# Rett Syndrome Innovation Award

# Request for Proposals

**Opportunity:**

There are no FDA approved treatments available for Rett syndrome, a rare neurodevelopmental disorder cause by mutations in *MECP2,* but advances over the last 20 years since the discovery of the genetic cause of Rett syndrome have brought us closer to being able to develop treatments targeting the underlying pathology associated with the loss of *MECP2*. The International Rett Syndrome Foundation (IRSF), a nonprofit organization dedicated to finding treatments for Rett syndrome and supporting families living with Rett syndrome, has continued to accelerate the progress by supporting basic, translational, and clinical research to achieve the goal of disease modifying or curative treatments for Rett syndrome*.* The Rett Syndrome Innovation Award seeks to gain a better understanding of the underlying pathology of the disorder in order to identify novel therapeutic approaches to treat and cure for Rett syndrome.

**Program objective:**

The two-year basic research grant awards are meant to (1) provide seed money for research that leads to the identification of therapeutic targets or therapeutic approaches to treat Rett syndrome, (2) assist investigators to establish careers in the field of Rett syndrome research, and (3) lead to follow-on funding from other agencies.

**Main areas of research interest:**

Although we have identified several focus areas of interest and listed them below in no order of priority, they are not meant to be exclusive.

1. Molecular, cellular and circuit level characterization of MECP2 function to generate novel therapeutic targets/approaches
2. Integrated multi-level characterization of Rett Syndrome disease states including pre- and post-regression phases in disease models encompassing both the loss of and the restoration of MECP2 function.
3. Profile of cellular and brain-region-specific vulnerability to loss or gain of MECP2 function
4. Identifying genetic modifiers of MECP2 function for the development of novel therapeutic targets

This RFP does not support clinical research projects.

**Funding level**

The Rett Syndrome Innovation Award funds innovative research up to $150,000 per year for two years ($300,000 total). Indirect costs are limited to 10% of the total budget. Additional details can be found in the general budget guideline section below.

**Eligibility**

* Independent investigators with an appointment in an academic, government, non-profit research institution or biotechnology company worldwide
* History of independent publication record
* History of grant support in which the applicant is the principal investigator (PI)
* US Citizenship is not required

Scientists from underrepresented groups are encouraged to apply.

**Submission dates:**

* July 15, 2021 Letter of intent
* Aug. 29, 2021 Full Application due
* October 2021 Award notification

**Instructions for submission:**

Please submit a one-page letter of intent detailing your research plan and a biographical sketch. Please highlight how your research plan will benefit the progression of science leading to a treatment or cure for Rett syndrome.

Letters of intent should be emailed to [research@rettsyndrome.org](mailto:research@rettsyndrome.org) by July 15, 2021 at 5:00 PM Eastern time. Letters of intent will be reviewed and select candidates will be invited to submit a full application.

Full applications will include a research and lay summary, a detailed research plan, budget and budget justification. Applications will be reviewed for scientific merit by members of the Scientific Review Board, and then undergo programmatic review by IRSF staff. Final funding decisions are approved by IRSF’s Board of Directors. Notifications are expected to be emailed by the end of October, 2021.

**General Budget Guidelines**

* The maximum funding level is $150,000 a year for two years.
* Grants are made for technical support, supplies, equipment and relevant travel. PI salary support will be considered on a case-by-case basis and may be limited to 20% of the total award.
* Indirect costs of up to 10% of direct costs may be included *within* the total request amount.
* Proposals for less than the maximum amount are encouraged.
* Second year funding is non-competitive but is based on review of the first year’s progress report.

**Contact information:**

Administrative inquires: research@rettsyndrome.org

Scientific inquiries: bbjorke@rettsyndrome.org