



REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

2022 Investigator Award in Cell and Gene Therapy for Cancer RESEARCH GRANT

Abstract Deadline: May 9, 2022 at 11 am (EST) (Step 1)

Invitation to Submit Application: May 30, 2022

Deadline for Completed Application: July 11, 2022 at 11 am (EST) (Step2)

Finalists Selected: Week of August 8, 2022

Award Announcement: September 6, 2022, or sooner

Date of Issue: April 15, 2022

PROGRAM GUIDELINES

PURPOSE

Alliance for Cancer Gene Therapy, Inc. (ACGT) funds research aimed at furthering the development of cell and gene therapy approaches to the treatment of patients with cancer.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

This award is for those conducting cell and gene therapy research in solid tumors with preference given to mechanistic studies that promote validation of therapeutic efficacy and help develop IND-enabling proposals that address the following areas:

- Identifying new molecular targets for solid tumors, including neo-antigens in tumor and stroma as immunotherapeutic targets.
- Addressing the challenge of genomic instability, increasing tumor mutational burden and associated tumor heterogeneity to reduce the possibility of tumor escape.
- Expanding beyond conventional alpha-beta T-cell therapies – identify other cell types including engineered B cells, macrophages, inducible pluripotent stem cells, NKT and gamma-delta T cells that can be leveraged to promote tumor eradication and control.
- Identifying and prosecuting biomarkers of response and resistance to cell and gene therapies.
- Enhancing our understanding of the disordered tumor microenvironment (TME) and its role in promoting tumor growth, as well as immunosuppression and T-cell exhaustion, and developing novel approaches to diminish the tumor's ability to limit the efficacy of cell and gene therapy.
- Understanding the influence of the myeloid compartment, targeting macrophages and dendritic cells to regulate tumor immunity.
- Exploiting the epigenetic landscape of cancer as well as the associated functional and defective T cells in cancer.

- Developing oncolytic virotherapy approaches in solid tumors, especially exploiting their potential to convert “cold tumors” into “hot tumors.”
- Developing next-generation synthetic biology systems with more potent effector activity, enhanced durability and improved safety, compared to earlier cellular therapeutics.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Candidates for the **ACGT 2022 Investigator Award in Cell and Gene Therapy for Cancer** must hold an MD, PhD, or equivalent degree and must be tenure-track or tenured faculty. ACGT recognizes that there may be other excellent researchers not on a tenure-track, or not at medical schools or research centers, **but this is an eligibility requirement for this application**. The investigator must be conducting original research as an independent faculty member. ACGT has no citizenship restrictions, but research supported by the award must be conducted at academic medical centers or research centers located in the United States or Canada.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

The award provides up to a maximum of \$500,000 distributed over 2-3 years, inclusive of a maximum of 10% indirect costs. The funds may be used at the recipient’s discretion for salary, technical assistance, supplies, animals or capital equipment, but may not support staff who are not directly related to the project, e.g., secretaries or administrative assistants. Purchase of equipment is not allowed in the final year of the grant. Continued support is contingent upon submission and approval of a non-competitive progress report each year.

APPLICATION PROCEDURES

Applications must be submitted via **proposalCENTRAL**, a service provider hosted by Altum. Access is available using links provided in the ACGT website, www.acgtfoundation.org or directly through the proposalCENTRAL website at: <https://proposalcentral.altum.com/Login.asp>.

There is a two-step process for submitting applications electronically by the required deadlines:

- **Step 1:** A pre-application Letter of Intent (LOI) that includes an abstract of the proposed research and a current biographical sketch must be submitted by the deadline of May 9, 2022, through the proposalCENTRAL platform. The LOI/abstracts will then be reviewed by the [ACGT Scientific Advisory Council](#) and its approved reviewers. Proposals considered most likely to be responsive and competitive for potential funding by ACGT will be invited by May 30, 2022 to submit full applications.
- **Step 2:** For those invited to submit full applications, a completed electronic application, including templates and a Signed Administrative and Signature Page(s) scanned and attached to the front of the completed application template, must be submitted by the deadline of July 11, 2022 through the proposalCENTRAL platform.

NOTE: A paper copy submission is NOT required.

INSTRUCTIONS

Instructions for completing the application are available at ACGT’s website under [Groundbreaking Research > Apply for Funding](#) and also through the [proposalCENTRAL website](#).

CUSTOMER SUPPORT

If you have any questions regarding the online application, please contact proposalCENTRAL Customer Support by e-mail at pcsupport@altum.com or at (800) 875-2562 x 227 (toll-free) or (301) 916-4557 x 227.

REVIEW PROCESS

Each applicant's LOI/abstract of the proposed project is reviewed by members of the ACGT Scientific Advisory Council and its approved reviewers. All applicants will be evaluated on the basis of scientific and technical merit and a corresponding fit with the research objectives of the grant. Based on the review of the LOI/abstracts, certain applicants will be invited to submit a full application for consideration. These applications are then peer reviewed by 2-3 experts in the field, with the highest scores determining the pool of finalists from which the ACGT Scientific Advisory Council and its approved reviewers makes its final recommendations to ACGT's Board of Directors for approval.

INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES

Grant funds will be disbursed following execution of a grant agreement between the grantee institution and ACGT. The following items will be covered in ACGT grant agreements with grantee institutions:

- Overhead of up to 10% is included in the awarded amount. The **2022 Investigator Award in Cell and Gene Therapy for Cancer** research grant will support research projects with two- to three-year time frames for completion.
- Grantees and their affiliated institutions are required to submit annual progress reports to ACGT. In addition, they are expected to share their research findings with the scientific community in a timely fashion through presentation at professional meetings and publication in scientific journals.
- ACGT will request acknowledgment of the grant in any presentations and/or publications by the investigators and/or institutions.
- ACGT will receive a reasonable royalty return, including license fees on inventions and improvements made by investigators on research supported by its grants.
- The grantee institution will agree (i) to indemnify ACGT solely with respect to claims relating to the award of a grant and (ii) that all research supported by ACGT will be conducted in accordance with all applicable state and Federal laws, rules and regulations.
- Awards to an institution will terminate when the principal investigator departs from the grantee institution and can be re-initiated at an alternate institution subject to ACGT approval.
- Should grantees and/or their affiliated institutions fail to meet policies, procedures and/or ongoing requirements of the grant, ACGT reserves the right to rescind annual follow-on grant awards.

RESPONSIBILITY OF THE GRANTEE INSTITUTION

An application for a grant must bear the signature of an official authorized to sign for the institution, **acknowledging the above policies**.

PROGRAM INQUIRIES

For application information, policies and procedures, and general information, please contact blavery@acgtfoundation.org.