

**The Heart Center
&
Pediatric Technology Center**

Request for Applications

Overview

The Heart Center at Children's Healthcare of Atlanta in collaboration with the Pediatric Technology Center (PTC) at Georgia Tech invites Letters of Intent (LOIs) for collaborative seed grants supporting the development of novel devices, technologies, and analytical approaches to improve outcomes for children with heart disease. This funding mechanism is designed to catalyze translational research partnerships between clinical investigators at Children's Healthcare of Atlanta (CHOA), and engineering or data science investigators at Emory University and Georgia Tech.

Awards are capped at \$100,000 in direct costs, with no money allocated for indirect costs. Projects must be grounded in a clear path to extramural funding.

Two-Stage Application Process

This RFA uses a two-stage review process. Only investigators whose LOIs are invited to submit a full application will be eligible for funding.

Stage 1: Letter of Intent

Deadline: July 15, 2026

LOIs will be reviewed by the Heart Center scientific leadership for fit, feasibility, and strategic alignment. Investigators will be notified of invitation status within 2 weeks.

LOI requirements (2 pages maximum):

- Title and names/institutions of all key personnel
- Background and significance: the clinical problem and the gap in pediatric cardiac care
- Innovation: the proposed technology, device, or analytical approach
- Collaboration plan: how CHOA, Emory, and Georgia Tech expertise are integrated
- Anticipated deliverables within 12 months
- Target extramural mechanism and anticipated submission timeline

Stage 2: Full Application (Invited Only)

Deadline: September 1, 2026

Invited teams will be asked to submit a full application. Full application requirements are described in the Application Requirements section below.

Key Dates

LOI submission deadline: 7/15/2026

LOI decisions communicated: 8/1/2026

Full application deadline (invited): 9/1/2026

Anticipated project start date: 1/1/2027

Submissions: Email PDF to Mary Anne Geryak (mary.anne.riley@emory.edu)

Eligibility

- The lead PI must hold a primary faculty appointment at CHOA or Emory.
- Each project must involve active, substantive collaboration between at least one clinical investigator at CHOA and at least one engineering or data science investigator at Emory/Georgia Tech.
- Research must be relevant to pediatric cardiac health and align with one or more of the scientific focus areas below.
- No faculty effort funding. Salary support for faculty is not allowable.
- No indirect costs (F&A). All funds must be used as direct project costs.

Scientific Focus Areas

Applications must align with one of the following focus areas. Projects that bridge multiple areas are encouraged.

- Wearable, implantable, or non-invasive sensors for cardiac and physiologic monitoring in neonates and infants
- Body surface mapping technologies (cardiac, gastric, neural) adapted for pediatric use
- Smart perioperative devices for congenital heart disease surgical care
- Miniaturized or pediatric-adapted cardiovascular devices
- 3D printing and patient-specific modeling for surgical or catheter-based planning
- Home monitoring and remote care platforms for children with congenital or acquired heart disease
- Device-tissue interface or biomaterial innovations for pediatric applications
- Automated analysis of cardiac imaging (echocardiography, CT, MRI) using deep learning
- Multi-modal data integration (imaging, physiologic, genomic, microbiome) for pediatric cardiac phenotyping
- AI-assisted device or wearable signal interpretation

Projects should demonstrate clear potential to generate preliminary data and/or intellectual property supporting subsequent extramural funding.

Full Application Requirements (Invited Teams)

Full applications may not exceed 4 pages (excluding references, biosketches, and budget). Applications must include:

Research Proposal (4 pages max)

- Specific Aims page
- Background and Significance
- Innovation: what is novel about the approach relative to existing technologies or methods
- Approach: Experimental or development plan with milestones and anticipated outcomes
- CHOA–Emory/Georgia Tech collaboration: roles of each team and why this partnership is essential
- Limitations and mitigation strategies
- Timeline and pathway to extramural funding

Additional Required Components

- NIH-SciENCv formatted biosketches for all key personnel (not counted in page limit)
- Budget with line-item justification (not counted in page limit)
- References (not counted in page limit)

Review Criteria

Full applications will be reviewed by Heart Center scientific leadership.

Proposals will be scored on:

- Scientific merit and innovation — novelty and rigor of the proposed approach
- Relevance to pediatric cardiac health — clinical significance and potential patient impact
- Strength of the cross-institutional collaboration — complementarity and integration of expertise
- Feasibility — likelihood of achieving stated deliverables within 12 months and within budget
- Extramural pathway — specificity and realism of the path to external funding
- Translational potential — likelihood of advancing toward clinical use or commercialization

Budget Guidelines

Maximum award: \$100,000 direct costs

No faculty effort: Salary support for faculty investigators is not allowed

No indirect costs: F&A costs may not be charged against this award.

Allowable direct costs include:

- Research personnel (coordinators, research assistants, technicians, students, postdoctoral fellows)
- Supplies and reagents
- Device fabrication, prototyping, or engineering materials
- Computing infrastructure or cloud resources directly required for the project
- Data acquisition or licensing costs
- Subject-related costs (e.g., sample processing, study procedures)
- Travel, publication and open-access fees

Expectations for Funded Projects

- Progress report at 6 months
- Final report and presentation to Heart Center at 12 months
- At least one peer-reviewed publication submission or accepted abstract at a national or international meeting by award end
- Acknowledgment of funding in all resulting publications and presentations

Questions and Submissions

For questions about eligibility, focus areas, or application requirements:

Michael Davis, PhD

Director of Children's Heart Research and Outcomes Center (HeRO)

michael.davis@bme.gatech.edu

Michael Fundora, MD

Director of Clinical Research

Associate Director of Children's Heart Research and Outcomes Center (HeRO)

Michael.Fundora@emory.edu