Male Contraceptive Initiative Undergraduate Project Grant Request for Applications

Purpose: This request for applications is for undergraduate students interested in working on projects related to new male contraception.

Background: Nearly half of all pregnancies worldwide are unintended. Furthermore, current contraceptive options do not adequately meet the needs of users who desire contraception. Male Contraceptive Initiative (MCI), a US-based 501(c)3 nonprofit, is a funding agency and advocate for new male contraceptive solutions that are effective, safe, reversible, and non-hormonal.

The project is supervised by MCI and the MCI Youth Advisory Board (YAB). The YAB is composed of undergraduate and recent graduate youth, aged 16-27, who are engaged in social research and advocacy work around understanding youth perceptions and needs of male contraception, and ultimately bringing male contraception to market. Successful grantees will be matched with a YAB member mentor, in addition to having the support of MCI staff.

Project details: Projects must be small-scale research or advocacy projects applicable to the understanding or development of new, nonhormonal, reversible male contraceptives. Projects must be conducted over the 2025-26 academic year. Successful applicants will receive $500-1000 in funding (paid in 2 installments over the life of the project), mentorship from MCI, and may be invited to the YAB volunteer committee. Project scopes may include, but are not limited to:

- advocating for expanded methods of contraception
- qualitative or quantitative research on perceptions of/need for/interest in male contraception
- policy advocacy activities
- bench science conducted in a lab that is developing male contraceptive targets

Other projects may be considered; please contact kathryn@malecontraceptive.org to discuss.

Eligible applicants: Applicants must be enrolled undergraduates at accredited domestic and foreign universities or colleges. Groups are eligible to apply, but must contact kathryn@malecontraceptive.org for requirements. US and international applicants are eligible. Applicants should be able to effectively read, write, and speak English. YAB members, MCI staff, MCI practicum students/fellows, and other recipients of MCI funding are not eligible to apply.

Open date: Oct 20, 2025
Application due date: Nov 22, 2025
Grant amount: $500-1000 USD

Application documents:

Please include the following application documents in order to apply for this opportunity. Please send documents to kathryn@malecontraceptive.org by Nov 22, 2025.

- A CV or resume.
- A brief cover letter (~250 words) describing academic, professional, volunteer, or other relevant experience, and interest in male contraception.
- A project proposal (~500-1000 words). Please describe the project that you would like to conduct. Projects can be advocacy projects, market research projects, qualitative or quantitative projects, or bench science work. Proposal must include project goals, process, timeline, justification, and plan for final deliverables and deliverable dissemination. Applicants are encouraged to consider potential time constraints they may face (e.g. Institutional Review Board approval) in their timeline to ensure that project activities can be completed within the designated time frame.
- A brief budget justification, describing the amount of funds students are requesting, and how the funds will be used. Funds can be used as a stipend or to support project costs.
- If applicable, the name and contact information of a faculty mentor or advisor. This is strongly suggested but not required. Faculty mentors/advisors are not required to have expertise in the field of male contraception.

Applicants are encouraged to reach out to kathryn@malecontraceptive.org at MCI to review any application questions they may have and to ensure eligibility and viability of the project–at least two weeks prior to the due date is suggested. Applicants are also encouraged to review the information and publications on https://www.malecontraceptive.org/ to help orient them to the field of male contraception. In addition, applicants are encouraged to review https://www.malecontraceptive.org/yab-project-grant.html for examples of past projects.

Decision process:

Awards will be selected based primarily on relevance and feasibility of the proposed project, and candidate strength. MCI and the YAB may reach out to applicants for clarification if needed throughout the application process. Selections will be made by the YAB and MCI staff. Successful applicants will carry out the work with oversight from MCI and the YAB.

Decisions will be made by late 2025/early 2026.

Reporting:

Awardees will be required to have brief check in meetings at least 2-4 times throughout the grant or as needed to assess progress. Successful applicants will also be invited to present their work at a YAB meeting.

Final project reports are required for all projects and will be delivered to both MCI and the Parsemus Foundation, an MCI partner and partial funder of the grant. Further dissemination such as publication through white papers, digital or print advocacy materials, commentaries, advocacy plans, published articles in scientific and journalistic outlets, etc. will be strongly encouraged, dependent on the project, and developed with input from the applicant and MCI.

MCI and Parsemus may publicly disseminate and host materials through appropriate channels including social media and web publication. Dissemination and promotion of results will be done in such a way to promote both the project and the grantee. The grantee may be featured on MCI and Parsemus website and social media.

Due to the nature of the project and the limited academic experience of the grantees, journal publication will not be required, but may be encouraged depending on the project. Any journal publication resulting from efforts supported by MCI funds is required to be Open Access, such that a member of the public can view the article without paywalls or other impediments. Additional funding to support Open Access fees may be requested as appropriate.