



~ REQUEST FOR RESEARCH PROPOSALS ~

The Connors Center IGNITE Awards*Investigating female-specific or sex-differentiated effects in novel therapeutics*

Letters of Intent Due: September 21, 2018	Full Proposals Due: November 16, 2018	Awards Announced: December 14, 2018
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Sponsored by the Mary Horrigan Connors Center for Women's Health and Gender Biology

The Connors Center for Women's Health and Gender Biology is pleased to announce a request for research proposals (RFP) from the Brigham and Women's Hospital (BWH) research community.

The goal of this newly launched IGNITE Awards program is to advance understanding of female-specific and sex-differentiated effects in novel therapeutics. These IGNITE investigations will be the first to leverage the Connors Center's emerging **First-in-Women Precision Medicine Platform**. First-in-Women is a translational research platform which will advance the inclusion and specific investigation of women in the early development of new drugs and devices, in studies of approved drugs and devices, and in the development of digital therapeutics in order to produce sex-specific knowledge before distribution to the population at large. First-in-Women will provide mentorship in the design, implementation, and analysis of data related to female-specific and sex-differentiated effects with experts in this field. First-in-Women will be a go-to hub for national efforts to advance our investigation of sex as a biological variable in relation to novel therapeutics. Specifically, we aim to increase 1) the inclusion and study of women in early-phase development of drugs, devices, and digital therapeutics, and 2) the investigation of sex-specific and sex-differentiating factors (e.g., metabolism, immune system, hormones) that may affect the efficacy, tolerability, and safety of novel therapeutics.

While investigators funded by IGNITE awards will be responsible for the day-to-day implementation and oversight of their studies, IGNITE investigations will be carried out as collaborations between the recipient and Connors Center First-in-Women faculty, whose contributions will facilitate and advance investigations by providing content and methods expertise as well as additional staff time, effort, and support, as appropriate. A designated First-in-Women team of scientific and implementation advisors will meet with IGNITE investigators on a pre-designated schedule to monitor progress and address the following topics:

- Scientific focus
- Clinical translation aligned with the First-in-Women mission
- Connection to Connors Center and First-in-Women resources
- Assessment of project goals, milestones and deliverables
- Review of project finances

The intention of these meetings is to support and maintain the momentum of the studies in order to maximize each projects' future growth and potential for impact. The scope of proposed investigations includes studies designed to advance therapeutic strategies using drugs, devices, and digital therapeutics. Basic, translational,



and clinical research will be considered. Priority will be given to investigations of non-approved or recently-approved agents, though studies of any approved agent will be considered.

Two awards, each for \$50,000 direct costs plus indirects, will be distributed. Additional resources may be available to awardees to expand the scope of their studies, which will be determined by the Connors Center during the start-up phase. The initial funding period will run for 12 months. Grantees should be prepared to continue their studies for a second year if first year progress shows promise for expanding the investigation; renewals as well as a one-time no-cost extension will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Projects must be ready to commence upon receipt of award.

Based on Letters of Intent, select applicants will be invited to submit full proposals for review. Interviews may be requested before final awards are determined.

Timeline:

Request for proposals announced:	August 24, 2018
Letter of Intent due:	September 21, 2018
Invitations to submit full proposals distributed:	October 17, 2018
Full proposals due:	November 16, 2018
Award recipients announced:	December 14, 2018
Earliest start date:	January 2, 2019

Eligibility:

You are invited to apply if you meet the following criteria. Both US and non-US citizens are welcome to apply.

- You have a doctoral degree (MD and/or PhD or equivalent).
- You have an HMS appointment at the Instructor level or above.
- Your primary appointment is at Brigham & Women's Hospital.

Application Materials:**Letter of Intent Due September 21, 2018, at 12:00pm:**

- Research Proposal Cover Sheet
- A 1-page Letter of Intent, which addresses the following:
 1. What is the major problem in medicine that you plan to study, and how does your proposal address either a female-specific or sex-differentiated question?
 2. How do your previous experiences and accomplishments inform the current project?
 3. How do you plan on using this IGNITE Award to support your work to advance our understanding of therapeutics in women?
 4. What do you foresee is the biggest obstacle(s) to achieving your objectives?

Items above must be compiled into a single PDF and submitted electronically to Natasha Minor, MPH, Connors Center Project Manager, at nminor@bwh.harvard.edu. Letters of Intent will be reviewed by a



panel of established researchers. Decisions from the review panel will be final. No written feedback will be provided.

Full Proposal Due November 16, 2018, at 12:00pm (Invitation Only):

1. A two-page research statement describing the scientific work that you propose to undertake. Include a timeline with planned milestones and deliverables. Figures, tables, and images may be included within the two pages. A maximum of 10 references may be included on an additional page.
2. A one-year budget (using the budget template provided) for a maximum of \$50,000 direct costs plus indirects, with budget justification (200 words max).
3. NIH biosketch
4. A one-page letter of support on letterhead from your Division Chief, Department Chair, Laboratory PI, or mentor.

All items above must be compiled into a single PDF, in the above order, and submitted electronically by 12pm on November 16 to Natasha Minor, MPH, Connors Center Project Manager, at nminor@bwh.harvard.edu. An editable Research Proposal Cover Sheet can be downloaded from the [Connors Center website under the News and Events tab](#).

Application text must be in Arial, 11-point font. Single-spacing is allowed. All margins must be at least 0.5 inches. Incomplete applications, applications submitted in multiple files, and multiple applications submitted by a single Investigator will not be considered.

Proposal Review Criteria:

Applications will be judged for scientific merit, feasibility, fit with the goals and objectives of the Connors Center First-in-Women Precision Medicine Platform, and potential for obtaining independent funding to continue the study once the IGNITE funding period has ceased.

Other terms of the program:

Award recipients will benefit from engagement with the Connors Center First-in-Women Precision Medicine Platform. They will be expected to collaborate with Connors Center research leadership and to meet regularly with Connors Center staff to share ideas, to review progress, and to discuss challenges throughout the project. In addition:

- Each applicant may only serve as the Principal Investigator of one submitted proposal.
- All recipients will be required to submit a final written report of research activity.
- Recipients will be required to present their project at one or more Connors Center events.
- Recipients must maintain their primary appointment at BWH for the duration of the funding period. If an awardee leaves BWH, all unspent funds will be returned to the Connors Center.

For questions about the Connors Center IGNITE Awards and associated funding opportunities, please contact Julie Alperen, Dr.PH, Administrative Director of the Connors Center for Women's Health and Gender Biology, at jalperen@bwh.harvard.edu.