

# BRIGHT IDEAS

Insights & opportunities from Mizzou Research

Vol. 8, No. 8 — March 2026

[View grants and contracts awarded in January.](#)



## Facilitating room for ideas

Brainstorms don't come without effort, and The Connector helps establish the right foundation for sharing via Research Interest Groups. [See how they orchestrate these meetups so scientists can focus on the big ideas.](#)



## Protect research enterprise

Effective **April 1**, principal investigators and key personnel on all proposals for federal grants or flow-through federal funding [must complete MU's one-hour research security training](#) before funding applications are submitted.



## Building a stronger safety culture on campus

Hosted by Environmental Health & Safety, Lab Safety Awareness Week in February included training, discussions and demos that reinforced safety as a team sport at Mizzou. [See photos and winners of the inaugural Safety MVP Award.](#)



## Brainy fun

More than 300 children and their families engaged with Mizzou faculty, staff and students on Feb. 28 at the Columbia Young Scientists Fair and Expo. [See who had a booth and a photo gallery of experiments and discoveries.](#)



## Seizing an epidemiological opportunity

The Marc Johnson lab at Bond LSC plans to partner with health departments and wastewater treatment plants to [study viral pathogen spread during 2026 FIFA World Cup events](#) as millions travel from city to city in a short timeframe.

## Professional development

### Qualitative research @ Mizzou

[Faculty and graduate students are invited to meet](#) from 1-3 p.m. on **March 9** at The Reflector, Townsend Hall, for a discussion about developing better support and networks for qualitative researchers. The event, which includes a panel of scholars and networking, is part of a larger effort to develop a [Qualitative Research Interest Group](#).

### Facilitating campus youth programs

[This in-person workshop](#) hosted by The Connector will offer tips on creating campus K-12 programs from **12:30-2:30 p.m. on March 12** (Room 572, Bond LSC). Lunch will be provided. Attendance at the first session on Feb. 5 is not required to register for this session. [Register.](#)

### Research writing retreats

Read, write and think in community with other scholars during upcoming writing retreats. The Professional Development team will be on hand for individual consultations from **9:30 a.m.-3 p.m. on March 16** (Room 171, Bond LSC). Drop in and out as needed. [Register for this month's retreat.](#)

### Using AI in grant proposal development

Participants will learn how generative AI tools can aid in the proposal development process in this webinar from **noon-1 p.m. on March 17**. We will explore ethics, funder requirements to disclose use of AI and university resources. A panel of campus experts also will answer questions. [Register.](#)

### Virtual Principal Investigator Leadership Program

[Learn best practices](#) and avoid common pitfalls in project management, meeting grant deliverables and team effectiveness from **noon-1:30 p.m. on April 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10**. [Register by March 31.](#)

## Resources and opportunities



Celebrate research and creative achievements during [Show Me Research Week, April 20-24](#).

- Make sure students [register](#) their oral and poster presentations by **March 31**.
- [Sign up](#) to be a judge by **April 3**.



Share your research through film. Mizzou [faculty are invited to submit panelists and pop culture movie selections](#) by **March 31** for possible inclusion in the Extra Credit film series hosted by The Connector and Ragtag Cinema.

**Is this private funding right for your project?**  
The W. M. Keck Foundation funds science, engineering and medical research with grants from \$1 to \$1.5 million. [Join an info session with this Zoom link](#) at 4 p.m. **March 10**. MU's [limited submissions](#) due date for research summaries and CVs is **April 6**. [Email Donna Van Pelt to request a meeting.](#)

**Need video help for a grant proposal?**  
Mizzou Visual Productions can help faculty with video needs for research projects and grant proposals or reviews. [Use this form to request assistance.](#)

**Share a compelling research image**  
[The Advanced Light Microscopy core \(ALMC\) is accepting entries for their annual contest.](#) To participate, upload a TIF file of an image taken or prepared on any ALMC instrument by **April 13**.

**From Mizzou Libraries:**

- [Researchers can now access ProQuest Digital Collections](#), a vast repository of primary resources that span six centuries and covering a multitude of topics and disciplines.
- New read and publish agreements allow scholars to [publish open access for free](#) or at a discounted rate.
- [Learn how to use MOspace](#), the university's digital repository at **2 p.m. on March 11**.

## Mark your calendar



Dennis Miller, associate teaching professor in psychological sciences, [will discuss neuroscience basics and why we do what we do](#). Learn how the brain's biology leads to behaviors, cognitions and emotions. Join us at **10 a.m. on March 14** in Room 171, Bond LSC.



[Wade Foster, co-founder and CEO of Zapier, will share how he built a globally influential, remote-first company](#) by identifying market opportunities, leveraging technology and leading with purpose at **5:30 p.m. on March 18**, Monsanto Auditorium, Bond LSC.

## Deadlines

**Limited submissions funding**

**March 23:** [Dr. Ralph and Marian Falk Research Catalyst Award](#)

**March 23:** [Pew Biomedical Scholars 2027](#)

**April 6:** [W. M. Keck Foundation Research Program](#)

**Institutional Review Board (IRB)**

**March 25:** [Submit](#) human subjects research applications, amendments and annual updates for April 8 full board review.

**Research Council grants**

**March 30:** Applications due by 5 p.m. [Email internal funding staff](#) with questions.

**Institutional Biosafety Committee**

**April 7:** [Submit](#) research protocols for May 7 meeting.

## Events

**HRPP/IRB research compliance seminar**

**March 9** (2 p.m.) – Emergency use of a test article, such as a device, investigational drug or biologic ([Request Zoom link](#).)

**NextGen Precision Health Discovery Series**

**March 13** (noon) – ["Curiosity-Driven Innovation in a Complex World"](#)

**Extra Credit film series**

**March 18** (6 p.m.) – "Barbie" and researcher panel discussion

**Grant Connections meeting**

**March 25** (10 a.m.) – Services offered by the three campus data hubs ([Zoom link](#))

**Mizzou Revvity Innovation Summit**

**March 31** (all day) – Presentations on cutting-edge research and emerging trends in science and technology ([Register](#).)

## In case you missed it



In a recent study, researcher [Smita Saxena showed that a natural molecule called GM1 can reach the brain when it's wrapped inside a tiny fat-based bubble](#), a novel delivery method to treat amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) symptoms.



[Engineering Associate Professor Praveen Rao has been named](#) a National Academy of Sciences Senior Member, and Curator's Professor [Wes Warren will receive a Fellows Award](#) from the Academy of Science-St. Louis in April.



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