

ORWH Impact 2013–2025: Research That Changes Women's Lives



National Institutes of Health
Office of Research on Women's Health

Transforming How Research Is Done

NIH's **2016 Sex as a Biological Variable Policy**, spearheaded by ORWH, transformed biomedical research by requiring funded scientists to study females and males or justify single sex studies. Through the **Specialized Centers of Research Excellence (SCORE) on Sex Differences** program, researchers are uncovering critical sex differences in health and disease, including evidence that women's cardiovascular risk begins at lower blood pressure levels than previously recognized.

Safer treatments. Earlier diagnoses. Better care for women. Stronger science for all.

Advancing Research Across the Life Course

From the largest U.S. study of early brain development—tracking 7,000 families from pregnancy through childhood—to supporting research on menopause, chronic disease, and healthy aging, **ORWH advances science that reflects whole person health**—recognizing the biological, social, and life-stage factors that shape women's health across the life course.

Women's health spans decades. Research must too.

Turning Research into Real Treatments

More than 2,200 ORWH-supported studies have generated 65,000+ publications, building on earlier work (1999–2024) contributing to **190+ FDA-approved medications** treating Alzheimer's disease, cancer, epilepsy, depression, and more.

When research reflects women's biology, treatments work better, for everyone.

Expanding Access to Women's Health Research Across the U.S.

ORWH has partnered with the National Institute of General Medical Sciences, along with other NIH Institutes, Centers, and Offices, to enhance research and biomedical workforce capacity across the country. The **Women's Health Research in Institutional Development Award (IDeA)** program supports women's health research with focused investment in **21 of 23 historically underfunded states and Puerto Rico**—expanding clinical trials, strengthening local research institutions, and ensuring all communities benefit from scientific advances.

Innovation should reach every woman—regardless of where she lives.

Building the Future of the Science of Women's Health

ORWH is strengthening the future of women's health research by advancing innovative methodologies and accelerating the translation of discovery into real-world solutions. ORWH has:

- Advanced **New Approach Methodologies** that use human-based models and computer tools to improve accuracy and reduce reliance on animal testing—including early methods to develop miniature organs “in a dish” and connected organ system models that help speed up drug development including for gynecologic conditions.
- Accelerated innovation through **Small Business Innovation Research** and **Small Business Technology Transfer** programs—bringing new tools like AI-based risk prediction, wearable technologies, digital menopause platforms, and devices designed for women's bodies from the lab into everyday use.
- Partnered with the National Library of Medicine to create **Discover Women's Health Research (DiscoverWHR)**—a powerful, easy-to-use hub bringing together trusted information on women's health to empower researchers, clinicians, and the public.

Today's innovation is tomorrow's care for women everywhere.

Growing the Women's Health Research Workforce from Students to Scientists

- ORWH partnered with the National Institute of Biomedical Imaging and Bioengineering to incorporate women's health into the Design by Biomedical Undergraduate Teams (DEBUT) Challenge, supporting undergraduate teams **developing biomedical technologies that address critical gaps in women's health** and inspiring the next generation of innovators.
- ORWH supported **890+ early-career scientists** through the **Building Interdisciplinary Research Careers in Women's Health (BIRCWH)** program—expanding the workforce advancing women's health innovation.

From early inspiration to scientific leadership in women's health.