

Research Newsletter

By SOMC Office of Research • Feb 05, 2026

Smart Brevity® count: 3.5 mins...931 words

🔥 Welcome to the sixth edition of the Research Roundup where we share important updates and research news to keep you in the know.

In this edition learn about new programs and initiatives to advance faculty research, explore funding opportunities, and save the date for important upcoming events such as Discover USC!



🔥 SOAR Program Seeking Mentors

The SOAR (Student Opportunities for Academic Achievement Through Research) program is preparing for its **2026 cohort**—and we're inviting faculty and researchers to serve as mentors! If you're interested in guiding a medical student through a **meaningful research experience**, now is the time to apply!

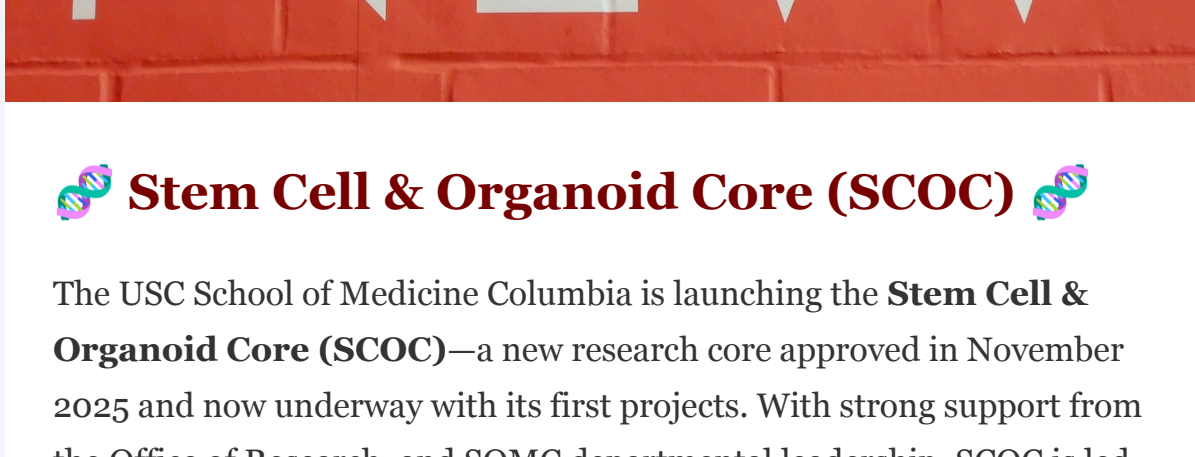
👉 [Apply here.](#)

📅 Closes **February 28, 2026**

Visit the [SOAR website](#) or email us to learn more.

✉ SOAR@uscmed.sc.edu

Programs & Initiatives



🧬 Stem Cell & Organoid Core (SCOC) 🧬

The USC School of Medicine Columbia is launching the **Stem Cell & Organoid Core (SCOC)**—a new research core approved in November 2025 and now underway with its first projects. With strong support from the Office of Research, and SOMC departmental leadership, SCOC is led by [Dr. Wenbin Tan](#) (Director) and [Dr. Camilla Wenceslau](#) (Co-Director).

Key faculty collaborators include **Drs. Daping Fan, Kandy Velazquez, and Gerardo Piroli**. The SCOC will provide cutting-edge human iPSC and organoid resources, disease modeling platforms, and technical training to support translational and regenerative medicine research across USC.

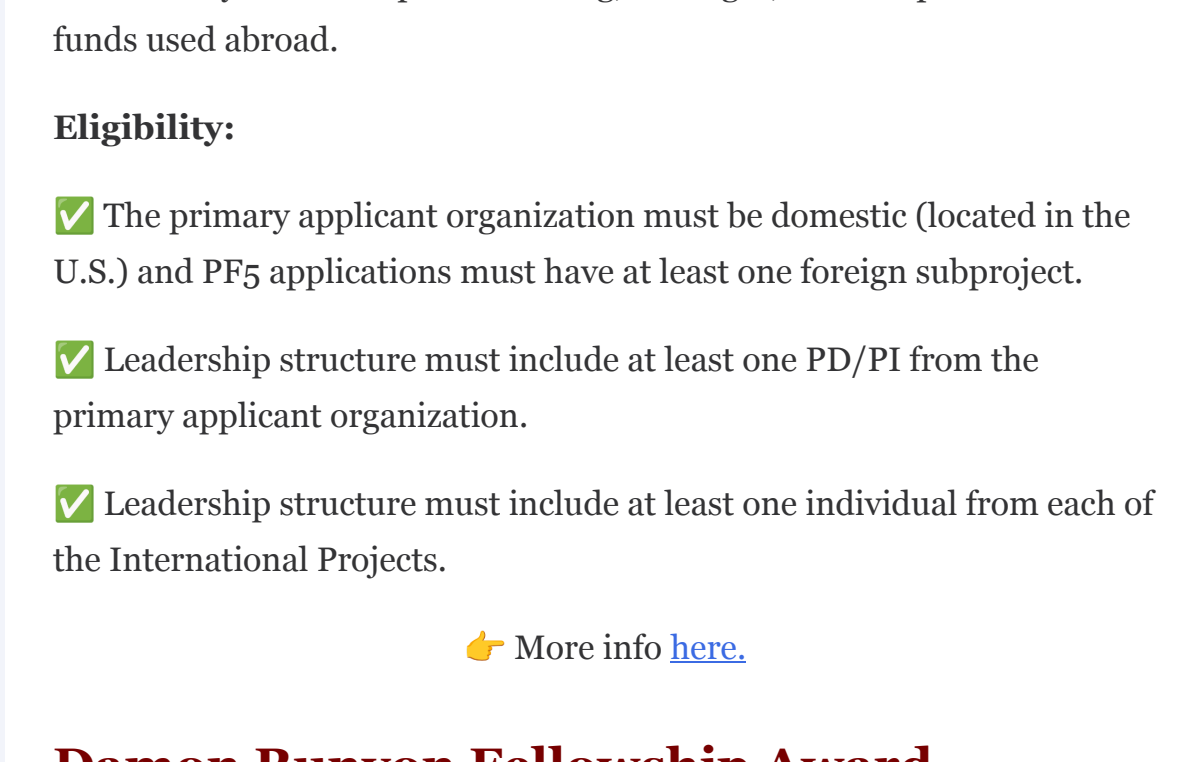
A dedicated SCOC website is currently in development—**stay tuned for more details soon!**

📄🌟 New in 2026: External Grant Review Program 🌟📄

The OOR is providing support for a new **External Grant Review Program** in 2026 to support SOM faculty in strengthening proposals for external funding. Through this initiative, faculty may engage **independent subject-matter experts of their choosing** to provide detailed, constructive feedback on proposal strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for improvement. The OOR will facilitate the process as needed to ensure a smooth review experience.

🎯 This program is designed for investigators who have demonstrated sustained effort in pursuing external funding and are seeking stronger outcomes, as well as those with frequent submissions looking to enhance proposal competitiveness.

Funding Opportunities



NEW NIH Funding Mechanism - PF5 - Collaborative International Research Project

NIH's **PF5** award supports **international research collaborations** between U.S. institutions and foreign partners. It replaces the old foreign subaward system to improve tracking, oversight, and compliance of NIH funds used abroad.

Eligibility:

- ✅ The primary applicant organization must be domestic (located in the U.S.) and PF5 applications must have at least one foreign subproject.
- ✅ Leadership structure must include at least one PD/PI from the primary applicant organization.
- ✅ Leadership structure must include at least one individual from each of the International Projects.

👉 More info [here](#).

Damon Runyon Fellowship Award

[The Damon Runyon Cancer Research Foundation](#) is now accepting applications for the **Damon Runyon Fellowship Award for postdoctoral researchers**. The foundation encourages all theoretical and experimental research that has the potential to provide insights into cancer and the search for cancer causes, mechanisms, therapies and prevention for all types of cancer.

📅 Applications due **March 16, 2026**.

👉 More info [here](#).

For questions: ✉ chris.segars@sc.edu or ☎ 803-576-6139

Augusta SCORE Program

[The NIH-funded Augusta SCORE Program](#) is pleased to announce pilot grants to support early career investigators who are interested in engaging in sex as a biological variable (SABV)-related research. Pilot grants can be requested to 1) to expand current research not focused on SABV to include SABV or 2) to increase capacity to assess SABV.

📅 Applications due **February 27, 2026**.

For questions: ✉ michael.ryan@uscmed.sc.edu

💎 Not seeing any funding opportunities that apply to you? 💎

👉 Check out the [Limited Submissions page](#) for the latest listing of limited funding opportunities.

Upcoming Conferences & Events



Discover USC Registration Now Open!

Registration for **Discover USC 2026** is now open for [presenters](#) and [reviewers](#).

Please encourage **students, post docs, and residents** to submit presentations and **consider serving as a reviewer!**

👉 Check out [this page](#) to learn more.

SAVE THE DATE: Women's Health Research Forum

Equity in Action: Bridging Clinical Care and Community Realities to Advance Women's Health

Prisma Midlands Department of OB/GYN is bringing back the annual **Women's Health Research Forum**. A free educational and networking event for clinicians, researchers, professionals, and policymakers across Women's Health.

📅 Friday, March 27, 2026 ([Add to Calendar](#))

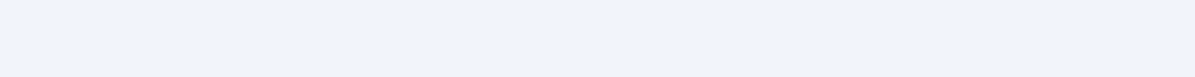
📍 Brookland Banquet and Conference Center

1066 Sunset Blvd.

West Columbia, SC 29169

👉 Register [here](#).

Action Items



♥ Complete Required Research Security Trainings

Federal regulations and sponsor agency requirements have resulted in mandatory annual research security and related training for covered individuals, defined as those who contribute in a substantive and meaningful way to the scientific development or execution of federally funded research projects.

Who: All covered individuals, as defined above.

What: CITI web-based module on research security (or an advanced refresher course providing foundational information on research security)

When: Research security training is required on an annual basis as follows:

- If this is your first time taking research security training, you must take the "Research Security Training (Combined Course)."
 - If you have completed the Research Security Training (Combined Course) previously, you may take the "Research Security Advanced Refresher" course in subsequent years.
- 👉 [Complete the training on the CITI platform.](#)

Thank you for reading this month's issue of the *Research Roundup*! We hope you found it helpful. If you have any suggestions for future issues or would like to share research news or opportunities, please let us know!

Were you forwarded this email and want to subscribe to future editions? Contact us, and we'd be happy to add you to our mailing list!

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