



Career Development Program Guidelines & Instructions

Scholar

July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026

Application Deadlines	
Eligibility Phase deadline:	October 17, 2025; 3:00 PM (ET)
Letter of Intent Phase deadline:	November 1, 2025, 3:00 PM (ET)
Letters of Reference deadline:	November 15, 2025, 3:00 PM (ET)
Full Application Phase deadline:	November 15, 2025, 3:00 PM (ET)
Award Start date:	July 1, 2026

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What's New

Research Program Focus

Starting in a prior award cycle, the approach to the application and review process has fundamentally changed. The Scholar award has always had the intention of supporting researchers who are on a trajectory for leadership in blood cancer research. To better capture this, we have modified the application process to better emphasize all the research activities of the applicant. Therefore, the ***total research portfolio*** of the applicant will be assessed by the review committee. These changes will better align the application, review process, and funding decisions with the purpose of the Scholar award. ***Therefore, the application template is unlike any project-based funding mechanism, and this should be considered well ahead of the full application deadline.***

ORCID

Starting this application cycle, we are requiring all applicants to sign up for ORCID (<https://orcid.org/>) and provide their ORCID number during the LOI phase and to keep their profile updated for the remainder of the funding period, if awarded. This policy will enhance our ability to track former awardees which will help us understand the level of success of the Career Development Program.

Disease Demographics and Equitable Research Models and Approaches

Last cycle, we added a Disease Demographics and Equitable Research Models and Approaches section. While some applicants presented clear information on disease demographics and a thoughtful description of how they might consider equitable research models and approaches, others did not. To achieve better descriptions, we have separated these into two separate sections. We are also encouraging potential applicants to begin thinking about this early. The SEER database is a great place to start, while Google and PubMed searches may help as well. Reviewers will give a score boost to those with clear information on demographics and thoughtful discussions about equitable research models and approaches while those with little information on demographics and lack of thoughtful discussions about equitable research will get a score reduction.

Application Compliance

In prior award cycles, ~20-30% of eligibility requests were rejected. We have updated the eligibility form to make rejections far less likely, but it takes much more time to complete. **To avoid eligibility rejection, read these Guidelines & Instructions carefully and fill out the eligibility form completely. Be sure to start this process early.**

A rejected applicant can only re-submit an eligibility request once.

In prior cycles, >10% of Career Development Program (CDP) applications submitted (from all non-clinical subcategories) were disqualified without full review based on non-compliance with the Mission Relevance of the application and environment. Carefully read the Mission Relevance and Mission Score sections to determine if The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society's CDP award mechanism best fits your current and future research program goals. The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society has recently taken an active role in making sure that our scarce funds go to applicants who are most closely aligned with our Mission.

For those applicants whose research *programs* are not primarily in blood cancer and are thus not eligible to apply in the Scholar program, LLS has other project-based funding mechanisms. Please consider the Translational Research Program and/or the Discovery Grant Program for funding of your blood cancer research *projects*.

In recent years, approximately 10-15% of all full applications had serious structural flaws. These include non-adherence to section lengths, font size, missing attachments (e.g., a Sponsor Letter or Biosketch), or critical sections not completed. ***Applications with such flaws run the risk of administrative disqualification.***

Carefully check the final version of your application prior to upload (even if someone else uploads for you).

About The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, Inc.

The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, Inc. (LLS) is a national voluntary health agency dedicated to the conquest of hematologic malignancies and relevant premalignant conditions. LLS supports research, patient aid, community service programs, advocacy, and public and professional education.

Description of the CDP Scholar Award

The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society supports talented blood cancer researchers in the early phase of their careers through the Career Development Program. CDP continues to provide a pool of dedicated researchers to advance the understanding and diagnosis of blood cancer, as well as the development of treatment and prevention options that will ultimately lead to a higher quality of life for blood cancer patients. Scholar applicants are primarily basic and translational researchers; those who are primarily clinical researchers should consider the Scholar in Clinical Research subcategory.

The Scholar award is a subcategory of CDP that exists to support the career development of early- to mid-stage independent investigators. ***This is not a project grant.*** Salary support is given to assist the Scholar in all their research activities. As such, all research activities of funded Scholar are supported by the Scholar award. We ask for a description of your overall research program as part of your application, which aids in the evaluation process of your overall application package. However, any funded Scholar's research is supported by the Scholar award, even if it is not directly related to the projects described in the original application. Therefore, all presentations and publications of a funded Scholar ***must*** properly acknowledge support from the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society.

The **Scholar** Award is for 5 years and supports tenure-track, early to mid-stage faculty who have ***already*** established themselves as blood cancer researchers and are on a trajectory of leadership in the field.

The maximum award per year is \$120,000 and includes the applicant's salary and fringe benefits. A Scholar's salary may be supplemented by funds from other sources. Indirect costs may be included and cannot exceed 5% of the total award amount requested in the proposal. The final value of the award may be limited by the policy of the applicant's Institution. Expenditures for laboratory costs/equipment, travel, etc. are not permitted. The applicant's research program described should occupy all the applicant's research time though there are no

requirements for a certain percent effort in our budget template. Scholar applicants are assistant or associate professors (or equivalent). Scholar applicants **must** hold an independent position. However, this award is not intended for well-established and/or senior investigators; those who are full professors, or who will be as of the award start date, are no longer eligible to apply.

The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society honors those CDP awardees whose awards are ending and who have done the most impactful work. One Scholar/Scholar in Clinical Research awardee will be honored with the **CDP Achievement Award**. This high honor will be given to the Scholar/Scholar in Clinical Research awardee who is a leader/emerging leader and has had the three most impactful publications of direct relevance to blood cancer over the course of their funding period. An absolute requirement is that those publications must acknowledge support of The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society (preferably as a specific acknowledgement of this funding mechanism*). Since we consider a CDP awardee to always be an awardee while funded, all publications should acknowledge our support.* A further consideration is the total publication record and productivity during the award period as well as career trajectory. Lastly, some consideration will include whether the applicant has complied with reporting requirements as well as reasonable requests from LLS, such as participating in an LLS event.** *Though not guaranteed, we hope to continue the CDP Achievement Awards indefinitely.*

*Use this format when acknowledging The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society: "XYZ...was supported by a Scholar award from The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society."

**LLS realizes that not all requests can be fulfilled by the CDP awardee, but if multiple requests are either ignored or are not fulfilled, then this information will contribute to the final CDP Achievement Award decision.

Eligibility

Scholar applicants must...

- Have a total research program that is at least 75% focused on direct blood cancer research.
- Be a tenure-track, independent investigator of at least an assistant professor position or equivalent (see Experience/Eligibility Clock).
- Not be a full professor as of the award start date.
- Not have any **unexplained** gaps in training, education, or employment.
- Have adequate funding to support the proposed blood cancer research; at least one blood cancer-focused grant having a minimum total of \$200,000/year (USD) going to the applicant for at least 3 years and which is active after the CDP award start date is sufficient to qualify. This must not be only start-up funds, a transitional award, or a career development-type award (see Research Support Requirement).
- Not concurrently hold a Scholar award together with any career development-type award that has a total value higher than the total value of the Scholar award.
- Have started their **first** independent position no less than 2 years but not more than 8 years as of January 1 the year of the award start date (see Experience/Eligibility Clock). Instructor-level positions are not counted as independent for eligibility purposes. However, **all non-mentored positions are considered independent for this**

calculation (e.g., positions with the title “Research Professor,” Assistant Research Professor,” “Adjunct Assistant Professor,” etc.).

- Have at least one full length (which may include short reports), peer-reviewed, primary research, corresponding author publication* that is primarily focused on blood cancer by the Eligibility Phase due date **as an independent investigator**. This may be a co-corresponding authorship publication. Corresponding authorship must be confirmed in the publication; “contributing equally” or other similar terms do not count.
- Have a Sponsor who will attest to institutional support for the applicant. An appropriate Sponsor may be a department head, chief of service, or program chair. The Sponsor must be from the same institution and in a supervisory position relative to the applicant.

*Peer reviewed manuscripts that are **fully** accepted by the Eligibility Phase due date are acceptable. A copy of the letter from the journal must be provided to LLS by the Eligibility Phase due date; clear evidence of full acceptance (with no more than minor structural/grammatical changes) is required.

Position Titles

Titles of all positions starting with doctoral-level training through the current position must be provided at the eligibility stage. Any position that has a title that is uncommon in the US must be described in the eligibility form and must have a letter submitted by the full application deadline explaining the position and the terminology. In addition, positions that are not clear as to whether they are mentored positions or independent positions must also have a letter explaining the nature of the position(s). If the eligibility form is submitted by the Eligibility Phase deadline, and everything else aligns with LLS’s policies, eligibility will likely be provisionally accepted pending receipt and evaluation of any letters. The letters must come from the appropriate institutional representative that is in a position to explain this (e.g., Human Resources). LLS will make the final determination of the nature of any position titles.

Citizenship

The program welcomes applications worldwide from appropriate non-profit academic institutions and investigators of any nationality.

Degree

Applicants must hold a PhD, MD, DVM, or equivalent degree.

Experience/Eligibility Clock

Applicants must currently hold an independent, faculty-level, tenure-track position at the level of assistant professor or associate professor (or equivalent). As a new policy starting in the 2022-2023 cycle, those with the title of full professor (or equivalent) by the award start date are ineligible to apply. The eligibility window is 2 to 8 years in an independent position (see Eligibility Outline table). All non-mentored, independent research positions are counted in the 8-year total. Instructor-level positions are not counted as independent for eligibility purposes. In some cases, LLS may ask for a letter from any applicable institution confirming employment start date(s). ***All non-mentored positions will be considered as independent for purposes of the eligibility window. Therefore, research assistant professor and similar positions will count towards the eligibility window.*** For example, if you were a research assistant professor for 5 years and a tenure-track assistant professor for 4 years, you would have 9 years of experience and you would therefore be ineligible to apply. One criterion is publishing (or the

ability to publish) as corresponding author in the non-mentored position, in which case this type of position will be considered as part of the 2 to 8 year eligibility window.

CDP Eligibility Outline 2025-2026 Application Cycle: Degree and Dates					
Degree and Dates	Scholar	Scholar in Clinical Research	Special Fellow (2-year)	Special Fellow (3-year)	Fellow
Degree	MD, PhD, DVM, or equivalent	MD, PhD, DVM, or equivalent	MD, PhD, DVM, or equivalent	MD, PhD, DVM, or equivalent	MD, PhD, DVM, or equivalent
Earliest doctoral-level oral thesis defense date (for those with only a PhD)	N/A	N/A	June 30, 2021	June 30, 2022	June 30, 2023
Most recent doctoral-level oral thesis defense date (for those with only a PhD)	N/A	N/A	June 29, 2022	June 29, 2023	Eligibility Phase due date
Maximum <u>total</u> postdoctoral experience as of the CDP funding start date (July 1 of the following year)	N/A	N/A	5 years	4 years	3 years
Independent faculty position required?	Yes ^a	Yes ^a	No	No	No
Earliest start date of independent position	January 1, 2018	January 1, 2016	N/A	N/A	N/A
Most recent start date	January 1, 2024	January 1, 2022	N/A	N/A	N/A

^a Mentored faculty positions (e.g., Instructor) do not count as independent; all non-mentored positions **do** count as independent, which may include positions with the title “Research Professor,” Assistant Research Professor,” “Adjunct Assistant Professor,” etc.

CDP Eligibility Outline 2025-2026 Application Cycle: Requirements					
Requirements	Scholar	Scholar in Clinical Research	Special Fellow (2-year)	Special Fellow (3-year)	Fellow
Applicant having adequate, blood cancer-focused research funding of their own as of the CDP award start date?	Yes ^b	Yes ^c	No	No	No
Sponsor/mentor having adequate, blood cancer-focused research funding as of the CDP award start date? (For Sponsors/mentors with more than 5 years of independence as of the CDP award start date)	N/A	N/A	Yes ^b	Yes ^b	Yes ^b
Sponsor/mentor having adequate, blood cancer-focused research funding as of the CDP award start date? (For Sponsors/mentors with equal to or less than 5 years of independence as of the CDP award start date)	N/A	N/A	Yes ^d	Yes ^d	Yes ^d
At least 1 first author publication?	No	Yes/No ^{e,f}	Yes ^f	Yes ^f	Yes ^f
At least 1 corresponding author publication, primarily on blood cancer, as an independent investigator?	Yes ^f	Yes/No ^{e,f}	No	No	No

^b Must be at least one peer-reviewed, nationally competitive research grant providing at least a total of \$200,000/year (USD) for at least 3 years; see the Research Support Requirement section of the guidelines for a full description; it is acceptable to have a letter demonstrating that funding will occur by the funding start date in cases whereby the funding starts after the eligibility due date

^c Funding may come from any source, but must be able to fund the research program

^d For Sponsors/mentors with equal to or less than 5 years of independence as of the CDP award start date, adequate funding may come from an R00, institutional startup funds, or other grants to sufficiently support the research; grant funding must clearly support blood cancer research in order to be considered adequate for this program; it is acceptable to have a letter demonstrating that funding will occur by the funding start date in cases whereby the funding starts after the eligibility due date

^e Scholar in Clinical Research applicants need at least one first author or one corresponding author research publication (no reviews, perspectives, conference/meeting presentations, or abstracts); having either a first author or a corresponding author publication will qualify

^f Full length, primary research publication (no reviews, perspectives, conference/meeting presentations or abstracts); peer reviewed manuscripts that are **fully** accepted by the eligibility

due date are acceptable; clear evidence of full acceptance (with no more than minor structural/grammatical changes) is required at the eligibility phase

Career Trajectory

The Scholar award applicant must be in the early- to mid-stage of a career in blood cancer research and/or treatment. The anticipation is that Scholar awardees will eventually be leaders in the blood cancer field. Therefore, most of the applicant's research time must be devoted to blood cancer.

Earlier-stage assistant professors who have not established independence from the lab in which they were mentored will not be competitive.

Institution Affiliation

Applicants must be affiliated with a non-profit academic institution at the time funding commences and for the duration of the award.

Research Support Requirement

Scholar Awards support only salary. Applicants must have active grant(s) (peer-reviewed, national-level; substantial, multi-year funding) to support the research program described in their application (or related research). The applicant must be the Program Director, Principal Investigator (PI), Other Principal Investigator, co-Principal Investigator, multiple PI, Project Leader, and/or other terms that clearly signify full or equal responsibility for the grant's oversight in order for that grant to qualify for eligibility. The position of co-investigator does not count for eligibility. This funding must clearly be focused on blood cancer. Funding typically will be an R01. However, other funding sources qualify if they have the other characteristics listed above.

Applicants with no R01 funding on which they have sole or shared responsibility are less competitive.

Applicants may have transitional awards, but these cannot be used for eligibility purposes. Funding cannot be only startup funds. In cases where such funding starts after the eligibility due date but by the CDP funding start date, the applicant must send evidence to researchprograms@lls.org from the funding agency of the award details (including funding agency, type, total and annual award amounts, start date, and end date). This must be received by LLS by the full application due date. If the eligibility form is submitted by the Eligibility Phase deadline, and everything else aligns with LLS's policies, eligibility will likely be provisionally accepted pending receipt and evaluation of this documentation. **Research support that ends prior to the award start date may not be used as evidence of adequate support.**

Application Limitations

Applicants may only submit one application. There is no limit to the number of applications submitted from a specific institution, nor is there a limit to the number of Scholar (or Scholar in Clinical Research) applications on which a Sponsor is listed.

Other Career Development Support

No career development-type award having a higher total award amount compared to the Scholar award may be held at the time of the award start date. If such an award is activated after receiving a Scholar Award, the LLS award must be relinquished. Those who have

previously held any career development-type award with a higher total funding amount compared to the Scholar award may apply for a Scholar Award. Those who currently hold such an award can apply as well, but they cannot hold that award should they accept the Scholar award.

If a career development-type award (of lower total value compared to the Scholar award) is held by the applicant, this funding may be held concurrently with the LLS award at LLS's discretion, should the LLS award be funded. In all such cases, the LLS funding may only be used to support the applicant/awardee's salary. LLS will not change any aspect of the Scholar award to accommodate other awards. In addition, an absolute requirement is that the other funding must support blood cancer research. Career development-type funding from organizations that are focused on diseases other than blood cancer may not be held concurrently with the Scholar award. This requirement reflects the necessity that a Scholar's research should be fully (or largely) focused directly on blood cancer.

Transfers

The application must be designed from the perspective of where the research will be performed. If a transfer is being considered, notify LLS at least 30 days prior to the transfer date by contacting researchprograms@lls.org. **Since applicants are judged in part on their institutional environment, a change to a new institution may affect the review of your application.** If a transfer is agreed upon by the applicant and a new institution after the in-person review meeting (or if LLS is notified of such a transfer after the in-person review meeting), a transfer form must be filled out, which is then reviewed by LLS scientific staff, and in some cases, select members of the review committee. If LLS staff and the review panel members agree that this move is beneficial, funding will be awarded. ***However, there may be cases where the award may not be funded.***

Change in Applicant or Awardee's Status

Applicants must be full-time, independent investigators at an academic institution. If this status changes, LLS must be notified immediately. In some cases, the Scholar award may continue, but only if the awardee's work is still clearly Mission-relevant and associated with a non-profit entity. However, a significant portion of the time must still be spent as an investigator at an academic institution. Should an applicant or awardee obtain a position at a for-profit entity, even part-time, they are no longer eligible to hold the Scholar Award. Any funds dispersed after this change in status making the awardee no longer eligible must be returned to LLS.

Mission Relevance

General

Scholar Awards are intended for early- to mid-career scientists with established track records in research directly relevant to blood cancer. Relevance is determined by the experimental approach as seen in the application as well as the applicant's publication and funding record. The applicant's research must generally seek to answer questions of direct relevance to blood cancer.

Correlation of a biological phenomenon with blood cancer is not sufficient evidence of relevance to LLS's Mission unless there are experiments to directly address this correlation.

To be eligible for a Scholar Award, the applicant must have substantial blood cancer research experience, as evidenced by publication and funding records directly relevant to blood cancer. Those with research programs crossing diverse topics, with some focus on blood cancer, are less likely to be fundable. Those with less than 75% blood cancer-focus in their research programs are not likely a good fit for the Scholar award.

Scholar applicants who do not have an established record of publications and funding demonstrating a commitment to blood cancer research will be disqualified without full review.

In prior CDP application cycles, multiple Scholar applicants were eliminated prior to full review for lack of direct blood cancer relevance to their current/proposed research and/or lack of appropriate blood cancer research experience. With the broadened focus of the new application process to include the Scholar applicant's full research program, it is expected that any applicant who does not have a research program focused primarily on blood cancer will be disqualified. This will be determined using both the application as well as publicly available information.

Mission Scores

The applicant also receives a **Mission Score** to measure adherence of the application to LLS's Mission of curing blood cancer. CDP Awards must focus on those questions of **direct** relevance to blood cancer. The Mission Score will be assigned based on the overall focus of the application.

Proposals that do not have clear relevance to blood cancer will be disqualified without full review.

Mission Score of 1: Research that directly investigates the pathogenesis, diagnosis, or treatment of hematologic malignancies and/or relevant premalignant conditions/states. In addition, at least some experiments must include patients, and/or patient materials (including PDX models).

Mission Score of 2: Research that directly investigates the pathogenesis, diagnosis, or treatment of hematologic malignancies and/or relevant premalignant conditions/states. In addition, at least some experiments must use blood cancer cell lines and/or animal models of blood cancer.

Mission Score of 3*: Research that investigates basic mechanisms directly relevant to normal blood cell development, hematopoietic stem/precursor cell function, or immune responses that are *directly* relevant to blood cancer. These studies must have the intention of improving our understanding of blood cancer and must use appropriate models to understand these mechanisms in blood cells.

Mission Score of 4:** Research that investigates pathological processes that may be associated with blood cancer. These studies do not have the intention of improving our understanding of blood cancer, nor do they use appropriate models to understand these mechanisms in blood cells.

Mission Score of 5:** Research that investigates processes not directly associated with blood cancer or normal blood cell development/function.

*Proposals with a Mission Score of 3 are rare. Investigators interested in biological/pathological processes in blood cancer will generally be actively engaged in research that at least partially qualifies as a Mission Score of 1 or 2.

**Applications with a Mission Score of 4 or 5 will be eliminated without full review.

Post-Award Adherence to LLS's Mission

Scholar awards will be selected based on the blood cancer relevance of the overall research program and the career trajectory. Funded Scholars whose research moves in a direction substantially different than direct blood cancer research may lose part or all their Scholar award funding.

Review Process & Applicant Notification

CDP applications are reviewed by an independent, voluntary panel of experts.

Review criteria for **Scholar** applications include:

- **Reviewers will assess the total research program. The Scholar application process has changed from being project-focused, with detailed descriptions of specific aims, to one in which the applicant presents the overall scope and anticipated direction of their research program. This aligns the application/review process with the intent of supporting the research program development of an early/mid-career investigator.**
- **Competitive applicants should be rising stars in the blood cancer field and therefore must have significant accomplishments in blood cancer research (publications, funding, recognition) demonstrating a likelihood of becoming a leader in the blood cancer field.**
- Likelihood that success in the applicant's research program will positively impact our understanding and/or treatment of blood cancers.
- The research program should be clearly focused on blood cancer. Collaborations and side projects in other areas are acceptable but should be a minor subset of their total research portfolio.
- ***The application must reflect the applicant's actual accomplishments and likely path forward. Reviewers will downgrade applicants who present a research program that appears tailored to fit LLS's Mission, but does not reflect their current program (e.g., if their proposal looks different from their current funding, recent publications, and their website, that will negatively impact the score).***
- The application should demonstrate conceptual and technical innovation of the research program.
- Applications should reflect the importance of the work to the field of blood cancer.
- The research program should show the potential to be transformative.
- Comprehensive research project narratives in the style of an R01 are **not** expected.
- Access to applicable key materials and models, which may include patient materials, animal models, drugs, etc., to demonstrate feasibility of the research program

- Clarity of presentation
- There should be institutional/departmental support for the applicant's research program and career advancement as demonstrated in the Sponsor Letter (typically written by a department chair or equivalent).

Based on these criteria, the application receives a Priority Score based on the NIH scoring system.

After the review panel meeting, Mission-relevant applications (Mission Scores 1, 2, and some 3) will be rank-ordered based on their Priority Score, and those within or near the payline will be presented to LLS's oversight committees for approval. Funding will be based on ranking, Mission Scores, and LLS priorities. Funding status is relayed by email only and is not available by phone. All Priority Scores are confidential and are available only to LLS oversight committees and staff. Brief, anonymous feedback from the review panel may be provided but only when available.

Applicants can see the status of their application on the [LLS Research Portal](#). Up until final decisions are made, the status will be "Under Review." After final decisions are made, the status will either be "Awarded" or "Waitlist" or "Not Funded." Please do not call or email regarding status updates.

Key Dates

Applicants can begin the application process once the program is open and can move through each step up until the deadline. Note that each step can be submitted early. As long as each step is done thoughtfully and meticulously, there may be an advantage to progressing through the steps well ahead of the deadlines.

Phase	Date
Eligibility Phase: open	July 1, 2025
Eligibility Phase: close	October 17, 2025; 3:00 PM (ET)
Eligibility determination by LLS staff	Rolling; typically within 2 business days of submission
Letter of Intent Phase: open	Immediately after eligibility is approved
Letter of Intent Phase: close	November 1, 2025, 3:00 PM (ET)
Full Application Phase: open	Immediately after Letter of Intent Phase submission
Reference letters due	November 15, 2025, 3:00 PM (ET)

Full Application Phase: close	November 15, 2025, 3:00 PM (ET)
Award Notification*	May 2026
Award Start Date	July 1, 2026

*LLS's non-negotiable Funding Agreement Terms & Conditions are available on www.lls.org.

The submission deadlines will be enforced. Please note that all times are Eastern Time (ET). If any date falls on a weekend or US holiday, the deadline becomes the next business day.

It is highly recommended that submissions are done the day prior to the deadline.

Internet traffic may be slow near the deadline, which may result in difficulties in submission. In addition, LLS's response time to questions may be delayed by the high volume received near the deadline. Therefore, it is imperative that any questions be posed to LLS as far ahead as possible. Every year, a few applicants get caught with difficulty near the deadline. Some tried to submit after the deadline but did not have their application reviewed. ***The best way to avoid this problem is to submit every phase well ahead of the deadline.*** In addition, those who are rushing right up until the deadline are more likely to make mistakes that may reduce the fundability of the application.

General Application Instructions

The CDP application process consists of 3 distinct phases: Eligibility*, Letter of Intent*, and Full Application.*

*Information provided at the earlier phases must match that provided at later phases. ***Divergence between information provided at the Eligibility and/or Letter of Intent Phases and information provided at the Full Application Phase may result in administrative disqualification; if not disqualified, any divergence may be shared with the review committee.***

Below are step-by-step instructions for applying:

1. Read these Guidelines & Instructions in full.
2. Log in to the [LLS Research Portal \(https://lls.fluxx.io/\)](https://lls.fluxx.io/) and select Career Development Program. Click "Apply Now" to begin the application process (well ahead of the deadline).
 - If you have applied to LLS in the past, you do not need to create a new registration and can log-in with your username (email address associated with your account) and your password. If you forgot your password, simply click the "reset or create password" link and enter your email address. The system will send your username and a link to update your password.
 - If you are a first-time user to the [LLS Research Portal](https://lls.fluxx.io/), please complete the intake form located at this link: [Account Creation Request](#) so an account can be created for you.
3. Familiarize yourself with the [LLS Research Portal](https://lls.fluxx.io/).

4. The application process consists of 3 phases, and each phase must be submitted through the [LLS Research Portal](#). The status of each phase is found on the [LLS Research Portal](#): after submission of each phase, your status will change indicating successful submission. ***Only when you see this change in status can you be assured that you submitted.*** This change in status that you see reflects the status that LLS staff sees. It is therefore ***highly recommended*** that you confirm each stage of the application process by checking your application status on the [LLS Research Portal](#).
5. Follow the instructions on the [LLS Research Portal](#) and this document to complete and submit your Eligibility Phase components. The Eligibility Phase requires completion of both the web form and the current eligibility form, which should be downloaded from the Project Document section of the web form.
6. You will receive an email notifying you of your Eligibility approval status, which happens after LLS staff review. It typically occurs within 2 business days, but may take up to 10 business days, which means you will benefit by doing this step early. Once your Eligibility is approved, return to the [LLS Research Portal](#), select "New or Pending" under Requests on the left panel and follow the instructions on the site and in this document to submit your Letter of Intent Phase components.
 - You may be contacted by an LLS staff member if the information provided on your eligibility request suggests that you may be better suited for a different award category.
 - LLS staff will determine eligibility on a rolling basis using the criteria described in this document.
7. Reference letter ***requests*** are required during the Letter of Intent Phase. Applicants are responsible for making sure that all required reference letters are submitted by their letter-writers by the Full Application deadline.
8. Once you have submitted your Letter of Intent Phase information, you may immediately begin the Full Application Phase. Please carefully follow the instructions on the [LLS Research Portal](#) and this document. The Full Application Phase requires completion of both the web form and the current application template, which must be downloaded from the Project Document section of the web form. **Failure to follow all application instructions may result in administrative disqualification of your application.**
 - Contact researchprograms@lls.org with any questions about the application that are not addressed in the [LLS Research Portal](#) or this document.
9. Submit your Full Application to LLS prior to the Full Application deadline. We strongly recommend submitting well before the deadline, as site traffic on the day of and days leading up to the deadline will be heavy.
10. Character limits include spaces. Character and other length limits are strictly enforced on the web form and the uploaded program description template. Font must be black Arial 11 pt. including figure legends, which must be text boxes separate from the figure itself. Tables should also have text with Arial 11 pt. black font. ***If character limits and font restrictions are not adhered to, or the preset margins are altered, the application may be administratively rejected.***
11. Line spacing is preset in the Word document. ***Do not change the setting. Pasting text from another document, which should generally be avoided, may result in a change in the line spacing in the template.*** Any modifications in line spacing, particularly if the change allows for more text to fit into the page, ***may result in administrative rejection of your application.*** However, you may add spacing between paragraphs.

12. To create a fair process to all applicants, these Guidelines & Instructions and information on the [LLS Research Portal](#) must be followed. ***Do not ask for exceptions to these policies, including but not limited to exceptions to deadlines or making corrections to your document past the deadline.***
13. Applicants ***must*** identify their current application status by a status bar as well as another status indicator. At each stage, locate these and use them to self-identify your status (e.g., whether you have successfully submitted to a new stage or are still at the prior stage). The information that applicants see reflects what LLS sees. Both status indicators are the clearest way for an applicant to know their status. ***It is the applicant's responsibility to determine their status and whether they have successfully completed a step.***

Carefully check every page of your application prior to submission. You are ultimately responsible for this submission, even if someone else submits on your behalf.

You may save your work and return to it at any time by clicking "Save." Clicking "Submit" will lock your application and prevent further modification at that stage. Contact researchprograms@lls.org if you submit in error (must be at least one hour prior to the deadline).

At any time during the application process, including after submitting your Full Application, you can check the status of your application by logging in to the [LLS Research Portal](#), selecting your application (under *Requests* in either "New or Pending" or "Submitted"), and referring to the Status in the yellow box at the top of the page.

If you have any technical difficulties with the [LLS Research Portal](#), please contact researchprograms@lls.org.

Detailed Eligibility Phase Instructions

Applicants may submit Eligibility Phase components upon opening of the program. It is recommended to submit as soon as possible, as there is almost never a benefit to waiting. There are both webform components and an eligibility template that you must obtain from the [LLS Research Portal](#). Your completed eligibility template must be uploaded onto the [LLS Research Portal](#). Eligibility will be evaluated by LLS scientific staff on a rolling basis (see the Eligibility Review section below). If eligibility is approved, the applicant may proceed to the next phase of the application process. If eligibility is rejected, the applicant may submit one more time if new information is provided and the eligibility deadline has not passed.

All information requested on the eligibility form must be provided. Write "N/A" for anything not applicable to you.

The eligibility template is lengthy, and you must sign this form prior to uploading. Therefore, it is highly recommended that this process is started well before the eligibility deadline.

Submission and Confirmation

You will receive an automated email stating that your information was successfully submitted within 2 business days of submission. If you have not received this email within 2 business days, contact researchprograms@lls.org.

You ***must*** confirm each stage of the application process by checking your application status on the [LLS Research Portal](#); there are two indicators of your status, and you ***must*** self-identify your place in the process. Both status indicators are the clearest way for an applicant to know their status.

Eligibility Review

LLS scientific staff will review eligibility on a rolling basis, and you will generally receive notification within 2 business days, but the process may take longer. Refer to Key Dates for details. **Contact researchprograms@lls.org if you have not received notification within 10 business days.**

If eligibility is accepted, you will have access to the Letter of Intent Phase and you will have immediate access to the full application template.

Prior to the Eligibility Phase deadline, the applicant should carefully consider who will write reference letters on their behalf and alert them of the due date for these letters (See Reference Letters subsection in the Detailed Letter of Intent Phase Instructions below as well as the Key Dates table above). ***Letters submitted past the deadline will not be accepted.*** It is therefore beneficial to have a backup letter-writer in case one of your original writers is not able to submit on time.

In prior cycles, some applicants did not provide complete and/or clear information in the eligibility form. In these cases, the applicant must update the eligibility form in order for the eligibility request to be reviewed. This information must be received in time for the applicant to complete the next phase. ***The LOI phase deadline will not be changed based on an eligibility form being returned to the applicant for incomplete and/or unclear information.***

Detailed Letter of Intent Phase Instructions

Applicants may access Letter of Intent Phase components as soon as their eligibility request is approved by LLS. The components in the [LLS Research Portal](#) must be completed by the Letter of Intent Phase deadline. This includes reference letter-writer request information, which must be input into the [LLS Research Portal](#) by this deadline (however, reference letter-writers should be contacted well before this time). Once these components on the [LLS Research Portal](#) are submitted, the applicant will have immediate access to the rest of the Full Application Phase components (the full application template was available after eligibility was accepted). Note that reference letters must be uploaded by the letter-writers by the Full Application Phase deadline.

There are three main aspects of the Letter of Intent Phase:

- Reference letter requests (letter-writer information added to the [LLS Research Portal](#))
- ORCID
- Corresponding author publications
- Program information
- Collaborator information

The reference letter information can be added as soon as the application moves to the Letter of Intent Phase (after eligibility is approved). It is recommended to complete the reference letters information before starting the Program Information components, so that the writers get their submission instructions early (more details are found in the next section). Completion of the reference letters section and all other components must happen prior to final submission of the Letter of Intent.

Reference Letters

The applicant must have reference letters submitted on their behalf. These letters must be submitted directly by the letter-writers to the [LLS Research Portal](#). (See Initiating Blind Reference Letters below.) Reference letter requests must be done by the applicant during the Letter of Intent Phase, but the letters must be submitted by the letter-writers by the Full Application deadline.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the letters are submitted in the [LLS Research Portal](#) and received by the deadline. Letters received by LLS after the deadline will not be accepted.

If there are not at least 3 letters of reference received by the full application deadline, the application will be administratively disqualified.

Reference Letter Policies

- Reference letter information must be provided by the applicant at the Letter of Intent stage, but the letters are not due until the full application deadline
- Three letters are required
- No more than four letters will be accepted
- It is beneficial to have a backup letter-writer in case one of your original writers is not able to submit on time
- It is beneficial to add letter-writer information to the [LLS Research Portal](#) as early as possible as well as to contact the letter-writers early
- Though not required, it is beneficial to have two of the letters coming from outside your institution
- Letters are blinded to the applicant and must be uploaded directly by the writer

The Sponsor Letter is separate from the reference letters and therefore is not considered one of the three reference letters; Sponsor information should not be provided in the reference letters section on the [LLS Research Portal](#) (see Sponsor Letter section).

You may have one person write both a collaboration/support letter and a letter of reference. Closely follow the rules for reference letters and collaboration/support letters to prevent disqualification.

Initiating Blind Reference Letters

During the Letter of Intent Phase, the applicant must contact those who will write their reference letters. A section called “Request Blind Reference Letters” is available on the [LLS Research Portal](#) during the Letter of Intent Phase. For each letter-writer, press the green “+” button on the right side. A pop-up window will appear. Copy and paste the first name, last name, and email address of the letter-writer into the designated spaces. After adding this information, press “Create Recommendation.” The pop-up will disappear, and an email will be automatically sent

to the letter-writer. The email will contain a unique link that allows the writer to directly upload the letter to the [LLS Research Portal](#). This process is repeated for each of the letter-writers. If a name is added in error, such as your Sponsor's name (which does not belong here), it cannot be deleted. Simply move on and add the name(s) that are needed here.

The email may end up in the letter-writer's spam. Therefore, after the letter-writer's information is added in the [LLS Research Portal](#), **it is critical for the applicant to follow up with each writer to be sure they received the email**. If they have not received this email within 2 business days, email researchprograms@lls.org, and the link will be re-sent to them.

The letters will not be viewable by the applicant. However, the applicant can view reference letter status on the [LLS Research Portal](#). Prior to each letter's submission, a note will be visible to the applicant indicating that no letter is uploaded. After the letter is uploaded, this note will change to indicate that the letter has been submitted.

ORCiD

Starting this application cycle, we are requiring all applicants to sign up for ORCiD (<https://orcid.org/>) and provide their ORCiD number during the LOI phase and to keep their profile updated for the remainder of the funding period, if awarded. This policy will enhance our ability to track former awardees which will help us understand the level of success of the Career Development Program.

Corresponding Author Publications Since Independence

Using the *Blood* citation format, list all primary research, corresponding-author publications following the instructions on the template and below.

These must be:

- Corresponding author publications, including multiple corresponding author publications (corresponding authorship must be verifiable on the manuscript)
- Publications resulting from your independent career
- Primary research publications (clinically oriented publications are acceptable, but must be primary observations/analyses)
- Peer-reviewed publications that are available on PubMed or the journal's website by the full application due date; peer reviewed manuscripts that are **fully** accepted by the eligibility due date are acceptable; clear evidence of full acceptance (with no more than minor structural/grammatical changes) is required at the Eligibility Phase

These must not be:

- Corresponding author publications that result from a prior mentored position
- Publications on which you are not corresponding author
- Non primary research publications (reviews, perspectives, etc.)
- Conference presentations
- Manuscripts submitted or under review/revision (except **fully** accepted manuscripts with no more than minor structural/grammatical revisions; see prior section)
- Manuscripts that are accepted (with no more than minor structural/grammatical changes) that were not declared at the Eligibility Phase
- Manuscripts found only on a preprint server

Applications will be checked by LLS scientific staff for accuracy. **Significant deviations from publicly available information may result in administrative disqualification. Failure to follow these rules may cause an administrative disqualification of the application.**

Program Information

Provide the following after completing the initiation of blind reference letters. All information provided here must remain consistent with the full application. **Significant divergence between information in this section and in the full application may negatively affect your funding chances.**

Summary

For funded applications, we post awardee information on our website. Together with the applicant's biographical information, there is a short Summary of the applicant's research. From there, a reader may choose to look at the longer Lay Description. Therefore, please provide a 3-5 sentence Summary describing your research program. The total of all sentences should be no more than 500 characters, including spaces. Use this guide to structure the short paragraph:

- Overall question/focus of your research (1 sentence)
- High-level approach you will use to address this question (1 to 2 sentences)
- Outcome/goal of your research (1 to 2 sentences)

The overall goal is to provide a succinct overview of your research in a short, cohesive paragraph.

Title

Provide a succinct title to describe your research; 150-character limit, including spaces.

Research focus and details

Provide the following details that form the basis of your research. Only state information that is **directly** related to **your** research. This information must reflect what will be in your full application; significant divergence may negatively affect your funding chances. A common problem that should not happen is listing "human patient samples" in this section but not describing human patient samples in the full application.

For each section, provide brief details using these criteria:

- Only provide information of direct relevance to your research
- Provide either the full name or the abbreviation but do **not** include both
- For multiple items, separate each by a comma; do not hit enter within the text box

Provide details for these items:

- Disease or Subject Focus
- Technological Approaches
- Model System(s); if you are working with human patients, put "human patients" or "human patient samples"

Collaborators

List the names and institutions of all investigators, outside of your institution, with whom you have significant and current interaction regarding your research program or your career development. Individuals listed here may be contacted by LLS to verify a connection.

- Include those who are outside your institution who you are collaborating with or who have a significant role in your career development
- Include only researchers who are at or above tenure-track level (or equivalent)
- Include only full names and institutions with no additional information
- Do not list their full institutional titles
- Do not include the names of those who are writing letters of reference

Submission and Confirmation

After clicking the “Submit” button, you will receive an automated email within 2 business days stating that your information was successfully submitted. If you do not receive the email confirmation, contact researchprograms@lls.org.

Immediately after Letter of Intent Phase submission, you will have access to the Full Application Phase and may proceed with the application.

You **must** confirm each stage of the application process by checking your application status on the [LLS Research Portal](#); there are two indicators of your status, and you **must** self-identify your place in the process. Both status indicators are the clearest way for an applicant to know their status.

Changes

Information collected in the Letter of Intent Phase will automatically populate fields in the Full Application Phase. Carefully and thoughtfully complete these sections as the fields are locked after the Letter of Intent Phase is completed. Letter of Intent Phase components must accurately reflect the focus of the full application. **Failure to follow these policies may result in disqualification of the application.**

In addition, applicants must place some of that LOI information on the full application template. This information must exactly match. Therefore, applicants must be thoughtful about the LOI information and only submit when it is clear that the information is final. Some applicants change this information in the full application, and starting this year, we will not accept that.

Either the application will be disqualified, or the information on the full application template will be replaced with the information from the LOI phase.

At this stage, the applicant should follow up with those chosen to write reference letters to remind them of the upcoming deadline for letter submission.

Detailed Full Application Phase Instructions

Some sections of the full application will carry through from the Letter of Intent Phase. Information that carries through must not be modified; changes made to the Letter of Intent Phase components after the Letter of Intent Phase deadline may result in administrative disqualification of the full application. The remainder of the full application consists of web form components and elements to be uploaded as a ***single PDF***.

Failure to submit as a single PDF in the order described on the template may result in disqualification of the application.

Three sections are required in this phase:

- Section 1: Abstracts and Brief Biography
- Section 2: Program Description Template
- Section 3: Attachments

Some information is put in the webform, some on the application template (downloaded from the [LLS Research Portal](#)), and some information is put in both.

Section 1: Abstracts and Biography

Lay Description

The Lay Description (Lay Abstract) should clearly state the relevance of your research to blood cancer and describe your current/proposed research, including the problems/questions to be addressed, approaches, and anticipated results using non-technical language that is easily understood by the lay community. Scientific/Greek characters or symbols must not be used. The Lay Description is essential for LLS to continue successful fundraising to support our current and future grantees, including the later years of ***your*** award, should it be funded. Thus, we require a well-written Lay Description, with sufficient detail and suitable language for non-scientists. Be aware of your confidential information, as the Lay Description (and Summary) will be shared with others. **The Lay Description has a minimum of 2,000 characters and a maximum of 2,500 characters, including spaces.**

Helpful hints:

- Consider how you would communicate your research to a friend or family member who is educated *but is not a scientist*.
- Limit the use of scientific terms that are specific to your field.
- When specific scientific terms are necessary, be sure to include a brief definition.
 - When in doubt, err on the side of over-explaining.
- Avoid using too many acronyms or other abbreviations and always define them before using (except for common acronyms like “DNA”).

Use the following list of questions as a guide for creating your Lay Description:

- What is the overall problem?
- What are the goals of your research program? How do these fit into the overall problem?
- What is unique about ***your*** research? You must describe the specifics of your research and approach while avoiding being overly generic.
- What will be the indicators for success in your program?
- What are the longer-term goals of your program?
- How will your research benefit blood cancer patients now or in the future? **If your research is distant from the clinic, it is critical to make the connection between your research and the benefit to *blood cancer patients* in the future.**

Scientific Abstract

The Scientific Abstract should accurately reflect your research (current/proposed). Though putting your research in a broader context may be useful, it is also important to avoid

overstating your research beyond what you are actually doing. Do not use disease names or other terms that are not directly relevant to your research. **1,500 characters maximum, including spaces.**

Brief Biography

Provide a brief, professional biography introducing the applicant to a lay audience. **1,000 characters maximum, including spaces.**

Section 2: Program Description Template

(Downloaded from the [LLS Research Portal](#))

The template consists of the required elements listed in the Program Description Template Components section. You will find detailed instructions for each element on the full application template (as well as below). Please ensure that you provide all requested information. If you have any questions regarding these elements, please contact researchprograms@lls.org. **No information may be attached to the beginning of this template; such added information may result in administrative disqualification of the application.**

Use Arial 11 pt. black font in each section of the application. This includes figure legends, which must be separate text boxes that use Arial 11 pt. black font. Do not shrink the figure legends, which makes the font appear smaller than Arial 11 pt. Tables must also use Arial 11 pt. black font.

The figures themselves *may* have smaller text size and/or a different font. However, it is to ***your advantage*** to have figures that are easily readable by the reviewers. Reviewers who have difficulty understanding your figure, which often happens with small text within the figure, will more likely downgrade the score of your application.

Outside of the figures themselves, should any font be smaller than Arial 11 pt. (including shrunken figure legend text boxes, which will appear smaller), the application may be administratively disqualified without review.

Line spacing is preset in the Word document. ***Do not change the setting. Pasting text from another document, which should generally be avoided, may result in a change in the line spacing in the template.*** Any modifications in line spacing, particularly if the change allows for more text to fit into the page, ***may result in administrative rejection of your application.*** However, you may add spacing between paragraphs.

Program Description Template Components

- **Applicant and Program Information:** Provide Applicant Name and Institution, Research Program Title, Summary, and Scientific Abstract. ***The Research Program Title and Summary must exactly match what was provided at the LOI stage. If it differs, the application may be disqualified or that information may be replaced with the information provided at the LOI phase.***
- **Writing Source:** Excessive use of artificial intelligence/large language models is not allowed. Indicate how much was used in your application.

- **Previous CDP Applications (if applicable):** If you have previously submitted a CDP application that was not funded, briefly describe what has changed from that application. Your prior application may be shared with the current review committee.
- **Current Non-Blood Cancer Research:** Brief description of all current research activities that are not directly related to blood cancer (and that do not use blood cancer models).
- **Description of Models, Drugs/Reagents, and Trials (these tables are found after the References section):** All model systems, drugs/reagents, and trials mentioned in your current and future research program, including figures, must be described here. This provides reviewers with an easily accessible reference source and serves to demonstrate feasibility of your research plans. ***All materials described in the Current and Future Research Program section, including those mentioned in figures, must be listed here.***
- **Graphical Abstract:** Provide up to two graphical abstracts to describe some aspect of your research, such as signaling pathways, overall approach, etc. This is similar to the graphical abstract in a Cancer Cell paper and provides reviewers (and others) with a quick overview of your research. Graphical abstracts must not be professionally developed. They must be developed primarily by the applicant using tools readily available in a typical lab (e.g., PowerPoint, Photoshop, Adobe Illustrator, BioRender, etc.). You will be judged on your ability to convey information in a simple manner, but you will not be judged on artistic ability. Do not rotate the image; it must be viewable by the reviewer without rotating the page. Avoid excessive use of words.

Current and Future Research Program: Provide current projects in your lab and integrate with your future plans. This provides the opportunity for reviewers to assess your innovative approaches and the impact they may have on our knowledge of blood cancer. Applicants are encouraged to also describe high-risk projects, including those with limited preliminary data. However, this section must be feasible based on your current experience and capabilities. It must also generally reflect your funding and publication record. ***This section should not be presented as a standard, 3 aim research project grant. This should be a broader overview of your total research program.***

Provide the following:

- The problem(s) to be solved, hypothesis, and the general approach used
- Key areas of technical and conceptual innovation
- Why your total research program is important, particularly for blood cancer
- How success in your research program will positively impact our understanding and/or treatment of blood cancers
- Avoid excessive experimental detail

In addition:

- If you do not have direct and demonstrable access to materials, access should be confirmed through letters of collaboration/support from the supplier. Lack of clear access to materials may indicate feasibility issues which may negatively affect the review of your application.
- The text (and figure legends) in this section must clearly identify the model system(s) with enough description so that the reviewer understands the system. Use appropriate descriptors which may then refer to details in the Description of Models, Drugs/Reagents, and Trials sections.
- **Disease Demographics and Equitable Research Models and Approaches:** As the scientific and medical fields are increasingly aware of demographic differences in

disease incidence as well as outcomes, it is important for basic/translational scientists to begin exploring ways in which they can contribute to a better understanding of these disparities. Engaging with this question not only enhances the relevance of your research but also helps in developing more effective and equitable treatments.

- **Disease Demographics:**
 - Describe the racial, ethnic, and gender demographics for all diseases that are the focus of your research program. Indicate what age(s) are affected. Charts and graphs are welcome. Provide citations (referring to the References section).
- **Equitable Research Models and Approaches:**
 - Where possible, describe how you will consider equity in your research models and approaches. As an example, if one is using genomic data or patient samples in their research, they should describe how they will attempt to use genomic data or patient samples that represent the population affected by their disease of interest. If your research does not readily incorporate these approaches, please provide a brief explanation for why it does not. Provide citations (referring to the References section).
- **Age Focus of Research:** Indicate the approximate percentage of pediatric focus of your research. For any number greater than 0%, briefly describe how the research has a pediatric focus.
- **References:** Use the *Blood* citation format.
- **Description of Models, Drugs/Reagents, and Trials:** See description above.
- **Access to Non-Commercially Available Reagents, Drugs, and Models:** Confirm that you have (or will have) access to all reagents, drugs, and models necessary for your research. This will be another component used to assess the feasibility of your research.
- **Budget**
- **Signature Page:** Please ensure all signatures requested are complete. *Electronic signatures are acceptable.*

Section 3: Attachments

The following sections must be attached to the end of the template (from Section 2) to create a single PDF. Attach in the order stated on the application template. No other information may be provided in this section.

NIH Biosketch and Other Support documents.

Biosketches and Other Support documents must be provided and must use the NIH format. Please refer to the NIH guidelines for questions on how to fill out these documents, except as follows. An eRA Commons User Name is not required. The Other Support document ***must be a document separate from the biosketch.*** You do not need to switch to a new version should the NIH update any format during the application process. Therefore, use the most recent format as of July 1 of this application cycle (though you may use a later version if you wish and if one becomes available).

Sponsor Letter

The Sponsor Letter must contain at least the following:

- Description of the applicant's position
- Description of the Institution's support for the applicant's research program
- Future plans for the applicant's career development at the Institution
- Description of how the applicant's time will be divided among research and other responsibilities to the Institution

The Sponsor Letter is separate from the reference letters; **Sponsors may not write a letter of reference. The Sponsor Letter is not blinded to the applicant.**

Collaboration/Support Letters (Required where applicable)

When there are significant collaborations, letters of support are helpful. This is critical when access to patient samples, animal models, or specialized equipment outside of the applicant's laboratory or department is necessary for the proposed research. If a company asset is required and is not commercially available from scientific supply companies, such as proprietary drugs, a letter from the company supplying this asset ***must*** accompany the application. The letters must be signed and must be provided on institutional/company letterhead. ***Failure to provide this information will negatively affect the review of your application.***

Collaboration/support letters must be short-typically 1 or 2 brief paragraphs. Each should briefly describe what support will be given to your research program. ***These letters should avoid any lengthy description of the positive attributes of you or your research*** (a sentence or two is fine), otherwise, they will be considered letters of reference. ***There can only be 4 total letters of reference (submitted separately), otherwise the application may be administratively disqualified; therefore, instruct each writer of a collaboration/support letter to largely restrict their letter to the collaboration and/or service provided to prevent their letter from being considered a letter of reference.***

Letters attached must not be letters of reference. All letters of reference must be uploaded separately by the writer (and blinded to the applicant). ***Outside of the Sponsor Letter, any letter attached to the application that is not primarily a letter of collaboration and/or a letter stating access to materials and/or other resources may result in administrative disqualification of the application.***

You may have one person write both a collaboration/support letter and a letter of reference. Closely follow the rules above for reference letters and collaboration/support letters to prevent disqualification.

Clinical Protocol Summary (Required where applicable)

Clinical trial protocol summaries should only be attached if the applicant is directly involved in the clinical trial, which is rare for applicants in this program. Provide a summary (up to two pages) of any clinical protocols essential to the current/proposed research program. Include the NCT number. Include approval date and compliance number. Indicate if IRB approval is pending and provide a letter from the institutional official regarding IRB status. ***Do not attach a full clinical protocol.***

Full approval for any IRBs that are necessary for the research must be obtained by the award start date.

Assurances (Required)

All assurances that are applicable to your research must be accompanied by a signed letter from the ***appropriate institutional official***, including assurances that are pending. Do not send letters signed by yourself nor from anyone outside of the designated institutional offices.

Any application without these letters attached will not be reviewed.

Human Subjects

Indicate if human subjects will be involved in the proposed research. The status (approved, pending, or exempt) of IRB (or equivalent institutional designation) approval must be provided. Documentation of any current or pending approvals must be contained in the full application. There is also a section on the web form that must be completed. An application may be submitted with IRB approval pending, but IRB approval must be obtained and provided to LLS prior to the award start date.

Laboratory Animals

Indicate if animals will be involved in the proposed research. The status and date of the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) (or equivalent institutional designation) approval must be provided. The Animal Welfare Assurance number must be included. Documentation of any current or pending approvals must be provided in the full application template. There is also a section on the web form that must be completed. An application may be submitted with approval pending, but approval must be obtained and provided to LLS prior to the award start date.

Recombinant DNA

Indicate if the proposed research involves recombinant DNA. Documentation of any current or pending approvals must be contained in the full application template; there is also a section on the web form that must be completed.

Biohazard Statement

Indicate if the proposed research involves the use of biohazards. Documentation of any current or pending approvals must be contained in the full application template. There is also a section on the web form that must be completed.

No attachments besides those listed above should be included, nor should there be any attachments preceding the template (e.g., no cover letters). Applications that include additional documents besides those requested may be administratively disqualified.

Uploading the program document and final submission

Upload the full application components, as a single PDF on the web form.

All documents must be combined into a single PDF in the order listed above before uploading. ***Failure to submit as a single PDF in the order above may result in disqualification of the application.***

Check each page of your PDF before uploading to be sure that everything is present and there are no issues with the text/figures. Changes to your PDF are not allowed past the deadline.

Submission and Confirmation

After clicking the “Submit” button, you will receive an automated email **within 2 business days** stating that your information was successfully submitted. **If you do not receive the email confirmation of submission, contact researchprograms@lls.org.**

You must confirm each stage of the application process by checking your application status on the [LLS Research Portal](#); there are two indicators of your status, and you must self-identify your place in the process. Both status indicators are the clearest way for an applicant to know their status.

Only one application document and one eligibility request document should be present. If extra documents remain after submission and before the deadline, email researchprograms@lls.org and let us know which documents to remove.

Carefully check your PDF prior to submission. If you notice problems with your PDF after you have submitted, email researchprograms@lls.org and we will help you upload the correct document if you are unable to delete the incorrect document. ***This email must be received, with the correct document, prior to the deadline; there are no exceptions to this rule.***

Check the application prior to final submission. The applicant is ultimately responsible for the submission, regardless of who is uploading information on the [LLS Research Portal](#). Every year, we hear from a small number of applicants that notice problems with their application after the deadline. Applicants will avoid this problem by carefully checking their application prior to final submission. Submitting well ahead of the deadline is also beneficial.

Once the deadline has passed, only the following updates may be made via email to researchprograms@lls.org:

- Manuscripts that are accepted for publication; the following must be provided:
 - Complete list of authors as they appear on the accepted manuscript with your name in bold
 - Manuscript title
 - Journal
 - Date of publication or online ahead of print (if known)
 - A copy of the acceptance letter from the journal
- Updates regarding any transfers to a new institution (see Transfers section in Eligibility).