



WV-INBRE Request for Major Research Project Applications

Release date:	December 15, 2025
Letter of Intent:	March 11, 2026
Application Due Date:	May 29, 2026
Award Notification Date:	~August 1, 2026

Major research awards will be funded for up to two years beginning August 1, 2026 based on applications submitted by Partner Undergraduate Institution (PUI) biomedical researchers.

Research applications from PUI investigators will be due on May 29, 2026. This timeframe is needed to allow sufficient time for review of the submitted proposals and selection of successful applications prior to the start of Y26 on August 1, 2026. Therefore, it is critical that faculty interested in serving as Project Investigators (PIs) of these projects should consider beginning to develop their applications **NOW!** **Tenured or tenure-track faculty members from all network partner institutions only are eligible to apply. Non-tenure track faculty members are not eligible to apply.** Project Investigators of Faculty Research Development Awards (FRDAs) are eligible and encouraged to apply for one of the major research awards. Faculty can apply for a Y26 major research award and for a Y25 FRDA on the same or different topics. However, if the major research award is funded, the FRDA will not be awarded. In addition to Major Awards, investigators may also apply for other awards in the WV-INBRE network. If the major and another program award is in the funding range, only the major award will be funded.

Listed below are the directions to use in preparing your application which must be submitted to Dr. Stan Hileman. If you have questions or need additional information, please contact him at smhileman@hsc.wvu.edu or telephone (cell: 304-319-2254).

1. **WV-INBRE Thematic Considerations:** All INBRE proposals must have a defined biomedical research theme. The current research theme for WV-INBRE is Cellular and Molecular Biology with an emphasis on any biomedical disease (e.g., addiction, cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes and obesity). Not all

applications have to strictly comply with the overall theme, but this theme is a broad umbrella and should be able to encompass most projects.

2. *Notification of Intent to Apply:* Anyone who intends to submit an application for the major research award competition should provide a Letter of Intent to Dr. Hileman at smhileman@hsc.wvu.edu by **March 11, 2026**; the Letter of Intent should include the title of the project, a brief project description and the name of the mentor (see mentor selection below) and names of any collaborators. This information is needed to select reviewers for the application.
3. *Application Form:* All applications must be completed using the most recent PHS 398 forms from NIH. Forms and instructions to complete the forms are found at <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/phs398.html>. Applicants must complete the PHS 398 form. These components include:
 - (1) a signed face page
 - (2) form page 2 – project summary, relevance and performance site
 - (3) form page 4 –Detailed Budget for Initial Budget Period
 - (4) form page 5 - Budget for Entire Proposed Project Period
 - (5) a detailed budget justification on form page 5 or a separate page
 - (6) biographical sketch
 - (7) specific aims
 - (8) significance and innovation
 - (9) approach
 - (10) literature cited.

Applicants must also include the human subjects use information (if using human subjects) and the vertebrate animal section (if animals are used), if appropriate. Human or animal use requires IRB approval or ACUC approval, respectively, prior to awarding of grant funds. The submitted application should have all necessary institutional signatures on the face page. Combine all documents into a single PDF file for submission.

4. Incomplete applications will not be reviewed. Applications must comply with all NIH guidelines for style, font size, margins, etc.
5. *Page Limitations:* The Research Plan section of the application will cover several items (see pages I-42 – I-48 of the PHS 398 instruction information). **Items 5.5.2 (Specific Aims) and 5.5.3 (Research Strategy) will be limited to 10 pages total for new projects.** Thus, you must include your Specific Aims and

Research Strategy (Significance, Innovation and Approach) sections within 10 total pages. **In the case of a competing renewal application, the applicant will be allowed up to two additional pages for a progress report, making the maximum total page limitation 12 pages.** Items 5.5.4 (Bibliography and References Cited) – 5.5.14 (Resource Sharing Plan(s)) are excluded from the page limits. While there are no specific page limitations for sections 5.5.2 and 5.5.3, it is recommended that no more than 1 page be devoted to Specific Aims and no more than 2 pages total be provided for the Significance and Innovation sections.

6. **Institutional Support:** Applicants should include an Institutional Support section in the application after the Research Plan [and a signed letter from an appropriate institutional official (e.g. college or university president)] detailing the institution's commitment for the project. This section should outline what support the applicant's institution will provide to support the research effort of the PI's project. For example, the institution should outline the laboratory and office space provided to the PI, the amount of reduced teaching load, renovations or alterations provided for the project if any, technical or student support from institutional funds, administrative support for the project, etc. **Project Investigators must be given 50% release time for the conduct of research.** As a result, 50% salary/effort may be requested by the Project Investigator in the budget or the institution may wish to provide part or all of the 50% release time salary as part of institutional support. There is no page limit for this section, but 1-2 pages should be sufficient. The letter from the institutional representative should be placed after the Bibliography and References but before the Checklist.
7. **Mentors/Collaborators:** Project Investigators must establish a mentor/collaborator relationship with a faculty member at Marshall University or West Virginia University and document that relationship in the application. One to two paragraphs should be placed after the Institutional Support section describing the mentor/collaborator selected and why this individual was chosen to be the mentor/collaborator. Also include Biographical Sketch pages for the mentor/collaborator in the application. If you need assistance in finding a mentor, contact Dr. Stan Hileman (304-319-2254; smhileman@hsc.wvu.edu) or Dr. Scott Levick (304-293-2418; scott.levick@hsc.wvu.edu). The name of mentor and any collaborators should be included in the Letter of Intent to apply and should aid the applicant in preparing their application.
8. **Budget:** Total direct costs must not exceed \$100,000/year as mandated by the NIGMS INBRE PAR. **Studies and projects that study a natural product**

focused on the theme of the Center for Natural Products Research (chemotherapy) or use the SMART Core may request up to \$125,000 each year. Indirect costs are allowed and should be predicated on your current federally-negotiated institutional indirect (F&A) cost rate and formula (either modified total direct costs [MTDC] or salary and wages [S&W]). Institutions without a negotiated indirect cost rate may request the NIH minimum indirect cost rate of 15%. Your business office or signing official must review and approve your budget. Questions about fringe benefits and indirect cost (F&A) calculations should be directed to your business official or Vickie Sanders (WVU: 304-293-0775; vsanders@hsc.wvu.edu) in the WV-INBRE office at WVU.

9. **Allowable expenses:** Major Research Award funds may only be used for (1) salaries for the principal investigator, students and technicians, (2) supplies, reagents and research-relevant software, (3) services such as animal care and next generation sequencing, (4) travel costs for attending research conferences up to \$2000 if the traveler is presenting, (5) equipment with cost between \$5000 and \$25,000 and (6) publication costs. Mentors are required for applications from primarily undergraduate institution (PUI) investigators and will be paid \$5000 per year for their services from the WV-INBRE program. Mentor fees should not be included in your application budget.
10. **Period of the Award:** The Award will be made for up to two years. Continued support in the second year will be dependent on evidence of progress. New Project Investigators will be expected to attend a national research meeting during the first year of the award and attend and present research at a national research meeting as well as submit one manuscript on the research project for publication during the second year of the award. If milestones are not met, the project will be considered for termination.
11. **Submission Process:** Applications should be submitted electronically as a single pdf to: Stan Hileman at smhileman@hsc.wvu.edu (with appropriate administrative signatures).
12. **Review Process:** Each application will be reviewed by two reviewers who will score the application using the NIH scoring system. Scores and project descriptions will be forwarded to the WV-INBRE Admin Core and the External Advisory Committee (EAC) for their funding recommendations. Projects recommended for funding by the EAC will then be forwarded to NIGMS for administrative review and approval before any awards will be announced.

13. **Timetable:** Notification of intent to apply should be sent to Dr. Hileman no later than March 11, 2026 as described above. Complete applications must be received by Dr. Hileman no later than May 29, 2026. Applications received after the deadline will not be reviewed.
14. **Have Questions?**: Applicants are encouraged to contact the WV-INBRE PC, Dr. Hileman (304-319-2254 (cell); smhileman@hsc.wvu.edu) or any member of the Administrative Core if you have questions about these guidelines or with any questions that might arise as you begin to prepare your applications.

WV-INBRE Program Contacts:

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