

## Early-Career Faculty Research Development Award Program

The Ludeman Family Center for Women's Health Research at the University of Colorado Anschutz is dedicated to mentoring and training the next generation of women's health and sex differences researchers. The Ludeman Center's Early-Career Faculty Research Development Award Program is a mentoring, academic and career development training program and funding mechanism that welcomes and incorporates awardees into a network of scientists from across the research spectrum who are focused on women's health or sex differences.

An **informational webinar** hosted by the Ludeman Center to describe the funding opportunities for the 2026 Funding Cycle will take place on **May 20, 2026, at 2 p.m.** Potential applicants are encouraged to attend and ask questions.

[Register to attend the webinar here.](#)

### What it means to be a Ludeman Center scientist:

- Attend monthly trainings on career building and academic skills development
- Participate in annual events (including Women's Health Research Day and the biennial National Conference on Women's Health and Sex Differences Research)
- Receive mentorship and coaching from Ludeman Center senior faculty members
- Network with colleagues across campus and around the world
- Speak to scientific audiences and the lay community about your research
- Receive biostatistical support from Ludeman Center statisticians
- Receive individualized coaching

## 2026 Funding Opportunities in Women's Health and Sex Differences Research

Eligible applicants will be full-time MD, MD-PhD, PhD, DO or PharmD faculty and fellows with a primary appointment at the University of Colorado Anschutz. The anticipated start of the funding period is September 1, 2026.

Award	Funds	Purpose
<b>Early-Career Faculty Research Development Awards</b>	<b>\$50,000</b> one-year awards  Up to four projects will be funded	Fund pilot projects in women's health or sex differences research with a focus on one of the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cardiovascular disease</li> <li>• Diabetes / metabolism</li> <li>• Intersection of mental and physical health</li> </ul>
<b>Interdisciplinary Research Award in Women's Health or Sex Differences</b>	<b>\$100,000</b> one-year award  One project will be funded	Fund one interdisciplinary project involving at least two investigators from different departments or divisions in women's health or sex differences research with a focus on one of the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cardiovascular disease</li> <li>• Diabetes / metabolism</li> <li>• Intersection of mental and physical health</li> </ul>
<b>Research Award to Address Health Disparities in Women's Health</b>	<b>\$50,000</b> one-year award  One project will be funded	Fund a project focusing on women's health or sex differences in cardiovascular disease, diabetes or mental health with a focus on factors that address health disparities.
<b>Specialized Center of Research Excellence (SCORE) on Sex Differences Pilot Grants</b>	<b>\$50,000</b> one-year award  One project will be funded	Fund a project to promote translational research on the bioenergetic and metabolic consequences of the loss of gonadal function.

The Ludeman Center is dedicated to creating an inclusive environment that promotes and values diversity. We are committed to ensuring a diverse field of researchers at CU Anschutz and encourage and welcome applicants who are likely underrepresented in the University's workforce, including individuals from marginalized and underrepresented populations; however, neither an applicant's race nor ethnicity will be considered in the selection process.

## **Description of Awards:**

### **Early-Career Faculty Research Development Awards**

The awards are one-year grants, not to exceed \$50,000, for exceptional early-career faculty members and fellows conducting research focused on women's health or sex differences in the underlying mechanisms, diagnosis, treatment, or management of cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and/or the intersection of mental and physical health. Research focused on other diseases or physiological questions will be considered relevant if there is a connection to cardiovascular disease, diabetes or mental health.

Eligibility spans the full spectrum of research (e.g. basic, clinical, translational, population science, implementation and biomedical informatics) across the lifespan. Interdisciplinary approaches, innovative ideas and use of technologically advanced methodological approaches are encouraged. Topics must focus on women's health or sex differences.

Examples of past focus areas of research are listed below:

- Cardiovascular implications of menopause
- Sex differences in the cardiovascular consequences of diabetes
- Sex differences in the metabolic response to insufficient sleep
- Investigating the sex differences of sensory processing in migraine
- Defining how maternal CBD consumption during pregnancy affects offspring cognition and mental health
- Vascular mechanisms for the effects of loss of ovarian function on cognition in women
- Developmental origins of health and disease
- Recognizing anxiety in Turner Syndrome

Because the long-term goal of this award is to enable a researcher to pursue a research career in women's health and/or sex differences, priority for this award is reserved for early-career faculty applicants. However, mid-level and senior faculty will be considered if there is a clear reason why this type of funding would provide benefit to their research careers. Applications from exceptional postdoctoral fellows with strong research proposals and mentors/mentoring plans will also be considered.

### **Interdisciplinary Research Award in Women's Health or Sex Differences**

This award is a one-year grant, not to exceed \$100,000, to fund an interdisciplinary project involving at least two investigators from different departments or divisions. The project must investigate women's health or sex differences in the underlying mechanisms, diagnosis, treatment, or management of cardiovascular disease, diabetes/metabolism and/or the intersection of mental and physical health.

Eligibility spans the full spectrum of research (e.g. basic, clinical, translational, populations science, implementation and biomedical informatics).

Because the long-term goal of this award is to enable a researcher to pursue a research career in women's health and sex differences, priority for this award is research funding for early-career faculty applicants. However, mid-level and senior faculty will be considered if there is a clear reason why this type of funding would provide benefit to their

research careers or if they are new entrants into the field of women's health and sex differences. Applications from exceptional postdoctoral fellows with very strong research proposals and mentors will also be considered.

### Research Award to Address Health Disparities in Women's Health

This award is a one-year grant, not to exceed \$50,000, for exceptional faculty members and fellows to support research in disparities in women's health. Through this research, opportunities to reduce health disparities and improve health for women might be identified. Projects must address the Ludeman Center's core focus areas including the underlying mechanisms, diagnosis, treatment, or management of cardiovascular disease, diabetes and/or the intersection of mental and physical health.

The long-term goal of this award is to support change in the field of women's health research to incorporate a deeper lens toward health disparities.

Eligibility spans the full spectrum of research types (e.g. basic, clinical, translational, population science, implementation and biomedical informatics) across the lifespan. Interdisciplinary approaches, innovative ideas and use of technologically advanced methodological approaches are encouraged.

### Specialized Center of Research Excellence (SCORE) on Sex Differences Pilot Grants

The award is a one-year grant, not to exceed \$50,000, for exceptional postdoctoral fellows and assistant professors conducting research focused on the bioenergetic and metabolic consequences of the loss of gonadal function, with a focus on translational research. Applications from established investigators will be considered if this represents a new research direction for the applicant.

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#### Considerations:

1. Priority will be given to applicants who demonstrate the likelihood of being able to obtain further extramural funding. **Applicants can have other non-overlapping funding for the proposed project but must show a clear reason as to why their research career would benefit from this award.**
2. Applicants must be full-time MD, MD-PhD, PhD, DO or PharmD faculty and fellows with a primary appointment at the University of Colorado Anschutz.
3. Applicants must be actively engaged in research in the areas prioritized for this proposal. Because the support is for one year, applicants must demonstrate that the work is likely to yield publishable results within two years of funding.
4. Applications are due no later than **Monday, June 15, 2026, by 5:00 p.m.** Applications will be evaluated by the Ludeman Center Grant Review Committee. All applicants will receive feedback.
5. Awardees will be required to participate in faculty trainings offered by the Ludeman Center focused on career building and academic skills development during the grant period. Awardees are invited to continue participating in trainings in future years.
6. Awardees may be asked to present their research findings at venue(s) specified by the Ludeman Center. This may include both professional and lay community audiences.
7. Awardees will be asked to communicate their accomplishments and career progress including additional grants and funding received, promotions, publications, and other accolades to the Ludeman Center during the grant period and in subsequent years.
8. Awardees must recognize the Ludeman Center and potentially other funders, as noted in the award within any publication or presentation that is a result of the award.

## Application Guidelines:

Applications must be submitted via email to [ludemancenter@cuanschutz.edu](mailto:ludemancenter@cuanschutz.edu). Please email the full application in PDF format. Letters of recommendation and support may be emailed separately.

1. **Face Page:** Provide the name of the applicant and mentor (if a fellow, instructor or assistant professor), including academic positions, schools, departments and campus mailing address.
  - **Project title**
  - **Identify the grant for which you are applying**
  - **Lay summary:** Include a project lay summary (approximately five sentences) of the goals and significance of the study.
2. **Abstract:** Briefly describe the applicant's proposed research and research career goals.
3. **Budget and budget justification:** Include a detailed budget request for the award with all costs justified. The award can be used for salary support and/or project support.
4. **Biographical sketch (current NIH format + funding):** Biographical sketches for both the applicant and mentor (where required, as stated above) are required, each of which lists all current and pending research support.
5. **Description of applicant's career goals:** Describe career goals and how Ludeman Center support will help in attaining them (one page). Include reasons for and history of interest in women's health and sex differences research. Those newly interested in women's health and sex differences are welcome, but we would like to know the source of interest.
6. **Role of the applicant's mentor (for fellows and early-career faculty):** Describe the mentor's role during the period of the award, including a mentorship plan (one page).
7. **Description of proposed research:** A complete, but concise (no more than five pages, single-spaced) description of the applicant's ongoing and proposed work must be included. Separate sections should be devoted to specific aims and hypotheses, background and significance, preliminary studies, experimental design and methods, and references cited. All figures, tables and other relevant data should be included within the body of the proposal (i.e., no appendices). References can be in addition to the five-page limit. The importance of the proposed work, its relevance to women's health or sex differences, translational impact, and potential for generating further funded research should be included. Explanation of interdisciplinary approaches, innovative ideas and use of technological approaches within the research should be provided when applicable.

## Other Factors and Assurances:

1. **Letter(s) of Recommendation** (for fellows and early-career faculty): From the mentor, endorsing the applicant and stating that the mentor will support the applicant's research.
2. **Letter of Support:** From department chair, division head or section head stating the institutional commitments to the applicant and the availability of the requisite space, time and other forms of support (e.g. laboratory space, salary, technical assistance).

## Other Stipulations and Expectations of the Recipients:

1. Recipients of the award must submit a final report within 30 days of the conclusion of the grant period (typically 12 months after funding is received). Report needs to describe progress to date, including challenges and successes. Final reports should summarize the results of their studies supported by the grant, including copies of all publications, a list of those anticipated, and plans for and attempts to secure additional funding for the project(s).
2. Recipients of the award are expected to engage in events and trainings offered by the Ludeman Center throughout the year of funding. Award recipients should plan to attend monthly academic and career

development trainings, attend Women's Health Research Day (typically held in March on the Anschutz Medical Campus) and present a scientific poster at the event.

3. Recipients are expected to respond to the Ludeman Center's Annual Researcher Audit in January of each year. The audit includes a survey and request for the recipient's updated CV.
4. Final Reports are required and should be sent to [ludemancenter@cuanschutz.edu](mailto:ludemancenter@cuanschutz.edu) in one combined PDF upon completion of the funding cycle.

### **Submission:**

Applications must be submitted no later than **Monday, June 15, 2026, by 5 PM Mountain Time**. Email full application in PDF format to [ludemancenter@cuanschutz.edu](mailto:ludemancenter@cuanschutz.edu).

### **2026 Program Timeline**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>
<b>May 20, 2026</b> 2 – 3 p.m. MT	<b>Informational Webinar</b> Webinar hosted by the Ludeman Center to describe the funding opportunities for the 2026 Funding Cycle. Potential applicants are encouraged to attend and ask questions.
<b>June 15, 2026</b> 5 p.m. MT	<b>Grant Application Deadline</b> Applications will each be reviewed by two reviewers. All submissions will receive feedback.
<b>Week of July 27, 2026</b>	<b>Notification of Applicants</b>
<b>August 7, 2026</b>	<b>Letter of Agreement Deadline</b> Grant awardees must return signed Letter of Agreement.
<b>August 25, 2026</b> 4 – 5 p.m.	<b>New Researcher Orientation Meeting</b> Grant awardees and their mentors meet with Ludeman Center leadership for orientation in the Anschutz Health Sciences Building.
<b>September 1, 2026</b>	<b>Funding Cycle Begins</b>
<b>October 31, 2026</b>	<b>Final Report Due</b>

**Questions about the grant application or the informational webinar on May 20, email [ludemancenter@cuanschutz.edu](mailto:ludemancenter@cuanschutz.edu).**