



# Career Development Program Guidelines & Instructions

## **Scholar**

**Effective dates:  
May 1, 2019 - April 30, 2020**

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## **What's New for 2019-2020**

Starting this award cycle, applicants who previously held a career development-type award of any amount and duration are eligible to apply for a CDP award. Continuing with recent policy, applicants who currently hold a career development-type award that is lower in total award amount than the CDP award are allowed to apply.

The funding amount has increased to \$120,000 per year (from \$110,000 per year). Applicants can now apply for \$600,000 total for the five-year award (inclusive of indirect costs).

The eligibility window now includes a minimum amount of time since applicants began their first independent position. Applicants must have started their first independent position no less than two years but no more than 8 years before the time of review (January 1, 2020). Instructor-level positions are not counted as independent for eligibility purposes.

The Key Publications section of the full application must include at least one corresponding author publication as an independent investigator. This publication must be available online by the application due date.

In the 2018-2019 award cycle, more than 27% of eligibility requests were rejected. Because of this, the eligibility process has changed with the goal of reducing the number of eligibility rejections. The number of times a rejected applicant can re-submit an eligibility request in any one cycle has also been reduced. To avoid eligibility rejection, read these Guidelines & Instructions carefully and fill out the eligibility form completely.

The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society is honoring those CDP awardees ending in 2019 who have done the most impactful work. One Scholar/Scholar in Clinical Research awardee will be honored with the **CDP Achievement Award**, which includes \$50,000 for Mission-relevant, but otherwise unrestricted use (in an academic setting). This high honor will be given to the Scholar/Scholar in Clinical Research awardee who has had the three most impactful publications of direct relevance to blood cancer over the course of their funding period. An absolute requirement for consideration is that those publications must acknowledge support of The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. Since we consider a CDP awardee to always be an awardee while funded, all publications should acknowledge our support, regardless of the aims stated in the original application\*. Though not guaranteed, we hope to continue the CDP Achievement Awards indefinitely.

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

The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society is implementing a new rule regarding overlapping aims in grant proposals submitted to LLS. This policy applies to proposals submitted within the same application cycle, which is defined as all LLS calls for proposals – across all grant programs –

that open within the same calendar year. An application to any LLS grant program may not have aims that substantially overlap with the aims of any other application (either to the same program or to a different program) that includes the same investigator(s) as PI(s), Co-I(s), Project or Core Leaders, or collaborator(s). All such duplicate grant proposal submissions with substantially overlapping aims are subject to administrative disqualification, and such proposals will not be reviewed further or considered for funding. Contact [researchprograms@lls.org](mailto:researchprograms@lls.org) with any questions about this policy or to discuss with LLS scientific staff any questions concerning potential overlap between applications.

### **2018 - 2019 Update: Application Compliance**

In the 2018-2019 cycle, more than 5% of CDP applications submitted (from Fellow, Special Fellow and Scholar subcategories) were triaged 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 research, mentorship environment, and career goals. The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society has recently taken an active role in making sure that our scarce funding goes to applicants who are most closely aligned with our Mission.

In recent years, approximately 10-15% of all applications had serious administrative/structural flaws. These include non-adherence to page numbers, font size, or missing sections (e.g. a Sponsor Letter or Biosketch). Applications with such flaws run the risk of administrative triage.

*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 CDP Scholar Award**

Through the Career Development Program (CDP), LLS supports talented blood cancer researchers in the early phase of their careers. 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 cures for blood cancer patients. Scholar applicants are primarily basic and translational researchers; those who are primarily clinical researchers should apply to the Scholar in Clinical Research subcategory.

The **Scholar** Award is for 5 years and supports tenure-track, junior faculty who have established themselves as blood cancer researchers.

The maximum award per year is \$120,000.00 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 direct costs requested in the proposal. The final value of the award may be limited by the Applicant's Sponsoring Institution's policy. Expenditures for laboratory costs/equipment, travel, etc. are not permitted. ***The awarded value will be limited to the amount requested in the submitted proposal.*** It is anticipated that the proposed research will occupy a majority of the applicant's time, however there are no requirements for a certain percent effort. Scholar applicants are Assistant or Associate Professors; those with different titles must provide a description of their position to [researchprograms@lls.org](mailto:researchprograms@lls.org). Scholar applicants ***must*** hold an independent position. This award is not intended for well-established and/or senior investigators.

## **Eligibility**

### **Scholar applicants must...**

- 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 position of direct relevance to the applicant.
- Be an independent investigator of at least an Assistant Professor position or equivalent (see [Experience/eligibility clock](#)).
- Have adequate funding to support the proposed research (see [Research Support Requirement](#)).
- Have started their ***first*** independent position no less than 2 years but not more than 8 years before the time of review (see [Experience/eligibility clock](#)). Instructor-level positions are not counted as independent for eligibility purposes.
- Have at least one corresponding author publication (available online by the application due date) as an independent investigator.

### **Citizenship**

LLS welcomes applications from US citizens and non-US citizens, as well as applicants who are performing research outside the United States.

### **Degree**

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

### **Eligibility Outline for 2019-2020 Application Cycle**

	<b>Scholar</b>	<b>Scholar in Clinical Research</b>	<b>Special Fellow (2-year)</b>	<b>Special Fellow (3-year)</b>	<b>Fellow</b>
<b>Degree*</b>	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
<b>Oral thesis defense date**</b>	N/A	N/A	On or after June 30, 2015	On or after June 30, 2016	On or after June 30, 2017
<b>Independent faculty position required?***</b>	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
<b>Earliest start date of independent position***</b>	On or after January 1, 2012	On or after January 1, 2010	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Most recent start date</b>	January 1, 2018	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Applicant R01-level funding required?****</b>	Yes	No*****	No	No	No
<b>Sponsor R01-level funding required?*****</b>	N/A	N/A	Yes	Yes	Yes

\*For Fellows, the degree must be conferred by the Award start date of July 1, 2020

\*\*More details are contained in the Guidelines & Instructions

\*\*\*Mentored faculty positions (e.g. Instructor) do not count as independent

\*\*\*\*Substantial, peer-reviewed funding that extends beyond July 1, 2020; must be the principal investigator on this funding

\*\*\*\*\*Funding may come from any source; see the Guidelines & Instructions for more details

### **Experience/eligibility clock**

Applicants must have held an independent, faculty-level, tenure-track position (or equivalent) for between 2 and 8 years at the time of review (January 1, 2020). All such 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). Research Assistant Professor (and similar/equivalent positions) may or may not

count towards eligibility depending on the policy of the institution where that position was held. ***An explanation of these position types must be provided by the full application due date, or the full application may be administratively triaged.*** In cases where the position would not be considered independent, a letter from the institution will be required explaining their policy, but only in cases where such positions might put the applicant outside the eligibility range.

### **Career Trajectory**

The Scholar award applicant must be in the early stages 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.

### **Institution Affiliation**

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

### **Research Support Requirement**

Scholar Awards support only salary. Applicants must be the PI or Co-I on active grant(s) (peer-reviewed, national-level; R01-equivalent) to support the research proposed in their application (or related research). Applicants may have transitional awards but these cannot be used for eligibility purposes; funding cannot be only startup funds. The presence of funding will be assessed at the eligibility phase, while the details of the Mission-relevance of that funding will be assessed after full application submission. In cases where funding starts after the eligibility due date, the applicant must send evidence to [researchprograms@lls.org](mailto:researchprograms@lls.org) from the funding agency of the award details (including funding agency, type, award amount, and start date). This must be received by LLS by the full application date.

**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 applications on which a Sponsor is listed.

### **Other Career Development Support**

No other comparable or better career development award (as measured by the total award amount) may be held at the time of the award start date. If a comparable (or better) career development award is activated after receiving a Scholar Award, the LLS award must be relinquished. Applicants who have held a comparable career development-type award may apply for a CDP Award.

### **Transfers**

The application must be designed from the standpoint of where the research will be performed. If a transfer is being considered, notify LLS as soon as possible. Since applicants are judged in part on their institutional environment, a change to a new institution may affect the review process. 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), the award may be re-reviewed by both LLS staff and select members of the review panel. 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 in an academic institution. If this status changes at any time, LLS must be notified immediately. In some cases, the Scholar award may continue, but only if the awardee's other work is 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-career scientists with established track records in research directly relevant to blood cancer. Relevance is determined by the experimental approach. This should be demonstrated by appropriate publications (see [Key Publications](#)) and research funding (including current research support; see [Research Support Requirement](#)). The proposed experiments must seek to answer questions of direct relevance to blood cancer or normal blood cell function of clear 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 blood cancer research experience, as evidenced by a substantial publication record in a field directly relevant to blood cancer.

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

*In the most recent CDP application cycle, multiple Scholar applicants were eliminated prior to full review for lack of direct blood cancer relevance to their proposed research and/or lack of appropriate blood cancer research experience.*

### **Post-Award Adherence to Aims**



CDP Awards are selected in part based on the aims in the application. LLS requires any substantial change to aims of funded awards to be approved by LLS in order for funding to continue. LLS understands that science does not progress in a direct path, and thus minor changes to the aims need not be approved by LLS (but should be described in annual progress reports). **Changes to the aims that substantially reduce the impact of the research on LLS's Mission will not be approved and funding may be reduced or eliminated.**

### **Key Publications Demonstrating Contributions to Blood Cancer**

Scholar applicants must provide a description of publications that best highlight their contributions to the understanding of blood cancer or normal blood biology having relevance to blood cancer. Three to five publications must be presented in the full application document. Scholar applicants must have expertise in blood cancer. This information will be used to determine the qualifications of the applicant to continue with a blood cancer-relevant research career.

These publications must:

- directly correlate with LLS's Mission Score of 1, 2, or 3;
- have the applicant as the corresponding author on at least one publication; for less experienced applicants, two of the publications may be those on which you are the first author;
- be primary research publications.

These publications must not:

- have only indirect relation or no relation to blood cancer;
- be review articles;
- be manuscripts that are not available online on the full application due date.

## **Review Process & Applicant Notification**

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

Review criteria for **Scholar** applications include:

- Accomplishments of the applicant. Recent research accomplishments must have direct relevance to blood cancer or normal blood biology that is clearly relevant to blood cancer
- Scientific quality of the proposal
- Access to applicable key materials and models, including patient materials, animal models, drugs, etc., to demonstrate feasibility of proposed experiments
- Clarity of presentation
- Direct relevance of proposed research to blood cancer
- Likelihood of the applicant becoming a leader in the blood cancer field
- The institution's support for the applicant's research program and career advancement, as demonstrated in the Sponsor Letter

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

Early-stage Assistant Professors who have not established independence from their postdoctoral lab will likely be less competitive (i.e. applicants lacking sufficient corresponding author publications without the postdoctoral advisor as an author).

### **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, which may include questions of normal blood biology. ***Research on normal blood biology must have a clear relevance to blood cancer.*** The Mission Score will be assigned based on the overall focus of the application. For example, if most of the aims are focused on established cell lines, but there is a sentence or two describing how results will be verified in patient samples, the Mission Score will be 2.

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

**Mission Score of 1:** The experimental plan must address mechanisms directly relevant to the pathogenesis, diagnosis, or treatment of hematologic malignancies and/or relevant premalignant conditions/states. In addition, at least some experiments must include patients, patient materials, or the most appropriate animal model system.

**Mission Score of 2:** The experimental plan must address mechanisms directly relevant to the pathogenesis, diagnosis, or treatment of hematologic malignancies and/or relevant premalignant conditions/states. In addition, at least some experiments must use cell lines and/or animal models that are directly relevant to hematologic malignancies and/or relevant premalignant conditions/states.

**Mission Score of 3:** The experimental plan must address basic mechanisms directly relevant to normal blood cell development, hematopoietic stem/precursor cell function, or immune responses. These studies must have clear relevance to blood cancer and must use appropriate models to understand these mechanisms in blood cells.

**Mission Score of 4:** Does not address mechanisms directly relevant to normal blood cell development/function, hematologic malignancies and/or relevant premalignant conditions/states.

**Applications with a Mission Score of 4 will not reach the full review committee.**

After the review panel meeting, Mission-relevant applications (Mission Scores 1, 2 and 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 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,” “Waitlist” or “Not Funded.” Please do not call or email regarding status updates.

### **Key Dates**

<b>Phase</b>	<b>Date</b>
Eligibility Phase: open	May 2019
Eligibility Phase: close	September 1, 2019, 3:00 PM (ET)
Eligibility determination by LLS staff	Rolling: May through September 8, 2019
Notification of eligibility	By September 8, 2019 (typically within 2 business days after submission)
Abstract Phase: open	Immediately after eligibility is approved
Abstract Phase: close	September 13, 2019, 3:00 PM (ET)
Full Application Phase: open	Immediately after Abstract Phase submission
Reference letters due	September 27, 2019, 3:00 PM (ET)
Full Application Phase: close	September 27, 2019, 3:00 PM (ET)
Panel Review Meeting	January 2020
Award Notification*	February/March 2020
Final version of Lay Abstract due	May 1, 2020
Award Start Date	July 1, 2020

\*LLS's non-negotiable Grant Agreement Terms & Conditions are available on [www.lls.org](http://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. The LLS Research Portal automatically shuts down submissions after the deadline has passed. Late submissions due to technical difficulties will not be accepted. Every year, a few applicants get caught with difficulty near the deadline; some are unable to submit because of these issues. The best way to avoid this problem is to submit every phase well ahead of the deadline.

## **General Application Instructions**

The CDP application will be completed in 3 phases: Eligibility, Abstract, and Full Application. Below are step-by-step instructions for applying:

1. Read the Guidelines & Instructions (this document) in full.
2. Log in to the [LLS Research Portal \(lls.fluxx.io\)](http://lls.fluxx.io) and select Career Development Program. Click "Apply to CDP!" to begin the application process (well ahead of the deadline).
  - If you need a new account or need to reset your password for an existing account, contact [researchprograms@lls.org](mailto:researchprograms@lls.org).
3. Familiarize yourself with the LLS Research Portal.
4. Follow the instructions on the LLS Research Portal and this document to complete and submit your Eligibility. Eligibility 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.
5. You will receive an email (within two business days) notifying you of your Eligibility approval status. 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 Abstract.
  - 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.
6. Once you have submitted your Abstract components, you may immediately begin your Full Application. Please carefully follow the instructions on the LLS Research Portal and this document. Full Applications require completion of both the web form and the current application template, which should be downloaded from the *Project Document* section of the web form. **Failure to follow all application instructions may result in administrative triage of your application.**
  - Contact [researchprograms@lls.org](mailto:researchprograms@lls.org) with any questions about the application that are not addressed in the LLS Research Portal or this document.

7. Request reference letters well in advance of the Full Application deadline.
8. Submit your Full Application to LLS prior to the Full Application deadline. **We strongly recommend submitting at least 1 week in advance of the deadline, as site traffic on the day of and days leading up to the deadline will be heavy.**
9. Character limitations include spaces. Character and other length limitations are strictly enforced on the web form and the uploaded project description template. If character limits and font restrictions are not adhered to, or the preset margins are altered, the application may not be reviewed.
10. 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.***

***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](mailto:researchprograms@lls.org) if you submit in error (must be at least one hour prior to before 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](mailto:researchprograms@lls.org).

### **Detailed Eligibility Phase Instructions**

Starting in the 2019-2020 cycle, most eligibility information will be submitted via an uploadable form. Only organizational details and general eligibility information are entered at this phase. Applicants may submit eligibility immediately after the program opens. Eligibility will be evaluated by LLS 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. 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.***

#### **Submission and Confirmation**

You will receive an automated email stating that your information was successfully submitted within 2 business days of submission. If not received within 2 business days, contact [researchprograms@lls.org](mailto:researchprograms@lls.org). **It is recommended that you confirm each stage of the application process by checking your application status on the LLS Research Portal at [lls.fluxx.io](https://lls.fluxx.io).**

## **Eligibility Review**

LLS staff will review eligibility on a rolling basis. Refer to [Key Dates](#) for details. **If you have not received notification within this time frame, contact [researchprograms@lls.org](mailto:researchprograms@lls.org).**

If eligibility is accepted, you will have access to the Abstract Phase.

During the eligibility phase, 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 Abstract Phase Instructions](#)). Letters submitted past the deadline will not be accepted. It is therefore beneficial to you to have a backup letter-writer in case one of your original writers is not able to submit on time.

## **Detailed Abstract Phase Instructions**

There are two main aspects of the Abstract Phase:

- Reference Letters
- Project Information

The reference letter information can be added as soon as the application moves to the Abstract Phase. It is recommended to complete the reference letters information before starting the Project 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 must happen prior to final submission of all Abstract Phase components.

Note: Lay abstracts are not requested during the application process. Lay abstracts will be required of those selected for funding following award notification. ***The lay abstract is essential for LLS to continue successful fundraising to support our current and future grantees.*** Thus, a well-written lay abstract, with sufficient detail and language suitable for the general public, is required post-award.

## **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).

**It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the letters are submitted in the LLS Research Portal by the deadline. Letters submitted past the deadline will not be accepted.**

## **Reference Letter Policies**

- Three letters are required.
- No more than four letters will be accepted.

- Two letters must be from outside the Sponsoring 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 provide in the reference letters section on the LLS Research Portal.**

### **Initiating Blind Reference Letters**

The applicant must contact those who will write their reference letters during the Abstract Phase.

A section called “Request Blind Reference Letters” is available on the LLS Research Portal during the Abstract 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.

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 two business days, email [researchprograms@lls.org](mailto: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 the letters’ statuses 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.

### **Project Information**

Provide the following after completing of the initiation of blind reference letters. All information provided here must remain consistent in the full application. ***Significant divergence between information provided in this section and in the full application may negatively affect your funding chances.*** Examples of significant divergence might be stating that the specific disease focus is CLL when your actual focus is normal myeloid development or stating that your model systems include patient samples, but your full application indicates no patient samples (or access to patient samples).

The scientific abstract should accurately reflect the actual research that you are proposing. Though putting your research in a broader context may be important, it is also important to avoid overstating your research beyond what you are actually proposing. Do not use disease names or other terms that are not directly relevant to your research. 1,500 characters maximum.

### **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](mailto:researchprograms@lls.org).

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

### **Changes**

Information collected in the Abstract Phase will automatically populate fields in the Full Application Phase. If requested prior to the Abstract Phase deadline, changes may be made with LLS approval. Email [researchprograms@lls.org](mailto:researchprograms@lls.org) requesting any change and identify the elements to be changed. No changes may be made after the Abstract Phase deadline has passed. Abstract Phase components must accurately reflect the focus of the full application. **Failure to follow these policies may result in disqualification of the application.** See the first paragraph in the [Project Information](#) section.

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 Abstract Phase. Information that carries through must not be modified; changes made to the Abstract Phase components after the Abstract Phase deadline or prior to the deadline without LLS approval, may result in administrative triage of the full application. The remainder of the full application consists of web form components and elements to be uploaded as a *single PDF*.

All sections in the full application template must use **Times New Roman 12pt. font**, except figure legends, which may use 10pt. font. Margins are pre-set and must not be changed.

**Failure to submit as a single PDF in the order below may result in disqualification of the application.**

Two sections are required for the uploaded PDF:

**Section 1: Project Description Template** (downloaded from the LLS Research Portal)

The template consists of the following required elements:

### **a. Applicant and Project Information**

Copy and paste the title and abstract from the Abstract Phase.

### **b. Key Publications Demonstrating Contributions to Blood Cancer**



Describe 3-5 research publications that best demonstrate your contributions to the understanding of blood cancer. Do not include reviews or publications that are not available online by the full application due date. You must be the corresponding author on at least one of these publications. Use the *Blood* citation format. Follow this with a description of how each publication has directly impacted our understanding of blood cancer (500 characters maximum for each description). **Only list publications that clearly fit within either Mission Score 1, 2 or 3.** See [Mission Relevance](#). Use Times New Roman 12pt. font.

### **c. Mission Score**

***Carefully re-read the Mission Relevance and Mission Score sections of this document before proceeding.***

Provide a Mission Score for each aim, followed by a brief description of the rationale for this assignment. ***The Mission Scores must directly reflect the Mission Score wording in the [Mission Score section](#) of this document; Mission Scores must be assigned based on the major focus of the aim.*** Follow this with an overall Mission Score based on the Mission Scores of each aim. Generally, the lowest numerical number of the aims will correspond to the overall Mission Score. However, there needs to be a clear rationale for how the aims integrate in to the overall Mission Score. Thus, an aim focused on gene expression analysis in human clinical trial patient samples will give that aim a Mission Score of 1. (“Gene expression analysis of venetoclax-treated patient samples from clinical trial [NCT number]” would be a fully sufficient explanation for a Mission Score of 1 for an aim). If the other aims have a Mission Score of 2, and are well-integrated in a logical, scientific fashion with the other aim, then the overall Mission Score will be 1.

The applicant-derived Mission Score will be a significant part of the review process. LLS staff and a subset of the review panel will provide the final Mission Score. As long as the applicant provides a reasonable scientific explanation for their score, divergence between the LLS/reviewer-derived and the applicant-derived Mission Score will be considered a difference in opinion and will not negatively affect your application. Divergence that is not supported by logical scientific explanation will negatively affect your application.

### **d. Previous CDP Applications**

If you have previously submitted a Scholar application that was not funded, briefly describe the updates that have been incorporated into this new application.

### **e. Description of Model Systems**

This section will provide the reviewers with an easily accessed source to understand the models described in the project (cell lines, mouse models, patient samples, etc.), including names, species, tissue origin, and any genetic or other descriptive information that is important for the project. ***All materials mentioned in the text and figures must be described here.***

#### **f. Longer-Term Research Goals**

Describe your longer term research goals over the next 5-10 years.

#### **g. Project Description (11 page maximum, including figures)**

The following information should be provided in this order:

- Background
- Specific Aims (including a brief description of the aims)
- Previous Work/Preliminary Data from your lab, including figures\*
- Experimental Design and Expected Outcomes, including figures\*
- Potential Pitfalls and Alternative Approaches
- Resources and Environment; this section must include a description of access to applicable key materials and models, including patient materials, animal models, drugs, etc.\*\*

Use Times New Roman 12pt. font, except figure legends, which may use 10pt. font.

\*Figure legends should be formatted with a font size equivalent of 10pt. or above; figures should indicate the data source (e.g. preliminary data from the applicant's lab or a publication).

**\*\*If your lab does not have demonstrated access to materials, access should be confirmed through letters of collaboration/support from the supplier. Lack of clear access to materials will negatively affect the review of your application.**

**The figure legends and the Experimental Design and Expected Outcomes section must clearly identify the model system(s) used (e.g. cell line name, what type of cell, etc.).**

#### **h. References (5 page maximum)**

Use the *Blood* citation format. Use Times New Roman 12pt. font.

#### **i. Budget**

The following information should be provided in the budget template (and on the web form):

- Current salary
- Fringe benefit expense
- Cost of living increases should be included in all out years

The total amount requested must not exceed \$600,000.00 (\$120,000.00/year). Should the application be funded, the total amount requested will be the amount awarded, even if the requested total amount is less than \$600,000.00.

#### **j. Signature Page**

This form must be completed, including the indicated signatures.

#### **k. Access to Non-Commercially Available Reagents**

Initial next to the statements certifying you will have access to all reagents necessary for the proposed research.

## **Section 2: Attachments**

The following sections must be attached in this order to the end of the template (from Section 1) to create a single PDF. No other information may be provided in this section.

### **a. Applicant's Biosketch and Other Support**

Use the most recent NIH format found on the NIH website. Include the NIH Other Support Document. Publications submitted and under review should be indicated on the biosketch. An eRA Commons User Name is not required.

### **b. Sponsor Letter**

The Sponsor Letter must contain the following:

- Description of the applicant's position
- Description of the Sponsoring Institution's support for the applicant's research
- Future plans for the applicant's career development at the Sponsoring Institution
- Description of how the applicant's time will be divided among research and other responsibilities to the Sponsoring Institution
- The Sponsor Letter is separate from the reference letters; Sponsors may not write a reference letter.

The Sponsor Letter is not blinded to the applicant.

### **c. 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 on institutional/company letterhead. ***Failure to provide this information will negatively affect the review of this application.***

### **d. Clinical Protocol (Required where applicable)**

Provide a brief summary of any clinical protocols essential to the proposed research. Include approval date and compliance number. Indicate if IRB approval is pending and provide a letter from the institutional official regarding IRB status. Full approval must be obtained by the award start date.

### **e. Assurances (Required)**

#### 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.

#### **f. Publications (Optional)**

Up to three manuscripts that are not online by the full application due date may be provided. Applications with more than three manuscripts, or that include manuscripts that are available online by the full application deadline, may not receive a full review.

#### **g. Applicant's Corresponding Author Publications**

Using the *Blood* citation format, list all corresponding-author publications.

Include:

- Corresponding-author publications, including multiple corresponding-author publications (corresponding-authorship must be verifiable on the manuscript)
- Research-oriented publications
- Publications that are available online by the full application due date

Do not include:

- Non-corresponding-author publications
- Non research-oriented publications (reviews, perspectives, etc.)
- Publications submitted or under review/revision
- Publications that are unavailable online by the full application due date

20% of all applications will be checked by LLS staff for accuracy. Significant deviations from publically available information may result in administrative triage. An example includes, but is not limited to, the inclusion of a publication where the applicant indicates corresponding authorship, but the manuscript does not indicate corresponding authorship, co/dual corresponding authorship, etc.

### **Uploading the project document and final submission**

Upload the full application components, as a single PDF, in the “Project Document” section 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.**

### **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](mailto:researchprograms@lls.org).**

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](mailto: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](mailto: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 actually is uploading information on the LLS Research Portal.** Every year, LLS has a small number of people that notice problems with their application after the deadline. The solution to this problem is very simple and in the hands of the applicant:

- **Check your application prior to final submission.**
- **Submit well ahead of the deadline.**

Once the deadline has passed, only the following updates may be made:

- Significant updates to clinical trials:
  - IRB updates
  - Opening of the trial
  - Patient enrollment

- Opening of new clinical sites
- Efficacy and/or safety updates
- Manuscripts that have been accepted for publication; the following must be provided:
  - List of authors
  - Title
  - Journal
  - A copy of the acceptance letter from the journal
- Updates regarding any transfers to a new institution (see Transfers section in [Eligibility](#)).