

REQUEST FOR RESEARCH PROPOSALS

The Gayle Brinkenhoff IGNITE Pilot Award for Breast Cancer Research

Advancing our understanding of disease mechanisms, treatment, and related health impacts of breast cancer

<https://connorscenter.bwh.harvard.edu/ignite/>

Coversheet: February 24th, 2023	Full Proposal Due: March 10th, 2023	Award Announced: May 8th, 2023
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Sponsored by the Mary Horrigan Connors Center for Women's Health and Gender Biology at Brigham and Women's Hospital and RevitaLash Cosmetics

The Connors Center for Women's Health and Gender Biology is pleased to announce a request for research proposals (RFP) from the Brigham and Women's Hospital research community for our second annual 2023 Gayle Brinkenhoff IGNITE Pilot Award for Breast Cancer Research. This award builds on the existing Connors Center IGNITE Awards program that began in 2019. To view previous IGNITE Awardees, visit: <https://connorscenter.bwh.harvard.edu/ignite/>.

Award Opportunity:

The Gayle Brinkenhoff IGNITE Pilot Award for Breast Cancer Research aims to promote and support pilot and proof-of-concept studies in the specific area of breast cancer aimed at advancing our understanding of disease mechanisms, treatment, and related health impacts, with the ultimate goal of generating pilot data to support further funding for larger translational projects. Projects can include development and utilization of novel diagnostics and therapeutics - drugs, devices, and digital strategies targeting breast cancer, as well as health services research, and clinical research projects focused on the course of breast cancer and its treatments. Studies that also involve other cancers in women together with breast cancer will be considered.

This \$50,000 award (inclusive of 20% indirect costs) will support one Brigham and Women's Hospital investigator to conduct a new, innovative project for one year. Applications that have high potential for translational impact are encouraged.

Background:

The broad goal of the IGNITE Awards program is to ensure that medical advances are optimized for the health of women through scientific investigation. The overall IGNITE program focuses on **female-specific and sex-differentiating factors across different stages of the drug and device development process, from target identification to post-approval monitoring and uptake in the community, as well as in the development and optimization of novel diagnostics and digital strategies.**

IGNITE investigations are important components of the Connors Center's **First.In.Women Precision Medicine Platform**. First.In.Women is a translational research platform that is advancing the inclusion and specific investigation of women in studies of the development and utilization of new drugs, devices, digital diagnostics and therapeutics to produce sex-specific knowledge about treatments for both women and men. First.In.Women is a go-to hub for national efforts to advance our investigation of sex as a biological variable in relation to novel diagnostics and therapeutics.

IGNITE Awardees and First.In.Women Partnership:

IGNITE Awardees benefit from the Connors Center First.In.Women program supports and activities, including the opportunity to engage with Connors Center scientific leaders and staff both individually and as a group through Work in Progress meetings (see below), mentoring meetings, and scientific meetings, such as the Connors Center Annual Research Symposium. The overall purpose of these meetings is to stimulate scientific exchanges, provide mentorship and sponsorship, integrate the First.In.Women translational framework, and facilitate networking and collaboration across the First.In.Women research community. These meetings provide the opportunity to: 1) review project goals, milestones and deliverables to ensure progress on study aims; 2) evaluate alignment between the First.In.Women mission and the clinical translation of the proposed research project; and 3) connect with Connors Center and First.In.Women resources. These meetings support and maintain the momentum of the studies in order to maximize each project's future growth and potential for impact.

Work in Progress Meetings:

IGNITE Awardees are expected to attend and present their work at one or more Work in Progress (WiP) meetings hosted by the Connors Center during the year of funding. The purpose of WiP meetings is to support the growth of all IGNITE Awardees and maximize the impact of First.In.Women translational science by providing IGNITE investigators an opportunity to obtain feedback on their ongoing work by experts in sex- and gender-informed research, subject-matters experts, and First.In.Women Faculty within BWH, and from external experts.

Award Administration:

The Gayle Brinkenhoff IGNITE Pilot Award for Breast Cancer Research Awardee must have a primary affiliation at Brigham and Women's Hospital and will be responsible for reporting and communicating with the Connors Center Administrators who will oversee this award. The award is up to \$50,000 and inclusive of 20% indirect costs.

The initial funding period will run for 12 months. Competing renewals are allowable if first year progress shows promise for an expanded investigation. No-cost extensions are discouraged. Projects must be ready to commence upon receipt of award.

Timeline:

Request for proposals announced:	January 6, 2023
Coversheet due:	February 24, 2023
Full proposals due:	March 10, 2023
Award recipients announced:	May 8, 2023
Women's Health Luncheon:	May 19, 2023
Earliest start date:	June 1, 2023

Eligibility:

We welcome applications that meet the following criteria. Both US and non-US citizens are welcome to apply.

- The Principal Investigator's primary appointment is at Brigham and Women's Hospital.
- The Principal Investigator must have a doctoral degree (MD and/or PhD or equivalent).
- The Principal Investigator must have an HMS appointment at the Instructor level or above.
- Prior IGNITE award recipients may apply for funding, either to extend a previously funded IGNITE project or to support a new research study.
- Applicants can submit only one application.
- Principal Investigators may only be granted one IGNITE award each cycle. For applicants who applied to the IGNITE RFP due Jan 9th, 2023, who are interested in applying for this award, please contact ConnorsCenter@bwh.harvard.edu for clarification on eligibility
- The awardee will be invited and highly encouraged to attend the BWH Women's Health Luncheon on May 19, 2023, All applicants are asked to hold this date until the final award decision is announced. .

Application Process and Materials:

Cover Sheet- Due February 24, 2023 at 12:00pm:

1. Research proposal cover sheet, using the provided template, including 100-word Project Overview submitted electronically by 12:00pm to Patricia Gallegos, Connors Center Project Manager, connorscenter@bwh.harvard.edu.

Full Proposals - March 10, 2023, at 12:00pm:

1. Research proposal cover sheet (completed at the time of the initial cover sheet submission)
2. A 2-page research statement describing your scientific proposal that includes a timeline with planned milestones and deliverables. Figures, tables, and images may be included within the two pages. A maximum of 10 references may be included on an additional page.
3. Brief description of plans for future grant applications and investigations using the data generated from this Award (150-word max).
4. Brief description of involvement/collaboration (current or prospective) in the proposed project of biopharma or biotech companies, as applicable (100-word max).
5. A 1-year budget for up to \$50,000, including indirect costs at 20%, using the provided template with a corresponding budget justification (200-word max).
6. NIH biosketch for PI(s)
7. A brief letter of support (up to 1 page) on letterhead for the PI from their Division Chief, Department Chair, Laboratory PI, or Mentor.

Proposal Review Criteria:

- Application text must be in Arial, 11-point font. Single-spacing is allowed. All margins must be at least 0.5 inches. All items above must be compiled into a single PDF in the order stated above. You may make

reasonable edits to the cover sheet when re-submitting with the full proposal. Incomplete applications and applications submitted in multiple files, and multiple applications submitted to this award opportunity will not be considered.

- Applications will be judged based on scientific merit, feasibility, fit with the goals and objectives of the Connors Center First.In.Women Platform and the breast cancer focus, as well as the potential for obtaining independent funding to continue the study once the funding period has ceased.
- Special considerations that will be weighed advantageously during review:
 - Projects led by early-stage investigators
 - Projects with high translational impact

Terms of the IGNITE Program:

- Awardees will be expected to attend WiP research meetings as described above.
- In addition to WiP meetings, recipients may be required to present their project at two or more Connors Center events (e.g., annual research symposium, donor events). Recipients are also expected to attend the Women's Health Luncheon hosted by the Connors Center on May 19th, 2023.
- Recipients will submit a brief 6-month progress report, a final report, and post progress surveys detailing research activity. Templates will be provided to awardees.
- Recipients must maintain their primary appointment at BWH for the duration of the funding period. If an awardee leaves their home institution, the unspent funds will be returned to the Connors Center.
- Recipients are expected to remain in touch with the Connors Center for at least 3 years post-award to report on publications, grants, and other outcomes from the award.
- Recipients must cite the funding source on all publications and presentations related to this project.

Please submit all materials electronically to ConnorsCenter@bwh.harvard.edu.

The Gayle Brinkenhoff IGNITE Pilot Award for Breast Cancer Research is made possible through a generous partnership with RevitaLash Cosmetics.