



NATIONAL COMPREHENSIVE CANCER NETWORK

FOUNDATION

Guiding Treatment. Changing Lives.

Request for Proposals (RFP)

The NCCN Foundation[®]

2021 Young Investigator Award (YIA) Program

The NCCN Foundation[®]

3025 Chemical Road, Suite 100

Plymouth Meeting, PA 19462

October 30, 2020

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PAGE

ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND 3

PROGRAM PURPOSE AND DESCRIPTION..... 3-4

PROGRAM TIMELINE..... 4

2021 SPECIFIC AWARDS.....4

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS..... 4

NOMINATION PROCESS..... 5

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION PROCESS..... 5-6

BUDGET..... 7

SUBMISSION..... 7

PAYMENT OF FUNDS.....7

UNSPENT FUNDS..... 7

NO-COST GRANT EXTENSIONS..... 7

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS..... 7

YIA PROPOSAL REVIEW COMMITTEE 7-8

SELECTION PROCESS..... 8

PROPOSAL EVALUATION CRITERIA..... 8

AWARD ADMINISTRATION..... 8

RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT..... 8

HELPFUL RESOURCES..... 8

ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND

The NCCN Foundation[®] was established in 2009 by the National Comprehensive Cancer Network[®] (NCCN[®]), a Section 501(c)(3) public charity whose mission is to improve and facilitate quality, effective, efficient, and accessible cancer care so patients can live better lives. NCCN operates as a not-for-profit alliance of 30 leading cancer centers devoted to patient care, research, and education (NCCN Member Institutions). Through the leadership and expertise of clinical professionals at NCCN Member Institutions, NCCN develops resources that present valuable information to the numerous stakeholders in the health care delivery system.

The NCCN Foundation strives to continue NCCN's mission by seeking philanthropic support to engage in activities including, but not limited to, developing a research grant program to encourage and assist physicians, scientists, nurses, and others in conducting innovative and collaborative research in oncology at NCCN Member Institutions. In order to expand upon the body of knowledge available regarding the diagnosis and treatment of cancer, the NCCN Foundation focuses on funding research projects that further its charitable and educational purposes and support researchers in fields for which it is often difficult to obtain funding.

PROGRAM PURPOSE AND DESCRIPTION

Through its Young Investigator Award (YIA) Program, the NCCN Foundation invites proposals from young investigators with innovative ideas and an interest in improving the quality, effectiveness, efficiency and accessibility of care provided to cancer patients. A primary focus of the NCCN Foundation YIA Program is to identify and fund top investigators in the early stages of their careers interested in participating and contributing to cancer research. The NCCN Foundation also recognizes the growing need for evidence-based research in the areas of clinical treatment and management (including new diagnostics and molecular markers), health systems and delivery of care, quality of life for cancer patients, and patient education. On average, four to six awards are awarded per year.

The awards provide two-year grants of \$150,000 for research expenses to promising young investigators across a broad range of oncology specialties and areas of interest. The award may be used to fund salary and benefits of the grant recipient, postdoctoral or clinical research fellows and/or research assistants, data collection and entry, patient costs, analysis, computer costs, necessary purchased services, surveys, and supplies. Within the total budget of \$150,000, indirect expenses will be covered to a maximum of 8%. The award may include funds up to \$3,000 for IRB review and continuing review. In addition to the \$150,000 award, a separate administrative allowance will be provided for travel (up to \$575), lodging, and registration expenses to attend the 2023 NCCN Annual Conference. Attendance is mandatory in order for the awardees to present their research results at the General Poster Session.

The award is open to physicians, scientists, nurses and others working in an oncology laboratory, clinical research or clinical setting, or cancer control program in one of NCCN's 30 Member Institutions, who:

- 1) Have a first full-time appointment as an Assistant Professor, Instructor, or an equivalent level, and
- 2) Are MDs, DOs, PhDs or, for nurses and others, have an advanced degree.

Each NCCN Member Institution can nominate one young investigator who may submit a research proposal.

A hallmark of NCCN's programs has been strong attention to excellent data collection, analysis and outcomes measures. Successful YIA proposal submissions will be expected to bring this same high level of rigor to their research and clinical practice programs. Successful candidates will identify and work closely with an appropriate institutional mentor for their two-year YIA. Following completion of research, abstracts will be published in print and online in *JNCCN—Journal of the National Comprehensive Cancer Network*. Awardees will be expected to present their findings within their own institution through educational opportunities such as grand rounds and tumor boards.

PROGRAM TIMELINE

- NCCN Member Institution Deadline for nomination of **one candidate** is **December 1, 2020**.
- Proposal Submission Deadline is **January 25, 2021 by 11:59 PM (ET)**.
- NCCN Member Institution Deadline for mandatory submission of one Proposal Review Committee member is **January 25, 2021**.
 - Proposal Submissions from Member Institutions that do not contribute a Proposal Review Committee member will not be considered for funding.
- Proposal Review Committee will meet via teleconference in **March 2021**
- The Award period starts **July 1, 2021 and ends on June 30, 2023**. It is anticipated that eighteen months will be used for the implementation of the scope of work (July 1, 2021 – December 31, 2022) and six months will be used to compile and finalize the study data and comply with all reporting requirements (January 1, 2023 – June 30, 2023).
- Presentation of research results will occur at the NCCN Annual Conference in **March 2023**.

2021 SPECIFIC AWARDS:

The NCCN Foundation expects to fund 4-6 YIA awards this year. Two of these awards will be specific to the areas of interest below.

- Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer (NSCLC) study
- Chronic Lymphocytic Leukemia (CLL) study

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Nominees must have:

- Medical degree--MD, DO or international equivalent **OR**
- Scientific degree--PhD or international equivalent **OR**
- Nursing degree--Masters and above or international equivalent
- Primary affiliation/work site at an NCCN Member Institution **for the duration of the award period**
- First full-time appointment at an NCCN Member Institution and remain in good standing for the duration of the award period
- Mentor in the proposed research field
- Institutional commitment to support the research project

NOMINATION PROCESS

Each NCCN Member Institution may nominate one candidate per institution by **December 2, 2020**. Instructions for proposal submissions will be sent directly to nominees by NCCN.

NCCN Member Institutions may submit the nomination of their candidate to foundationproposals@nccnfoundation.org. The following information is required:

- 1) Name
- 2) Title
- 3) Telephone Number
- 4) Email Address

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION PROCESS

All proposal submissions must be submitted in accordance with the requirements and instructions of this Request for Proposals (RFP). Proposals will provide concise documentation of the research plan and are expected to contain sufficient information to allow the reviewers to fully assess the scientific rigor of the proposed study.

The proposal should contain detail regarding the following areas:

Contact Information:

Nominee:

- A. Name & Degree
- B. Title
- C. Institution
- D. Area of specialization
- E. Address, phone number, email address

Statistical Co-Investigator:

- A. Name & Degree
- B. Title
- C. Institution

Institutional Office of Sponsored Research/Contract Personnel:

- A. Name
- B. Title
- C. Address, phone number, email address

Research Proposal:

Clinical Studies (Maximum 6 pages; one-inch margins & 12-point Times New Roman font)

- A. Title/Tumor Type
- B. Investigators and institutional affiliations
- C. Hypothesis with primary and secondary objectives
- D. Background information
- E. Study design
- F. Study population
 - i. Stage

- ii. Major inclusions/exclusions
- G. Treatment plan
- H. Endpoints/Statistical analysis
- I. Feasibility
 - i. Accrual/Project completion in timeframe specified above
 - ii. Projected Accrual Dates (Month/Year)
 - iii. Previous experience with trials that had similar tumor type, phase of study or prior therapy
 - iv. Collaborators' experience, including affiliates
 - v. Competing trials - List all active, approved or in-review studies at your institution for which the same patient population is eligible

Outcomes/Correlative/Pre-Clinical Studies (Maximum 6 pages; one-inch margins & 12-point Times New Roman font)

- A. Title/Tumor Type
- B. Investigators and institutional affiliations
- C. Hypothesis (include relevant background studies)
- D. Preliminary data
- E. Study design (include methods for obtaining samples, administering forms, or performing radiologic studies)
- F. Study population
- G. Methodology
- H. Analytic plan
- I. Feasibility
 - i. Accrual/Project completion in timeframe specified above
 - ii. Specimen acquisition

A full protocol may also be submitted in addition to the proposal information specified above.

Required Letters of Support from governing groups of the institution verifying:

- 1) Office of Sponsored Research approval
- 2) Department Chair/Division approval
- 3) Institutional budgetary review and approval
- 4) Mentor's Letter of Support

Letters should be addressed to:

Robert W. Carlson, MD, CEO
 National Comprehensive Cancer Network
 3025 Chemical Road, Suite 100
 Plymouth Meeting, PA 19462

Ancillary Documentation:

- 1) An NCI format Bio-Sketch of the Principal Investigator and Mentor
- 2) An appendix of supportive literature may be provided
- 3) If support will be sought/provided by other sources, please identify all sources of additional support and documentation of commitment.

BUDGET

Nominees must submit the budget in the NCCN budget format (template attached) and are required to disclose additional sources of funding for this research and demonstrate that funding does not overlap this award. The following information is required.

- A. Breakdown by major cost categories
- B. Justification of major costs with enough detail to demonstrate how funding for major elements in the study will be allocated
- C. For combined clinical and correlative studies, separate budgets for each component should be submitted
- D. Salaries, which are capped at the current NIH salary cap
- E. No travel or publication costs will be covered unless pre-approved

SUBMISSION

Proposals and supporting documents must be submitted in a **single PDF document** to the NCCN Foundation by **January 25, 2021 at 11:59 PM (ET)** via the following email address: foundationproposals@nccnfoundation.org.

PAYMENT OF FUNDS

The Award total of \$150,000 will be disbursed as follows:

- First payment of \$50,000 will be paid on or after July 1, 2021, subject to receipt by NCCN of all required items, which will be identified in the Study Start-up Letter.
- Second payment of \$50,000 will be paid subject to satisfactory progress at the end of the first year and upon submission of a satisfactory finance and progress report.
- Final payment of \$50,000 will be paid upon submission of a final study report and final expenditure report.

UNSPENT FUNDS

Any unspent portion of the grant funds must be returned to the NCCN Foundation within thirty (30) days of the expiration of grant end date.

NO-COST GRANT EXTENSIONS

Whereas the NCCN Foundation is subject to the terms and conditions of the funders' supporting this program, **under no conditions will no-cost grant extensions be granted.**

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Awardees are required to submit an annual financial report for each year of the grant funding and quarterly progress reports. The reporting schedule will be stipulated upon NCCN's notification of the activation of the study.

YIA PROPOSAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

Each NCCN Member Institution that nominates one candidate to apply for YIA funding must also provide a YIA Proposal Review Committee member. YIA Proposal submissions from Member Institutions that do not contribute a Review Committee member will not be

considered for funding. The YIA Proposal Review Committee members will have expertise in the broad spectrum of research areas for the YIAs. Please note that reviewers may be asked to review proposals outside of their expertise. Individual Review Committee members will recuse themselves from reviewing/discussing proposal submissions from their own institutions.

PROPOSAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

The YIA Proposal Review Committee will select recipients for YIAs based on the following criteria:

- Scientific Soundness
- Study Design
- Feasibility
- Statistics
- Budget
- Timeline – work **must** be finalized and final reporting submitted within the 2 year grant period

AWARD ADMINISTRATION

The NCCN Oncology Research Program (ORP) will provide oversight for the review, selection and awarding of the YIAs. ORP standards will be used by the YIA Grants Proposal Review Committee to review and score proposals received in response to this RFP.

RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT

During the Award period, the Investigator must not be absent from participation in the Project or from the Institution for extended periods of time during the Award Period, such as for a sabbatical leave or leave of absence, without prior written approval from the NCCN Foundation.

HELPFUL RESOURCES

- foundationproposals@nccnfoundation.org, email additional questions about this RFP, from either nominees or their institutions. Replies will be sent within 24-48 hours.
- Frequently Asked Questions (attached)