2021 FUNDING PROGRAM
DEVELOPMENT AND VALIDATION OF IMPROVED OUTCOME MEASURES
AN EDMOND J. SAFRA CORE PROGRAM FOR PD RESEARCH

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. PD is highly heterogeneous: individuals experience a wide array of motor and non-motor symptoms, many of which depend on disease severity and duration. Though our understanding of PD and its causes is growing, many questions remain. Currently, there are no disease-modifying drugs available for Parkinson's while standard symptomatic treatments provide some limited relief but come with complications and side effects.

The Michael J. Fox Foundation (MJFF) funds research to 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 develop biomarkers that can support therapeutic development. These may include biomarkers that improve definitive diagnosis, objectively track the progression of disease, enrich for subject populations, or more precisely detect a treatment response or target engagement.

The availability of these types of biomarkers would transform clinical trial design and assist in the interpretation of trial results.

DEADLINES & REVIEW SCHEDULE

- Pre-Proposals Due: October 22, 2020, 5 p.m. US ET
- Full Proposal Invitations: December 21, 2020
- Full Proposals Due (by invite only): March 18, 2021, 5 p.m. US ET
- Anticipated Award Announcement: Week of May 31, 2021
- Anticipated Funding: July 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 $750,000. Proposals will be evaluated based on potential impact, scientific merit, and research value. Requested support should be commensurate with work proposed and must include clear explanation of costs associated with the proposed research. 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 eligible to apply as co-investigators with designation of an administrative co-PI overseeing the laboratory in which research is performed. The administrative co-PI will be responsible for assisting in providing all institutional documents required for the project and will be required to sign any award contract. Training or mentoring-only proposals will not be considered.

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

PROGRAM GOAL
This RFA seeks to support research to develop biomarker tools and clinical outcome measures. This could include imaging, clinical outcomes development, non-invasive/physiological, biochemical/'omic' biomarkers, or application of data science or informatics—all of which should ultimately inform clinical trial design and execution and interpretation of results. Application should indicate if the proposed methodology or tool has been applied in human subjects or biosamples with PD or other neurodegenerative diseases.

PROGRAM PRIORITIES
Applications should focus on studies that achieve one or more of the following goals for Parkinson's:
- Develop or validate promising biomarkers of disease
- Develop or validate prodromal biomarkers
- Develop or validate biomarkers of phenoconversion
- Develop or validate specific molecular biomarker assays
- Analyze and derive candidate biomarkers from existing biological datasets
- Develop and support remote assessment strategies that could complement in clinic assessments

This program is not appropriate for:
- Therapeutic development
- Interventional studies
- Literature/landscape review or assessment

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.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION
In pursuit of our mission to accelerate the development of better treatments and a cure for Parkinson's disease, MJFF aims to support a rigorous research agenda reflecting a wide and diverse range of perspectives on Parkinson's disease and carried out in diverse populations. Diversity may refer to characteristics including, but not limited to, race, religion, ethnicity, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic circumstance, nationality, geographic background, ability and disability, political ideology, and age. Parkinson's is a complex problem; the more angles from which we attack, the greater the chances of finding innovative scientific solutions to benefit everyone living with the disease. As such:

- The Foundation encourages applications from diverse investigators representing groups historically underrepresented in the research enterprise.
- Because research shows that diverse teams outperform homogeneous ones, we urge applicants to share information about the composition of the team that will carry out the funded work.

INFORMATIONAL WEBINAR

MJFF will host an informational webinar on September 3, 2020, at 12 p.m. US 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. Register now.