Linda T. and John A. Mellowes Center for Genomic Sciences and Precision Medicine

Mellowes Center Marcus Fund for Discovery and Innovation
Request for Applications

Purpose and Overview

To advance genomic sciences and precision medicine, with a particular focus on the molecular underpinnings of human diseases and cancers, the Mellowes Center is inviting proposals for pilot research projects that utilize any combination of the genomic, transcriptomic or epigenomic technologies and bioinformatics platforms, currently available or able to be developed in the Mellowes Center.

Priority Areas of Funding for the Current Funding Cycle

- Human health research projects from all areas of science are invited to apply to this RFA.
- Translational science experts who propose to study topics related to understanding disease mechanisms with a focus on precision and personalized approaches.
- Responsive proposals will use the latest technology (e.g., spatial genomics, single cell 'omics, long read sequencing) or expand innovative methodology (e.g., new sample preparation, new bioinformatics analysis type(s)) and technology (e.g., new cellular measurements).
- Projects that will support grant submissions or publications within calendar 2026.
- Samples available on the July 1, 2025 start date.

Number of Awards and Budget

- This mechanism will fund up to two projects, each up to $25,000, for Mellowes Center services that include sample preparation, sample sequencing or high-throughput assay development, and bioinformatic analytics.
    - Note: Award will be applied to core services (sample processing and bioinformatic analysis) developed at or with the Mellowes Center. No funds are available for investigator FTE or reagents to obtain the primary sample(s).
    - We reserve the right to withhold any awards if submissions do not sufficiently meet the expectations and guidelines outlined in the RFA.
- Projects requiring greater than $25,000 to accomplish the outlined aims can be supplemented with other funding sources.

Timeline

- Submit a brief statement of intent with information on the project including disease area of study, relevant technology, sample type, sample numbers, and relevant analytics.
- Completion of a 30-minute consultation with the Mellowes Center by April 7, 2025.
- Full applications are due by 5:00 p.m. on May 2, 2025*
- Proposals will be peer reviewed and final awards will be designated by Dr. Urrutia, Mellowes Center Director by May 30, 2025.
- Planned start date: July 1, 2025

** Funding applications for this award are not to be submitted in eBridge, submission link will be provided upon completion of the consultation.*

Eligibility

- MCW Faculty (with priority given to early career investigators) with a health research project.
- To ensure appropriate allocation of resources, we require a consultation with the Mellowes Center technology and bioinformatics directors to review project components and scale. To schedule your 30 minute consultation, please submit a statement of intent and we will be in touch with available dates.

Application Instructions

Please see the MCW Mellowes Center website for existing resources that can be used as a launching pad for your innovative project and submit a statement of intent.

Application Format: Use standard 11-point font, single space, and half-inch margins throughout the application. Consecutively number all pages.

- **Cover Page:** Include project title, investigator(s) and affiliations.
    - **Scientific Abstract:** Provide a summary of the project. (250-word limit).
    - **Goal Statement:** Provide a summary of the proposed research project in layman's terms. If funded, this statement will be shared with donors and interested parties. (400-word limit).
- **Research plan (details provided in template):** Provide background on the research need and intended impact, specific aims, approach, innovation, significance and rationale for the use of NGS-based methodologies and analysis. Describe sample availability, needed analytics, outcomes, and future impact of proposed study. (3-page limit).
- **References:** List references cited (not counted in page limit).
- **Statement of work (from the Mellowes Center):** This will summarize the sample numbers, quality control assessment, preparation of sample(s), and bioinformatic analysis needed for the NGS data.
- **Biographical sketches:** Provide a NIH-format biosketch for each PI and co-Investigator.

The application must be completed using the template and submitted via the link provided after the Mellowes Center consultation.

Evaluation Criteria and Reporting

Grants will be reviewed by a specially assembled review panel, and decisions for funding made one month following the RFA deadline. Proposals demonstrating a high level of innovation using the development of new technology and analyses that support and extend high-impact paper(s) and/or a proposal for extramural funding will be prioritized.

Awardees will be required to submit a summary report (2-page limit) within three months of the conclusion of the project and to present their data at an upcoming **Mellowes Center retreat, symposium, or another designated event**.

Integral to the mission of the Mellowes Center is to provide services that directly benefit MCW faculty through education, research development, and professional growth. Citations and acknowledgements are an essential measurement of how institutional investments produce academic productivity and will support the growth of research services at Mellowes Center and MCW long-term. Please follow these guidelines for proper acknowledgement of the Mellowes Center and their team members.