

Bower Award and Prize For Achievement in Science 2026

Sponsor

The Franklin Institute

Description

Since 1824, the Franklin Institute of Philadelphia has honored the legacy of Benjamin Franklin by presenting awards for outstanding achievements in science, engineering and industry. Past laureates include Thomas Edison, Marie Curie, Claude Shannon, Jane Goodall, Nikola Tesla, Stephen Hawking, Edward Lorenz, the Wright Brothers, Bill Gates, and Albert Einstein.

This year's theme is **Human Gene Therapy**.

Nominations should recognize contributions to fundamental or application-oriented science with broad impact and should clearly indicate the scientific significance—innovative, technical and/or conceptual—and the societal/economic impact of the nominee's work. Since the concept of gene therapy was proposed more than 50 years ago, the development of therapeutic approaches using directed modification of DNA or cells has made significant progress in tackling challenges of biological complexity. Applications of gene editing systems, novel delivery platforms, and immunotherapies now have the potential to be 'game-changers' in the treatment of diseases ranging from in-born errors of metabolism to cancers. Nominations should recognize fundamental contributions to the development of strategies for engineering genetic alterations to cells for the treatment of human disease.

Nominations are encouraged in, but not limited to, the following areas:

- Ex vivo/in vivo cellular engineering
- In vivo gene transfer
- Cell-based gene therapies
- Development of viral and non-viral delivery platforms
- Mediators of genotoxicity

Eligibility

- This is an international competition for individuals who have pioneered novel strategies for engineering genetic alterations to cells for the treatment of human disease.
- Candidates must be living, and the winner must participate in The Franklin Institute Awards Week programs, to be held in April 2026 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA.
- Nominations from any individual or organization will be accepted, including self-

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nominations.

- Additional criteria may be found on the [Bower Award and Prize for Achievement in Science web page](#).
- Nominations of candidates traditionally underrepresented in science and engineering are particularly encouraged.
- **An email of intent to nominate would be appreciated by April 30th, 2025.**

Prize

The award, a 14k gold medal, and cash prize of \$250,000 USD are presented annually to a distinguished member of the international scientific community.

Deadlines

If College-level review is required, your College will communicate its earlier internal deadlines.

Type	Date	Notes
External Deadline	Friday, May 30, 2025 - 11:59pm	Please submit the nomination directly to Beth Scheraga, bscheraga@fi.edu . Please also submit a copy of the full nomination and OR-5 to research.services@uoguelph.ca .

How to Apply

Applications must be emailed directly to Beth Scheraga, bscheraga@fi.edu. Further information on nomination criteria is available on the [Bower Award and Prize for Achievement in Science website](#). Please submit an OR-5 and a completed application to research.services@uoguelph.ca by the external deadline.

For More Information

Contact Ailsa Kay at ailsakay@uoguelph.ca or Beth Scheraga at bscheraga@fi.edu. See the [Bower Award and Prize for Achievement in Science web page](#) for more information.

Alert Classifications**Category:**

Honours and Awards

Disciplines:

Health and Life Sciences

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Physical Sciences and Engineering

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