

Experimental Physics Investigators: Frequently Asked Questions

How do I apply for the investigator award?

We have an application portal where you can complete your pre-proposal. You can also find the link and more information on moore.org under the [Experimental Physics Investigators Initiative](#). Any additional questions can be directed to epi@moore.org.

When is the deadline to apply?

The deadline for the 2024 Cohort pre-proposal is Wednesday, 25 October 2023 at noon PT.

Will it be an open application or a nomination process?

It will be an open application process.

What are the criteria needed to apply?

Investigators must be conducting experimental physics research, have earned tenure (or equivalent) at their U.S. institution, and be within five years of that appointment at the time of submission of their preproposal. *For the 2024 application deadline, this means applicants must have earned tenure after 25 October 2018.*

I had a life event (childbirth in my case) following tenure which slowed progress in my research. Are there any allowances for this?

You may optionally request a 1-year extension to the eligibility criteria (receiving tenure within the past five years) owing to life events such as childbirth or caring for a family member since earning tenure. *For the 2024 application deadline, this means applicants must request extensions if they earned tenure between 25 October 2017 and 25 October 2018.* Extensions due to the pandemic will not be considered (we extended our eligibility window for everyone to account for disruptions owing to the pandemic). In addition, the pre-proposal provides an opportunity to describe anything else which may have impacted professional advancement.

What research areas are you supporting?

The fields we are primarily considering include atomic/molecular/optical physics, biophysics, chemical physics, condensed matter, fluid dynamics, geophysics, laser physics, materials, polymer physics, plasma physics, precision measurements, quantum information, and soft matter physics.

Why are you limiting the subfields within experimental physics?

These awards are focused on supporting the pursuit of research ideas of an individual investigator rather than work done as a part of larger collaboration. Our aim is to not only support experimental physicists but to provide opportunities to spur collaboration in and among our investigators. We will host an annual gathering of investigators to further this goal and, consequently, are limiting the sub-fields to those that are aligned closely enough to enable cross-fertilization of new ideas or advance new collaborative projects.

What research are you not supporting?

This program is specifically designed to support individual experimental physics researchers and their teams. What we do not support:

- Theoretical and computational work unless part of larger experimental research efforts
- Education research or public engagement
- Ongoing work of large collaborations (e.g., astrophysics/astronomy, exotic matter searches, fusion, gravitational physics, high energy physics, nuclear physics)
- Observational astronomy

Can researchers at liberal arts colleges apply?

Our goal is to support researchers who are proposing to do great research in inclusive communities. It is up to the applicant to indicate that they have sufficient time and resources to complete the proposed research. Some teaching buyout is allowed, but we expect investigators will teach and mentor students and postdocs while carrying out their research plan.

I work at a national laboratory. Am I eligible?

Maybe. The EPI program is designed to support investigators who are transitioning from an early to a mid-career stage (e.g., immediately post tenure at most universities). If you are in this mid-career stage at your lab, you are potentially eligible. Complete a pre-proposal and explain your career stage in the appropriate section. Keep in mind that indirect cost rates are very small compared to typical rates required at national labs and we recommend you consult with lab leadership to make sure you can accept funds with the limits we place on indirect costs.

I am based at a company. Am I eligible?

The grants will be made to the nonprofit or public university or research institutions where the investigator is based. We will not make grants to for-profit organizations.

I'm in an electrical engineering department. Am I eligible?

The home department of the investigator is not considered in the review. The essential requirement is that the proposed research is experimental physics.

I work closely with another eligible person. Can we apply as a team?

Each award will be made to a single institution, with one principal investigator. You can discuss the collaborative nature of the work in your application but need to choose one person to represent the partnership. If the partnership spans different institutions, the institution to which the award is made will need to create a subaward to redirect funds appropriately. Partnerships with national labs are allowed.

How will investigators be selected?

Selection of experimental physics investigators uses a two-stage process. In the first stage, we encourage individuals from U.S. institutions to submit pre-proposals. An external committee of physicists will review pre-proposals and provide recommendations to the Experimental Physics Investigators team.

A subset of applicants will be invited to submit additional information as a part of the second stage to collect full proposals. The research project sections of these full proposals will be reviewed by multiple experts in the field and the advisory committee will then review all applications and the expert reviews. They will then provide recommendations to the Experimental Physics Investigators team who make final funding decisions.

We have taken steps to reduce work required to apply in each stage and to encourage broad participation while still providing sufficient information to effectively evaluate applications. We are using [ORCID](#) to collect professional background information for each applicant. Additional contributed components will be brief.

Applicants will be considered solely on the merits of their proposal documents and awards will be made regardless of age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, race, national origin, religion, or disability.

What information will be asked for in the application?

The preproposal has 4 sections:

1. Research Idea: Brief description of a research direction you'd like to pursue.
2. Professional background: Two brief descriptions of previous contributions to science and typical CV information (imported from ORCID).
3. Research team members: Basic information about your research team members.
4. Personal information: Demographics and other background.

We encourage you to log in and start your application early so that you can see the details related to each of these sections in context and plan accordingly.

What if I do not have an ORCID profile?

All applicants must have an ORCID profile as it will simplify completing the application and updating professional background details in subsequent phases of the process.

What steps are you taking to reduce bias in the selection process?

Demographic information is not provided to any reviewers, and we ask that all narrative entries be written in ways to minimize the likelihood that reviewers will identify the applicant from that content alone. As much as possible, identifying information in the professional background will not be shared with the reviewers and we are using ORCID as a data source to ensure that these details are presented consistently for all applicants. While we are taking steps to reduce bias, you should understand that limiting identifying information is not a guarantee of anonymity (e.g., in smaller sub-fields there are a limited number of people working in a specific area).

When will I know if I've been invited to submit a full proposal?

We aim to inform all candidates of our decisions by mid-December 2023. We will provide at least four weeks between notification and the deadline for submission of full proposals.

How many investigators will be selected this year?

Our intent is to support the work of roughly 20 new principal investigators each year.

Are existing Moore Foundation grantees eligible?

Yes, subject to specific eligibility requirements of this offering.

What is the amount awarded to each investigator?

Each grant will provide \$1,250,000 over five years with additional funds available for research equipment. This amount includes a 12.5% overhead allowance on eligible expenses. The grant will be made to the applicant's public or private non-profit university or research institution.

If I am selected, when can I expect the grant to be finalized?

We anticipate final approval of funds by late summer 2024.

There is an individual in the community who is trying to unfairly discredit my work. Can I be sure that this person will not review my application?

We provide an opportunity to suggest both recommended reviewers and individuals whom you feel should not review your work. In addition, the foundation is committed to ensuring that individuals with conflicts of interest do not provide reviews.

I am traveling overseas on 25 October, can I submit my materials on 26 October?

Applications will not be accepted after the deadline. Please plan accordingly.

Will I get feedback on my pre-proposal so that my full proposal (or resubmission) can address that feedback?

No. Unfortunately, we do not have sufficient staffing to provide feedback on pre-proposals. If you are selected to submit a full proposal, it is our intent to provide technical reviewer comments to all applicants by September 2024.

If I apply this year and am not funded, can I apply next year?

At this time, there are no limits on the number of times a researcher can apply as long as they meet eligibility requirements. We may, however, limit the number of times an individual can apply in the future.

I submitted an application in a previous year. Will this year's reviewers have information from my previous submission?

All applications stand on their own, previous applications and reviewer feedback are not considered when reviewing and making decisions for the current program.

I collaborate with researchers at other institutions. Can I make subawards to those collaborators?

Yes, but in writing the proposal, please remember that the focus of the research description is on the science. In order to reduce bias during reviewing, please do not identify yourself or your collaborators or the institutions involved in the research initiative.

Where can I learn more about what has been funded in the past?

Visit our [Learn More](#) page and scroll down to see the investigators who have been supported by this program. Click on their images to learn more about their research efforts.