National Psoriasis Foundation Awards New Grants and Fellowships to Continue the Drive Toward a Cure

As NPF prepares to celebrate its 60th anniversary, they proudly announce the 2026 grant award recipients.

ALEXANDRIA, VA, UNITED STATES, September 17, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Today, the National Psoriasis Foundation (NPF) announced its 2026 Grant and Fellowship Award recipients. This year's awards arrive ahead of the organization's 60th anniversary and recognize a group of projects aimed at advancing the treatment and management of psoriatic disease through the exploration of precision medicine, new therapeutic pathways, and the systemic inflammatory nature of the disease.

As the worldwide leading nonprofit funder of psoriatic disease research, NPF fulfills its mission by driving efforts to cure psoriatic disease and improve the lives of all those who live with psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis (PsA).

Since 1987, NPF Grants and Fellowships have provided critical funding to the psoriatic disease research community while creating ample opportunities for investigators to strengthen their case for crucial follow-on funding from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and other major funders. With this year's funding awarded, NPF has now surpassed $40 million in psoriatic disease research grant and fellowship funding.

"Each year we select highly meritorious research investigations that align with our strategic objectives: curing and best treating psoriatic disease, and improving the health of everyone in this community," said Leah M. Howard, J.D., the President and CEO of NPF. "Past NPF funding has accelerated nearly every breakthrough in treatments that our community has today. This year, we're proud to fund a group of investigations that continue the progress we've begun."

"The world's understanding of psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis is deep and rapidly expanding because of NPF funding," said Guy Eakin, Ph.D., the Chief Scientific and Medical Officer of NPF. "Over many years, NPF has remained a reliable funder that today's best minds in psoriatic disease can depend on to fuel the next round of innovation and advancement."

In addition to deepening the understanding of psoriatic disease and its comorbidities, NPF fosters an environment conducive to future breakthroughs by encouraging researchers to

remain in the fields of psoriasis and PsA with dependable funding and collaborative support.

Expanding the Psoriatic Disease Research Landscape

NPF's extramural research program is more than a collection of individual awards. It is a strategic investment in work that:
- Fosters psoriatic disease research community growth and retention with dependable funding
- Launches promising early-stage investigations and innovative ideas that lead to future treatment developments and a better understanding of the disease
- Encourages interinstitutional collaboration among the field's current and future leaders

"So many researchers are in a challenging funding environment. At NPF, we are proud to provide the timely support needed to advance psoriatic disease research and sustain our decades of momentum," said Murphy Wray, PharmD., the Director of Scientific Research and Award Management at NPF.

Seeding Creative Ideas for Follow-On Funding

NPF has a track record of funding creative and often outside-the-box ideas to allow for the preliminary data and insights necessary to strengthen a researcher's applications for funding from the NIH or the pharmaceutical industry.

"Scientific research is an exploration," said Wray. "Every NPF-supported grant is an exploration of an idea that will keep us moving relentlessly toward our vision of a world without psoriatic disease."

The 2026 NPF Grant and Fellowship Award recipients were chosen by a psoriatic disease expert panel chaired by Daniella Schwartz, M.D., and Bahram Razani, Ph.D., M.D., both previous NPF grant recipients. These experts and the community of people impacted by psoriatic disease have helped NPF establish a set of research priorities that address today's most urgent needs and set us up to leverage scientific and medical advances.

NPF Research Grant Priorities
- Novel therapeutic development
- Advancing personalized medicine
- Better understanding how psoriatic disease interacts with other inflammatory conditions
- Recruiting, training, and retaining researchers

Advancing Personalized Medicine

Currently, there are no validated biomarkers available in the management of psoriatic disease. To help move this field forward, NPF awarded Discovery and Early Career Research Grants to examine biomarker development.

- An NPF Discovery Grant will study wearable activity monitors and Artificial Intelligence to develop early, non-invasive digital markers of treatment response.
- Two NPF Early Career Grants* will explore the development of a psoriasis-specific imaging biomarker to identify patients at a higher risk of heart disease, and predict which PsA patients are at the highest risk of disease progression and joint damage.

* NPF's Early Career Research Grants are made possible through the generous support of the Sue Shoenberg Endowment for Early Career Research Grants.

With the knowledge that over 100 genes are linked to the development of psoriatic disease, NPF has awarded more than a half-dozen grants to enhance our understanding of genetic and environmental risk.

- Four NPF Discovery Grants will look at the effects of pollution, using genetics for personalized care, examining genetics to learn more about how skin responds to inflammation, and understanding how genetic factors both increase risk of disease and protect against infections.

- An NPF Bridge Grant will aim to identify genetic risk factors with the goal of developing ways that the body can develop tolerance to those risks.
- An NPF Early Career Grant* recipient will explore the impact of gum disease on psoriasis due to shared inflammatory pathways.

Addressing Systemic Nature of Psoriatic Disease

Psoriatic disease is a chronic inflammatory disorder affecting the entire body. Understanding and preventing systemic inflammation is the key to protecting patients from relapse and development of serious related disorders.

- One NPF Discovery Grant will focus on cardiovascular risk, mapping fat cells for the first time to test whether they drive systemic disease.
- Another NPF Discovery Grant will dive deep into whether the gut microbiome is changed by diet and weight loss, to potentially help guide future diet-based treatment strategies.
- An NPF Early Career Grant* will be targeting a key protein to see if they can identify new treatment strategies that can improve skin disease and related metabolic health.
- An NPF Translational Grant** will utilize skin and blood samples from before and after GLP-1 use to examine how inflammation changes at the cellular level.

** NPF's Translational Research Grants are made possible through the generous support of John S. Schwartz / David Schwartz Foundation, Inc.

New Therapeutic Development

There is an opportunity for the development of therapeutic agents along multiple pathogenic axes in psoriatic disease. NPF is supporting grants to help lead to the development of novel targets.

- One NPF Discovery Grant will examine nerve-immune interactions aiming to identify new ways to reduce skin inflammation, pain, and itch.
- Another NPF Discovery Grant will explore a new approach that enhances the skin's own cannabinoid signaling system, which regulates inflammation and skin cell growth.
- An NPF Early Career Grant* will focus on chronic itch and how skin inflammatory mediators affect the function of protective neurons.
- An NPF Translational Grant** will aim to develop a first-in-class inhibitor that will target skin cells, exploring an entirely new molecular pathway.

Advances in disease biology, formulations, and delivery produce real-world, clinically meaningful therapeutic interventions. That is why NPF is awarding grants exploring new ways of delivering therapies.

- An NPF Discovery Grant will be aimed at utilizing a topical IL-17A that targets specific inflammatory molecules in the skin.
- An NPF Translational Grant** recipient will explore a new delivery technique for delivering treatment by importing hydrogel technologies from other therapeutic areas to psoriatic disease.

New proof-of-concept research is essential to developing new ways of improving the quality of life and health of people with psoriatic disease.

- Two NPF Discovery Grants will focus on examining a key enzyme that is elevated in psoriasis lesions, learning how it controls inflammation and assessing potential as a new therapeutic target. The other will dig deeper into mechanisms that initiate psoriatic inflammation.

Recruiting, Training, and Retaining Researchers

Supporting emerging, talented researchers is essential. The NPF Early Career Research Grants and NPF Fellowship Grants not only drive research but also serve as a longer-term investment in the future pipeline of scientists and physician-researchers in psoriatic disease.

- NPF has awarded an additional grant in this area that will aim to better understand itch – specifically a better understanding of the nerve cells – and how this may worsen inflammation and itch.
- Through the generous support of Dr. Mark Lebwohl, NPF has also awarded a Fellowship grant that will aim to improve the understanding of psoriasis by studying immune-acting fibroblasts and their role in psoriasis.

The full portfolio of 2026 NPF Research Grant and Fellowship awardees is available online at psoriasis.org/npf-funded-research-projects.

In 2027, NPF will celebrate its 60th year of representing all those impacted by psoriatic disease and its related comorbidities. These 2026 NPF grant recipients will each play a crucial role in furthering six decades' worth of advancements toward a cure.

Earlier this year, NPF announced the Milestones to a Cure grants initiative. Currently, experts are reviewing letter-of-interest submissions for six continents, all aimed at identifying and overcoming the remaining barriers on the road to a cure. Sixty years of NPF-led progress have brought the community to within view of a future without psoriatic disease. NPF's Milestones to a Cure will achieve that vision by awarding the best minds in psoriatic disease with the resources to address and explore the key remaining questions on the path to a cure.

Learn more about Milestones to a Cure at psoriasis.org/milestones-to-a-cure-rfp.

About The National Psoriasis Foundation

NPF is the largest nonprofit funder of psoriatic disease research in the world and the leading organization representing individuals with psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis. The mission of NPF is to drive efforts to cure psoriatic disease and improve the lives of more than 8 million individuals in the United States affected by this chronic immune-mediated disease. Learn more at psoriasis.org.

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