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Genomic Sciences and  
Precision Medicine



## Mellowes Center & Cardiovascular Research Center – Request for Applications

### Purpose and Overview

The Mellowes Center for Genomic Sciences and Precision Medicine (MC) and the Cardiovascular Research Center (CVRC) are pleased to announce a joint funding opportunity to support pilot research projects that advance genomic sciences and precision medicine. This initiative is designed to accelerate innovative approaches to understanding human disease, with a particular emphasis on emerging methodologies that interrogate the molecular underpinnings of cardiovascular diseases. Projects may leverage any combination of genomic, transcriptomic, or epigenomic technologies, alongside cutting-edge bioinformatics and data science platforms. The goal of this funding mechanism is to generate high-impact data that catalyzes future extramural grant submissions, publications, or both, while fostering cross-disciplinary collaboration and technological innovation.

### Eligibility

Applicants must be MCW faculty members of both the CVRC as well as the MC with a translational cardiovascular health research project. Faculty are encouraged to apply for membership to both Centers.

### Priority Areas of Funding for the Current Funding Cycle

Applications with the following properties will be given priority:

- Use of the latest technology and analytical methods (e.g., spatial genomics, single cell ‘omics, long read sequencing) or innovative methodology (e.g., new sample preparation, new bioinformatics analysis type(s)) and technology (e.g., new cellular measurements).
- Translational science experts who propose to study topics related to understanding disease mechanisms with a focus on precision and personalized approaches.
  - proposal must either be patient oriented or include meaningful use of human tissues or blood samples related to cardiovascular health or disease
- Projects that will support grant submissions with additional preliminary data or provide additional data to improve publications within calendar 2026.

### Types of Awards

- Mellowes Center Pilot Awards:
  - \$15K-\$50K (total amount of all awards combined: \$50K)
  - project period: 1/1/2026-6/15/2026
  - Award comes in the form of a credit for services to be used within the Mellowes Center ‘Omics and Bioinformatics analytics Core. There will be no funds transfer or need for the PI to manage the funds.
- CVRC Genomic Sciences & Precision Cardiovascular Medicine Award:
  - one \$75K award
  - project period: 2/1/2026-6/30/2027
  - Contact PI will manage the award through MCW’s eBridge system
  - Due to the priority focus on development of ‘Omics related projects, investigators are encouraged to consult and use Mellowes Center ‘Omics and Bioinformatics analytics Core.

## Mellowes Center Pilot Awards Instructions

### Submission Process

- Complete online a [Statement of Intent](#) with information on the project including disease area of study, relevant technology, sample type, sample numbers, and relevant analytics. *[four weeks prior to full application]*
  - Applicants are encouraged to engage in informal discussions to clarify scope and budget for developmental services requested (Chris Bauer, [chbauer@mew.edu](mailto:chbauer@mew.edu)) can assist with scheduling).
  - Mellowes Administrative Team will assemble an SOW (including initial cost assessment) upon submission of Statement of Intent. Please note that this team may need to reach out to clarify logistics.
  - SOW will be provided to the submitting PI prior to final submission to confirm project scale/scope.
- Complete Research Strategy template (to be provided) and submit *via Airtable link* by **November 17, 2025\***
- Final funding decisions will be made jointly by faculty leadership of the Mellowes Center and CVRC.

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

### Key Dates

Deadline	Date
RFA Released	<b>Sept 18, 2025</b>
Complete a Statement of Intent (link)	<b>Oct 15, 2025</b>
Complete the Research Strategy template (provided) and submit full application via Airtable link	<b>Nov 17, 2025</b>
Notice of Awards Sent to PIs	<b>Dec 15, 2025</b>
Projects starting and samples deadline	<b>Jan 1, 2026</b>
Project work must be completed by*	<b>June 15, 2026</b>

*\*No extensions will be granted.*

### Evaluation Criteria

Applications will be scored on the following:

1. Innovation
2. Feasibility/ability to complete within the required timeline
3. Potential for publication or grant submission
4. Mission-specific criteria of both organizations – going “beyond the base pairs” to improve cardiovascular health in southeast Wisconsin and beyond

### Application Instructions

### 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:

Provide specific aims, background, significance, and rationale for the use of global scale, 'Omics-based methodologies and analysis to reveal new discoveries in your specific focus of disease research. (3-page limit).

- **Background and Expected Impact**  
State the scientific problem, the gap in research, and where this study will make an impact on the understanding of human cardiovascular disease.
- **Specific Aims and Approach**  
Describe in detail the hypothesis to be tested and the research methods to accomplish the project aim(s)  
Provide preliminary data to support the necessity of novel NGS and bioinformatic approaches for discovery of mechanisms or pathways critical to human disease
- **Innovation, Significance, and Outcomes**  
State how the project innovates and drives discovery for a cutting-edge impact on human disease  
Describe data evaluation strategies and key metrics to assess the project outcomes
- **Future Plans**  
Outline how you envision this project contributing to or growing into a larger effort  
Describe how the work ties in with existing and future publications or grant funding
- **Project Team**  
Briefly describe the role and expertise of each project team member that makes them best suited to carry out their responsibility on the proposed project
- **Citations (not included in the page limit)**  
Include all references cited in the narrative

Following the Consultation, Mellowes Center will provide an SOW. Please attach this with your submission. This will summarize the sample numbers, quality control assessment, preparation of sample(s), and bioinformatic analysis needed for the 'Omics data.

Biographical sketches. Provide a NIH-format biosketch for each PI and co-investigator.

### **Post Award**

Please note that award winners are required to present results at a Center event (e.g., Faculty Seminar Series, Symposium, CVRC Signature Program Meeting, CVRC Research Retreat, etc.).

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## CVRC Genomic Sciences and Precision Cardiovascular Medicine Award Instructions

### ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- All key personnel must be [members](#) of the CVRC and MC and MCW faculty. If key personnel are not [CVRC members](#), they must complete a [membership application](#) that must be submitted before or at the time of award application. Similarly, if key personnel are not [MC members](#), they must complete a [membership application](#) that must be submitted before or at the time of award application.
- All PIs must be fully vested in the project in both spirit and practice and contribute actively on the project. According to MCW corporate policy, the Contact PI will be primarily responsible for ensuring compliance with the scientific, safety, and ethical responsibilities of the grant award. The Contact PI will have the additional expectation of managing the award through MCW's eBridge system and through their department. The Contact PI will be responsible for all grant reporting and fiscal management and will be the main contact for budget and reporting management.

### FUNDING REQUIREMENTS

- The award is \$75,000 for one year and five months. One award is available. No cost extensions are discouraged and require prior approval and proper justification.
- Expenditures, including supplies, personnel, travel (\$3,000 maximum), publication and presentation expenses (\$3,000 maximum), are allowed under the terms of the award, providing the expenses are related to the approved project. The total cost of supplies can exceed \$5,000, but any single supply or equipment must cost less than \$5,000 each to comply with MCW rules. Capital equipment purchases (equipment costing \$5,000 or more) are not allowed. Given that the priority of this funding is to advance genomic sciences and precision medicine, use of the MC 'Omics and Bioinformatics services is highly encouraged. *Budget information is considered "Just in Time" and will be entered by the awardee into eBridge and adjudicated at that time.*
- The award will be awarded to the contact PI through the contact PI's primary MCW department. The contact PI's primary MCW department will be in charge of creating and managing subawards.
- The award must not have major scientific or budgetary overlap with other funding.
- Faculty salaries are an allowable cost, up to 5% effort (use NIH salary cap, if applicable). Therefore, cost sharing forms are only required if the effort specified does not equal the amount of salary requested (forms are considered "JIT"). Official PI effort is not required; however, it is encouraged.
- All required safety approvals (IRB, IACUC, OCRIC, IBC, etc.) must be acquired within 90 days of the notice of award or the award may be rescinded.
- Awardee may meet virtually or in person with CVRC or MC donors during the award year and year after, and are encouraged to join, when possible, any fundraising events by the CVRC or MC in ensuing years.
- Abstracts, manuscripts, articles, oral presentations, or poster presentations related to the project must acknowledge the CVRC as an affiliation and acknowledge the support of the "Medical College of Wisconsin Cardiovascular Research Center Award" (i.e., "Funded [in part or wholly] by the Medical College of Wisconsin Cardiovascular Research Center"). Similarly, if MC core is utilized in the generation of data, it must be [acknowledged](#) in all written and oral presentations or publications.
- The awardee may be asked to give a presentation about their project one or two times during the award year and the year after the award. Awardee may be asked to review grant applications in future years.
- Awardee must submit a final progress report (similar to AHW final progress report) within 60 days of grant end to [cvc\\_grants@mcw.edu](mailto:cvc_grants@mcw.edu). The CVRC will email these forms to you ahead of time.
- All expenses must be incurred during the award period and all invoices must be paid by the project within 60 days of grant end.

## SUBMISSION DEADLINE

This document and associated materials should be submitted to [cvc\\_grants@mcw.edu](mailto:cvc_grants@mcw.edu) by December 1, 2025, at 11:59pm.

## GENERAL REVIEW CRITERIA

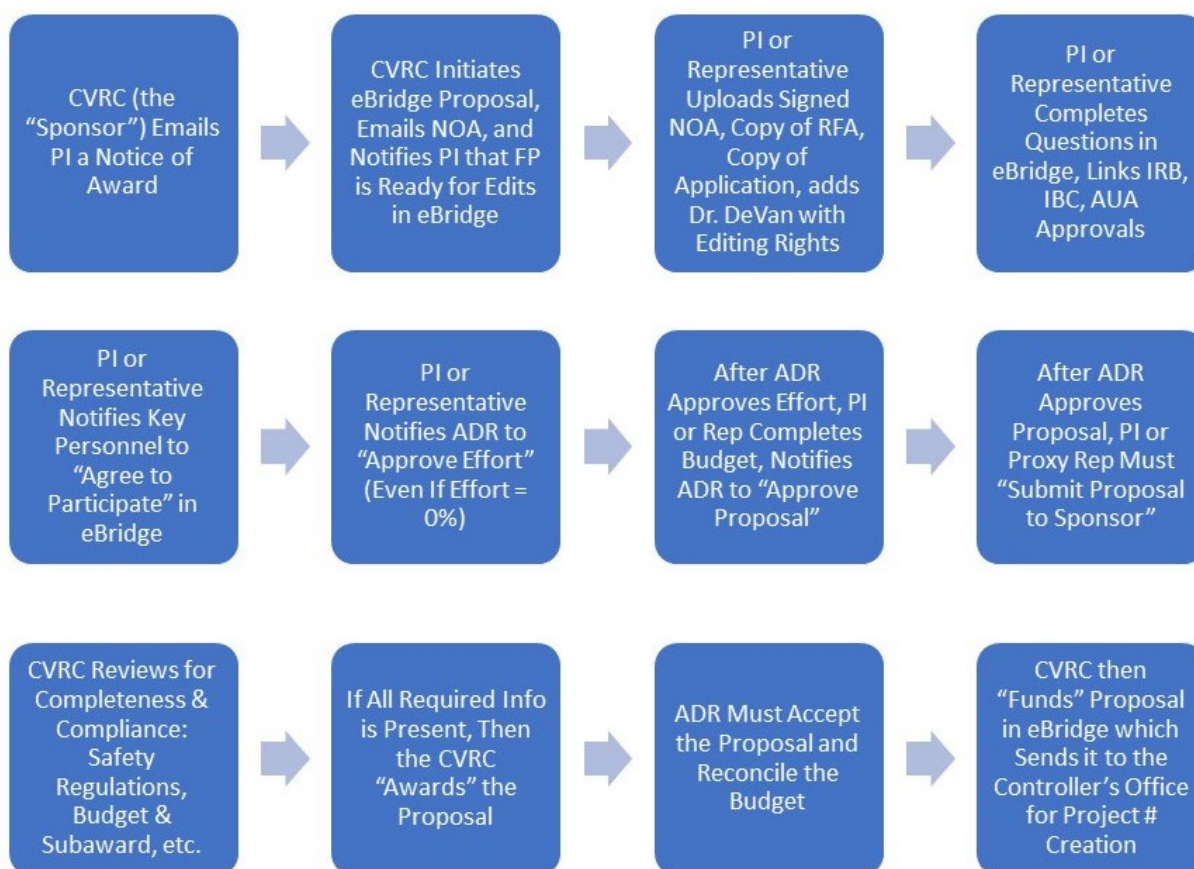
All applications are reviewed by a study section using an NIH-style classic review format and every effort is made to find internal reviewers with related subject matter expertise that do not have conflicts of interest with their assigned applications (belong to the same department/division, have published or known grants with applicant within last three years, mentor, etc.). Applications are ranked by initial scores supplied by written review of two to three reviewers who have signed a statement of confidentiality. Applications that receive initial written scores (using NIH's scale) above 6 may not receive review in the study section. All study section members without conflict provide an overall impact score that is averaged for the overall impact score. If needed, the reviewers may ask further questions of the applicant before determining their final scores. If this occurs, the applicant will be sent a list of questions and asked to respond within a period of five to 10 business days. Anonymous reviews are provided to applicants within a month of the study section meeting. Modified classic NIH criteria are used to score each application as listed below:

1. **Significance:** Does the project address an important problem or a critical barrier to progress in the field? If the aims of the project are achieved, how will scientific knowledge, technical capability, and/or clinical practice be improved? How will successful completion of the aims change the concepts, methods, technologies, treatments, services, or preventative interventions that drive this field?
2. **Innovation:** Does the application challenge and seek to shift current research or clinical practice paradigms by utilizing novel theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions? Are the concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions novel to one field of research or novel in a broad sense? Is a refinement, improvement, or new application of theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions proposed? Is there appropriate justification for the proposed work provided through literature citations, data from other sources, or, when available, from investigator-generated data?
3. **Approach and Feasibility:** As written, can this project be accomplished within 17 months? Is the overall strategy, methodology, and analyses well-reasoned and appropriate to accomplish the specific aims of the project? Is the statistical plan adequately described? Are experimental controls, plans to reduce bias, power analyses, and statistical methods fully described? Is the statistical plan appropriate for the overall project?
4. **Investigator:** Are the PI and other researchers in the proposal well suited to the project with appropriate experience and training or support from knowledgeable colleagues? Do they demonstrate an ongoing record of accomplishments that have advanced their field(s)?
5. **Leveraging:** How will this proposal be leveraged for extramural funding? What is the likelihood that this proposal will lead to an extramural grant within two years?
6. **Overall Impact:** What is the likelihood for the project to exert a sustained, powerful influence on the research field(s) involved, in consideration of the preceding review criteria? Note: An application does not need to be strong in all categories to be judged likely to have major scientific impact.

## NOA, JUST IN TIME REQUIREMENTS, EBRIDGE, AND FUNDS TRANSFER:

If you are selected for funding, the CVRC will send a Notice of Award (NOA) with award conditions and the CVRC will initiate a funding proposal in eBridge. After this, the PI or their representative must complete and submit the eBridge application, including the budget and upload of the signed NOA, within two and a half weeks of notification in order for the funding to be available in a timely manner.





**QUESTIONS?** Please contact Allison DeVan, PhD or Erin Theriault, MS at [cvc\\_grants@mcw.edu](mailto:cvc_grants@mcw.edu).

## TIMELINE

Deadline	Date
RFA Released	<b>Sept 18, 2025</b>
Deadline for Application & Related Materials to <a href="mailto:cvc_grants@mcw.edu">cvc_grants@mcw.edu</a>	<b>Dec 1, 2025, 11:59 pm</b>
Notice of Awards Sent to PIs	<b>By Jan 16, 2026</b>
Applications Entered Into eBridge by PI or Their Representative	<b>Within 2.5 Weeks' Notice</b>
Project Start Date*	<b>Feb 1, 2026</b>
Deadline to Obtain IRB, IACUC, OCRICC, and IBC Approvals	<b>Within 90 Days of Award Letter</b>
Project End Date (1 year, 5 months)	<b>June 30, 2027</b>
Final Progress Report Due	<b>Within 60 Days of Grant End</b>
All Invoices Paid for Expenses Occurring During Previous Award Period	<b>Within 60 Days of Grant End</b>

\*Funds will not be dispersed until appropriate IACUC, IBC, and/or IRB requirements are met.

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Follow NIH formatting rules for font size, margins, etc.

1. Complete and Sign the Face Page(s) (template below).
2. Abstract (250 words or less)
3. Lay Audience Abstract (1/2 page limit; used for administrative communications)
  - a. Overall and project-specific succinct and accurate description of the proposed work in plain language understandable by a general, lay audience (this may be used in publications, outside communications)
  - b. Describe the relevance of the proposed research project to cardiovascular public health
4. Specific Aims/Hypotheses/Questions for Overall Proposal (1-page limit)
  - a. Clearly identify the problem that this project will address
  - b. Clearly state the overall hypothesis
  - c. Clearly state the aims and specific hypotheses that this project will address
5. Research Plan (5-page limit) with the following sections:
  - a. Significance
  - b. Innovation
  - c. Approach (Methods/Specific Protocols, Preliminary Data [not required], Timeline for Accomplishing Goals, Anticipated Results, Limitations, and Future Directions)
  - d. References/Literature Cited (not included in page limits)
6. [NIH Biosketch](#) for the PI or MPIs only (5-page limit)

Submit a completed application to [cvc\\_grants@mcw.edu](mailto:cvc_grants@mcw.edu) (not eBridge) no later than **December 1, 2025**, by **11:59pm**.

**CVRC APPLICATION FACE PAGE** (use LOI link for MC Pilot Awards)

<b>TITLE OF PROJECT:</b> don't forget to add me!			
<b>PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR</b>	Name (First, Middle Initial, Last Name, degrees)		
	Are You an Early-Stage or New Investigator ( <a href="#">NIH Definition</a> )? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
	Phone (    )	Email Address	
	Position/Title		
	Primary Department and Division		
<b>APPLICATION ASSISTANT</b>	Name (First Name, Last Name, degrees)		Email Address
<b>DEPT/DIVISION ADMINISTRATOR</b>	Name (First Name, Last Name, degrees)		Email Address
<b>INVOLVES:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Humans	<input type="checkbox"/> Vertebrate Animals	<input type="checkbox"/> IBC
<b>I CERTIFY THAT</b> (check all)	<input type="checkbox"/> I have the facilities, other resources, and equipment necessary to complete the proposed research <input type="checkbox"/> I will comply with MCW-mandated safety, human, and animal policies <input type="checkbox"/> If I have a subaward, staff from my primary department at MCW will create and manage the subaward in eBridge <input type="checkbox"/> This project has no scientific or budgetary overlap with another funded project		

PI Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Key Personnel Name: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Key Personnel Role (Co-I, etc.): [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Key Personnel Primary Department: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Key Personnel Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Key Personnel Name: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Key Personnel Role (Co-I, etc.): [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Key Personnel Primary Department: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Key Personnel Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

(copy and paste additional key personnel sections as needed)

**Checklist of Materials:**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Signed and Completed Application Face Page                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Research Plan (5 pages)                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Abstract (250 words or less)                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> References (no page limit)                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lay Audience Abstract (<1/2 page)                                | <input type="checkbox"/> PI or MPI NIH Biosketch(es) (5 pages each) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Specific Aims/Hypotheses/Questions for Overall Proposal (1 page) |   |