

Postdoctoral Fellowship Grants (2021-2023)

Guidelines and General Instructions for Application

KEY DATES

Application Release Date:	June 1, 2020
Application Deadline:	September 9, 2020 at 5:00 PM EST
Peer Review Process:	September – November 2020
Applicant Notification Date:	December 2020
Earliest Project Start Date:	March 1, 2021

Introduction

LYMPHOMA RESEARCH FOUNDATION OVERVIEW:

The Lymphoma Research Foundation (LRF) remains dedicated to finding a cure for lymphoma through an innovative research program and by supporting the next generation of lymphoma researchers. LRF provides education for people with lymphoma, their loved ones and caregivers, including comprehensive disease guides and facts sheets, in-person conferences and online resources. The Foundation also provides continuing medical education programs designed to increase the knowledge, skills and performance of healthcare professionals. The Foundation's support services, including the LRF Helpline, Clinical Trials Information Service, financial assistance programs and Lymphoma Support Network, provide direct support to people with lymphoma. To learn more about the Foundation, visit lymphoma.org.

POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIP GRANT OVERVIEW:

The Lymphoma Research Foundation (LRF) maintains a strong commitment to supporting early career investigators and ensuring they can build a successful career in the field of lymphoma research. The LRF Postdoctoral Fellowship Grant is designed to support investigators at the level of advanced fellow or postdoctoral researcher in laboratory or clinic-based research with results and conclusions that must be clearly relevant to the treatment, diagnosis or prevention of Hodgkin and/or non-Hodgkin lymphoma, including chronic lymphocytic leukemia. Areas of research may include, but are not limited to, etiology, immunology, genetics, therapies and transplantation. Historically, successful applications in this program have focused on basic, translational, and epidemiological research. The LRF Grantee must spend 80 percent of their time in research during the award period.

The LRF Postdoctoral Fellowship provides a total of \$105,000 to grantees over two years. Salary support is provided in the amount of \$45,000 for the first year and \$50,000 for the second year. Incidental funds of \$5,000 per year may be budgeted for research supplies or professional development expenses such as tuition, registration fees, and travel for courses and meetings. This Grant does not provide for institutional overhead.

LRF HEALTH EQUITY INITIATIVE:

For the 2021 cycle, a minimum of two Postdoctoral Fellowship Grants will be awarded to applicants from underrepresented groups in the lymphoma and CLL research fields. These groups include: American Indians or Alaska Natives, Blacks or African Americans, Asian Americans, Hispanics or Latinos, Native Hawaiians or other Pacific Islanders, African Canadians, Inuit, and First Nation Peoples. Applicants must also be a citizen or permanent resident of

the United States or Canada and meet all other eligibility criteria for the Fellowship Grant (see “Applicant Eligibility,” page 2). Applicants who meet the above criteria are strongly encouraged to apply.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND EVALUATIVE FACTORS:

All projects must be focused on hypothesis-driven research in lymphoma – the Foundation considers “lymphoma” to encompass all recognized lymphoma subtypes as well as chronic lymphocytic leukemia (CLL). Projects which combine the study of lymphoma/CLL with another cancer or hematologic malignancy (including myeloma and other leukemias) will not be accepted. Bench, translational, and clinical research projects are all eligible. Applications will be reviewed by members of LRF’s Scientific Advisory Board (SAB).

Evaluation of applications will be based on, but not be limited to the following factors:

- Overall research proposal and its relevance and significance to lymphoma research
- Applicant’s prior research experience
- Applicant’s potential for research career in lymphoma
- Sponsor’s qualifications and record of success in training researchers
- Letters of support provided by senior faculty
- Assessment of program and facilities available to support the project

APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY:

1. Applicants must hold an MD, PhD, or equivalent degree. MD applicants must have completed at least two years (24 months) of their fellowship work at the start of the award period. All applicants should not have completed more than five years (60 months) of their fellowship or postdoctoral work at the start of their award period. Individuals holding faculty positions prior to March 1, 2021 are not eligible to apply; awarded applicants may move into faculty positions during the award period.
2. Applicants must be affiliated with a sponsoring institution in the U.S. or Canada, be legal to work in either country for the duration of the LRF Grant and intend to pursue a career in lymphoma research. Citizenship and permanent residency status are required only for awards made through the LRF Health Equity Initiative (see page 1).
3. Applicant must secure a primary sponsor at their home institution who will supervise the proposed research project. The sponsor’s role is to assure (on behalf of the Institution) that the specific aims of the project are met and to present the Institution’s role in the development of the applicant’s career. The primary sponsor may support only one applicant to the Fellowship program per grant cycle. Associate sponsors (including at other institutions) are permitted but not required.
4. Applications are encouraged from qualified individuals without regard to age, race, religion, sex, creed, national origin or any other characteristics protected by law.
5. During the award period, the Grantee must spend a minimum of 80 percent of his/her time in research without major patient care, teaching, or administrative responsibilities except as such responsibilities relate directly to a pre-clinical or clinical lymphoma research project.
6. The LRF Grantee may not hold another competitively applied for fellowship and/or a grant that primarily supports Principal Investigator (PI) salary during the period of the LRF Grant, except if awarded as part of an NIH Institutional Training Grant (T32/K12 or equivalent). Supply and material costs for the clinical research project should be supported by another grant or from institutional funds. The percent of research time for the PI on all active grants should not add up to more than 100%. LRF must be informed as to the sources and the amounts of all extramural/non-institutional funding received by the Fellowship recipient during the term of the LRF Grant, and reserves the right to determine that the LRF Grant may not be held concurrent with other funding.

7. A previous LRF Fellowship Grant recipient cannot apply for another LRF Fellowship Grant other than in exceptional circumstances, which is decided on a case-by-case basis. However, applicants from previous years who did not receive an award are welcome to apply if they still meet eligibility requirements.
8. All LRF applications are self-initiated. LRF does not invite applications from selected individuals or laboratories.

PUBLIC ACCESS POLICY – PubMed CENTRAL:

LRF funded researchers are required to submit, or have submitted for them, to the National Institutes of Health’s PubMed Central database an electronic version of the author’s final manuscript including all modifications from the publishing and peer review process (the “postprint”) upon acceptance for publication, to be made publicly available no later than 12 months after the official date of publication. This requirement applies to all grants awarded after May 1, 2012, whether LRF funds the research in whole or in part.

All scientific progress reports must include the PMC ID number (PMCnnnnn) to publications in Pub Med Central supported by the Lymphoma Research Foundation starting on May 1, 2012.

PHYSICIAN PAYMENTS SUNSHINE ACT:

Please be advised that a portion of LRF’s funding for certain Postdoctoral Fellowship Grants is underwritten by manufacturers of pharmaceutical drugs and devices and/or other entities who are required to report payments or transfers of value made to U.S. physicians and teaching hospitals under the federal Physician Payments Sunshine Act. LRF’s understanding is that payments made to the recipient of a Postdoctoral Fellowship Grant that has been supported by one of these entities are reportable as research grants under the Sunshine Act if the applicant is a licensed physician (MD or equivalent) in the United States. Applicants will be notified at the time of the award letter if their grant payments are considered reportable.

Application Process

SUBMISSION INFORMATION:

All interested grant applicants must submit their applications online through proposalCENTRAL (<https://proposalcentral.altum.com/>) by **5:00 PM EST on September 9, 2020**. Applicants are encouraged to contact LRF at researchgrants@lymphoma.org for questions or concerns relating to issues of eligibility for or responsiveness to this RFP.

To avoid being rushed at deadline, applicants are encouraged to register and complete a professional profile at proposalCENTRAL **now**. Applicants should make sure their grants and contracts office has registered their institution and signing officials with proposalCENTRAL, and that they acquaint themselves with any internal approval processes required by their institution’s grant office.

Applications that do not meet eligibility requirements, or that exceed page limitations, will not be reviewed.

RESEARCH PROPOSAL FORMAT:

Use the template supplied by proposalCENTRAL and upload as a PDF document.

The Research Proposal description should discuss the nature of the proposed research plan and should cover the following points:

1. SCIENTIFIC ABSTRACT

2. SPECIFIC AIMS
3. BACKGROUND AND APPLICANT ROLE – This should include a detailed description of the contribution you, as the applicant, made to the development of this project and what your role will be in the execution of the project going forward.
4. PRELIMINARY STUDIES
5. EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN AND METHODS- Provide evidence of appropriate facility resources for the proposed research, as well as any resources provided by pharmaceutical partners or other collaborating entities (support letters from these entities should be included as part of the Appendix). If patient tissue samples are required for this project, please include plans for how these samples will be obtained.
6. MILESTONES – Please include all relevant milestones for execution of this research plan as described.
7. RELEVANCE TO THE UNDERSTANDING AND TREATMENT OF LYMPHOMA
8. REFERENCES

Limit Sections 1-7 of your Research Plan to **8 pages, including tables and figures**, as per instructions on the template. Section 8 (References) and any table of contents are not included in the page limit. **Please note proposals that exceed page limits will not be reviewed.**

A **complete** application will also include the following elements:

1. **Application Signature Page:** proposalCENTRAL will prompt you to generate a printable version of this page when you have completed your application. Original signatures from the applicant, sponsor, and institutional official are required. A scan of the signed page must be uploaded as a PDF. Proxy and/or electronic signatures are not permissible. Please note LRF no longer requires the original signed document be mailed to the LRF office.
2. **LRF Waiver:** The original of the Waiver must be signed by the applicant, the primary Sponsor, and an authorized signing official of the sponsoring institution (please confirm the identity of signing officials with your institution's grant office). Signatures in ink are required. A scan of the signed page should be uploaded as a PDF.
3. **ORCID** – The Lymphoma Research Foundation strongly encourages all applicants to set up an ORCID profile and link it to their grant application. Follow the steps in the "Applicant" screen of the Proposal Central application to link your existing profile or set up a new one.
4. **Non-Technical Abstract:** This is a brief description (100 words or less) of the proposed project presented in terminology for the general public. It should be understandable to the average reader of a daily newspaper.
5. **Technical Abstract:** In addition to describing the project using technical language, the Technical Abstract should explain (in 100 words or less) the significance of the proposed work to the field of lymphoma.
6. **Keywords:** Please select all applicable keywords in each of the four Areas of Study categories. A thorough, accurate selection of keywords will enable LRF to match your application with appropriate reviewers.
7. **Collaborative Partners:** Please indicate in the appropriate area of the application any consortia, cooperative groups, industry partners, or other collaborative partners that will be providing significant resources (i.e. funding, access to therapies, statistical or sample analysis, data or tissue samples, etc.) to this project. All collaborative partners that are not key personnel on the application should be listed in this section. Please indicate whether requests for this support are pending or approved. Support letters confirming support or resources for the project should be uploaded as part of the appendix – please note these letters should be authored and signed by senior officials with the authority to allocate resources.
8. **Statement of Level of Effort:** Provide the approximate percentage of time that the applicant will devote to each work activity (e.g., research, clinical, teaching, administration, other). At least 80 percent of the applicant's time must be devoted to research. The total of these items must not exceed 100 percent.

9. **Current and Pending Research Support:** List all active and pending research support for the applicant. Include all individual and institutional support available for the proposed work during its duration. For each item, provide a source of support, identifying number, project title, name of principal investigator/program director, annual direct costs, and total period of support. Failure to provide evidence of sufficient supporting funds for the proposed research can invalidate the application. *Note: proposalCENTRAL now records other support in your personal profile. Follow the instructions in the application system to enter or import information from your profile to this section.*

Research support for the primary sponsor should be indicated using the Sponsor Support template and uploaded as an attachment; list all active research support and highlight lymphoma/CLL specific support, indicating if the support will apply to the project proposed in the application. Associate sponsor support is only required if the support is funding any portion of the applicant's project.

10. **Sponsor's Letter of Support:** This letter should demonstrate the primary sponsor's support of your project and commitment to provide the necessary training and supervision. All letters should be submitted on institutional letterhead. Upload in PDF format. **Please note your primary sponsor must be based at your home institution.** If secondary sponsors are not being counted towards the three blinded support letters (below), please include their support letters in the appendix.
11. **Additional Letters of Support:** In addition to providing a letter of support and commitment from the applicant's primary sponsor, enter three (3) additional individuals into the proposalCENTRAL application who are familiar with your past work and/or training and who are providing letters of recommendation – this may include any secondary sponsors on the project. ProposalCENTRAL will automatically notify these individuals via email, and their (blinded) letters of support will be included with your submission once uploaded. Applicants are encouraged to confirm with the three individuals who will supply letters that they have received the email from ProposalCENTRAL and that they have been able to log in to the system well before the deadline. **Letters must be fully submitted before the application deadline or the system will prevent you from submitting your application.** If you have additional letters of support you may upload these in the appendix, but they will count towards your appendix page limit. For technical assistance submitting letters, please refer to the proposalCENTRAL technical helpline information on page 6.
12. **Organization Assurances:** Please indicate if human subjects, vertebrate animals, recombinant DNA, and/or biohazards are used in the proposed research proposal. If the answer is yes, please note whether approval for use of these resources is approved or pending. Projects with approval should upload a file with correspondence confirming that approval has been granted; the entire assurance document is not needed. Projects whose approval is pending should upload a note indicating the approximate date when an approval is expected. Awarded applicants that are still pending at the time of application will need to provide proof of approval in order to receive the award.
13. **Applicant's Biographical Sketch:** Please follow the current NIH format and upload as a PDF. Please note the section on coursework completed is not required.
14. **Sponsor's Biographical Sketch:** Please follow the current NIH format and upload as a PDF. If any associate sponsors are listed they must also submit a biosketch.
15. **Budget:** Enter a budget in the proposalCENTRAL template outlining the planned expenses for the grant. For salary, fill in \$45,000 for year one and \$50,000 for year two (fringe may be included in this amount). In the non-personnel section, outline the planned expenses for the \$5,000 incidental expenses each year. **Institutional overhead or salary for non-PI personnel is not allowable.**

APPENDICES:

The following additional documents **should be uploaded in PDF format**. Appendices 1-2 (and any additional support letters) should not exceed 30 pages total. Publication reprints are not subject to the 30 page limit but should not exceed five publications total. Please note that when animal, human subjects, and biohazards certification has been obtained (if applicable to the project), applicants need only to include the confirmation that approval has been granted, not the entire assurance document.

1. **Other Research Support for Mentor:** See “Current and Pending Research Support” on pg. 4 of the RFP.
2. **Support Letters from Pharmaceutical Partners or Other Collaborators:** See “Collaborative Partners” on pg. 4 of the RFP.
3. **Publication Reprints:** Each application is limited to 5 (five) publications.

PLEASE NOTE: Attachments/Appendices

When uploading documents to proposalCENTRAL in the appendices, please be sure to follow the guidelines below in order to ensure that your attachments will be viewed by the reviewers as you intended.

- Review the permissions and security settings in the PDF attachment and be sure that the file is not password protected or locked for editing so that it can merge properly with the rest of the application when downloaded.
- Check all merged documents created in Adobe PDF to make sure that each page is merged properly.

To check that the entire application is correct and in the proper order, please select the blue hyperlink “Signature Page(s)” in the left menu tab. Then, click the red button “Print Signature Pages and Attached PDF Files.” This will create a merged PDF of your application, which includes the attachments that you uploaded. If any pages are missing, please contact PC customer support for further assistance.

FOUNDATION CONTACTS:

Whitney Steen
Associate Director, Research and Scientific Programs

Phone: 212-349-2910
Email: researchgrants@lymphoma.org

TECHNICAL HELPLINE:

Questions concerning use of the proposalCENTRAL electronic submission system should be directed to the proposalCENTRAL helpline, which is available for questions from applicants during normal business hours (8:30 a.m. – 5:00 pm EST), Monday-Friday.

Phone: 800-875-2562(Toll free) or 703-964-5840

E-mail: pcsupport@altum.com

APPLICATION DEADLINES AND TIMETABLE :

- **Application**

**Submission Deadline: September 9, 2020 at 5:00PM EST.
EXTENSIONS WILL NOT BE GIVEN.**

- **Review**

September-November 2020

All applications will be reviewed by the LRF Scientific Advisory Board (SAB).

- **Notification**

December 2020

Applicants will receive notification of funding decision no later than December 23, 2020. Individuals selected as LRF Grantees will receive with their notification an LRF Research Grant Agreement and Policy, Terms and Conditions for signature by the LRF Grantee, the sponsor, and the sponsoring institution.

- **Funding**

Earliest March 2021

Funding will commence at the earliest on March 1, 2021. Payments will be made semi-annually to the Sponsoring Institution, which will be responsible for disbursing funds to the LRF Grantee.

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE APPLICATION AND AWARD PROCESS:

Please follow the instructions on the proposalCENTRAL(PC) website and in this RFP to complete your application. You do not need to complete the application all at once; your application will be saved on the PC server until completed. Incomplete applications cannot be submitted. A complete application must include all of the items listed in the checklist on pg. 9, including support letters. All applications must be submitted in English.

You or your institution's grant office may also wish to review the sample Research Grants Policy, Terms and Conditions, and Grants FAQ, which are available on the LRF website at lymphoma.org/grants. All chosen awardees must adhere to all requirements as stated in the Policy, Terms, and Conditions. Please contact researchgrants@lymphoma.org if you or your institution has concerns or questions about the requirements.

After successful submission of an application, applicants will receive a confirmation email from proposalCENTRAL. **Please check that the email associated with your ProposalCENTRAL account is one where you wish to receive notifications about your application, as all response letters will be sent to that email.**

If selected for award, payments will be made semi-annually to the sponsoring institution, which will be responsible for disbursing funds to the LRF Grantee. If the grantee leaves the sponsoring institution, the grant will be transferred to the Grantee's new Institution or payments will be ended early if the grantee moves to a non-eligible institution or is otherwise unable to continue their research project. The institution and/or sponsor cannot transfer LRF Grant funds to a different researcher if the original recipient becomes ineligible or unavailable.

All LRF applications, application evaluations, and priority scores are considered confidential and are made available only to the SAB, the Board of Directors (BOD), LRF and PC administrative staff, and other LRF representatives involved in the application process. Applications discussed during the final round of review may receive some feedback from the committee with their response letter, however, full critiques of applications, scores, and rankings are not made available to applicants. Although LRF and PC endeavor to protect the confidentiality of proposal and evaluation materials, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.

Postdoctoral Fellowship Award Eligibility Checklist

Use this checklist to help verify your eligibility. If you remain uncertain about eligibility after completing this form, please email researchgrants@lymphoma.org.

Applications must meet all of the following eligibility criteria in order to be reviewed.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA		
1	Applicants must hold an MD, PhD, or equivalent degree. MD applicants must have completed at least two years (24 months) of their fellowship work at the start of the award period (March 1, 2021). All applicants should not have completed more than five years (60 months) of their fellowship or postdoctoral work at the start of their award period. Individuals holding faculty positions prior to the start of the award period are not eligible to apply.	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Applicants must be affiliated with a sponsoring institution in the U.S. or Canada for the duration of the LRF Grant. Citizenship is not required.	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Applicant's research project must involve bench, translational, and/or clinical research in lymphoma and/or chronic lymphocytic leukemia, but does not include other hematologic malignancies or cancers.	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Applicant must secure a sponsor who will supervise the proposed research project. The sponsor's role is to assure (on behalf of the Institution) that the specific aims of the project are met and to present the Institution's role in the development of the applicant's career. The sponsor may support only one applicant per cycle.	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	The applicant must spend a minimum of 80 percent of his/her time in research without major patient care, teaching, or administrative responsibilities except as such responsibilities relate directly to the proposed research project.	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	The applicant may not hold another competitively applied for postdoctoral fellowship title during the period of the LRF Grant. However, LRF Grants may be supplemented by funds from other sources. LRF must be informed as to the sources and the amounts of all extramural funding received by the LRF Fellow during the term of the LRF Grant. Failure to comply may result in termination of the LRF Grant.	<input type="checkbox"/>

Checklist for Applicants

2021 Postdoctoral Fellowship

Use this checklist as a tool to help in preparing your submission. Ensure that you allow **enough time** to complete the application process to meet the deadline of **5:00 pm (EST) September 9, 2020**, as late applications **will not be accepted**.

Application and Submission Checklist

- Register and complete a professional profile at proposalCENTRAL (<https://proposalcentral.altum.com>).
- Ensure that your grants and contracts office has registered your institution and signing officials with proposalCENTRAL.
- Three (3) letters of support **in addition to** your sponsor's letter, are required. Applications cannot be submitted if three support letters have not been uploaded - make sure your letter writers know and can comply with the application deadline.
- Begin the application process on the proposalCENTRAL system. You do not need to complete the application all at once; your application will be saved on the server until completed. ***Remember, incomplete applications cannot be submitted.*** See more on required Application parts below.
- Download and review with your institution's grant office the sample "Research Grants Program Policy, Terms and Conditions" at lymphoma.org/grants. **All** Applicants must adhere to all requirements as stated in the "Terms and Conditions."
- Print the Waiver and Signature pages and provide signatures (in ink) by the Applicant, Sponsor, and the Sponsoring Institution's authorized official. Upload a scanned version of each signed page as a PDF. Proxy and/or electronic signatures are not permissible.

In addition, note the following required application components:

- Applicant Biosketch
- Sponsor Biosketch(es)
- Statement of Level of Effort
- Sponsor Letter(s) of Support
- Three (blinded) general Letters of Support
- Non-Technical Abstract
- Technical Abstract

- Areas of Study/Keywords – fill out through proposalCENTRAL.**
- Research Plan – See RFP page 4 for detailed page limits.**
- Current and Pending Research Support**
- Budget—Fill out through proposalCENTRAL.**
- Regulatory Documentation (IRB, etc.), if applicable to proposal -please note only confirmation of approval is required, not the entire assurance.**
- Appendices – other attachments needed to support the application (limit 30 pages total):**
 - Sponsor’s Research Support**
 - Support letters from collaborators/pharmaceutical partners, if applicable to proposal**
 - Publication Reprints -- not required. Publications are not subject to 30 page limit but no more than five (5) publications should be submitted.**