

VUMC Limited Submission Opportunity 2026 SebastianStrong Foundation Discovery Science Award

Applications due October 23, 2025

VUMC: These instructions are for VUMC investigators. VU investigators should apply through [InfoReady](#) and address any questions to VU-LSO@vanderbilt.edu.

VUMC can select **two candidates** for the [2026 SebastianStrong Foundation Discovery Science Award](#). The [SebastianStrong Foundation](#) is dedicated to raising awareness of childhood cancer and accelerating the **development of more targeted, less toxic treatments**. SebastianStrong funds cutting-edge, peer-reviewed pediatric research projects in early stages.

The Discovery Science Award typically provides **up to \$500,000** for groundbreaking research that aligns with the Foundation's mission. The research must demonstrate strong potential to progress toward a clinical trial in 1-3 years. The foundation has historically limited overhead costs to a maximum of 15%.

Research Proposal Criteria:

- Proposal must be focused on pediatric cancer.
 - The foundation is particularly interested in pediatric cancers with low survival rates or high relapse rates.
- Research will lead to less toxic, more targeted treatments.
- Research pursues underfunded or unconventional approaches that could change the status quo
- Proposal is clearly communicated in lay terms and can be understood by the foundation's Board of Directors and donors (e.g. use examples and spell out acronyms).
- Demonstrates strong potential to progress toward a clinical trial in 1-3 years.
- Peer-reviewed new, ongoing, and/or updated research is appropriate.
- In progress or ongoing clinical trials are not eligible.

See descriptions of previous award winners [here](#).

Internal Application Process

Anyone interested in being one of VUMC's nominees must submit the following (in a single PDF) to LSO@vanderbilt.edu by **5 p.m. on October 23**. Submissions should reference "SebastianStrong Discovery Science Award" in the subject line of the email.

1. Brief lay-summary of the research including a summary budget (2-page maximum)

- a. A clear explanation, understandable by donors and the Board of Directors is a key component of consideration
2. Letter of support from department chair/center director
3. NIH Biosketch or brief CV (5-page maximum)

Any questions about this opportunity or the LSO process can be directed to LSO@vanderbilt.edu