The Pershing Square Foundation
Lotus Award Application Guidelines

Lotus Award Overview

The Pershing Square Foundation (PSF) has worked across sectors to catalyze innovative approaches to the most difficult problems. Talented individuals have always been at the center of our approach. We aim to support leaders who transform systems, embrace new paradigms, and have an innate drive to make an impact.

PSF has funded pioneering cancer researchers through the Pershing Square Sohn Cancer Research Alliance for over a decade and supported women's health initiatives in New York City. Through this Request for Proposals (RFP), PSF aims to combine these two priority areas of women's health and cancer to shine a light on one of the most understudied and underfunded cancers—ovarian cancer. Ovarian cancer is the deadliest gynecologic cancer, with 80% of women diagnosed at an advanced stage. Only 31.5% of women diagnosed during an advanced stage survive for five years. Ovarian cancer remains a disease with a poor prognosis due to limited early detection and treatment options.

PSF supports research efforts by (1) deploying capital quickly, (2) funding high-risk, high-reward ideas, (3) bringing new perspectives into a field, (4) encouraging collaboration, and (5) leveraging our vast network. We challenge our scientific partners to think creatively and across silos, to spur innovation to fight ovarian cancer.

Through the Pershing Square Lotus Award for Ovarian Cancer Research, PSF is looking for investigators who are either already working on a promising project in ovarian cancer or in another type of cancer that could have an impact on ovarian cancer. Grantees each receive $250,000 a year for three years, totaling $750,000.

Researchers who are not studying ovarian cancer are encouraged to apply. This award aims to (1) inspire investigators with unique expertise to apply their knowledge to ovarian cancer and (2) empower ovarian cancer researchers to pursue their boldest, most innovative ideas.

Pershing Square Lotus Award
For Ovarian Cancer Research

Application Process

The application process will be conducted in one stage:

Letter of Intent (LOI), Biosketch, and Budget – Opens on **Monday, December 21st, 2026,** to all who meet the eligibility criteria.

- For clarity, the Lotus Award does not have a full proposal stage. Projects will be evaluated solely through the LOI.

Timeline and Key Dates

December 21, 2026:	Open to receive Letter of Intent (LOI) applications
February 1, 2027:	Deadline to submit LOI
March & April 2027:	Application review *(may include finalist calls as needed)*
May 2027:	2027 winners notified *(all applicants will be notified regarding the status of their application)*
June 14, 2027:	Pershing Square Prize Award Dinner
August 1, 2027:	Projects start

Please note that PSF may adjust the notification dates without notice to applicants.

Key Criteria

1) **Radically innovative research**: The Lotus Award seeks to support bold, innovative research with the potential to transform ovarian cancer research. Projects may span basic biology, early detection, prevention, immuno-oncology, novel therapeutic approaches, disease modeling, emerging technologies, and translational research, among other areas. The award particularly encourages ambitious, high-risk projects that may be difficult to fund through traditional mechanisms but have the potential to challenge established thinking, open new avenues of investigation, or enable significant advances in the field.

2) **Scientific excellence:** Proposals should demonstrate outstanding scientific merit, including a compelling research question, a rigorous scientific approach, and the expertise necessary to carry out the proposed work. Scientific excellence will be assessed through peer review, including consideration of the investigator's expertise and the strength and relevance of any collaborations with ovarian cancer researchers.

3) **Potential impact on ovarian cancer:** Proposals should articulate a clear and compelling connection to ovarian cancer and explain how the research could meaningfully advance the field. Projects may address important gaps in our understanding of ovarian cancer biology or

introduce new approaches to its prevention, early detection, diagnosis, or treatment, including recurrent disease. Priority will be given to research with the potential to challenge existing paradigms, address significant unmet needs, or establish promising new directions for future investigation or clinical translation.

Eligibility

A PhD, MD, MD-PhD degree (or equivalent) is required. Lead Principal Investigators (PIs) of the submitted proposal must hold tenure-track faculty appointments (or equivalent, e.g., group leader or independent principal investigator) at academic research institutions in the United States of America and must have at least two (2) years of experience running their own laboratories by the start date of the grant (August 2027). Multiple applicants from the same institution may apply as long as eligibility criteria are met.

Applicants to PSF prize programs (the MIND Prize, Pershing Square Sohn Cancer Prize, and Lotus Award) can **only apply to one program at a time.** For example, if you apply to the 2027 Lotus Award, you cannot apply to the 2027 Pershing Square Sohn Cancer Prize that same year. You can be a collaborator on another lead PI's application, however.

Current PSF grantees (including MIND and Cancer Prize winners) may not apply to the Lotus Award as a lead PI until their existing award term has concluded, and final reports have been received. They are allowed to be a collaborator on an application.

Only the lead PI needs to meet these eligibility requirements.

Collaborations with ovarian cancer researchers are encouraged but not required. They may be especially valuable for PIs without prior ovarian cancer research experience, or for projects that need specific expertise or resources (e.g., access to patient samples). Where a collaborator is included, reviewers will consider the strength and feasibility of the collaboration; applications without a collaborator will not be at a disadvantage. Collaborators will need to include a biographical sketch. Lead PIs on an application may be a collaborator on another application.

A PI who is not a U.S. citizen or permanent resident, by submitting an application for this funding, assures that his/her visa status will provide sufficient time to complete the project and grant term within the United States. The Pershing Square Foundation does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, disability or any other legally protected characteristics.

Pershing Square Lotus Award
For Ovarian Cancer Research

Letter of Intent (LOI)

We will begin to accept LOI applications on **Monday, December 21st, 2026.** LOIs are due **Monday, February 1st by 5:00pm ET**. The LOI is a **1.5-page document** in Georgia, 11-point font, single-spaced, with one-half inch (.5) margins. Figures are accepted but must remain within the 1.5-page limit and must be legible. References are not included in the limit.

Please include the following sections:

1. Scientific background and rationale – **One-half (.5) page** (**400 words maximum)**
    - Briefly describe the biological question and rationale underlying the proposed research.
    - Why are you particularly well positioned to undertake this work?
2. Proposed Research Project – **One (1) page**
    - Describe the project aims, experimental approach, research plan, and innovation/impact of the work.
    - What important gap or unmet need exists in the field, and how will your proposed research address it?
    - If successful, how could this project meaningfully advance the field?
    - Why is the project innovative within the specific research focus area?
    - Why is this project worth funding now?

A **budget** and a **biosketch** will be required along with the LOI. Applicants must use the provided PSF templates. A biosketch for collaborators is required (it does not have to be in PSF's template), if applicable. The submission form and these templates can be found on our application portal once a user has created an account and started the application: https://prizeapplication.smapply.io/.

NOTE: The total budget per year must reach but should not exceed $250,000 (this includes direct and indirect costs). The budget should be constructed as follows:

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
Total Direct Costs	$225,000	$225,000	$225,000	$675,000
Indirect Costs (up to 10% of total annual payment)	$25,000	$25,000	$25,000	$75,000
TOTAL *(Direct & Indirect)*	$250,000	$250,000	$250,000	**$750,000**

You can absolutely have less than $25K in indirect costs and more than $225K in direct costs, but totals must reach $250K/year.

Review Mechanisms

- After submission of the LOI, applications will undergo peer review by Foundation leadership and the Lotus Scientific Advisory Board. Conflicts of Interest will be considered.
- Applicants will be selected by a group of qualified individuals based on their credentials, the merits of their proposals, and the connection of their proposals to the goals of the Foundation.
- The final selection will be contingent upon ratification by Foundation leadership.
- As a policy, PSF does not provide reviewer critiques or evaluations to applicants.

Prize Administration

Award Agreement
Upon acceptance of the award, the grantee and their employing organization will be required to sign an award agreement indicating acceptance of the Foundation's Award Agreement. Among other requirements, the Foundation must be notified in advance and approve of any significant changes in objectives, key personnel, or budget. As the agreement template reflects over a decade of collaboration with institutions on best practices and fair terms, we do not allow any edits to the award agreement unless there is information included that is factually incorrect. If you have questions about this before applying, please email us.

Publicity
By submitting an application for funding, the PI grants the Foundation permission to use their name, image, likeness and quotes at any time in connection with the publicity relating to this Award (whether during the Award period or after) provided that such use is factual, accurate and for non-commercial purposes only. The Foundation will coordinate with the appropriate individuals with the employing institution for use of institution name. (Further publicity terms related to the PI's institution will be outlined in the award agreement and will be agreed to upon agreement execution.)

Funding
PSF will allow no more than 10% of the award amount ($25,000/year) to be allocated to indirect costs. Full term funding will be contingent upon review of annual progress reports and other oversight activities conducted by PSF. PSF will determine future funding at its sole discretion. Multi-year support is not automatic and is conditioned on meeting certain milestones and deliverables defined in the Award Agreement, including submission of complete and accurate progress reports indicating that the project is meeting measurable objectives.

Reporting Requirements

All grantees are required to provide an annual written progress report in accordance with applicable IRS requirements. The reports will be reviewed to ensure that the purposes of the grants are being fulfilled. A reminder will be sent in advance of the deadline. All project PIs and key scientists will also be required to attend an annual scientific retreat. Additional details will be included in the award agreement.

Further Information

Any questions concerning this RFP should be addressed to: info@TheLotusAward.org.