



Anschutz



Ludeman Family Center for
Women's Health Research

Application Guidelines for the 2026 Ludeman Center Women's Health Innovation Scholar (WHINS) Program *Accelerator Award*

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About the CU Anschutz Ludeman Family Center for Women's Health Research

The Ludeman Center envisions a world where all women are healthy and thriving. We transform women's health through leading-edge research, the development of outstanding scientists, and partnership with women, providers, and community to ensure women receive evidence-based, responsive healthcare. Profound gaps in sex differences research and scientific innovation currently deny women the tools, treatments, and services they need to be healthy and thrive. Our work to champion and conduct scientific research focused on women's health and sex differences will change the future for all women.

Women's Health Innovation Scholar (WHINS) Description – Accelerator Award

WHINS Accelerator Award is a transformational opportunity that incorporates CU Innovations and Ludeman Center training with research funding for established researchers to advance and expedite the translation of research findings to patient care. WHINS scholars must focus on women's health or sex differences research in cardiovascular disease, diabetes/metabolism or the intersection of mental and physical health. It is required that proposals illustrate a credible pathway toward prevention, diagnosis, treatment, implementation, or future clinical application within the timeline of 2 years.

The Ludeman Center provides mid-career WHINS scholars with up to a total of \$150,000 a year in funding, to be divided between PI salary/benefits and project funding. WHINS scholars' departments/divisions must agree to provide \$10,000 in annual project support funds for each year that funding is received from WHINS. These candidates must include a timeline for the innovation proposed that will occur within two years of funding in their proposal.

Application Review and Timeline

- The award selection process involves two stages: (1) a **letter of intent** (LOI) to narrow the pool to the applicants and projects most aligned with the scope of WHINS, prioritizing proposals that demonstrate a potential pathway from proposed research to impacts on patient care; (2) a **full proposal** to select the award recipient(s).
- A letter of intent and full proposal must be submitted and meet all application guidelines; otherwise, applications will be administratively rejected.
- Proposals will be reviewed by independent, scientific experts in a rigorous peer-review process.

CALL FOR LETTER OF INTENT	October 15, 2026
LETTER OF INTENT DUE	November 30, 2026, by 5:00 p.m. MT
INVITATION TO SUBMIT FULL PROPOSAL	By December 14, 2026
FULL PROPOSAL DUE	January 25, 2027, by 5:00 p.m. MT
AWARD NOTIFICATION	By February 22, 2027
PROJECTED START/END DATE	April 1, 2027/April 1, 2029

Applicant Eligibility

If eligibility questions remain after reviewing these guidelines, please email ludemancenter@cuanschutz.edu.

- Applicants must have an MD, PhD, PharmD, or DO. Eligible candidates should be Associate Professors or Professors. Clinical scholars must hold an MD, DO or PhD in psychology, have one of the titles previously listed, and have completed their clinical training.
- Applicants must demonstrate a commitment to pursuing a career in women's health or sex differences research and show that they will have sufficient time to commit to WHINS research and training.
- Applicants' department or division chair must agree to augment the research project funding with \$10,000 per year of WHINS funding awarded (independent of salary gap augmentation).
- Applicants may have project budget items that include personnel, supplies, travel, training/career development, and equipment. Indirect costs are not allowed.
- Applicants may have research grants from other funding sources during the award period, but there must be clear documentation of mechanisms to avoid scientific and budgetary overlap.
- Applicants may be from any school/college within the University of Colorado Anschutz.

Scope of Proposal

- Proposals must fall within the scope of the Ludeman Family Center for Women's Health Research mission, focused on women's health or sex differences research in the broad areas of cardiovascular disease, diabetes/metabolism, and/or the intersection of mental and physical health.
- Proposals may consist of research across basic, translational and/or clinical research, epidemiological, implementation science or bioinformatics. Thus, there are no restrictions to the type of science or methodology.
- Funding will be awarded to those with innovative projects that illustrate a pathway for translation to patient care.

Grant Conditions, Reporting and Ludeman Center Affiliation Requirements

- Signed letter of agreement.
- Progress reports detailing progress-to-date for each year of funding.
- A final report discussing the overall results and outcomes at the conclusion of funding. Report must state findings, expenditures, impact on patient care and publications/presentations which acknowledge Ludeman Center funding.
- No-cost extension requests are allowed upon approval by the Ludeman Center director upon advice from the WHINS program director at the end of the award period for up to one year.
- Publications, presentations and posters featuring results of this funding should acknowledge "Ludeman Family Center for Women's Health Research (Grant #)".
- Meeting for WHINS Scholar every six weeks with program director and/or senior scientist.
- Meeting for WHINS Scholar every six months with scholar's mentoring team and program leadership.
- WHINS Scholars must participate in an initial meeting with CU Innovations team in first quarter of funding and should arrange subsequent meetings and additional training in methodologies, e.g., bioinformatics.
- Submission of an abstract for the Ludeman Center's Annual Women's Health Research Day during the funding period.
- Biennially, WHINS Scholars will participate in the Ludeman Center National Conference on Women's Health and Sex Differences Research.
- Additional didactic educational opportunities will vary by WHINS Scholar.
- WHINS Scholars are required to complete Coursera [Considering Sex as a Biological Variable in the Conduct of Research](#) online specialization as well as other suggested training courses.
- Annual submission of updated biographical sketch and CV and response to the Ludeman Center Researcher Audit.

- Occasional presentations to community groups, Ludeman Center supporters or other constituents regarding your work.

Review Criteria

Criteria to be used for selection of WHINS Scholars include:

1. Evidence of a high level of scholarship/strength of biosketch appropriate to career stage
2. Clarity of the vision of the applicant's career goals (including timeline for grant applications/publications and translating to patient care or commercial potential)
3. Commitment to research in women's health or sex differences
4. Strength of the applicant's ability and proposed project to translate to patient care
5. Statement of potential clinical impact of their project
6. Evidence of innovation in proposed project
7. Strength of science/research plan proposed
8. Clear evidence of career support from the department/division chair during and after the WHINS funding.
9. Evidence of support from department/division chair

Copies of all complete applications will be made available to all members of the selection committee, and each candidate will be evaluated in detail by at least two members, with written reviews provided. After full selection committee discussion, priority scores will be assigned, and the scores averaged and ranked. Any selection committee member with a conflict of interest will leave the room during the entire review and discussion of the applicant. Applicants will be notified in writing of the outcome of the review and sent edited written reviews as soon as feasible.

Application Process

Letter of Intent Instructions

The LOIs should be no more than two pages in length and include the following:

- Scholar, rank, department/division, school/college
- Project title and focus area being addressed by this study
- Statement of commitment to women's health and/or sex differences research
- Scientific abstract including rationale, hypothesis, specific aims and design
- Literature references (not included in page maximum)
- Scholar's biosketch and list of publications (not included in page maximum) and funding. Please use the ScienCV and Current and Pending (Other) Support (CPOS) Common Forms.
- Follow NIH format guidelines: Arial, Helvetica, Palatino Linotype, or Georgia fonts with a font size of 11 points or larger with a minimum of ½ inch margins
- Send submission in a combined PDF file to ludemancenter@cuanschutz.edu by 5:00 p.m. MT on **November 2, 2026**.

Full Application Instructions

Full applications are by invitation only, upon acceptance of the LOI. Applicants will be notified by November 20, 2026, if their LOI will advance to a full application.

Format Instructions

- **PAGE HEADER:** All pages of the application should be numbered; the name of the principal investigator should appear in the upper right-hand corner of each page.
- **FORMAT:** Follow NIH format guidelines: Arial, Helvetica, Palatino Linotype, or Georgia fonts with a font size of 11 points or larger with a minimum of ½ inch margins.
- **ORDER & LENGTH:** The order of the application should be followed, adhering to the maximum number of pages allowed for each subsection indicated in parentheses (see below).
- No appendices allowed.
- Create a **single PDF** for all sections and biographical sketch and email to ludemancenter@cuanschutz.edu. The letter from the department/division chair should be sent separately.

Section Descriptions

- **Cover Page (1 page):** Include a cover page with the PI name, contact information (phone/email), faculty rank, department/division/school, project title and one paragraph lay summary.
- **Table of Contents (1 page):** Provide a table of contents with page numbers to the corresponding sections. If possible, hyperlink the table of contents to the sections.
- **Personal Statement (1 page):** Describe your overall career goals and your commitment to women's health or sex differences research, outline personal strengths that will ensure success in this endeavor, and state why you and this project should be chosen for the program. Define the translational potential of your proposed project and what you hope to accomplish during this two-year funding period. Describe how support from the Ludeman Center's WHINS program is critical to accomplish your research goals as well as how the program will propel your career forward.
- **Research Experience (2 pages maximum):** A description of the applicant's research experience (2 pages maximum). The section should describe prior projects/experience that demonstrate the applicant's ability to perform clinical, translational, epidemiological or basic research. Please include references (not subject to page limit).
- **Training Plan (2 pages maximum):** The training plan must describe a plan for professional activities/responsibilities during the award period and explain how these will contribute to career growth and progression and include strategies, continued education and future research. The training plans of the applicant regarding coursework and other elements needed to help the applicant gain necessary skills in their chosen field and/or to translate their ideas to patient care. Applicants must share their vision towards translation and the training that will be needed with innovations and other resources to make the two-year project successful.
- **Scientific Abstract (0.5 page):** Summarize the research objectives and rationale.
- **Budget and Justification (2 pages):** Outline expenses for the duration of the award and provide written justification.
- **Biographical Sketch(es):** A biographical sketch for the applicant is required. Please use the ScienCV and Current and Pending (Other) Support (CPOS) Common Forms.
- **Research Plan (5 pages):** Describe the research plan for the proposed project period.
 - **Specific Aims (1 page):** Describe the specific aims and hypotheses that inform your research project.
 - **Significance and Innovation (0.5 page):** State the significance of this proposed research with respect to women's health or sex differences. Include relevant background research to support the

premise for the work. Describe innovation in the project and address how this project will translate to patient care.

- **Approach (3.5 pages):** Describe the experimental approach to the research question and how it will be accomplished during the funding period. Include a timeline with deliverables and feasibility, which includes any preliminary studies pertinent to the project, as well as anticipated problems and plans to address these issues.
- **Literature Cited (no limit):** Use Vancouver or NIH style (numbered citations within text) format.
- **Division or Department Chair Letter:** A letter from the applicant's department chair or division chief confirming that the applicant will have time for pursuit of a research program and clarifying what start-up funding, laboratory facilities, office space and equipment are dedicated to this project. In addition, this letter should set forth the other means by which the department/division will support the applicant's proposed research program during and after the period of WHINS support. This must include an agreement to support the balance of the scholar's salary and benefits if not fully covered by the WHINS as well as an annual commitment of \$10,000 towards project support for the scholar during the period funded by the WHINS (independent of the salary gap augmentation). This should be submitted directly to ludemancenter@cuanschutz.edu.

Full Application Submission

Submit the full application as one PDF to ludemancenter@cuanschutz.edu. Include the name of the applicant and award program in the email subject line. Department/division chair letter should be submitted directly by the recommenders to ludemancenter@cuanschutz.edu.

Questions

For questions, please email ludemancenter@cuanschutz.edu.