



## **2018 Bladder Cancer Research Innovation Award**

**\$300,000 over two years**

### **Letter of Intent Guidelines**

#### **Purpose of Award**

The aim of the 2018 Bladder Cancer Research Innovation Award is to support exceptionally novel and creative projects with great potential to produce breakthroughs in our understanding or the management of bladder cancer. The proposed research may be basic, translational, or clinical but must have direct applicability and relevance to bladder cancer and address one of the questions of interest (see below). Proposals for innovative projects that will develop preliminary data necessary to prepare and submit a competitive research grant application to a major funding agency are encouraged. The award is available to full time, independent investigators who are affiliated with a non-profit academic, medical or research institution within the United States or Canada. Candidates not currently performing bladder cancer research are encouraged to apply. Proposals that involve a multidisciplinary approach and/or multi-institutional collaboration are encouraged.

The award is for \$300,000 over two years (\$150,000 per year) for direct research expenses, which may include salary and benefits for postdoctoral or clinical research fellows, and/or research assistants; research/lab supplies; and equipment. The second year of funding is dependent on approval after a one year progress report has been submitted and reviewed by BCAN.

One proposal will be funded for the Bladder Cancer Research Innovation Award in 2018. The Awardee is expected to attend the annual Bladder Cancer Think Tank meeting in August 2019 and to present the results of the funded research during the 2020 Think Tank meeting.

#### **QUESTIONS OF INTEREST**

**What are mechanisms by which the resident microbiota interacts with the biology of urothelial cancer?**

**What are the tumor cell autonomous or micro environmental determinants of bladder cancer progression to metastasis?**

## **Application Process**

Interested applicants must submit a Letter of Intent by Wednesday, February 21, 2018. The Letters of Intent will be reviewed by members of the Innovation Award Scientific Review Group and those applicants whose Letters of Intent are deemed most meritorious will be invited to submit full research proposals and compete for the Award. Applicants will be notified of the decision status of the Letter of Intent by Wednesday, April 4, 2018, and the deadline for complete applications will be Wednesday, May 16, 2018. The award decision will be announced in July 2018.

## **Eligibility**

1. Applicant must have a medical and/or doctoral degree (including Ph.D, M.D., D.O., D.D.S, D.V.M, Pharm.D., Sc.D, D.N.S. or equivalent doctoral degree) in the biomedical field.
2. Applicant must be an independent investigator affiliated with a non-profit academic, medical or research institution within the United States or Canada. Proof of permanent resident status or a valid work visa is required if the applicant is not an American or Canadian citizen. Employees or subcontractors of a for-profit private industry are not eligible for the award, but may serve as Collaborators for another applicant.
3. Any individual who current holds an active BCAN Young Investigator Award may not apply.
4. Any individual who has previously received a BCAN Research Innovation Award may not apply.
5. Investigators may not apply both for this Award and for a BCAN Young Investigator Award.
6. BCAN will not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, ethnicity, creed, religion, sexual orientation, disability, nationality, age or any other factor irrelevant to the quality of the application.
7. Applications may have co-principal investigators (PI). However, applicants should make the rationale for this choice clear to the reviewers

## **Letter of Intent Description**

1. The Letter of Intent is limited to 2 pages and must describe the proposed bladder cancer research project, including the Specific Aims; Rationale, Methodology and Approach; Statement of Innovation (describing how the proposed study employs a new idea and/or innovative approach); and Statement of Significance and Relevance to bladder cancer and one of the questions of interest.
2. Must be in English. Please follow NIH guidelines:
  - Paper Size: 8.5" x 11"
  - Margins: at least 1/2" all sides.
  - Font: Arial, Helvetica, Palatino, Times New Roman or Georgia at least 11 pt (or larger).
3. Relevant references must be attached and are limited to 2 pages.
4. The applicant's biographical sketch ([NIH Form](#)) must be attached and is limited to 4 pages. For applications with co-PIs, each PI's bio sketch must be included. Co-investigator bio sketches are not required for the LOI.
5. Scientific abstract is limited to 2000 characters including spaces (approximately 250 words). This abstract must provide a clear, concise and comprehensive overview of the proposed bladder cancer research project.

## **Evaluation Process and Criteria**

Letters of Intent will be reviewed by the Innovation Award Scientific Review Group, comprised of medical experts recognized for their own accomplishments in cancer research and as leaders in the field. Those applicants whose Letters of Intent are deemed most meritorious will be invited to submit full research proposals and compete for the Award.

The Scientific Review Group will also review and score the full applications based on the merits of the research proposals. The Award review process is based on the peer review system utilized by the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Any reviewer with a conflict of interest is excused from voting on a specific application.

The Chair of the Scientific Review Group will present the highest ranked proposals to the Bladder Cancer Research Network Management Committee (comprised of members of BCAN's Scientific Advisory Board, as well as patient advocates), which will review the ranking of the top applications and recommend the final Award decision, based on all included criteria specified in the RFA, for approval by the BCAN Board of Directors. Any member of the Management Committee or the BCAN Board of Directors with a conflict of interest is excused from voting on the Award decisions.

Evaluation of Letters of Intent and invited Applications will include the following criteria:

- **Responsiveness to RFA:** Does the proposal address one of the questions of interest outlined in the RFA?
- **Investigator:** Does the applicant have appropriate experience and training to successfully complete the proposed project? Has the applicant achieved, or have the potential of achieving, a track record of accomplishments to advance the field of bladder cancer research?
- **Innovation:** Does the application challenge and seek to shift current research or clinical practice patterns by utilizing novel theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation or interventions?.
- **Significance:** If the aims of the project are achieved, how will scientific knowledge, technical capability, and/ or clinical practice be improved?
- **Approach:** Are the overall strategy, methodology, and analyses well-reasoned and appropriate to accomplish the specific aims of the project? Are potential problems, alternative strategies and benchmarks for success presented? Is the budget fully justified and reasonable in relation to the proposed project?
- **Environment:** What institutional support, equipment and resources are available to the applicant and are they adequate to successfully complete the proposed project?

## **Letter of Intent Filing Instructions**

All applicants for the Bladder Cancer Research Innovation Award must submit a Letter of Intent online by Wednesday, February 21, 2018 at 5:00 PM U.S. Eastern Time using the proposalCentral website at <https://proposalcentral.altum.com/default.asp?GMID=102>

We will make no exceptions to the Wednesday, February 21, 2018 deadline. You will receive a confirmation email once you submit your letter of intent. If you do not receive one please contact Stephanie Chisolm at [schisolm@bcan.org](mailto:schisolm@bcan.org)

If you have any difficulties registering, logging in, or creating your application, contact proposalCENTRAL Customer Support directly:

Phone: 703-964-5840, Toll-free phone: 1-800-875-2562, Email: [pcsupport@altum.com](mailto:pcsupport@altum.com)

Please note that Proposal Central live customer support is only available from 9am – 5pm U.S. Eastern Time, and plan accordingly.