



Pediatric All-Star Cancer Research Grant

2026 Request for Applications

The V Foundation for Cancer Research was founded in 1993 by ESPN and renowned basketball coach, Jim Valvano. Our mission is to fund all-star cancer researchers and game changing cancer research that accelerates Victory Over Cancer®. We've allocated nearly \$400M in grants for cancer research across the nation and in Canada, solidifying our position as a leading advocate for cutting-edge cancer research. We fund **innovative, high-risk, high-reward research** through a variety of grant mechanisms and calls for applications.

Purpose of Award:

The V Foundation is dedicated to supporting pediatric cancer research and, in the last five years, has nearly doubled the amount of funding in this critical space. This RFA has three possible grant mechanisms, Translational, V Scholar, and All-Star. Your institution **may submit up to two** nominations: one Translational (see Translational RFA) **or** V Scholar (see V Scholar RFA) nominee **plus** one All-Star, if eligible. This RFA is specifically for the pediatric **All-Star** grant mechanism.

All-Star Grant Objectives:

This All-Star grant is a reinvestment in the most exceptional prior V Foundation grantees and their most innovative ideas. This grant provides funding for high-risk, high-reward, transformative projects that will have a significant impact on our understanding and/or treatment of cancer. Please note it is not required that the previously funded grant was focused on pediatric research nor do the previously funded grant and the newly proposed project need to be linked.

This All-Star grant is restricted to **pediatric** cancer research and research on ANY pediatric cancer type can be funded. The scope of research includes basic/exploratory research, translational, preclinical, and clinical research. Regardless of project type (i.e.: basic vs translational), nominees must propose innovative, non-incremental research that has the potential to radically move the needle in our understanding of cancer or clinical practice. Research areas **not** included in this scope are epidemiology, behavioral science, and health services research.

Biostatistics:

A biostatistical or bioinformatics plan is **required** for all proposals in order to be considered for funding.

Grant Specifics:

- A five-year grant totaling, \$1,000,000 (paid in annual installments of \$200,000). This amount includes both direct and indirect costs. Indirect costs are allowed up to 10% of total grant amount.
- The V Foundation follows NIH Guidelines regarding salary caps. Institutions are welcome to supplement a grant recipient's salary with institutional funds if desired.

Institution Eligibility:

The V Foundation has a closed RFA process and only research institutions that received this invitation may submit a nominee for consideration. Other affiliates of the institution that did not receive the email are not eligible to nominate an applicant. **Do not distribute outside of your institution.**

Applicant Eligibility: Your nominee must be the lead Principal Investigator (PI) on the research team and **must meet all of the following criteria by the nomination due date:**

- Nominated by their Cancer Center Director or similar high ranking research official.

- Employed at a non-profit research institution (e.g., 501c3, Section 170).
- Must be either a US Citizen or have a legal permit (temporary or permanent) to work in the US. This requirement does not apply to invited Canadian institutions.
- Hold a full-time faculty appointment at the Assistant Professor or Assistant Professor-equivalent level or above. Non-promotable, adjunct, affiliated, temporary, part-time or acting faculty positions are not eligible for Principal Investigator nomination.
- Must have previously been awarded a V Foundation **research** grant as the lead PI and must meet at least **ONE** of the following criteria by the nomination deadline:
 1. Have a completed V Foundation research grant or
 2. Be in the final year of an active V Foundation grant (received final payment and on track to finish by grant end date).
- Must have been the lead PI on the V Foundation research grant from start to finish.
- Must have all financial and progress reports up to date.
- Must not have a current V Foundation All-Star grant.
- Must not have only received V Foundation non-research/Mission grant(s).

Next Steps:

Letter of Recommendation (LOR): An LOR is required with each nomination form. The LOR must be written by the Cancer Center Director or a senior official at a similar level if needed. The nominee will also upload it to their application. **The review committee will evaluate the LOR which should include:**

- A description of the process used to identify your nominee and why the nominee was chosen.
- The institutional resources that will be available to the nominee (examples might include research and office space, teaching release, mental health support, etc.).
- Discussion of previous V Foundation funding and impact.
- Communication of complex ideas is an important skill for all researchers to learn. If the nature of the research is basic and/or translational science, how will science communication with diverse audiences be incorporated into their training? If the nature of the research is translational and/or clinical (bench to bedside with patient contact), describe how patient advocacy/communication will be incorporated into their training.
- The name, title and contact information of the person writing the LOR.

Nomination Form:

- Complete the attached All-Star Nomination Form for your nominee.
- Nomination Form must include the signature of the primary researcher and the Cancer Center Director or similar high ranking research official.
- *Reminder: Your institution may submit up to two nominations: one Translational **or** V Scholar nominee **plus** one All-Star nominee, if eligible (see Translational and V Scholar RFAs for details). A separate nomination form and LOR are required for each nominee.*
- Email your organization's completed All-Star nomination form and LOR in one email to nominations@v.org. If your institution is also nominating a Translational **or** V Scholar, please include both nominations plus required documents within the same email to nominations@v.org.
- Allow 5 business days from the time of receipt for our team to review, verify, and process your nomination(s). The nominee(s) will then be invited via email to complete the online application.

Important Dates:

Nomination Due Date: March 2026

Application Due Date: April 2026

Earliest Award Start Date: July 2026

If you have questions, please contact us at grants@v.org. We are delighted to extend this invitation and look forward to receiving your nomination.