

FAQs for Origin of the Eukaryotic Cell Grant Solicitation

Updated July 9, 2019

Eligibility

Am I eligible if I applied to previous competitions from the Moore Foundation or Simons Foundation?

Yes. You may apply if you have applied to previous competitions at either or both organizations.

Please note: If you have any past due grant requirements from a current or previous Moore Foundation award, you must complete these requirements prior to our consideration of your application.

Can I participate in multiple proposals in this solicitation?

You may serve as lead on only one proposal. You may also be a co-submitter on one other proposal.

What types of organizations will you fund, and will you fund internationally?

For selected projects with the primary institution in the U.S., grantees must be 501(c)(3) public charities per the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) code. We will also fund internationally; selected projects with the primary institution outside the U.S. must be determined to be equivalent to a U.S. 501(c)(3) public charity.

Is there a limit on the number of applicants who may apply from one institution?

No.

I'm an adjunct professor with my own research laboratory. Am I eligible?

No. Applicants must hold a tenured or tenure-track position (or equivalent independent position). If you are uncertain whether the terms of your appointment meet this eligibility requirement, please e-mail symbiosis@moore.org prior to submitting a proposal and provide information about the terms of your position. We will consider your situation and respond as soon as possible.

My primary appointment and research space are at a government facility. Am I eligible?

Yes. However, we require that applicants hold a position that is the most similar to tenure track available at that institution (i.e., equivalent in terms of institutional commitment). *Also see FAQ regarding indirect cost requirements for grantees.* Temporary or term appointees and contractors are not eligible. If you are uncertain whether the terms of your appointment meet this eligibility requirement, please e-mail symbiosis@moore.org prior to submitting a pre-application and provide information about the terms of your position. We will consider your situation and respond as soon as possible.

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I'm not sure if I am eligible, since my primary institution does not have a tenure track. What should I do?

For institutions that do not have a tenure track, we require that applicants have a position that is the most similar to tenure track available at their institution (i.e., equivalent in terms of institutional commitment to the employee, etc.). If you are uncertain whether the terms of your appointment meet this eligibility requirement, please e-mail symbiosis@moore.org prior to submitting a pre-application and provide information about the terms of your position. We will consider your situation and respond as soon as possible.

Funding Focus

Which research fields will be supported by the eukaryogenesis awards?

We are not prescribing which fields and methodological perspectives will be supported through these awards, although we view that many disciplines and approaches have important contributions to make. We encourage applications from those who may not have previously worked on eukaryogenesis but who have novel perspectives and tools to bring to this area of research.



Must my proposal focus on aquatic organisms in light of the Moore Foundation's focus on marine and freshwater systems?

No. We expect that a wide array of organisms will be required to address eukaryogenesis hypotheses, including non-aquatic organisms that are well-suited for testing eukaryogenesis concepts and mechanisms.

What don't you fund?

Studies centered on the diversification of eukaryotes and other post-LECA events are outside the scope of this funding opportunity. Proposals without direct connection to eukaryogenesis and applied research are also ineligible.

Funding Decisions

Who is making the funding decisions?

Staff at the Moore Foundation and Simons Foundation will work together to determine which projects to fund. Final approvals for funding rest with appropriate decision authorities at each organization.

For successful applicants, will my award be provided by the Moore Foundation or the Simons Foundation?

The foundations, in their sole discretion, will determine which organization will provide funds for each of the selected projects.

Proposal Components

When is my proposal due?

Monday, September 30, 2019 by 23:59 PDT.

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What must the proposal include and who must make the submission?

The proposal lead is responsible for all components of the proposal package. In addition, the proposal lead is the only person who should respond to the surveys included in the proposal process; these surveys are neither seen by reviewers nor considered in evaluation of the proposal but are intended to inform the Symbiosis in Aquatic Systems Initiative team about the current status of aquatic symbiosis research and the community of scientists who work in this area.

Project leads should open an account at symbiosis.smapply.io early in the process to familiarize themselves with submission steps. Please monitor your spam folder for verification emails from the smapply.io website and add "noreply@mail.smapply.io" and "symbiosis@moore.org" to your address book.

Your proposal must include the following information:

- **Contact Information for Each Team Member**
- **Community Survey (ONLY FOR PROPOSAL LEAD)**
- **Proposal with Figures and References**
- **Researcher Background and Biographical Sketch for Proposal Lead and Any Co-Submitters**
- **Budget Sketch and Justification**

Uploaded documents that exceed the word/page limits will not be reviewed. For all documents, please use 11 pt. Times New Roman font on 8.5-11" paper with 1-inch margins. All documents should be PDFs.

Upon completing the application, the proposal lead will be asked to complete an optional demographic survey. ONLY THE PROPOSAL LEAD SHOULD RESPOND. The [Symbiosis in Aquatic Systems Initiative](#) is interested in surveying the community for demographic information because we want to learn how we can improve attracting and supporting individuals from all identities and backgrounds. We also wish to inform ourselves how we can best serve the needs of our grantees and the grantee community. All questions on this survey are optional. The survey responses will be kept separately from the scientific materials and will not be shared with external reviewers. Responses will not be used to evaluate your proposal. After each stage of the selection process has been decided, foundation staff will track the aggregate properties of the applicant pool. All responses will be kept in strict confidence. Please click [here](#) for the Apply privacy policy for data.

In the proposal, should I note relevant work that is already supported by my / my team's grants?

Yes. If relevant, please note connections with currently funded research.

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Will I be evaluated based on the community survey questions?

No. While the community survey is required, it is intended to give Moore Foundation staff an overview of research across all areas of aquatic symbiosis and about best practices and current and future needs. We will use the information as part of a broader landscape analysis. The information will not be used to evaluate your proposal. We appreciate your thoughtfulness in responding to the questions and thank you for your time.

Do I need endorsement or approval from my institution to apply for this funding opportunity?

Not at this time. If your project is selected as a finalist, your institution's sign-off will be required at a later date for the proposal to move forward.

Will there be another competition next year?

No. At this time, neither Foundation anticipates holding another competition on the origin of the eukaryotic cell.

Review Process

How does the review process work?

Foundation staff and external reviewers will evaluate the proposal materials. Project leads will be notified of proposal status in early 2020. Grants are expected to be awarded in 2020.

Who are the reviewers?

Reviewers include expert scientists selected by staff at the Moore Foundation and Simons Foundation.

Will you share reviews or provide feedback on the application?

No. We are restricting any counsel or guidance to ensure we remain neutral and fair to all applicants. Feedback will not be shared during the application process or at the conclusion of the application process.

What is the policy on conflicts of interest?

Rigorous reviews of applicants are crucial to the aims and success of the eukaryogenesis portfolio. We seek to ensure the review and selection process for the competition are fair and impartial. We will not have reviewers evaluate a proposal if one or more of the following criteria apply:

1. The reviewer has been a mentor to or mentee of the applicant, for example as a graduate student, postdoctoral researcher or advisor.
2. The reviewer has had a significant collaboration with the applicant in the past 48 months, such as a jointly funded research project or a co-authored publication (excepting for projects with large numbers of collaborators).
3. The reviewer is at the same institution.

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4. The reviewer is a family member or partner of the applicant.
5. The reviewer or foundation has determined the review cannot be impartial for reasons not listed above.

Can I get a list of potential reviewers who might be assigned to my application?

No. We do not make public the roster of reviewers for this competition.

Are the contents of my application confidential?

Yes. Foundation staff will treat all application materials, including ideas and descriptions of plans, as strictly confidential. External reviewers will also be required to maintain confidentiality on all materials.

How many projects will be selected?

We have not pre-determined the number, size or duration of projects that we will fund.

Budgets and Indirect Costs

What are the expected amounts of the awards?

We have not pre-determined award sizes and will aim to match budgets to project needs. Budgets submitted as part of the proposal package are considered preliminary. Budget development will occur in coordination with the respective funding organization. The Moore Foundation and Simons Foundation have discussed budget development philosophies and procedures and will work to create similar funding experiences for grantees. That said, because of variations between the indirect cost policies of each foundation, there may be variation in budget construction.

Can funds be used to buy out teaching obligations at my institution?

No. Funds may not be used to buy out teaching time.

Do the foundations pay indirect costs?

We provide limited overhead costs.

The Moore Foundation's policy is not to exceed 12.5% of allowable expenses. Indirect cost discussions will occur between the Moore Foundation and finalists that we expect to be supported by the Moore Foundation. All finalist institutions must agree to abide by the foundation's indirect cost policy: <https://www.moore.org/docs/default-source/Grantee-Resources/indirect-cost-policy.pdf?sfvrsn=0>.

The Simons Foundation provides 20% of modified direct costs as indirect costs. All finalist institutions that will be supported by the Simons Foundation must agree to abide by its indirect cost policy: <https://www.simonsfoundation.org/funding-opportunities/policies-and-procedures>.

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I am considering moving to a new institution after the proposal. If selected, can I transfer my grant to the new institution?

Yes, so long as you and your new institution still meet the eligibility criteria (such as being appointed to a tenure-track or equivalent position) and have the infrastructure and other resources required to support your research.

What happens if I want to move to a new institution after the award begins?

We will work with your current and new institutions to transfer the grant. Please note that moving to a new institution requires developing a new grant agreement between the Moore Foundation or Simons Foundation and the new institution as well as transferring funds between institutions, typically via the foundation that has provided the resources for your project.

Technical Support

I submitted my final application to be considered, but now I've noticed errors in my final PDF.

Once you have clicked the final "submit" button, your online application closes and is no longer editable by you. It is imperative that you carefully review your materials prior to submission. You will need to e-mail symbiosis@moore.org with your concerns and reasons for having your application reopened; the decision to re-open an application is at the discretion of foundation staff.

Other Opportunities

How else can I apply for funding from the [Symbiosis in Aquatic Systems Initiative](#)?

The Symbiosis in Aquatic Systems Initiative currently has an open call to support development of model systems through its [Symbiosis Model Systems](#) portfolio. We do not have other opportunities at this time. If you or your colleagues would like to receive future announcements from the Moore Foundation, please add your contact information to our database: [Symbiosis in Aquatic Systems Initiative Announcements](#). To sign up for future Simons Foundation Life Sciences RFA announcements, please click [here](#).