



## Burroughs Wellcome Fund Sponsor Guide

May 2025

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### Executive Summary

[Burroughs Wellcome Fund \(BWF\)](#) is an independent foundation dedicated to advancing biomedical research by supporting research and educational activities. To achieve this, they provide financial support through competitive, peer-review award programs. In fiscal year 2023, they awarded more than \$36 million in grants and fellowships to researchers.

Keywords: Biomedicine, health, infectious disease, early career, interdisciplinary, STEM, education, climate

### Background

The Burroughs Wellcome Fund (BWF) was established in 1955 as the corporate foundation of the pharmaceutical firm Burroughs Wellcome and Co. BWF became fully independent in 1993 following a \$400 million endowment from the Wellcome Trust in the United Kingdom. Today, BWF stands as an independent private foundation whose mission is to advance the medical sciences by supporting research and other scientific and educational activities.

### What They Fund

BWF primarily supports initiatives that align with its mission to advance biomedical sciences and education. Key funding areas include:

- **Early-Career Support:** Programs like the Career Awards for Medical Scientists provide substantial funding to physician-scientists transitioning from postdoctoral training to faculty positions.
- **Interdisciplinary Research:** BWF encourages research at the interface of biology and quantitative sciences, recognizing the importance of cross-disciplinary approaches in modern science.
- **STEM Education:** The Fund supports science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education initiatives to foster the next generation of scientists.
- **Climate Change and Human Health:** BWF has launched seed grant programs to stimulate collaborations between researchers in disparate fields to address the health impacts of climate change, as well as a center of excellence program to

help institutions bridge the gap between fields needed to understand the impacts of climate change on human health.

BWF programs (past and present) can be found on [this page](#).

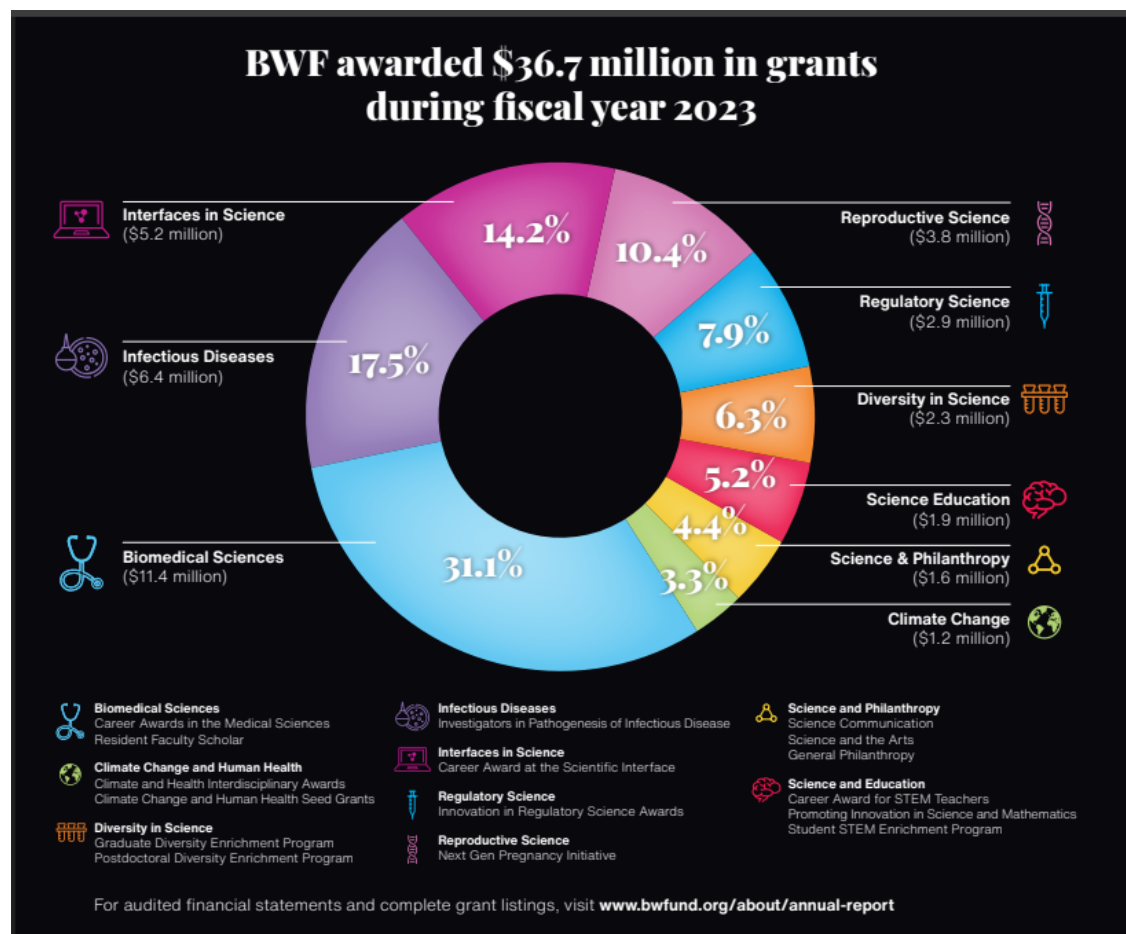


Figure 1. Distribution of BWF Grants, FY2023 (from BWF 2023 Annual Report)

## Grant-making process

BWF makes grants primarily to degree-granting institutions on behalf of individual researchers via competitive award programs. They typically implement a peer-review process to select winning proposals. Advisory Committees review applications based on scientific merit, innovation, and potential impact. The committees make recommendations to the Board of Directors for final approval.

In addition to competitive grants, BWF also makes noncompetitive grants -Ad Hocs -for areas that are closely related to their major focus areas. These grants are intended to enhance the general environment for research in the targeted areas. Many of these grants appear to support scientific meetings and conferences.