

My name is Dr. Sara Alibrandi, and I am a post-doctoral fellow in Transplant Immunology at Icahn school of Medicine at Mount Sinai in New York. I am writing in strong support of robust state investment in biomedical research and academic science across New York State.

My work focuses on understanding the immune mechanisms that drive transplant rejection. Specifically, I study how immune cell populations, such as regulatory T cells and antigen-presenting cells, and extracellular vesicles shape inflammatory responses in transplanted organs. These conditions affect thousands of patients in New York and nationwide, often leading to dialysis, re-transplantation, or premature death. By identifying the immunologic pathways that drive graft dysfunction and kidney failure, our goal is to develop more precise, less toxic therapies that improve long-term outcomes and reduce healthcare costs.

This work supports trainees, strengthens interdisciplinary collaborations, and contributes to New York's reputation as a global leader in biomedical innovation.

However, early-career investigators like myself are increasingly vulnerable to funding instability. Federal grant uncertainty and institutional budget constraints directly affect our ability to sustain research momentum, recruit trainees, and pursue innovative ideas. When funding tightens, experiments are delayed, hiring freezes occur, and promising scientific directions are put on hold. For young scientists building independent careers, these disruptions can be career-defining.

State-level investment in biomedical research is not simply an academic issue, it is an economic development strategy. Research institutions generate high-skilled jobs, attract federal and philanthropic funding, launch biotechnology startups, and anchor local innovation ecosystems. Every dollar invested in research circulates through the economy by supporting laboratory personnel, core facilities, equipment vendors, and community partnerships. More importantly, it accelerates discoveries that reduce long-term healthcare expenditures and improve quality of life for patients.

New York has long been a national leader in medicine, transplantation, and kidney research. To remain competitive with other states that are making bold investments in science and technology, New York must continue to invest strategically in its research workforce, particularly early-career investigators who represent the future of discovery.

I respectfully urge the Legislature to prioritize strong, sustained funding for research and academic science in this year's budget to ensure that New York remains at the forefront of scientific excellence.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'SA', located in the bottom right corner of the page.