

2027 Beckman Young Investigator Program Letter of Intent Frequently Asked Questions

For additional questions, contact:

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Eligibility:

1. The Beckman Young Investigator program states that applicants must be within the first four years of a tenure-track position (or equivalent) with a hire date no sooner than Jan 1, 2022? ***Am I eligible if I:***

A. Hold a non-tenured assistant professor position

B. Will accept a tenure-track position with a start date on/after July 31, 2026

C. Currently hold a tenure-track position with more than 4 years since my hire date at my current or previous institution and have **not** experienced any “stop-the-clock” events. See question 3 for more information on what counts as a “stop-the-clock” event.

No. Examples A, B and C are not eligible to apply for the BYI Program.

2. What if I currently hold a tenure-track position with more than 4 years since my hire date at my current or previous institution, but had one or more “stop-the-clock” events? ***Am I eligible to apply?***

Maybe. It depends on the length of each event and how far beyond 4 years you are in your independent academic position. If your “stop-the-clock” event(s) equal at least as much time as you are beyond 4 years, then yes, you are likely eligible to apply.

If you believe that you are eligible despite being in an independent position for more than 4 years, please send a brief summary of your “stop-the-clock” events, along with signed documentation from your institution of your leave for those events, to byi@beckman-foundation.org before opening a BYI Letter of Intent application. Please note that the Beckman Foundation offers a full year extension for each child that you added to your family through either birth or adoption, regardless of the length of your leave. Qualifying leaves may have occurred during your postdoctoral training and/or your current role as a Principal Investigator (PI), but both will require documentation from your current or former (postdoc) institution.

3. What counts as a “stop-the-clock” event?

Parental leave upon the birth or adoption of a child (credited as 12 months, regardless of the length of your leave), leave to care for a sick family member, personal illness, and time away from your position due to a family move are a few common examples of “stop-the-clock” events. Other events may also qualify. If you have a question about whether your event counts as a “stop-the-clock” event, please reach out to byi@beckman-foundation.org.

4. I received my PhD and spent several years in industry before beginning my current assistant professor position. ***Am I eligible to apply?***

Maybe. Applicants must have no more than 10 years post terminal degree and no more than 5 years’ experience in a non-tenure track or industry position. Exceptions are made for postdoctoral training, MD/PhD training, and other similar situations.

5. What is the eligible time frame for those with an MD/PhD?

The Foundation considers the end of residency equivalent to “post terminal” degree. Applicants must be within 10 years of completing their residency to apply.

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6. Despite being in my position for more than 4 years and/or being more than 10 beyond receiving my PhD, I still have NIH Early Stage Investigator (ESI) status. ***Am I eligible to apply?***

No. The Foundation's requirements for the BYI program do not align with NIH ESI status. You must meet the Foundation's requirements to be eligible.

7. What if I currently hold a tenure-track position, am within 4 years of my hire date at my current or previous institution, have not held a non-tenure track or industry position for more than 5 years, but am still more than 10 years beyond earning my PhD? ***Am I eligible to apply?***

Maybe. If you are more than 10 years beyond when you earned your PhD and you did not have a "stop-the-clock" event, then no, you are not eligible to apply. If you have experienced a "stop-the-clock" event since your PhD was granted, then you are still eligible to apply, so long as your "stop-the-clock" event(s) equal at least as much time as you are beyond the 10 years.

If you believe that you are eligible but earned your PhD more than 10 years ago, please send a brief summary of your "stop-the-clock" events, along with signed documentation from your institution of your leave for those events, to byi@beckman-foundation.org before completing a BYI application. Please note that the Beckman Foundation offers a full year extension for each child that you added to your family through either birth or adoption, regardless of the length of your leave.

8. I am not *currently* a United States citizen or permanent resident. ***Am I eligible to apply?***

Yes, you are eligible to apply. Applicants with pending permanent residency are eligible to apply, but official US citizenship or permanent residency documents are required by the BYI Interview (March 16, 2027). Those without documents by that date will not be permitted to advance to the BYI Interview.

9. I currently have over \$225,000 in external funding but:

A. Funding will end one year into the BYI award

B. I am a Co-PI/Co-I on some awards

Am I eligible to apply?

No. Applicants must have annual funding of no more than \$225,000 at the time of the Letter of Intent and Full Application deadlines. Please count only the direct funds your lab receives from all PI, Co-PI, and Co-I awards.

10. I have an R00 grant that together with my other awards exceeds \$225,000 annually. Am I eligible to apply?

Yes. Transition grants (grants received as a postdoc), department wide instrumentation grants, and start-up funds do not count toward the \$225,000 annual limit.

11. I was notified that I will receive an award and have signed a formal agreement but am awaiting funding. Is this funding considered current?

Yes. The Foundation defines CURRENT Funding as funds that your lab has received, or funds that your lab will receive after signing a funding agreement. These funds must be included when you determine your financial eligibility for the BYI award.

12. I have a cutting-edge proposal that fits the Beckman prompt but requires a clinical trial. Am I eligible to apply?

No. The Foundation does not support clinical research, clinical trials, or single target drug discovery projects. Individuals with strictly clinical appointments are not eligible to apply.

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13. I still meet the eligibility requirements but have submitted twice. Am I eligible to apply?

No. Applicants may only submit a maximum of two letters of intent.

14. All components of my letter of intent are complete but I am missing an endorsement. Can I submit?

No. The letter of intent requires two signatures from the Chief Academic Officer and Dean OR similarly authorized person(s).

15. I am an assistant professor in social sciences. Am I eligible to apply?

The Foundation supports chemical and life sciences applications. Please review [previous awardees](#) to better determine if your research aligns with our mission.

Application:

16. My proposal includes a collaboration with another lab. Is this allowed?

Only one principal investigator is allowed on the application, but if awarded, grant money can be used to fund collaborations.

17. May I send my idea for a pre-proposal for consideration to confirm if I should apply?

No. Please review our website and recent awardee projects to determine if your idea would be a good fit for the program.

18. I can only commit 5% of my research time to the program. Is this acceptable?

Yes. The BYI Award does not require a minimum time effort. Research effort does not include teaching or administrative duties.

19. What is an institutional endorsement?

An Institutional Endorsement is an electronic signature that is submitted through the online application. The Letter of Intent requires two Endorsements:

- Chief Academic Officer (President, Chancellor, Provost) or similarly authorized signatory, and
- Dean of the College/School/Division for the participating Academic Unit or similarly authorized signatory

These are NOT letters of recommendation.

20. What are the requirements for the three “independent evaluators”?

We are requesting the names of three individuals who could serve as evaluators for your research, if needed. This also helps the Foundation build a list of researchers in your field for possible future review purposes. Please note that these are not Letters of Recommendation, nor will they be called to review for the current application cycle.

21. I submitted a similar proposal to the NIH. Can I still apply?

The BYI program requires that the project be solely funded by the Beckman Foundation. Minimal overlap is allowed. Please keep in mind that most NIH funding mechanisms would not meet the innovative, novel aims of the BYI program.

22. I have additional information that I would like to include in my application outside of the required documents. May I include supporting materials?

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No. Applicants are only permitted to upload the required documentation.

23. Will reviewers see all the components of my application during the blind review?

No. The Letter of Intent is conducted blind, meaning that while the Foundation asks for additional information at the time of submission, the reviewers will only have access to your pre-proposal. The other information will be used by the Foundation to determine applicant eligibility. In order to allow the Letter of Intent review to be conducted blind, it is critical that you NOT include any identifying information (name, lab members, institution, prior mentors) in the pre-proposal; this includes following the naming conventions for the files and citations. Failure to follow the guidelines for blinding your pre-proposal may lead to application ineligibility.

Application Submission and Next Steps:

24. I ran into an issue and missed the 5 PM PST deadline to submit my application. Can I still submit?

No. The Foundation firmly adheres to the predetermined deadline and does not make exceptions for late applications. We strongly urge applicants to submit early to avoid website traffic and last-minute mishaps.

25. I am experiencing a technical issue with the online application. Who can I contact for assistance?

Please contact the [application help desk](#) for assistance.

26. I have submitted my Letter of Intent. When will I hear back from the Foundation?

BYI applications are reviewed in stages, starting with the LOI. Three reviewers conduct a blind review, and about 100 top candidates advance to the Full Application round. Applicants will be notified in mid-November if they are selected to advance.

27. If my application is chosen to advance, how long will I have to prepare my full application?

After being notified in mid-November, applicants will have until the first part of January to submit their full proposal.