Request for Applications Overview

The ASAP Collaborative Research Network

CRN 2025 RFA | Technical Track

Table of Contents

Opportunity

The Aligning Science Across Parkinson's (ASAP) Initiative invites applications from collaborative teams to join the ASAP Collaborative Research Network (CRN), an international, multidisciplinary, multi-institutional network of research teams working to address high-priority research questions in an effort to advance our understanding of Parkinson's disease (PD) and drive new ideas into the R&D pipeline. **For this cycle, applications within the Technical Track that focus on the development of novel tools that can be reliably produced and shared with the research community to accelerate validation and therapeutic R&D for emerging targets identified from ASAP discoveries will be considered (please see the Award Overview section for list of targets).**

Background

The ASAP Initiative

ASAP is a Parkinson's disease-focused, global initiative that aims to address key knowledge gaps in PD research to reinvigorate the PD research pipeline. ASAP is managed by the Coalition for Aligning Science (CAS) and implemented through the Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research (MJFF). Led by Nobel laureate Dr. Randy Schekman, and Dr. Ekemini Riley, ASAP works with The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research (MJFF) to leverage the Foundation's grant administration and grantmaking infrastructure to receive applications, administer the review process and execute grant awards to projects selected for funding.

ASAP is on a mission to accelerate the pace of discovery and inform the path to a cure for Parkinson's disease (PD) through collaboration, generation of research-enabling resources, and data-sharing. The ASAP initiative provides funding opportunities to the scientific community in support of higher-risk, large-scale, ambitious projects to spur discovery for Parkinson's disease (PD) research. The **Technical Track** is designed to generate resources for the research community to further explore emerging targets identified from ASAP discoveries. To learn more about ASAP, please visit our website and read about the initiative.

Goals of the ASAP Collaborative Research Network

Parkinson's Disease (PD) is a multisystem disorder encompassing motor and non-motor symptoms, which is why we support a collaborative, multidisciplinary approach to significantly increase our understanding of disease. We will continue to build upon the international, multidisciplinary network of collaborating investigators first established by ASAP in 2020. Further, we seek to:

- **Attract** diverse talent from relevant fields outside of PD and neurodegeneration, as well as young investigators who will infuse fresh ideas and perspectives to PD research.

- **Support** productive, meaningful collaborations to achieve goals that supersede the expertise or capabilities of any one lab.
- **Drive** intense focus to the selected research themes to accelerate discovery.
- **Embrace** the values of open science and transparency as a means of accelerating outcomes and improving the reproducibility and impact of research findings.

We encourage a forward-thinking approach to research that is not constrained by long-held hypotheses and dogma, and that is conducted in an environment of trust. As such, we seek to bring together investigators who are enthusiastic about working transparently in a highly collaborative network -- one that includes field experts working with investigators with no previous record of PD research, who prioritize innovation over safe bets, and who are willing to risk testing unconventional ideas.

Award Overview

Research Focus and Scope

The CRN 2025 Technical Track supports the development of novel tools that can be reliably produced and shared with the research community to accelerate validation and therapeutic R&D for emerging targets pursued or identified through ASAP discoveries (see list of 20 targets currently being prioritized within ASAP programs in Table 1). Preclinical tools generated, validated and distributed through this track should support research for at least 5 of the targets listed in Table 1 below, be tailored to meet key gaps in the existing commercial laboratory reagent/model landscape, and help address critical research questions for these selected targets.

Technical Track Objective: Generate, validate, and distribute preclinical reagents and/or models tailored to support critical research needs for at least 5 of the prioritized targets from the 20 listed in Table 1**.**

Technical Track Funding Focus: Support tool-specific (not target-specific) projects that generate high-quality resources distributed via commercial mechanisms.

Technical Track Approach: Teams must focus on a **tool type** (e.g., antibodies, viral vectors, mouse models) to ensure depth of expertise and quality of tools created for the panel of targets selected. Note that hypothesis-driven research is out of scope for this proposal. Once the tools have been developed and validated, there may be opportunities for additional funding support at that time to test target biology, but this is not the scope of the current call.

Eligible Targets for Tool Generation

Projects within the Technical Track must focus on tool development related to the prioritized target list from the table below. This list was compiled from targets

currently pursued or identified in the ASAP CRN program and/or the Global Parkinson's Genetics Project (GP2). Prioritization was given to targets with known links to PD biology with limited toolsets so that the research community can utilize the tool to further study the target's impact on PD initiation/progression. Please note that some of the targets on the list might already have extensive resources for a specific tool type (e.g. animal model or antibody) but not for another tool type. The technical track is focusing on the development of tool types that meet key gaps in the existing commercial laboratory reagent/model landscape.

Table 1. List of Target Candidates for the ASAP Technical Track

ASAP does not endorse the targets outlined below as the only targets that should be studied in the Parkinson's field. The following targets are of interest due to emerging discoveries from ASAP programs (published and unpublished findings). Our ultimate goal is to funnel new ideas into the clinical pipeline, which is why we are seeking to establish toolkits to study these targets, test the relevance of these discoveries further, and make clearer go/no go decisions on whether to move these targets forward into the research and development pipeline.

Gene Name	***Protein Name***	***Uniprot ID***	***ASAP Program from which Target Source Identified***
CLN5	Bis(monoacylglycero)phosphate synthase (BMPS)	*O75503*	*CRN*
CLU	Clusterin/Apolipoprotein J	*P10909*	*CRN*
CTSB	Cathepsin B	*P07858*	*CRN / GP2*
DNAJC6	DnaJ Heat Shock Protein Family (Hsp40) Member C6/Park19; Auxilin	*O75961*	*CRN*
FBXO7	F-Box Protein 7	*Q9Y3I1*	*CRN*
GBA1LP	Glucosylceramidase beta pseudogene 1	*N/A*	*CRN*
GPNMB	Transmembrane glycoprotein NMB	*Q14956*	*CRN / GP2*
HLA-DRB5	Major Histocompatibility Complex, Class II, DR Beta 5	*Q30154*	*CRN / GP2*
ITSN1	Intersectin 1	*Q15811*	*GP2*

LRP1	Prolow-density lipoprotein receptor-related protein 1	*Q07954*	*CRN*
PARK7/DJ1	Parkinson disease protein 7/DJ1	*Q99497*	*CRN / GP2*
PGK1	Phosphoglycerate Kinase 1	*P00558*	*CRN*
PLA2G15	Lysosomal phospholipase A2	*Q8NCC3*	*CRN*
PSMF1	Proteasome inhibitor subunit 1	*Q92530*	*GP2*
RIMS2	Regulating Synaptic Membrane Exocytosis 2	*Q9UQ26*	*CRN*
STING1	Stimulator of interferon genes protein	*Q86WV6*	*CRN*
SYNJ1	Synaptojanin-1	*O43426*	*CRN*
TREM2	Triggering receptor expressed on myeloid cells 2	*Q9NZC2*	*CRN*
USP30	Ubiquitin carboxyl-terminal hydrolase 30	*Q70CQ3*	*CRN*
VPS13C	Vacuolar protein sorting 13 homolog C	*Q709C8*	*CRN / GP2*

We acknowledge that this list is not comprehensive and that some important targets that require tools are not included in this round of the Technical Track. If you are interested in developing reagents/models for targets not included in this list, those would fall outside the current scope of the Technical Track. However, we welcome you to submit these out-of-scope ideas to the MJFF Research Tools Program for discussion by emailing tools@michaeljfox.org to explore other funding opportunities.

Target Selection

Applicants are instructed to select **at least 5 targets from Table 1.** The number of targets selected should be based on the timelines and expenses associated with generating and validating the tool type pursued by the team. We strongly encourage teams to select targets strategically. Please consider the following when reviewing the list:

- **Pathway**: Selecting targets that are within a common pathway, will likely make a stronger proposal, as it would support synergistic validation workstreams, and also create a toolkit package to support future programs interrogating key PD pathways. For example, one could consider a proposal around the detection reagents for lysosomal targets, developing antibodies for targets listed that are part of the lysosomal pathway. Please note that this is an illustrative example only.

- **Available Tools**: When selecting targets, please ensure that the team has evaluated the current commercial landscape for the tools available for the targets. We will not support duplication of existing reagents/models but rather support the development of preclinical tools that address an unmet need. To enable this review, we kindly provide our internal landscape analysis at https://zenodo.org/records/14552859 as a starting point. Applicants should also conduct their own additional independent review when selecting the targets to focus on for their proposal.

In Scope vs Out of Scope

The Technical Track LOI application consists of three components: (1) Tool Generation, (2) Tool Validation, and (3) Tool Distribution.

(1) Tool Generation

- In Scope
  - Generation of preclinical models to support *in vivo* or *in vitro* assessments of target or mutation function (e.g. genetically modified rodents or iPSCs, etc) of at least 5 targets from the ASAP prioritized list
  - Generation of detection reagents to support improved measurement or visualization of the target or target activity (e.g. antibodies, nanobodies, probes) of at least 5 targets from the ASAP prioritized list
  - Generation of modulation agents to understand the directionality of therapeutic benefit (e.g. viral vectors, compounds, antisense oligonucleotides, etc) of at least 5 targets from the ASAP prioritized list
- Out of Scope
  - Projects to generate preclinical tools/models for targets outside the list provided by ASAP or projects that will not be generating *preclinical* tools/models.
  - Development of preclinical reagents or models incorporating third-party intellectual property that would prevent or significantly delay distribution.
  - Development of preclinical reagents or models that duplicate existing tools or do not provide substantial benefit over alternatives available.
  - Generation of therapeutic candidates or non-preclinical research tools that will remain undisclosed or inaccessible to the research community.
  - Generation of target-agnostic devices (e.g. wearable devices, equipment, etc)

(2) Tool Validation

- In Scope

- Validation of the tool in appropriate systems (e.g. knockout validation for antibodies, catalytically-dead control for tools towards kinase targets, etc).
- Characterization of the tool to inform conditions of use in PD research (e.g. application compatibility for antibodies, nigrostriatal system integrity in genetic rodent models, etc).

- Out of Scope
  - Projects performing hypothesis-driven research rather than generating and validating novel preclinical tools/models. Therefore, in-depth mechanistic studies of the target biology, target pathway, or therapeutic potential of the target are out of scope.

(3) Tool Distribution

- In Scope
  - Research tools/models must be made available through the commercial repository or academic core represented by the Core/Repository Co-Investigator. This commercial repository or academic core must have a demonstrated history of commercializing research reagents/models.
  - Sales of the research tools at commercially reasonable prices for academic and industry researchers without burdensome licensing requirements for purchasers.
  - Established click-to-order e-commerce systems preferred.
- Out of Scope
  - Projects generating preclinical reagents/models that cannot or will not be rapidly shared with the research community through easily accessible mechanisms.
  - Solely sharing research tools through MTAs between institutions.
  - Proposals to develop a new company or establish a new distribution system.

Team Composition

Teams are required to be multidisciplinary and multi-institutional. Unlike “Center Grants” that play to the strengths of a single institution, this research network intends to establish teams comprising the best researcher expertise to address key knowledge gaps and program goals, regardless of their geographical location or institutional affiliation. The ASAP CRN encourages applications which leverage diverse expertise to creatively overcome challenges in PD research.

Collaboration is core to the ASAP mission and therefore a central feature of the CRN. To foster successful coordination and cohesion, teams should be made up of a group of **Core Leadership** representatives of between two (2) and five (5) collaborators responsible for co-leading & executing the proposed work. A Coordinating Lead PI will assume primary responsibility for submitting the proposal (on behalf of Core Leadership) and will act as administrative contact between

ASAP and all other PIs on the application. All Core Leadership representatives are expected to actively contribute to the project and engage in network activities. All Core Leadership except for the Core/Repository Co-Investigator must commit to a minimum allocation of 0.25 (25%) of their time and effort. For a more detailed description of ASAP Team roles and a summary of Institutional and Core Leadership eligibility criteria, please see the corresponding ASAP CRN 2025 Team Application & Budget Guidelines document.

To ensure open access to the tools developed within this program, the Technical Track has the unique requirement of a **Core/Repository Co-Investigator**. This Core/Repository Co-Investigator must be a representative from a commercial repository or academic core that has existing infrastructure, ability, and commitment to licensing and commercializing the resulting models/reagents generated within the program according to the following principles:

- Available to non-profit and for-profit researchers at commercially reasonable prices
- No additional licensing requirements for for-profit researcher access
- Global distribution
- Reagents/models easily findable on repository/core website with simple request/order processes (online click-to-order commercial platforms preferred)

Funding Available

Applicant teams may request funds up to **$2 million USD total costs per year to support up to a three-year research plan, for a total of up to $6 million USD in total costs.** Total costs are inclusive of a maximum 15% indirect cost rate for all entities. Final funding will be determined based on the submission and review of an invited full proposal and budget detailing rationale, key project milestones, and timeline for completion of project goals.

Key Dates

MARCH 5, 2025	Online application portal opens for LOI submission
MAY 5, 2025	LOI deadline (6 PM ET)
WEEK OF JULY 7, 2025	Notification of invitation to submit full proposals
SEPTEMBER 8, 2025	Full proposal deadline (6 PM ET)
FEBRUARY 2026	Funding decisions made
JULY 2026	Anticipated project start date

Grant Terms and Policies

Grant Terms

- **Use of Funds** – Funds may be used for scientific and technical personnel, supplies and standard equipment needs directly related to the successful execution of the proposed scope or work. However, funds may not be used for laboratory or facility renovation.
- **Carryover Funding** – Unused research funds may be carried over to the following year. If unused funds amount to ≥ 5% of the total award amount for any project year, a budget reallocation request must be submitted and approved before funds are permitted to be carried over. A one-time request for no-cost extension (NCE) will be considered at the end of the project period.
- **Reporting Requirements** – ASAP-supported research programs require scheduled updates on progress and outcomes throughout the grant duration. Progress reports are due annually or at other times as deemed necessary by ASAP and MJFF for project evaluation. Progress report forms will be provided by MJFF approximately two months before they are due. Investigators may also be asked to interact regularly with ASAP and/or MJFF staff and advisors to discuss elements of the project on an ongoing basis throughout the project duration.
- **Intellectual Property** – ASAP will not retain any rights to funded projects, other than the right to publicly discuss any data, published results, and intellectual property that result from the research.
- **Open Science** − All Teams must comply with the ASAP Open Science Policy outlined below. This policy is non-negotiable.

ASAP Open Science Policy

The ASAP Open Science Policy is divided into five (5) main requirements:

1. **Share research outputs.** Data, code, and protocols generated as part of an ASAP-funded study must be deposited in a discipline-specific, community-recognized repository by the time of publication, with information to facilitate reuse and a license that allows for reuse. Key lab materials generated as part of an ASAP-funded study must be registered by the time of publication.

2. **Identify research inputs.** Data, software, protocols, and key lab materials used in a study–but which were not generated as part of an ASAP-funded study–must be unambiguously identified in the study's publication.

3. **Ensure immediate open access.** Preprints must be posted no later than the date a manuscript is submitted to a journal. Preprints and publications must be immediately publicly available with a CC-BY or CC0 license and include an Availability Statement

outlining where all research outputs (Requirement 1) and research inputs (Requirement 2) can be accessed.

4. **Acknowledge ASAP.** Manuscripts and other research outputs that were partially or fully funded by ASAP must acknowledge ASAP. Manuscripts must include an ORCID and ASAP affiliation for all authors who received funding from ASAP.

5. **Share outputs with the ASAP network.** All ASAP-funded research outputs, including manuscripts, must be shared on the ASAP grantee virtual platform, no later than the time of publication. Manuscript drafts must be sent to the ASAP Open Science Team no later than the time of preprint.

For more details, please go to https://parkinsonsroadmap.org/open-science-policy/

Cost Policy

Please see the ASAP CRN 2025 Team, Application, and Budget Guidelines for more information regarding subawards, indirect costs, and allowable costs vs. unallowable costs.

Application Process

There are two stages for this funding opportunity: (1) Letter of Intent (LOI), and (2) full proposal.

LOIs are due no later than May 5, 2025 by 6pm ET. Following evaluation, teams selected to submit full proposals will be notified in July 2025. Invited full proposals will be due in September 2025. **Awardees will be notified of final funding decisions in February 2026.**

All applications must be completed and submitted through MJFF online portal at https://grants.michaeljfox.org/s_Login.jsp. We strongly recommend that applicants familiarize themselves with the online portal in advance of any deadlines. No exceptions will be made for technical or institutional difficulties in preparation or submission. For detailed application instructions, please visit the online portal for more information.

As a reminder, CAS and MJFF are partnering to implement this ASAP RFA. As such, applicants may hear from CAS or MJFF with follow-up needs or questions pertaining to their submissions.

LOI Instructions

A brief letter of intent is required for funding consideration (no more than five [5] pages). Applicants must use the template available on the online portal. In addition to the five-page template, applicants must follow each tab within the online portal and fill in the designated areas. Note: no budget is collected at this stage. The LOI consists of the following sections:

1. **Project Description**
    - Descriptive project title
    - Project summary (100 words maximum)
    - Scientific goals and strategy that highlight the (1) Tool Generation, (2) Tool Validation, and (3) Tool Distribution approach for the targets selected (1000 words maximum)
    - Statement of impact and alignment with ASAP Initiative goals (500 words maximum)

2. **Team Summary**
    - List of Team investigators
    - Description of each investigator's role on the project (100 words maximum per investigator)
    - Description of the collective expertise and resources that the investigators bring to the Team
    - Collaboration history of each investigator, including reference to past intra-Team collaboration where relevant (review the LOI template for specific parameters)
    - Historical adherence to open science practices (review the LOI template for specific parameters)

3. **Letter of commitment signed by each investigator.**

4. **Institution Letter of Acknowledgement and Agreement** signed by an authorized representative of the Technology Transfer and/or other necessary department from each investigator institution.

Full Proposal Instructions

Full proposal submissions are by invitation only based on the outcome of LOI review. A weblink and additional instructions for online submission will be provided to selected applicants during the week of July 7, 2025. Full proposals are **due no later than September 8, 2025.**

LOI Checklist

For a more detailed description of ASAP Team roles and a summary of Institutional and Core Leadership eligibility criteria, please see the corresponding ASAP CRN 2025 Team Application & Budget Guidelines document. Below we have summarized key eligibility criteria for the LOI stage for your convenience:

- ❑ The Core Leadership of the proposed team consists of one (1) Coordinating Lead PI, one (1) Core/Repository Co-Investigator, and an optional one (1) to three (3) additional Core Leadership Co-Investigators.
- ❑ The Core Leadership of the proposed team are employed at one Primary Institution (Coordinating Lead PI) and one Secondary Institution (Core/Repository Co-Investigator), with up to three (3) subawardee institutions.
- ❑ The Core/Repository Co-Investigator shall be responsible for making the resulting research tools and models available to the research community at large. Their Institution must have an established history of commercializing preclinical reagents/models through global distribution channels, with accessibility to non-profit and for-profit researchers. See Team Composition section for more information.
- ❑ The overall team represents at least two (2) different scientific disciplines.
- ❑ Members of the Core Leadership hold a doctorate, such as a PhD, MD, or equivalent degree. The exception may be the Core/Repository Co-Investigator but this individual must be authorized to act on behalf of their Institution within this program.
- ❑ The Coordinating Lead PI holds an academic appointment and is in an independent faculty position or equivalent. Applicants from the private sector must hold a Senior Scientist position or equivalent.
- ❑ All Core Leadership Co-Investigators are in an independent faculty position or equivalent. Applicants from the private sector must hold a Senior Scientist position or equivalent.

Review and Selection Process

ASAP will evaluate all applications for both scientific merit and alignment with ASAP's mission. All projects will be externally reviewed by a panel of experts who are familiar with our program goals and have deep expertise in our program's scientific focus areas. Final decisions will be made by ASAP staff and Executive Leadership in consultation with external advisors. There is no expectation that a set number of awards will be granted; selection of awardees will be based on the following criteria:

- **Quality** of the proposal, expertise, and capacity of the collaborative group for addressing the proposed project. There should be evidence of synergy and substantive contributions from all assembled members of the research team – i.e., not simply a collection of individual projects.
- **Potential impact** of the preclinical research tools being developed in the application.

- **Degree** to which the proposed work brings in new ideas to the field and stimulates potential new avenues of investigation.
- **Diversity** of the proposed scientific team.
- **Demonstrated collaborative potential** of the proposed Team as evidenced by co- authorships, past collaborations among at least two (2) members of the Team, as well as relevant contributions to other successful research collaborations in the recent past.
- **Distribution capabilities** of the Core/Repository Co-Investigator to make the resulting preclinical reagents/models broadly available to the research community through global distribution channels with quick processing times.
- **Commitment to open science and active research community engagement.** These values may be demonstrated through service on committees and editorial boards, past history of open science practices (including but not limited to sharing of research outputs such as data, code, protocols, lab materials, etc, publication of open access articles, and use of preprint servers)
- **Leadership capacity of the Coordinating Lead PI.** This investigator's vision, leadership qualities, willingness to collaborate, and demonstrated ability to bring together and lead a multidisciplinary team of experts to a successful conclusion will be a critical factor.

Confidentiality

The review process will be performed under confidentiality among all parties involved except as necessary for our evaluation or to comply with any applicable laws. All LOIs received in response to this ASAP RFA will be subjected to review and only applicants whose LOIs are determined to best fit the criteria specified in the RFA will be invited to submit full applications. In order to expedite the LOI review process, written critiques will not be provided to applicants who are not invited to the full application stage.

Successfully funded proposals will be made publicly available and/or shared across the ASAP Collaborative Research Network and/or or with other grantees or collaborators. Lay project summaries will be publicly communicated on ASAP and/or MJFF websites. Unfunded proposals submitted to ASAP will remain confidential. Application materials will not be returned to applicants.

Contact

Inquiries concerning this funding opportunity are encouraged to avoid submission complications. For administrative and programmatic inquiries, please

contact grants@parkinsonsroadmap.org. We encourage questions well in advance of the deadline.