2013 Conquer Cancer Foundation of ASCO—Young Investigator Award

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Conquer Cancer Foundation
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Please visit www.conquercancerfoundation.org/YIA for the most up-to-date version of the 2013 Request for Proposals.

Conquer Cancer Foundation
The Conquer Cancer Foundation is working to create a world free from the fear of cancer by funding breakthrough research, by sharing knowledge with physicians and patients worldwide, and by supporting initiatives to ensure that all people have access to high-quality cancer care. Working in close collaboration with a global network of top scientists and clinicians, as well as leading advocacy and research organizations, the Foundation draws on the passion and expertise of over 30,000 oncology professionals who are members of its affiliate organization, the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO.) For more information, visit www.conquercancerfoundation.org.
Purpose

The Conquer Cancer Foundation of ASCO Young Investigator Award (YIA) provides funding to promising investigators to encourage and promote quality research in clinical oncology. The purpose of this award is to fund physicians during the transition from a fellowship program to a faculty appointment. The Conquer Cancer Foundation welcomes application submissions in all oncology subspecialties.

Funding Available

The total award amount is $50,000 for one year, payable on July 1 and January 1 in two equal installments. The number of YIA grants in each funding cycle is not predetermined by the Conquer Cancer Foundation. Awards are given based on individual merit and availability of funds.

Eligibility Criteria

The Young Investigator Award is intended to support proposals with a clinical research focus. ASCO’s definition of clinical research is “hypothesis-driven research that employs measurements in whole patients or normal human subjects, in conjunction with laboratory measurements as appropriate, on the subjects of clinical biology, natural history, prevention, screening, diagnosis, therapy, or epidemiology of neoplastic disease” (Journal of Clinical Oncology, Vol. 14, No. 2, 1996 pp. 666-670). In Young Investigator Award proposals, preclinical in vitro and/or animal studies are acceptable as long as the outcome of these studies would ultimately lead to patient-oriented clinical research. Project proposals should have measurable outcomes during the one year grant period.

Applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Be a physician (MD, DO, or international equivalent) working in any country and currently in the last two years of his/her final subspecialty training at an academic medical institution at the time of grant submission. Examples of subspecialty training include, but are not limited to, a hematology-oncology fellowship, a surgical oncology fellowship, or a radiation oncology residency. If there are questions regarding whether the potential applicant is at the correct career stage, it is encouraged to send an email to grants@conquercancerfoundation.org for clarification and eligibility verification.
- An institutional commitment for a faculty appointment at the time of grant submission is not required, but the applicant should be working in an oncology laboratory or clinical research setting.
- Have a mentor in the proposed research field from the sponsoring institution who must provide a letter of support. The mentor must assume responsibility and provide guidance for the research. If the mentor is not an ASCO member, a supporting letter from an ASCO member from the sponsoring institution must be included.
- Be planning an investigative career in clinical oncology.
- Be an ASCO member (Full Member, Member in Training, or International Corresponding) or have submitted a membership application with the grant application.
• Be able to commit at least 60% of full-time effort in research (applies to total research, not just the proposed project) during the award period.

• A United States-trained MD, PhD is eligible if both degrees are completed prior to the start of the grant period. For foreign-trained physicians, eligibility for those currently enrolled in PhD programs will be determined on a case by case basis, please contact grants@conquercancerfoundation.org for eligibility verification.

• Eligible physicians are allowed to hold only one grant from the Conquer Cancer Foundation at a time.

NOTE: If at any time during the application or review process you have a career plan change or leave your current position, please notify Foundation staff at grants@conquercancerfoundation.org.

The Conquer Cancer Foundation Grants Selection Committee reserves the right to evaluate and determine applicants' eligibility based on the information and justifications included in the application materials.

2011 – 2012 Application Dates

Online Applications Open: July 1, 2012
Full Applications Due: September 27, 2012
Notification Date: April 1, 2013
Award Term: July 1, 2013 - June 30, 2014
Application Process

All applications must be submitted in accordance to the requirements and instructions of this Request for Proposals (RFP). All application materials must be in English and must be submitted online in the Easygrants system. No paper applications or applications sent by e-mail will be accepted.

Applicants are encouraged to start their application early due to the complexity of the online application process. To initiate an application through Easygrants, please go to https://grants.conquercancerfoundation.org.

If applicants have previously used Easygrants to apply for a Conquer Cancer Foundation grant or through participation on a Foundation review committee, their login information should be the same. Email grants@conquercancerfoundation.org if you are locked out of your account.

The full application must be submitted by 11:59PM EDT on Thursday, September 27, 2012. No late applications will be accepted. Applicants are encouraged to submit early because technical help will not be available after 5PM EDT on September 27.

Applications must include the following mandatory components:

1. Contact Information
2. Project Information (includes Abstract, IRB and Animal Use Assurances)
3. Specific Aims
4. Personal Statement
5. Applicant’s Biosketch
6. Research Strategy
7. Cited References
8. Project Timeline
9. Budget and Justification
10. Mentor’s Biosketch
11. Mentor’s Letter of Support
12. Institutional Letter of Support from Department Chair or Dean
13. Institutional Approval Face Sheet Signed by the Institutional Approver

The following are optional components:

1. Clinical Protocol (strongly encouraged to attach this document)
2. Prior Publications (maximum of two publications)
3. Supporting Documentation
4. Sponsor’s Biosketch (required if mentor is not an ASCO member)
5. Sponsor’s Letter of Support (required if mentor is not an ASCO member)

Important Instructions about Uploads. Some sections will be uploaded documents in the “Uploads” portion of the online application or uploaded by the mentor or institutional approver. Uploads can be in PDF, MS Word, or MS Excel formats although PDF format is preferred to ensure proper conversion. Uploaded documents should not be password protected or they may not convert properly.

Contact Information. This section includes the following information about the applicant:
Project Information. This section includes the following information about the proposed project:

- Project title
- Subject area
- Research focus area(s)
- Assurances for use of human and/or animal subjects in the research proposal
- Abstract – a brief abstract of the research proposal must be entered (<350 words)

Specific Aims. List succinctly the specific objectives of the research proposed, e.g., to test a stated hypothesis, create a novel design, solve a specific problem, challenge an existing paradigm or clinical practice, address a critical barrier to progress in the field, or develop new technology. The specific aims should state concisely and realistically what the research intends to accomplish and/or what hypothesis is to be tested, and should list measurable objectives for the proposed project.

Personal Statement Questions. Please answer the following questions in the text box areas on the online application. You may cut and paste from a Word document. Please answer as briefly as possible. Each question has a maximum limit of 350 words.

- What is the applicant’s career plan?
- How would receiving this award affect the applicant’s career?
- What is the percentage of time the applicant spends on research activities?
- What is the applicant’s role versus the mentor’s role in the proposed research study?
- What are the sources of salary support?
- Who will collect and analyze the data?
- What is the clinical potential of this research project?
- Was this research proposal submitted and/or will be submitted to other funding agencies/organizations?

Uploads (the following seven components are uploaded in the “Uploads” section):

1. Applicant Biosketch. Applicants may use their current NIH biosketch if they have one available or they may use the biosketch template provided in the online application. The biosketch must have no more than four (4) pages.
2. Research Strategy. The research strategy should be limited to four (4) typewritten, single-spaced pages, with one-inch margins and using an 11 point Arial font type. ALL pertinent tables, pictures, and graphs MUST be included within the 4-page limit.

The Research Strategy must contain the following information:

- **Significance and Background:**
  - Explain the importance of the problem or critical barrier to progress in the field that the proposed project addresses.
  - Explain how the proposed project will improve scientific knowledge, technical capability, and/or critical practice in one or more broad fields.
  - Describe how the concepts, methods, technologies, treatments, services, or preventative interventions that drive this field will change if the proposed aims are achieved.

- **Innovation:**
  - Explain how the application challenges and seeks to shift current research or clinical practice paradigms.
  - Describe any novel theoretical concepts, approached or methodologies, instrumentation or interventions to be developed or used, and any advantage over existing methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions.
  - Explain any refinements, improvements, or new applications of theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions.

- **Approach:**
  - Describe the overall strategy, methodology, and analyses to be used to accomplish the specific aims of the project. Include how the data will be collected, analyzed, and interpreted as well as any resource sharing plans as appropriate.
  - Discuss potential problems, alternative strategies, and benchmarks for success anticipated to achieve the aims.
  - If the project is in the early stages of development, describe any strategy to establish feasibility, and address the management of any high risk aspects of the proposed work.
  - Point out any procedures, situations, or materials that may be hazardous to personnel and precautions to be exercised.
  - Clearly state the applicant's role in the project (i.e. writing of protocol, performing the assays, etc.). When human subjects are involved, the precautions to ensure patient safety and confidentiality and the relevance or implications for patient care should be explained.
  - List and describe the facilities and resources available to conduct the study, including a description of industry support for any clinical trials.

- **Statistical Analysis.** A statistical consideration section is required for all applications. For clinical and in-vivo studies this section should include the primary objective/hypothesis and primary endpoint of the study, justification of the proposed study sample size, procedures for data analysis, and appropriate statistical considerations. Laboratory-based in vitro research proposals should also include the primary objective/hypothesis and primary endpoint of the
study, procedures for data analysis, and appropriate statistical details that describe the summary measures that will be used to meet the objectives of the study. Applications will be reviewed by a biostatistician and it is highly recommended that you consult with a biostatistician before you submit your application.


4. Institutional Letter of Support. A letter from the Department Chair or Dean at the sponsoring institution where the applicant's research project will be conducted must be provided. This letter must include a statement of institutional support that will enable the applicant to perform the proposed research. If the mentor is the Department Chair, the Institutional Letter of Support must come from the Dean.

5. Clinical Protocol (optional). If your project involves a clinical protocol, you are highly encouraged to upload a copy of the protocol in the Uploads section.

6. Prior Publications (optional) – Up to two prior publications may be included. The applicant must be a co-author on these publications. Please upload a copy of each publication. (You will also need to enter the publication information on the “Publications” page).

7. Supporting Documentation (optional). This section may be used to upload any necessary additional information required to properly review the application (i.e. a letter from a drug company that they will provide the investigational drug, a letter of collaboration from another laboratory providing expertise for this project, etc.). Applicants are encouraged to provide a letter of support for any investigational agents. Due to the limited time given to the reviewers, upload of any documents that are not critical to the review of the proposal or any additional publications is not allowable.

Project Timeline. Enter major milestones for your project, the expected completion date, and if there is an associated deliverable. A deliverable is something that can be included in a progress report, such as a publication or an approval letter. You are not required to have deliverables. However, the timeline should make it clear what outcomes will be achieved during the grant award period.

Budget and Justification. The award funds will be directed to the sponsoring institution and should be used towards salary support, supplies, equipment, travel, etc. necessary for the pursuit of the recipient’s research project. Award funds may not be applied to patient care costs that are reimbursable by a third-party payor, to the applicant’s ASCO membership dues, or to tuition or fees for academic courses. The budget must be directly entered into the budget section of the online application. Budget justification must be entered for each line item requested in the “Notes” section.

The budget guidelines are as follows:

- **Total Award**: The total award amount is $50,000 for one year, payable on July 1 and January 1 in two equal installments. The proposed budget must not exceed the total award amount.
• **Research support**: At least $46,000 should support costs directly related to the research project such as personnel salary, supplies, equipment, and other expenses. Budgeted items must be consistent with available institutional facilities and resources. Patient care costs that are reimbursable by a third-party payor, and tuition and fees for academic courses are unallowable costs.

• **Travel**: Up to $1,500 should be allotted specifically for the applicant’s travel to the Conquer Cancer Foundation Grants and Awards Ceremony and for any other travel essential to conducting the study. Attendance is mandatory at the Conquer Cancer Foundation Grants and Awards Ceremony which will take place during the ASCO Annual Meeting in June 2013 immediately following acceptance of the grant.

• **Indirect costs**: Up to $2,500 (or 5% of the total award amount) may be applied to overhead or facilities and administrative costs of the recipient's institution in administering the recipient's research project.

**Publications (optional)** – Up to two prior publications may be included. The applicant must be a co-author on these publications. Please enter the publication information in this section including the title, the year published, and the type of publication. You should have also uploaded a copy of the publications on the Uploads section.

**Mentor’s Biosketch and Letter of Support.** Please identify a mentor from your sponsoring institution. The mentor’s contact information including name, phone number, email address, and ASCO ID (or N/A) must be entered in the online application. Please have all of this information available before entering your mentor. When the “Notify” button is clicked, an email will be sent to the mentor containing login information and a message indicating that the following supporting documents must be uploaded for the application:

• **Mentor’s Biosketch.** Mentors may use their current NIH biosketch if they have one available or they may use the biosketch template provided in the online application. The biosketch must have no more than four pages.

• **Letter of Support.** This should include the following information:
  o Training plan for the applicant, including intended structure of the mentor/investigator interaction during the proposed investigation
  o Confirmation that the applicant is currently in the last two years of his/her final subspecialty training at an academic medical institution at the time of grant submission
  o A critical review of both the applicant and the research proposal
  o The role(s) or anticipated role(s) the applicant holds (will hold) at the institution
  o The level of institutional commitment to the applicant’s career development as an independent clinical investigator
  o Assurance that the applicant’s sponsoring institution will provide adequate facilities and support for performance of the proposed work
A mentor is strongly encouraged to have no more than two mentees applying for the Young Investigator Award and/or Career Development Award for this funding cycle. No more than two mentees from a single mentor will be funded in a given year.

When the mentor has uploaded the required supporting documents, an email will be sent to the applicant confirming that this task has been completed. The applicant will not be able to view these documents. All supporting documents must be received before the applicant will be able to submit the application.

*If the mentor is an ASCO Member, the applicant is not required to select a sponsor from the sponsoring institution.

**Sponsor’s Biosketch and Letter of Support.** If the mentor is NOT an ASCO Member, a sponsor who is an ASCO Member must be selected. The sponsor contact information including name, phone number, email address, and ASCO ID must be entered in the online application. Please have all of this information available before entering your sponsor. When the “Notify” button is clicked, an email will be sent to the sponsor containing a login information and message indicating that the following supporting documents must be uploaded for the application:

- **Sponsor’s Biosketch.** Sponsors may use their current NIH biosketch if they have one available or they may use the biosketch template provided in the online application. The biosketch must have no more than four pages.

- **Letter of Support.** This should include the following information:
  - Confirmation that the applicant is currently in the last two years of his/her final subspecialty training at an academic medical institution at the time of grant submission
  - A critical review of both the applicant and the research proposal
  - The role(s) or anticipated role(s) the applicant holds (will hold) at the institution
  - The level of institutional commitment to the applicant’s career development as an independent clinical investigator
  - Assurance that the applicant’s sponsoring institution will provide adequate facilities and support for performance of the proposed work

When the sponsor has uploaded the required supporting documents, an email will be sent to the applicant confirming that this task has been completed. The applicant will not be able to view these documents. All supporting documents must be received before the applicant will be able to submit the application.

**Institutional Approval.** The Authorized Official representing the institution of the applicant must approve the completed application (both the project proposal and the budget) before submission. This official is normally from the institution’s Office of Sponsored Research.

In this section, the name and contact information of the Institutional Approver must be entered in the online application. Once the application is complete, the “Notify” button should be clicked to send the Institutional Approver an email containing login information and instructions describing how to enter the
online system to review and approve the application. If any section of the application is still incomplete, the Institutional Approver should not be notified.

Upon logging in of the Institutional Approver, the completed application in PDF format will be available to view. If the application is approved, the Institutional Approver must upload the completed and signed Institutional Approval Face Sheet. The template of the Institutional Approval Face Sheet is downloadable from the Institutional Approver’s Easygrants task. However, if the application is not approved, the Institutional Approver should contact the applicant directly to correct any problems prior to approval.

Upon upload of the completed and signed Institutional Approval Face Sheet, an email will be sent to the applicant confirming that this task has been completed. Subsequently, the applicant must log in and submit the completed and approved application. No changes should be made to the application upon obtaining institutional approval.

The completed and approved application must be received on or before the deadline of 11:59 pm EDT on September 27, 2012.

Selection Process

The Conquer Cancer Foundation Grants Selection Committee will select the recipient based on the following criteria:

- Significance and originality of the proposed study and hypothesis
- Appropriateness, feasibility, and adequacy of the proposed experiment and methodology
- Quality of the mentor and the plan for mentoring interactions with the applicant
- The qualifications and experiences of the applicant. Factors considered include the quality and extent of past education, scientific training, research experience, research originality, productivity, potential for independent investigation, and commitment to a career in clinical oncology research.
- A focus on patient-oriented or translational and, ultimately, clinical research
- Availability of institutional resources to support the proposed project

Award Notification

All communication will be sent to the primary email address entered for the applicant. Please confirm that this email address is correct. Please add grants@conquercancerfoundation.org to your safe senders list and/or check your spam folder if you are not receiving communications such as document submission notifications, application submission confirmation, etc. Applicants can expect to be notified in April 1, 2013 by email to their primary email address.

For questions, please email grants@conquercancerfoundation.org
CHECKLIST
Young Investigator Award

Mandatory Components

☐ Contact Information – including ASCO Member ID number

☐ Project Information – including Abstract (< 350 words), IRB, and Animal Use Assurances

☐ Specific Aims

☐ Personal Statement

☐ Applicant’s Biosketch (4 pages maximum)

☐ Research Strategy (4 pages maximum including tables, pictures, graphs, single spaced, 1 inch margins, Arial, font size 11)

☐ Cited References

☐ Project Timeline

☐ Budget and Justification

☐ Mentor’s Biosketch (4 pages maximum)

☐ Mentor’s Letter of Support

☐ Institutional Letter of Support (from Department Chair or Dean)

☐ Institutional Approval Face Sheet Signed by the Institutional Approver

Optional Components

☐ Clinical Protocol (It is strongly encouraged to attach this document)

☐ Prior Publications (maximum of 2; applicant must be one of the authors)

☐ Supporting Documentation (for example, letter from a company that will provide an experimental agent)

☐ Supporting Documents from the Sponsor (required if Mentor is not an ASCO member)
  - Biosketch (4 pages maximum)
  - Letter of Support