

FALL 2020 FUNDING PROGRAM INVESTIGATING ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS THAT INCREASE THE RISK FOR PARKINSON'S DISEASE

BACKGROUND

Parkinson's disease (PD) affects nearly 1 million people in the US and over 6 million worldwide, and those numbers are expected to rise over the coming decades. Though our understanding is growing, the cause of PD is not known in most cases. A better understanding of the factors that contribute to PD pathogenesis could lead to strategies for reducing risk.

The Michael J. Fox Foundation (MJFF) funds research to better define, measure, and treat Parkinson's disease as well as critical tools and other resources to advance that research. The purpose of this Request for Applications (RFA) is to investigate environmental factors, such as exposure to chemicals or toxic emissions, that increase the risk of PD and/or influence disease progression. While some evidence links environmental factors with increased risk of PD, much remains unknown regarding the specific environmental risks, their role in disease, and quantification of their contributions. A better understanding of environmental risk factors for PD could lead to efforts to reduce or prevent such exposures.

DEADLINES & REVIEW SCHEDULE

- Pre-Proposals Due: May 14, 2020, 5 p.m. US ET
- Full Proposal Invitations: July 22, 2020
- Full Proposals Due (by invite only): September 2, 2020, 5 p.m. US ET
- Anticipated Award Announcement: November 2020
- Anticipated Funding: January 2021

Applicants are encouraged to apply early to allow adequate time to correct errors found during the submission process.

FUNDING AVAILABLE

Duration: One- to-two-year grants.

Award Amount: Up to \$400,000. Requested support should be commensurate with work proposed and must include clear explanation of costs associated with accessing and integrating data from relevant epidemiological databases. These budgets include direct and indirect costs. For academic and for-profit institutions, no more than 15% or 10%, respectively, may go to indirect costs. Additional details about MJFF's indirect cost policy can be found in the [Application Guidelines](#) and [FAQ](#).

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Applications may be submitted by researchers or clinicians in:

- U.S. and non-U.S. biotechnology/pharmaceutical companies, or other publicly or privately held for-profit entities; and
- U.S. and non-U.S. public and private non-profit entities, such as universities, colleges, hospitals, laboratories, units of state and local governments and eligible agencies of the federal government.
- Post-doctoral fellows are **not** eligible to apply as principal investigators.

As projects may require many kinds of expertise, MJFF encourages industry and academic collaborations when appropriate.

PROGRAM GOAL

The Investigating Environmental Risk Factors that Increase the Risk for Parkinson's Disease program supports the analysis of large epidemiological datasets to identify environmental risk factors, such as exposure to chemicals, toxic emissions, air pollutants, and dietary contaminants, which are associated with an increased risk of PD. MJFF is especially interested in funding projects that utilize large longitudinal datasets and will prioritize collaborative efforts that bring together teams of investigators with access to multiple diverse datasets. This program is not appropriate for studies that require additional or prospective data collection.

PROGRAM PRIORITIES

Applications should focus on studies that achieve one or more of the following goals:

- Identify new environmental risk factors for PD.
- Contribute evidence that clarifies the role in disease or quantifies the risk of known environmental factors.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Our [Application Guidelines](#) provide general guidance about applying for funding from MJFF, though the RFA always supersedes information contained in the Application Guidelines. Please note that MJFF updated our publication and indirect costs policies in early 2020. The new [open access publication policy](#) requires articles resulting from MJFF-funded work publish in a preprint repository then in an open access forum with free and immediate readership rights.

MJFF will host an informational webinar on March 27, 2020, at 12 p.m. ET to clarify and explain the goals of our funding opportunities and answer applicant questions. The webinar will be available to view on-demand after the live airdate. To register, please visit the [Investigating Environmental Risk Factors that Increase the Risk for Parkinson's Disease](#) program webpage.