Keck Foundation Research Program (Medical Research or Science and Engineering)

**Deadline:** Internal deadline 5/15/2022

**Initial Approach:** One-page concept paper submitted to Sarah Fodor s-fodor@northwestern.edu

**Foundation:** W. M. Keck Foundation

PLEASE NOTE: The Keck Foundation requires that all Northwestern University contacts go through the University’s institutional liaison to the Foundation, Sarah Fodor (Executive Director of Foundation Relations and Corporate Engagement)

The W. M. Keck Foundation Research Program supports **basic science research** projects in two areas: (1) medical research and (2) science and engineering. The Foundation strives to fund endeavors that are distinctive and novel in their approach. It encourages projects that are high-risk with the potential for transformative impact. "High-risk" comprises several factors, including questions that push the edge of the field, present unconventional approaches to intractable problems, or challenge the prevailing paradigm. The Foundation makes around 10–12 awards in each cycle. Research that focuses on a single disease is typically not funded by Keck.

Funding is awarded to universities and institutions nationwide for projects in research that:

- focus on important and emerging areas of research
- have the potential to develop breakthrough technologies, instrumentation, or methodologies
- are innovative, distinctive, and interdisciplinary
- demonstrate a high level of risk due to unconventional approaches, or by challenging the prevailing paradigm
- 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
- do not focus on clinical or translational research, treatment trials, or research for the sole purpose of drug development
- fall outside the mission of public funding agencies (Keck strongly prefers that PI has previously applied and can supply comments from a program officer that the project is outside program focus)
- demonstrate that private philanthropy generally, and the W. M. Keck Foundation in particular, is essential to the project’s success.
**Eligibility:**
Research universities, medical colleges, and major private independent scientific and medical research institutes are eligible to apply to the Research Program. Both senior and early career investigators may apply.

**Award**
Northwestern University has been approved to apply for a maximum of $1 million per project over one to three years.

**Additional Information**
Seeking funding from the Keck Foundation is a multi-stage process managed by the Office of Foundation Relations. Final funding decisions on invited full proposals are expected in late June/early July 2023 for project start dates in July 2023.

Northwestern University may submit up to four concept papers in each area to the Keck Foundation. Concept papers will be reviewed and approved by school research deans and Interim Vice President for Research Milan Mrksich before submission to the foundation. The submission process is managed by Sarah Fodor, Executive Director of Foundation Relations and Corporate Engagement.

Single-paged concepts for the Research Program should be in 12-point TNR font with 1 inch margins and should include these items (use bold headers for each section bolded below):

- Organization Name
- Project title
- Full name of Principal Investigator
- An **overview** of the proposed project emphasizing any unique aspects and pilot studies (indicate area of emphasis for project - medical research or science and engineering research)
- A description of the **methodologies and key personnel**
- A brief **justification of the need for Keck Foundation support**, and
- An **estimated budget** broken down, if possible, by major areas, e.g., personnel, equipment, consumable supplies, etc. (budgets can be rough approximations at this stage)

If possible, within the 1-page limit, the authors may add other details (e.g., background to put the research into perspective, description of the institution’s prominence in the field). Avoid illustrations in these single-pagers – the researchers will need all the room for text. If a reference is necessary, abbreviate it as (Science, 323, 45, ‘11). DO NOT USE (Jones et al., 2011).

If your concept paper is approved for submission to the Foundation, Foundation Relations will submit it and arrange a conference call between Keck Foundation program staff and Vice President for Research Milan Mrksich, expected to take place between July 1 and August 15, 2022. After this call, you will be notified if you are approved as Northwestern’s nominee to submit a Phase 1 application to either of the Keck Foundation’s Research Programs. Northwestern may submit only one application in each program.
If you are approved as a Northwestern nominee, Phase 1 applications will be due November 1, 2022. If you are invited to submit a Phase 2 proposal, you will be notified by January 15, 2023 with the full proposal due February 15. Funding decisions are expected by July 2023.

**Next Steps**
Identifying ideas that are a good match for this opportunity can be tricky. If you are interested in applying for this funding opportunity, please contact Sarah Fodor to discuss your idea.

**Sarah J. Fodor, PhD**
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Foundation Relations & Corporate Engagement
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For more information about this RFP: See [www.wmkeck.org/grant-programs/research](http://www.wmkeck.org/grant-programs/research)