

Caltech | Funding Memo

Title: W. M. Keck Foundation Research Program - Limited Opportunity

Funding Agency: W. M. Keck Foundation

Internal Deadline: 08/10/2020 11:59 PM PDT

External Deadline(s):

11/01/2020 04:30 PM PST (Pre-Proposal)

02/15/2021 04:30 PM PST (Full Proposal)

Cognizant Office: Office of Foundation Relations

Description:

The W. M. Keck Foundation strives to fund endeavors that are distinctive and novel in their approach. The Foundation invites eligible institutions to submit concept papers in the areas of medical research, and science & engineering. It encourages projects that are high-risk with the potential for transformative impact. "High-risk" comprises a number of factors, including questions that push the edge of the field, present unconventional approaches to intractable problems, or challenge the prevailing paradigm.

Frequency: Typically biennial

Total Award: \$1,000,000

- Up to \$1,000,000 - Higher budgets amounts not currently being considered by the Foundation

Indirect Costs: Not Allowed

- **Caltech's minimum overhead rate is based on the award's annual gross funding. Please refer to the [FY20 Annual Rate Memo](#) for applicable minimum overhead requirements. Applicants must work within their division to account for the required overhead via an approved MORA form.**

Duration: 3 years

- A 2 year project may be considered if outcomes are achievable in that time frame
- On occasion, longer time frames may also be acceptable if there is a valid reason for the particular project

Discipline(s): Biology and Biological Engineering; Chemistry and Chemical Engineering; Engineering and Applied Science; Geological and Planetary Sciences; Humanities and Social Sciences; Physics, Mathematics, and Astronomy

Eligibility: Research Faculty, Tenure-Track Faculty, Tenured Faculty

- Research universities, medical colleges and major private independent scientific and medical research institutes are eligible to apply to the Research Program
 - Eligible institutions may submit one Phase I application online per grant cycle
- Caltech PIs who currently serve as Co-Is or Co-PIs on Keck Foundation-funded projects at other organizations may apply if the project is significantly different from that funded with collaborators elsewhere
- Multi-investigator teams eligible and common among awardees
 - Teams may include extramural collaborators
- Caltech researchers other than tenure-track faculty will need to obtain approval from the Division Chair and Vice Provost for Research prior to submitting an application

Research Areas of Interest:

- Medical research refers to those projects whose focus is on understanding and probing biological systems of relevance to human biology and/or human health. Projects that exploit biological systems as templates or tools or are primarily bioengineering-oriented may fall under the scientific and engineering category. Projects involving creation of medical devices, the operation of clinical trials, or that focus on drug development fall outside the scope of the Keck Foundation's interests
 - Please see medical research abstracts from the previous 3 years (link below) for more details on what types of projects the foundation considers a fit in this category. Please contact the Office of Foundation Relations at Caltech with any questions
- Science & engineering projects are those that focus primarily, but not exclusively, on physics, chemistry, and earth science. Bioengineering projects may also fall into this category, rather than medical research
 - Please see science & engineering abstracts from the previous 3 years (link below) for more details on what types of projects the foundation considers a fit in this category. Please contact the Office of Foundation Relations at Caltech with any questions
- Projects should focus on important and emerging areas of research
- Projects should have the potential to develop breakthrough technologies, instrumentation or methodologies
- Projects should be innovative, distinctive and interdisciplinary
- Projects should have the potential for transformative impact, such as the founding of a new field of research, the enabling of observations not previously possible, or the altered perception of a previously intractable problem
 - The Foundation has often spoken of having the willingness to pursue what are ultimately "Noble Failures" – projects that are out-of-the-box and potentially paradigm-shifting that may fail, but nonetheless push the boundaries of the field
- Proposals should demonstrate that private philanthropy generally, and the W. M. Keck Foundation in particular, is essential to the project's success

Research Exclusions:

- Funding will not support:
 - Clinical or translational research, treatment trials or research for the sole purpose of drug development
 - Conference or seminar sponsorship
 - Public policy research

Post-Award Obligations:

- Annual and final progress reports

Recent Caltech Recipients:

- None

Guidelines & Other Information:

Overview: <http://www.wmkeck.org/grant-programs/grant-programs>

Eligibility and Priorities: <http://www.wmkeck.org/grant-programs/research>

Previous Recipients: <http://www.wmkeck.org/grant-programs/research/medical-research-grant-abstracts>

Attached spreadsheet “ [Keck Recent Recipients - Sortable](#) ” reflects all winning projects from the past 3 years in both categories, and can be filtered and sorted to view abstracts, institutions, PI names, and dates of awards. It may found under the “Documents” section of this memo.

FAQ: <http://www.wmkeck.org/grant-programs/faq>

Documents:

[Keck Recent Recipients - Sortable](#)

[Keck PreProposal Concept Paper Template - Medical Research](#)

[Keck PreProposal Concept Paper Template - Sci&Engineering](#)

Pre-Proposal Requirements:

- This is a limited opportunity – **Caltech may nominate 1 (one) candidate for medical research and 1 (one) candidate for science & engineering.** Please send pre-proposals to the Office of the Provost at provost@caltech.edu by **August 10, 2020**
- See attached template (for either medical research or science & engineering) and the following instructions
 - Please do not modify the section headings, font type or size, or margins of the pre-proposal template. The pre-proposal is limited to 1 page total
 - For the proposed project section, emphasize the following:
 - Impact
 - Innovation, particularly any unique aspects
 - pilot studies
 - Justification for Keck support should be brief and should focus on why the project is not suited to receive federal support in its current stage. Note: recent declinations from federal agencies for the proposed project or a version thereof are not disqualifying, especially if the declinations emphasized that the project was at a too-early stage; broke with conventional paradigms; was too high-risk
 - The estimated budget should be broken down, if possible, by major areas, e.g., personnel, equipment, consumable supplies, etc. Budgets can be rough approximations at this stage, but please note the following: The Keck Foundation will not pay indirect costs, nor graduate student tuition, nor faculty salary for any individual faculty member that exceeds 10% of his/her annual salary

- If possible, within the 1-page limit, authors may add other details (e.g., background to put the research into perspective, description of Caltech's and/or the division/department's prominence in the field)
- No figures
- If a reference is necessary, abbreviate it as (Science, 323, 45, '11). DO NOT USE (Jones et al., 2011)
- Although these pre-proposals follow the template set out by the W.M. Keck Foundation, there will be opportunities to make edits/modifications to the narrative should the concept be selected for presentation to the Keck Foundation

Please notify the Foundation Relations team if you anticipate making a submission or if you have any questions regarding this opportunity. We are here to help ensure that Caltech's proposals are competitive. We can assist with proposal development and advise you on the routing of your paperwork. Interested researchers should work with their division grant manager to prepare the budget, the MORA form, and the Division Approval Form (DAF). Submissions and awards for this grant program will be processed through the Office of Foundation Relations.

Opportunity ID: 441