Application Guidelines for the 2027 CCRF Catalyst Grant: Pediatric AML

Please note that Children's Cancer Research Fund permits investigators to submit only one Letter of Intent as Principal Investigator per calendar year. Applicants are encouraged to review all available grant mechanisms before applying.

Further details on our Research Grant Policies can be found below. We encourage applicants to contact CCRF staff with questions regarding eligibility requirements. Questions should be directed to grants@childrenscancer.org.

Letter of Intent & Application Timeline

LETTER OF INTENT DUE	**February 15, 2027 BY 8:00 P.M. ET**
INVITATION TO SUBMIT FULL PROPOSAL	**By April 15, 2027**
FULL PROPOSAL DUE	**June 15, 2027 BY 8:00 P.M. ET**
NOTIFICATION	**November 2027**
AWARD STARTS	**NO LATER THAN June 1, 2028**

About Children's Cancer Research Fund

In 1979, 13-year-old Katie Hageboeck was nearing the end of her 16-month battle with leukemia. Before she died, Katie asked that her savings for a new 10-speed bike be given to Children's Cancer Research Fund, a little-known fund at the University of Minnesota. Since 1981, Katie's parents, Diana and Norm, have made it their mission to support groundbreaking research.

Today, Children's Cancer Research Fund (CCRF) is a national nonprofit focused on funding transformational research to bring better treatments and cures to children with cancer. Thanks to donors and partners around the country, we have contributed more than $235 million to research, education and awareness, and quality-of-life programs for childhood cancer families. We believe children deserve safer, less toxic treatments, and we're committed to funding groundbreaking research and services that enhance healing and care.

CCRF Catalyst Award Description

Children's Cancer Research Fund is proud to announce the CCRF Catalyst Award, a new, occasional funding opportunity in support of a significant challenge in pediatric cancer. Over the past several years, CCRF has funded multiple research projects and clinical trials focused on pediatric acute myeloid leukemia (AML). To continue this momentum, the inaugural 2027 CCRF Catalyst Award will focus on advancing treatment and improving outcomes for high-risk, relapsed, or refractory pediatric acute myeloid leukemia (based on risk classification and disease-response criteria consistent with contemporary COG clinical trials).

While significant advances have been made in treating pediatric AML, children and adolescents/young adults (AYAs) with high-risk genetic changes or fusions continue to have notably worse outcomes. CCRF's primary goal with this funding mechanism is to bring **at least one novel therapy or therapeutic combination for high-risk, relapsed, or refractory childhood AML to clinical trial readiness or into an early-phase clinical trial.**

Priority will be given to therapeutic development directed at biologically well-characterized targets or pathways supported by compelling preclinical evidence. Applicants must demonstrate relevance to the intended pediatric AML population, evidence supporting therapeutic targeting, and a credible path to clinical trial readiness within the funding period. Prior clinical validation of the proposed therapy is not required. CCRF encourages applications incorporating biomarker development/validation or biomarker-informed therapeutic approaches to support patient selection, response assessment, or mechanism-of-action studies. Applicants with prior clinical translation experience will be prioritized.

To accelerate research translation and data analysis, CCRF strongly encourages multi-institutional and/or multidisciplinary collaborations. Where beneficial to expand data access and analysis, we encourage projects to include researchers and scientists with expertise in adult AML on the team.

Award Information

Number of Awards
We expect to make one award to a single research team. Teams may include multiple PIs and are encouraged to include PIs, Co-Investigators, and/or collaborators from multiple disciplines and/or institutions.

Award Period
Maximum project period is 36 months. One no-cost extension will be allowed for no more than 12 months.

Award Budget
Up to $3,000,000 may be requested. Indirect costs are included in the $3,000,000 maximum and may not exceed 10% of total direct costs.

Indirect costs may be assessed on sub awardees' total direct costs, but they must be excluded from the lead institution's total direct costs when calculating indirect.

The total request may not exceed $3,000,000.

Clarifications:

- CCRF adheres to the NIH salary cap for Principal Investigators.
- Allowable direct costs include salaries, fringe benefits, supplies, subcontracts, publication costs, equipment and travel expenses.
- Project-related travel is allowed and must be fully justified. Up to $5,000 per year is permitted for conference travel.
- All subcontracts and subawards must be described and well-justified.
- If utilizing subawards and/or subcontracts, the applicant institution is responsible for administering and disbursing these funds.
- Any equipment to be purchased with grant funds must be well-justified.

Collaborations

Multiple PIs will be permitted for this funding mechanism. The grant will be made to the institution of the first PI (the "lead PI") listed on the application (the "applicant institution"), and that institution will administer all subawards and subcontracts.

Applicant Eligibility & Requirements

- Each PI must be eligible to serve as a Principal Investigator at their sponsoring institution.
- All PIs are required to commit at least 10 percent of their research efforts each year to activities supported by this award.
- Co-Investigators are permitted and encouraged.

- Applicant institutions must be based in the United States. Collaborations with institutions based outside of the United States are permitted, but the applicant (prime) institution must be US-based.
- Applicants are not required to be United States citizens.
- Submission of a Letter of Intent (LOI) is required.
- Applicants' organizations may submit more than one application, provided each application is scientifically distinct. **However, CCRF will only accept one LOI from a PI each calendar year across all funding mechanisms. This restriction applies to all investigators listed as a PI.**
- Applicants should review all necessary materials and use the appropriate templates and forms. Failure to comply with the instructions provided may result in programmatic or administrative rejection of your Letter of Intent (LOI) or full application.

Letter of Intent (LOI) Instructions

All applicants are required to submit a Letter of Intent (LOI). LOIs will undergo peer review to ensure the proposed research is within the scope of this funding mechanism. Invited applications must be substantially similar in focus to the project described in the LOI. Submission of an LOI that does not follow the guidelines provided below will result in administrative rejection by CCRF. The LOI must be submitted via Proposal Central. The LOI should be no more than 3 pages long, not including the biosketches and citations. The following components should be provided in this order:

1. Page Header: Lead Principal Investigator's name, institution, and project title must appear at the top of the page.
2. Describe current position and background of all Principal Investigator(s).
3. Provide a brief summary of the proposed research, written for a lay audience.
4. Provide an abstract of the research proposal.
5. Describe how the project will advance treatment for high-risk, relapsed, or refractory childhood AML using risk classification and disease-response criteria consistent with contemporary COG clinical trials. Applicants should specify the criteria used to define their intended patient population.
6. As the intent of this program is definitive clinical translation, applicant must demonstrate clear plan and feasibility for advancing discoveries into clinical development. Applicants with a history of clinical translation will be prioritized.
7. Briefly justify the budget request.
8. Attach appropriate biosketches using the NIH biosketch form.

Citations and biosketches are required and are not included in the three-page limit. Up to 1 page of citations may be submitted. See page 8 for additional formatting instructions.

Applicants will be notified if their LOI will advance to the full proposal stage. Application materials will be made accessible through Proposal Central.

Children's Cancer Research Fund Grant Policies

Updated January 2026

Eligible Individuals (Principal Investigator)
Each Principal Investigator must be eligible to serve as a Principal Investigator at their sponsoring institution. Applicants do not need to be United States citizens; however, they must have a paid appointment at an academic, medical, or research institution located in the United States.

Restrictions
Anyone serving on the Children's Cancer Research Fund Research Advisory Committee is not eligible to apply for funding or to receive research support from a CCRF grant, including as Co-Investigator.

Number of Applications
Applicant **organizations** may submit more than one application, provided each application is scientifically distinct. However, CCRF will only accept one Letter of Intent each calendar year from anyone named as a PI on an application.

Multiple Grants and Grant Renewals

- **A PI may only hold one active grant from CCRF at a time.** However, it is acceptable for a PI to serve as a Co-Investigator or collaborator on one or more other CCRF grant(s).
- A PI may apply to CCRF for new funding in the final year of a current grant. CCRF must receive the final report on the existing grant before a new award may begin.

Eligible Institutions and Responsibilities
Any nonprofit research institution based in the United States is eligible to apply. The applicant institution must have appropriate resources and infrastructure to support the proposed research, including:

- Adequate facilities and services to manage the award.
- Fiscal and grants management infrastructure to support policies including protection for human and animal subjects (e.g. a sponsored projects office or contract with IRB or IACUC).
- Human subjects or IACUC approval is required as a condition of grant funding. **For the CCRF Catalyst funding mechanism, an awarded multi-institution collaboration will be required to establish a Single IRB of Record.**

To signify agreement with grant policies, an application must be signed by an authorizing official of the applicant institution. The applicant institution is responsible for verifying that all documentation related to the application and grant is correct, including representations made by any named researcher (e.g., position or title).

The applicant institution is responsible for immediately reporting to CCRF any action including recertification, loss of certification, breach of contract, misconduct, or change in employment status for a named researcher with the institution. This includes PI administrative leave, which may occur during the

term of any award pertinent to the work described in the grant application.

Applicants must carefully review the funding announcement instructions and complete all required materials using the specified templates and forms. Non-compliance with the provided instructions may lead to administrative rejection of the application. Additionally, failure to adhere to these terms or any other CCRF policies or procedures may result in the suspension or cancellation of the grant, at CCRF's sole discretion.

Data Sharing
Children's Cancer Research Fund is dedicated to data sharing and interoperability. Full proposals must include a description of the data generated by your research, how it will be FAIR (findable, accessible, interoperable, reusable), and the plan for sharing and dissemination. See Full Application Instructions for more details.

Peer Review of Applications
All LOIs and invited full proposals will be reviewed and scored by peer reviewers. Each peer review committee includes leaders who are appropriate scientific experts. Reviewers will conduct an independent and confidential review. The Research Advisory Committee at CCRF will then evaluate the highest-scoring applications, considering their relative merit, the available funding, and CCRF's objectives, and will provide recommendations. CCRF leaders will use these recommendations to make final decisions.

Scientific Merit Score
CCRF uses the scientific merit categories and rating scale similar to the NIH. Reviewers assign whole-number scores based on their analysis of the proposed research, considering the review criteria. They are instructed to use the full range of scores. Applications are evaluated individually, not compared to one another, with each assessed for its potential to advance knowledge in its field.

Progress Reports and Final Reports for CCRF Catalyst Award
Report dates and requirements will be confirmed in a Grant Award Letter. An annual written progress report is required each year. Progress reports will be reviewed by independent scientific advisors and by CCRF staff. **The decision to release the following year of funding will be based in part on timely reporting and progress against aims.**

Each interim progress report should focus on activity since the previous report and must:

- Describe progress during the reporting period against the specific aims outlined in the proposal.
- Describe any change(s) to approach or research plan and explain rationale for change(s).
- Describe any problems/delays encountered or anticipated and plans to resolve them.
- Describe intended goals/objectives for next reporting period.
- Provide a lay summary of progress to date.
- Provide a financial report covering the reporting period.
- List of publications or presentations, if any, in preparation, submitted or published that are based on the work supported by the grant.

The final written report should include details of all financial expenditures and a scientific report for the full grant period, as well as a lay summary. All narrative and financial reports should be submitted through Proposal Central.

In addition, the research team will be asked to provide 2 virtual updates per year on the progress of the project for CCRF staff, donors and family stakeholders.

Grantees should submit reports in a timely fashion or request an exception. Non-compliance may result in withholding of payments or ineligibility for future awards. All reporting questions are available in Proposal Central.

CCRF may reach out to grant recipients in subsequent years after the conclusion of a grant to gather additional information about how the grant helped shape future work and findings.

Expenditures and Indirect Costs
CCRF research grants are not intended to cover the total costs of the proposed research. The institution is expected to provide facilities and administrative support. **We allow indirect costs to be calculated as 10% of total direct costs.**

Overlap
Applicants invited to submit a full proposal must provide a comprehensive overview of all support that the PI and key personnel have requested or secured from other sources, whether through grants, contracts, or institutional funding. Applicants should identify any potential overlap between the proposed project and existing or pending support, including overlap in scope, effort, or budget.

Budget Adjustments and Unused Funds
Up to 25% of budgeted funds may be carried over from year to year in a multi-year grant. CCRF may elect to partially fund or hold new funds if carryover exceeds 25% without prior approval. Any funds to be used after the original grant term must be approved via no-cost extension request.

At the conclusion of the approved grant term (including any approved NCE's), unused and remaining funds of $5,000 or more must be returned within 90 days following the full grant term.

NIH Salary Cap
Budgets created for CCRF funding should adhere to the NIH salary cap.

Grant Transfer
If the lead PI transfers to another institution during the term of the grant, a request for grant transfer must be submitted in writing to CCRF (email: grants@childrenscancer.org). Continuation of funding at the new institution is contingent on approval by CCRF and completion of an amended contract.

Recognition of CCRF
CCRF will work with grant recipients to coordinate a joint press release announcing the grant. Grant recipients are encouraged to give recognition to Children's Cancer Research Fund where funders are listed on the institution's website, annual report and/or other printed or electronic publications.

All publications or presentations based on the funded project should acknowledge Children's Cancer Research Fund.

Publications and Presentations
CCRF requests that grantees inform us as soon as possible about the acceptance of upcoming publications concerning the research funded by the grant. When a paper has been published, please forward a copy or link to CCRF, both during and after the grant period. Both publications and presentations of CCRF-funded research should be reported in progress/final reports. Publications can be sent to grants@childrenscancer.org.

No Cost Extension (NCE)
A no-cost extension (NCE) allows a research project to continue beyond its original end date with no additional funding provided. Grantees must submit an NCE request using the CCRF-provided template at least 4 months before the project's original end date. Only one NCE may be requested, and the maximum extension period is 12 months unless there are extraordinary circumstances. NCE requests should be emailed to grants@childrenscancer.org

Use of Embryonic Stem Cells & Fetal Tissue
CCRF does not fund research utilizing human embryonic stem cells or fetal tissue.

Font (size, color, type density) and Line Spacing
Children's Cancer Research Fund follows the NIH guidelines regarding font and line spacing.

Text in your attachments must follow these minimum requirements:

- Font: Recommended fonts are Arial, Georgia, or Helvetica.
- Font size: Font must be 11 points or larger. Smaller font size is acceptable in figures, graphs, diagrams, and charts, but must be no smaller than 8 points.
    - Some PDF conversion software reduces font size. It is important to confirm that the final PDF document complies with the font requirements.
- Type density: Must be no more than 15 characters per linear inch (including characters and spaces).
- Margins: Must be at least .5 inch on standard letter paper size (8.5" x 11").
- Line spacing: Must be no more than six lines per vertical inch.
- Text color: No restriction. Though not required, black or other high-contrast text colors are recommended since they print well and are legible to the largest audience.

Submission Instructions (LOI + Full Application)

1. To start a submission, navigate to Proposal Central and select "applicant or awardee."

2. After you've logged into Proposal Central, navigate to the Grant Opportunities tab and search for Children's Cancer Research Fund in the search bar to find our active grant opportunities. Click the "apply now" button to start a submission.

3. In section 2, you will be able to download instructions.

4. Complete each section and upload applicable templates. You may save your application to finish later by clicking "save".
    a. When you return to Proposal Central, click the "proposals" tab at the top to navigate to your applications. You can filter your application based on Proposal Status in the upper right-hand corner. Click "in-progress" to return to your existing applications.

5. Once completed, click "submit". You will receive a confirmation email from Proposal Central. If the deadline has not passed, you may unsubmit your application to make changes by clicking "unsubmit" on the "proposals" tab.

6. If you have any questions or issues with your Proposal Central account, please contact pcsupport@altum.com

Full Application Instructions (by invitation only)

Children's Cancer Research Fund uses Proposal Central for electronic submission of all LOIs and full applications. Fax, email, or hard copy submissions will not be accepted. Please see submission instructions above.

Section Descriptions

1. **Title Page**: Enter a title for your project and press save. Project title cannot exceed 81 characters with spaces.

2. **Instructions**: This section contains all applicable instructions.

3. **Access Permissions:** Use this section to grant access to others involved in the application. Signatories will need "edit" access. Proposal Central automatically grants access when a contact is added to the application. If access issues arise, verify the users' access level in Proposal Central. If issues persist, please contact pcsupport@altum.com

4. **Principal Investigator Information:** The individual who creates the proposal is automatically listed as the Principal Investigator. Please complete the following:

a. First & last name
b. Institution
c. Highest degree
d. Position & title
e. Division
f. Department
g. Work/lab address.
h. Email address
i. Phone number
j. Confirm that each PI will commit at least 10% effort to this project.

5. **Key Personnel: CO-PI & CO-Investigators**
   If applicable, please add any additional CO-Principal Investigator or CO-Investigators information. You will be required to upload their biosketch in section 11.

6. **Organization/Institution Information:** The applicant's institution is pre-loaded as the contact institution. To make changes, search for the appropriate registered institution in Proposal Central and click "save." Please provide email address for the signing official and grants administrator.

7. **Abstracts & Keywords:**
   a. **Lay abstract (2,000 character maximum including spaces)**: Provide an abstract written for a general audience. Use language the average adult can understand. This abstract will be made public if the proposal is selected for funding.
   b. **Scientific Abstract (2,000 character maximum including spaces)**: Provide an abstract written for a technical/scientific audience.
   c. **Keywords**: Selected keywords from the list provided that best represent your research focus as it relates to childhood cancer.

8. **Budget Period Detail:** Enter costs for each requested budget period (a budget period is 12 months). Indirect costs are allowed up to 10% of total direct costs. The maximum request is
   $3,000,000 over three years (paid out up to $1,000,000 per year). Projects that include institutional cost-sharing, funding from other sources, or in-kind support should include that in the budget detail and describe it in the budget narrative.
   a. **Subcontracts:** Click "add new" to add all relevant subcontract information, if applicable.

   b. **Personnel Costs**
      - Name
      - Role
      - Appointment type
      - Appointment months
      - Effort
      - Base salary
      - Requested salary
      - Requested fringe

   c. **Non-Personnel Costs:** This section is intended for non-personnel costs. Actual personnel

costs of academic staff/faculty should be included under the personnel section of the application. Non-personnel expenses include:

- Consultant Expenses
- Equipment Expenses
- Supply Expenses
- Travel Expenses
- Other Expenses
- Contract Services
- Indirect Costs: Projects may assess indirect costs on subcontractors' or subawardees' total direct costs, but they must be excluded from the lead institution's total direct costs when calculating indirect. Total indirect costs may not exceed 10% of the project's overall total direct costs.

9. **Budget Summary:** Please include a summary of the following:
    a. Proposed request amount for each budget period.
    b. Personnel costs
    c. Non-personnel costs
    d. Indirect costs

- **Budget Justification (2,000 characters maximum for each category):** Provide a justification for the budget requested under each category below. If no budget is requested for a category, insert "not applicable." Budget justification is requested for:
    a. Personnel costs
    b. Supplies and other operating costs
    c. Travel and meetings
    d. Equipment
    e. Other expenses

10. **Organization Assurances**
    Multi-institutional collaborations will be required to establish a Single IRB of Record.

    a. Human Subjects: Indicate whether the project involves human subjects. If yes, please provide status of IRB approval and approval date, if applicable.
    b. Vertebrate Animals: Indicate whether the project involved vertebrate animals. If yes, please provide IACUC approval status and approval date, if applicable.

11. **Attachments**
    a. **Data-sharing (no max page limit)**
    Children's Cancer Research Fund is dedicated to data sharing and interoperability. Please describe the data generated by your research, how it will be FAIR (findable, accessible, interoperable, reusable), and your plan for sharing and dissemination, both during and after the term of the project. Data includes any information generated through research, including clinical data, sequencing data, real-world evidence, etc. Please indicate what data standards will be used, and if none are available, how this will be addressed.

    Discuss any intellectual property considerations and how they will be addressed. For any algorithms or tools developed, please discuss what software license will be leveraged and why. Finally, please describe your plan to share your research findings with the wider scientific community.

b. **Facilities, Other Resources, Equipment (no max page limit)**
Facilities, Other Resources, and Equipment section should summarize the overall scientific environment, institutional resources, and commitments relevant to the effective implementation of a project. Applicants should describe how the proposed project will use the facilities and resources available to them. Applicants should also document how the study as a whole will benefit from laboratories, patient populations, and collaborations.

c. IRB Documentation
Applicants proposing research involving human participants must provide documentation of their Institutional Review Board (IRB) status as part of the grant application. Acceptable documentation may include:

- IRB Approval: An official IRB approval letter indicating approval of proposed research.
- IRB Review Pending: Documentation indicating that the project has been submitted to the IRB and is awaiting approval.

d. **Leadership Plan**
If the proposed project has multiple PIs, include a Project Leadership Plan that addresses:

- The respective roles and areas of responsibility of the PIs
- The plan for fiscal and management coordination
- The process for decision-making on scientific direction and resource allocation
- The plan for timely data-sharing and regular communication among investigators
- Publication and intellectual property policies
- Procedures for resolving conflicts

e. **NIH Biosketch for PI(s) and CO-I(s)**
Applicants must submit a current NIH-format Biographical Sketch generated through SciENcv for the PI and all Co-Investigators.

f. **Current and Pending (Other) Support**
The PI(s) and all key personnel must submit a current NIH Current and Pending (Other) Support document generated through SciENcv.

Provide a comprehensive overview of all current and pending research support the individual is receiving from other sources, including grants, contracts, and institutional funding. Identify any potential scientific, budgetary, or effort overlap between the proposed project and existing or pending support

g. **References**
Include citations for all sources referenced in your proposal to support your rationale, methods, and scientific claims.

h. **Research Plan and Timeline**
The research plan should clearly describe the significance, innovation, and approach of your proposed research. **The page limit for the research plan is six (6) pages.**

- Significance: State the significance and importance of your proposed project with respect to childhood cancer research. Relate the specific aims to the goals and long-term objectives. Include potential scientific or clinical impact for children fighting cancer.
- Innovation: Describe novel concepts, methods, or approaches and how they advance the field of pediatric cancer research.
- Approach: Detail your study design, methods, and analysis. Address feasibility, preliminary data, challenges, alternatives, and collaboration plans.

The timeline should explain how you will organize project activities over time, track progress, and ensure feasibility. **The page limit for the timeline is one (1) page.**

The research plan and timeline should be combined into 1 PDF totaling 7 pages and uploaded together.

i. **Research Protocol**
Upload appropriate research protocol.

j. **Specific Aims**
Clearly describe what you aim to accomplish, why your research is important, how you will achieve your goals, and the expected outcomes and potential impact.

k. **Letters of Support**
Letters of support are optional and can be uploaded under "letters of support."

12. **Validate**
Click the validate button to check for any missing required information. All missing information will then be listed on the screen for you to correct.

13. **Signature Pages**
Download relevant pages and obtain appropriate signatures. We accept ink or e-signatures. Upload signed signature pages under section 11 attachments.

Contact Information

For questions, please contact grants@childrenscancer.org
For ProposalCentral technical support, contact pcsupport@altum.com