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Sanofi Innovation Awards 2025-2026

***Call for Pre-Proposals***

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**April 14, 2025**

*iAwards Program Description and Objectives:*

Sanofi is a global life sciences company committed to improving access to healthcare and supporting the people we serve throughout the continuum of care.

Sanofi iAwards initiative is a multi-institutional partnership program designed to support collaborations with academic investigators to accelerate innovative early stage, disease-relevant research towards the clinic. With this program, Sanofi aims to fund cutting-edge translational research that can contribute to our early-stage pipeline and ultimately benefit patients.

Award winning proposals will receive:

* $150,000 research funding including institutional direct and indirect costs for 12 months.
* Sanofi R&D expertise and guidance.

Sanofi’s main objective in creating the iAwards program is to convert successful and promising iAwards projects to sponsored research programs and subsequently create in-licensing and start-up opportunities with the potential to continuously enrich Sanofi’s early-stage portfolio.

*Pre-Proposal submission:*

Provided with this call is the pre-proposal submission template, as well as the areas of interest on page 3.

Only selected members of Sanofi and your Institution will have access to your pre-proposal; however, we recommend that information in the pre-proposal should not contain any confidential information or unpublished results. Pre-proposals should not include third parties except members from other Partner institutions also involved in the iAwards Program (listed on page 4).

All pre-proposals must be submitted to Sanofi by May 19th, 2025 at the latest using [**this link**](https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/cd12dd79975b42f6b35a047247a3174d)

The timelines of the iAwards North America Program 2025-2026 are further described on page 4. Pre-proposals that would not respect the guidelines (format, timelines, etc.) will not be evaluated.

*Areas of Interest:*

**GENOMIC MEDICINE**

1. Non-viral (i.e. LNP) approaches for delivery of nucleic acids to the CNS and muscles
2. Novel approaches to analytical characterization & potency prediction of Lipid Nano Particles (LNP)
3. Approaches to obviate lipid nano particle / viral capsid immunogenicity including predictive models

**IMMUNOLOGY & INFLAMMATION**

1. Immunology of senescence / inflammaging
2. Complement system and Opthlamic disorders
3. Immune checkpoint targeted bi-specifics for immunology and inflammation
4. Mechanisms and therapeutic strategies to provide immune re-set (providing deep, durable disease modification)
5. Disease interception in dermatology (AD, HS, vitiligo), Respiratory (Asthma, COPD) or Gastroenterology (IBD, celiac)

**ONCOLOGY**

1. New therapeutic targets and new cell surface markers for priority indications (Multiple Myeloma, Acute Myeloid Leukemia, gastrointestinal cancers, lung cancers, childhood cancers
2. New strategies of Immune Cell Engagers (engagers of NK cells, engagers of unconventional immune cells)
3. Novel strategies for targeting tumor micro-environment (including myeloid/macrophages, fibroblast targets, vascular normalization, ect.)
4. Novel in vivo delivery approaches
5. Novel translational models in Immuno-Oncology

**Target, Disease, and Systems Biology**

1. AI/ML Foundation models for multi-omics target biology and target identification.New strategies of Immune Cell Engagers (engagers of NK cells, engagers of unconventional immune cells)
2. Single cell & spatial characterization of respiratory & autoimmune diseases (HS, atopic dermatitis, SLE, asthma, COPD).
3. Large-scale functional genomics for target ID in nodal immune pathways
4. Novel 3D complex modeling for screening disease relevant targets and mechanism.
5. Data and AI-driven indication expansion, life-cycle management and positioning
6. Characterizing disease heterogeneity through unsupervised embeddings of high dimensional multi-model data

**RARE & NEUROLOGICAL DISEASES**

1. Biology, transport mechanisms and targeted delivery of therapeutics to muscle and/or CNS
2. Novel targets, models, and therapeutic concepts for genetically defined CNS or musculoskeletal diseases (e.g., triple repeat disorders, spliceopathies, etc.)
3. Novel targets and mechanisms for neuroinflammation and/or to achieve neuroprotection in neurodegenerative diseases.
4. Novel target , and therapeutic concepts for proteinopathies (e.g., synuclein, tau, ApoE4, Bin1, TDP-43, TMEM106B, PLCG2)

Biomarkers for neurodegenerative diseases (e.g., AD, PD, ALS, MS). Computational algorithms to combine large scale multi-omic studies for precision neurology (incluing cross-validation of neuroinflammation, metabolic, and neurodegeneration biomarkers).

**VACCINES**

1. Use of artificial intelligence
   1. To develop virtual patient vaccination models
   2. To build on “Smart RNA vaccines” for regulated and cell-specific expression
   3. To streamline the sequence-to-mRNA vaccine process
   4. To design new vaccine antigens and analyze vaccine data
2. Targeting and Disease-Specific Vaccines
   1. New targeting systems for cell-guided vaccines
   2. New technologies for vaccines against autoimmune diseases (e.g., IBD, MS, lupus) and allergies
   3. New biological approaches to prevent aging-related diseases
3. New vaccination and administration technologies
   1. Tolerogenic approaches for T cell vaccines, focusing on rout, adjuvant, formulation, and design
   2. Improvement of mRNA vaccine delivery into the cytosol
   3. Alternative vectors and administration routes
   4. Develop controlled release mechanisms, eliminating the need for boosters
4. Immunological analysis and evaluation
   1. Multiparametric immunological analysis on microsamples
   2. New technologies to assess mucosal immunology post-vaccination
   3. In-vitro and in-silico immunogenicity readouts of drug product formulations
5. Vaccine stability and production
   1. Enhance the stability of RNA-based vaccines
   2. Protein production with cell-free systems, scalable to GMP manufacturing
   3. Improved E. coli strains combined with antibiotic-free selection systems for plasmid manufacturing
   4. Universal liquid formulation for thermostable vaccines
6. Tests and equipment
   1. Novel high-throughput multiplex biological assays
   2. End-to-end small-scale, automated, and high-throughput drug substance equipment

*Call timelines:*

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| *Key steps* | *Due date* |
| Call for Pre-proposals | April 14th 2025 |
| Submission of completed Pre-Proposals to Sanofi by Institutions | May 19th 2025 |
| Notification of Pre-proposals chosen to be pursued - Call for Full Proposals | June 30th 2025 |
| Submission of completed Full Proposals to Sanofi by Institutions | September 5th 2025 |
| Institutions informed funding decisions | November 2nd 2025 |