



2023 Bladder Cancer Research Innovation Award

\$300,000 over two years

Letter of Intent Guidelines

Purpose of Award

The aim of the 2023 Bladder Cancer Research Innovation Award is to support exceptionally novel and creative projects with great potential to produce breakthroughs in our understanding of bladder cancer. The proposed research may be fundamental, translational, clinical or epidemiological and must have direct applicability and relevance to bladder cancer. Applications to this funding mechanism must include innovative approaches and new ideas which may include, but are not limited to, novel theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions. Applications lacking innovative approaches will be considered non-responsive to this funding mechanism.

Projects that are high-risk and high-reward, as opposed to incremental in nature, are required. Essential elements of this award mechanism include the following: does the project address (i) an important problem and/or critical barrier to progress in the field of bladder cancer research? (ii) an area in which there is a significant gap in current knowledge? Proposals will be accepted for creative ideas and innovative approaches that have direct application and relevance to bladder cancer. 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. Eligible recipients include investigators who have experience in other areas of cancer or biomedical/health science research with promising ideas and approaches that can be applied to bladder cancer research. If the applicant's primary area of expertise is outside of bladder cancer, including a co-Primary Investigator with expertise in bladder cancer research is acceptable and recommended.

The award is for \$300,000 over two years for direct research expenses, which may include salary and benefits for postdoctoral or clinical research fellows, and/or research assistants (salary support for the Primary Investigator or co-Primary Investigator(s) is not permitted); 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.

Up to two proposals will be funded for the Bladder Cancer Research Innovation Award in 2023. The Awardees are expected to attend the annual Bladder Cancer Think Tank meeting in August 2024 and to present the results of the funded research during the 2025 Think Tank meeting.

Application Process

Interested applicants must submit a Letter of Intent by **Thursday January 12, 2023, at 5:00pm EST.** The Letters of Intent will be reviewed by members of the Innovation Award Scientific Review Group. 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, March 1, 2023, and the deadline for complete applications will be Wednesday, April 12, 2023. The award decision will be announced in July 2023. BCAN will not discriminate based on gender, race, ethnicity, creed, religion, sexual orientation, disability, nationality, age or any other factor irrelevant to the quality of the Letter of Intent.

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 sciences or in a field applicable to health science research.
2. Applicant must be an independent investigator employed by 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.
3. Employees or subcontractors of for-profit private industry are not eligible for the award but may serve as Collaborators for another applicant.
4. Applicant may not have previously received a BCAN Innovation Award nor have other funding with significant scientific overlap.
5. Eligible applicants are allowed to hold only one active grant from BCAN at a time.
6. Investigators may submit only one Letter of Intent for a Bladder Cancer Research Innovation Award and may not apply both for this Award and for any other BCAN Research Award.
7. Applications may have co-principal investigators (PI). However, applicants should make the rationale and roles 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 an innovative approach to bladder cancer research, either conceptual or technological); and Statement of Significance and Relevance to bladder cancer. 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 11pt (or larger).
2. Relevant references must be attached and are limited to 2 pages (in addition to the 2-page LOI limit)
3. The applicant's biographical sketch <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm> must be attached and adhere to NIH page limits. Co-investigator biosketches are not required for the LOI, however for full applications with co-PIs, each PI's biosketch must be included.
4. The Technical abstract is limited to 2000 characters including spaces (approximately 250 words). The technical abstract should provide a clear, concise and comprehensive overview of the proposed bladder cancer research project. Specify the relevant background, hypothesis, aims and methodologies of the project.

Evaluation Process and Criteria

Letters of Intent will be reviewed by the Innovation Award Scientific Review Group, comprised of medical and scientific experts recognized for their own accomplishments in cancer research and as leaders in the field. Approximately 10 applicants who submit letters of intent will be invited to submit a full proposal.

The Scientific Review Group will also review and score the full applications based on the merits of the research proposals. In full applications, the budget description should be sufficiently detailed to evaluate the feasibility and timeline of the project. The Award review process is based on the peer review system used 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, which will accept the scientific merit scores. The Management Committee will review the ranking of the top applications based solely on those scores 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 prohibited from voting on and discussing the Award decisions.

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

1. **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? If the applicant's primary area of expertise is outside of bladder cancer, does the project include a co-Principal Investigator with sufficient knowledge and expertise to ensure the project's success?

2. **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? Areas to be addressed include but are not limited to: bladder cancer prevention; bladder cancer detection and diagnoses; understanding tumor development, recurrence and progression; improving therapy and outcomes.

3. **Significance:** Does the project address an important problem or a critical barrier to progress in the field of bladder cancer research? If the aims of the project are achieved, how will scientific knowledge, technical capability, and/ or clinical practice be improved?

4. **Approach:** Are the overall strategy, methodology, analyses and statistics 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 and timeline?

5. **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 Thursday January 12, 2023 at 5:00 PM U.S. Eastern Time using the ProposalCentral website at <https://proposalcentral.com/ProposalGI.asp?SectionID=2432&ProposalID=-1>

We will make no exceptions to the Thursday January 12, 2023, deadline. You will receive a confirmation email once you submit your letter of intent. If you do not receive one, or if you have questions, please contact Bernadette Fitzsimmons at bfitzsimmons@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

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