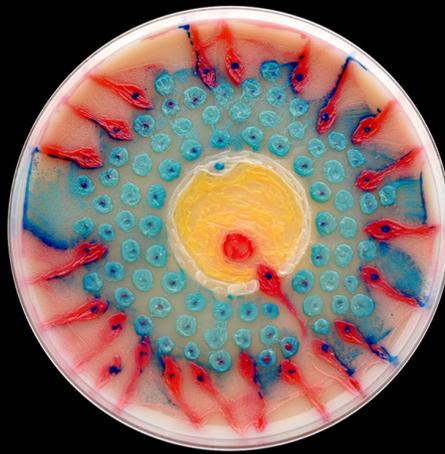




MILKEN INSTITUTE



An Executive Summary

# FUNDING SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

A philanthropist’s decision to invest in scientific research and development may be driven by an array of factors. Their giving may be motivated by personal experience with a specific disease, the desire to help improve health and save lives, or the aspiration to improve the status quo. Regardless of one’s motivations, strategic philanthropic investments in medical research require a careful consideration of the philanthropist’s priorities and an understanding of the current state of research to amplify the impact of their giving.

With support from Apex Foundation, the Milken Institute Philanthropy Advisory Service conducted a landscape analysis of current and best practices for funding scientific research, which was informed by interviews with foundation leaders, philanthropy advisors, and government stakeholders. In this Giving Smarter Guide for Funding Scientific Research, we outline a pathway for defining your philanthropic priorities, aligning them with the unmet needs of a research field and the existing funding ecosystem, and effectively deploying philanthropic capital to universities and research institutions (see right).

Throughout the report, we also highlight standout examples of philanthropic support for scientific research, ranging from a focus on novel research without existing data by the Kenneth Rainin Foundation, workforce development by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, to the collaborative project review and modification model employed by the Jain Foundation (see page 5 of the full report for complete list of case studies).

Scientific research is a noble endeavor—one that many advocate for and professionally pursue. However, difficulties remain in how to identify the best philanthropic process and opportunities to support research. Our goal with this report is to identify common approaches and best practices to address the potential pitfalls and challenges that come with supporting scientific research in academic institutions.

However, as with all things in science, you cannot know what will or will not work until you perform the experiment.

View the full Giving Smarter Guide  
[philanthropy.milkeninstitute.org](http://philanthropy.milkeninstitute.org)



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