Professor Matthew Griffin receives NIH New Innovator Award

Griffin’s lab researches the ways the human microbiome affects health outcomes.

Wednesday, October 08, 2025

UC Irvine Physical Sciences Communications



Professor Matthew Griffin, who last year won the V Scholar for Cancer Research Award.

Picture Credit:
Matthew Griffin

Professor Matthew Griffin of the UC Irvine Department of Chemistry has received a National Institute of Health Director's New Innovator Award to support his lab's work into how the human microbiome – the collection of trillions of microbes in human guts that shares no genetic relation to us – impacts human health. The award is part of the NIH's High-Risk, High-Reward Research program, which seeks to support early career researchers who demonstrate exceptional promise to execute bold and innovative projects with the potential to generate far-reaching impact. "This award will support our ongoing research to understand how the microorganisms that live in and on our bodies can communicate with our immune system," said Griffin, whose lab will receive nearly $2.2 million in research funding for this project over the next five years, and who is one of only thirty recipients of this prestigious award in 2025, selected from a nationwide annual competition. "We'll decode how our immune cells sense and respond to polymeric sugars made by our gut microbiota, and how we can use these sugars to reprogram the way our immune system develops and responds to danger." The work promises to illuminate the potential health benefits of probiotic microorganisms, including those you can buy at grocery and health stores. "Our work may even one day allow doctors to prescribe specific probiotics as living therapies that can treat immune-related diseases like inflammatory bowel disease, obesity and cancer," Griffin said.

Professor Matthew Griffin wins the Beckman Young Investigator Award

News Briefs
Chemistry
Awards
The Future of Health
View PDF