

Research News

Limited Submission Opportunity: Science Philanthropy Alliance

[Science Philanthropy Alliance](#)

What If... Awards for Creative Medical Research

OBJECTIVES: **What If... Awards for Creative Medical Research** provide pilot funding for medical research projects addressing novel questions that have the potential to open new frontiers in a field. Projects must be distinct from the ideas currently pursued in an investigator's research program. We are looking for projects in biomedical or health research that, if successful, could ultimately lead to significant advances in the prevention, detection, treatment, cure, care delivery, or survivorship of cancer, especially brain, pancreatic, or lung cancer, neurological disease, cardiovascular disease, metabolic disease, or rare diseases. Interdisciplinary or convergent, collaborative projects -- including community-engaged projects -- are highly encouraged. Platforms and systems-level approaches that are relevant to multiple disease areas are within scope. No preliminary data is required.

ELIGIBILITY: Principal Investigators holding a Ph.D., M.D. or equivalent degree and tenure track faculty roles at either Northwestern University, Rush University, University of Illinois-Chicago, or University of Chicago are eligible to apply. Each institution is invited to submit 10-12 applications. We welcome interdisciplinary and collaborative proposals, but individuals may only serve once as principal investigators. Eligible projects must not be currently funded by any other entity (government grants or private donations/grants). If you have a pending proposal out in support of your proposed project, please reach out to [Maddy Beauregard](#) in the Rush Office of Philanthropy to confirm your project's eligibility.

FUNDING & AWARD PERIOD: **The What If... Awards program** is a highly competitive awards program that provides \$125,000 per year for two years (\$250,000 total; direct costs only). Awards are required to be matched 1:1 by the awardee's institution, for a total project budget of \$250,000 per year for two years (\$500,000 total; direct costs only). *Rush University leadership has agreed to provide matching funds.* Tenure-track faculty at all career levels from the following institutions are eligible to apply: Northwestern University, Rush University, University of Illinois-Chicago, and University of Chicago.

FUNDING SPECIFICS AND RFA: Funding specifics below and [follow this link for complete RFA](#):

TO APPLY: Rush may nominate up to 12 faculty members to apply. To apply to fill this slot.

- Register via this [REDCap](#) form by 5 p.m. on **Wednesday, Jan. 22**.
- Submit the following documents via this [REDCap](#) form by 5 p.m. on **Wednesday, Jan. 29**:
- Cover Page: Grant proposal title, PI/Multiple PIs, Key Personnel, and other significant collaborators.
- Specific Aims, brief statement on significance, innovation, and environment/investigator. This should be no more than two pages long.
- NIH biosketch (PI/Multiple PIs only)

The internal review committee will make a decision by **Wednesday, Feb. 5**; Philanthropy will then assist the applicant in completing their proposal submission to [Science Philanthropy Alliance](#). **The complete proposal is due by 3 p.m. on February 15.**