I. OVERVIEW OF THE FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

Program Announcement for the Department of Defense

Defense Health Program

Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs

Ovarian Cancer Research Program

Pilot Award

Announcement Type: Initial

Funding Opportunity Number: HT942524OCRPPA

Assistance Listing Number: 12.420 Military Medical

Research and Development

SUBMISSION AND REVIEW DATES AND TIMES

• **Pre-Application (Preproposal) Submission Deadline:** 5:00 p.m. Eastern time (ET), May 14, 2024

• **Invitation to Submit an Application:** June 17, 2024

• **Application Submission Deadline:** 11:59 p.m. ET, August 6, 2024

• End of Application Verification Period: 5:00 p.m. ET, August 9, 2024

• **Peer Review:** October 2024

Programmatic Review: December 2024

This program announcement must be read in conjunction with the General Application Instructions, version 901. The General Application Instructions document is available for downloading from the Grants.gov funding opportunity announcement by selecting the "Package" tab, clicking "Preview," and then selecting "Download Instructions."

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II. DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT THE FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

II.A. Program Description

The U.S. Army Medical Research Acquisition Activity (USAMRAA) is soliciting applications to the fiscal year 2024 (FY24) Ovarian Cancer Research Program (OCRP) using delegated authority provided by United States Code, Title 10, Section 4001 (10 USC 4001). The Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs (CDMRP) at the U.S. Army Medical Research and Development Command (USAMRDC) is the program management agent for this funding opportunity. Congress initiated the OCRP in FY97 to provide support for research of high potential impact and exceptional scientific merit. Appropriations for the OCRP from FY97 through FY23 totaled \$496.45 million (M). The FY24 appropriation is \$45M.

The mission of the OCRP is to support patient-centered research to prevent, detect, treat, and cure ovarian cancer to enhance the health and well-being of Service Members, Veterans, their Family members, and all women impacted by this disease.

II.A.1. FY24 OCRP Areas of Emphasis

To meet the intent of the funding opportunity, applications for the FY24 OCRP Pilot Award must address a critical component of at least one of the Areas of Emphasis listed below:

- Understand the basic biology and etiology of ovarian cancer initiation, progression, metastasis, recurrence, genetics, and other critical events.
- Develop novel therapeutic strategies for treatment.
- Investigate innovative approaches for ovarian cancer prevention.
- Identify and develop new strategies for screening, early-stage detection, accurate diagnosis, and prognosis.
- Identify and implement strategies to improve survivorship and quality of life.
- Address health disparities.
- Improve precision medicine.

II.A.2. Award History

The OCRP Pilot Award mechanism was first offered in FY05. Since then, 1,411 Pilot Award applications have been received, and 205 have been recommended for funding.

II.B. Award Information

The OCRP Pilot Award supports the exploration of innovative concepts or theories in ovarian cancer that could ultimately lead to critical discoveries or major advancements that will drive the field forward. The proposed research must demonstrate a clear focus on ovarian cancer (e.g., using tissues, cell lines, datasets, or appropriate animal models), and serve as a catalyst to expand or modify current thinking about and/or approaches in ovarian cancer. *If cell lines or animals are to be used, a clear justification should be provided for the choice of proposed cell line(s) or animal model(s)*.

To foster research with a potential to yield new avenues of investigation, preliminary data are not required, but are allowed. Research projects should include a well-formulated, testable hypothesis based on strong scientific rationale; however, applications that demonstrate exceptional scientific merit but lack innovation do not meet the intent of the Pilot Award. *The outcome of research supported by this award should be the generation of robust preliminary data that can be used as a foundation for future research projects.* Clinical trials will not be supported by this award mechanism.

Innovation: Research deemed innovative may introduce a new paradigm, challenge current paradigms, look at existing problems from new perspectives, or provide new insights, technologies, or applications that have the potential to meet the OCRP mission.

The following list, although not all-inclusive, provides examples of research that are not considered innovative and will likely not be considered for funding under this award mechanism:

- Investigating the next logical step or continuation of a previous research project.
- Proposing work that is an incremental advancement of published data.
- Using published series of in vitro assays to further characterize a model system.
- Incorporating known biomarkers into in vivo or clinical models of ovarian cancer.

A congressionally mandated Metastatic Cancer Task Force was formed with the purpose of identifying ways to help accelerate clinical and translational research aimed at extending the lives of advanced state and recurrent patients. As a member of the Metastatic Cancer Task Force, the CDMRP encourages applicants to review the recommendations (https://health.mil/Reference-Center/Congressional-Testimonies/2018/05/03/Metastatic-Cancer-Research) and submit research ideas to address these recommendations provided they are within the limitations of this funding opportunity and fit within the FY24 OCRP priorities.

The proposed research must be relevant to active-duty Service Members, Veterans, military beneficiaries, and/or the American public. Collaborations between researchers at military or Veteran institutions and non-military institutions are strongly encouraged. These relationships can leverage knowledge, infrastructure, and access to unique clinical populations that the partners bring to the research effort, ultimately advancing cancer research that is of significance to the Warfighter, military Families, and the American public.

Research Involving Animals: All research funded by the FY24 OCRP Pilot Award involving new and ongoing research with animals must be reviewed and approved by the USAMRDC Office of Human and Animal Research Oversight (OHARO) and Animal Care and Use Review Office (ACURO), in addition to the local Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) of record. IACUC approval at the time of submission is *not* required. *Allow at least 3 to 4 months for ACURO regulatory review and approval processes for animal studies.* Refer to the General Application Instructions for additional information.

A clinical trial is defined in the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 45, Part 46.102 (45 CFR 46.102) as a research study in which one or more human subjects are prospectively assigned to one or more interventions (which may include a placebo or another control) to evaluate the effects of the interventions on biomedical or behavioral health-related outcomes.

Studies that do not seek to measure safety, effectiveness, and/or efficacy outcome(s) of an intervention are not considered clinical trials.

For the purposes of this funding opportunity, research that meets the definition of a clinical trial is distinct from clinical research. Clinical research encompasses research with human data, human specimens, and/or interaction with human subjects. Clinical research is observational in nature and includes:

- (1) Research conducted with human subjects and/or material of human origin such as data, specimens, and cognitive phenomena for which an investigator (or co-investigator) does *not* seek to assess the safety, effectiveness, and/or efficacy outcomes of an intervention. Research meeting this definition may include but is not limited to: (a) mechanisms of human disease, (b) diagnostic or detection studies (e.g., biomarker or imaging), (c) health disparity studies, and (d) development of new technologies.
- (2) Epidemiologic and behavioral studies that do *not* seek to assess the safety, effectiveness, and/or efficacy outcomes of an intervention.
- (3) Outcomes research and health services research that do not fit under the definition of clinical trial.

Excluded from the definition of clinical research are in vitro studies that utilize human data or specimens that cannot be linked to a living individual and meet the requirements for exemption under §46.104(d)(4) of the Common Rule.

The funding instrument for awards made under the program announcement will be grants (31 USC 6304).

The anticipated direct costs budgeted for the entire period of performance for an FY24 Pilot] Award should not exceed \$300,000. Refer to Section II.D.5, Funding Restrictions, for detailed funding information.

Awards supported with FY24 funds will be made no later than September 30, 2025.

The CDMRP expects to allot approximately \$4.8M to fund approximately 10 Pilot Award applications. Funding of applications received is contingent upon the availability of federal funds for this program, the number of applications received, the quality and merit of the applications as evaluated by peer and programmatic review, and the requirements of the government. Funds to be obligated on any award resulting from this funding opportunity will be available for use for a limited time period based on the fiscal year of the funds. It is anticipated that awards made from this FY24 funding opportunity will be funded with FY24 funds, which will expire for use on September 30, 2030.

II.C. Eligibility Information

II.C.1. Eligible Applicants

II.C.1.a. Organization: Extramural and Intramural organizations are eligible to apply, including foreign or domestic organizations, for-profit and non-profit organizations, and public entities.

Extramural Organization: An eligible non-Department of Defense (DOD) organization. Examples of extramural organizations include academic institutions, biotechnology companies, foundations, federal government organizations other than the DOD (i.e., intragovernmental organizations), and research institutes.

Intramural DOD Organization: Refers specifically to DOD organizations including DOD laboratories, DOD military treatment facilities, and/or DOD activities embedded within a civilian medical center.

Awards are made to eligible *organizations*, not to individuals. Refer to the General Application Instructions, Appendix 1, for additional recipient qualification requirements.

II.C.1.b. Principal Investigator

Investigators at the level of postdoctoral fellow or clinical fellow (or equivalent) and above may be named by the organization as the Principal Investigator (PI) on the application.

There are no limitations on the number of applications for which an investigator may be named as a PI.

An eligible PI, regardless of ethnicity, nationality, or citizenship status, must be employed by or affiliated with an eligible organization.

II.C.2. Cost Sharing

Cost sharing/matching is not an eligibility requirement.

II.C.3. Other

Organizations must be able to access **.gov** and **.mil** websites to fulfill the financial and technical deliverable requirements of the award and submit invoices for payment.

Refer to <u>Section II.H.2</u>, <u>Administrative Actions</u>, for a list of administrative actions that may be taken if a pre-application or full application does not meet the administrative, eligibility, or ethical requirements defined in this program announcement.

II.D. Application and Submission Information

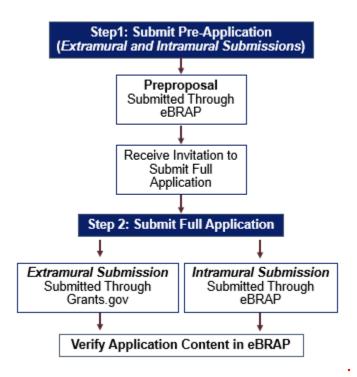
II.D.1. Location of Application Package

Submission is a two-step process requiring both a *pre-application* submitted via the Electronic Biomedical Research Application Portal (eBRAP.org) and a *full application* (eBRAP.org or Grants.gov). Depending on the type of submission (i.e., extramural vs. intramural), certain aspects of the submission process will differ.

The CDMRP uses two portal systems to accept pre- and full application submissions.

eBRAP (https://ebrap.org) is a secure web-based system that allows PIs and/or organizational representatives from both extra- and intramural organizations to receive communications from the CDMRP and submit their pre-applications. Additionally, eBRAP allows extramural applicants to view and verify full applications submitted to Grants.gov and allows intramural DOD applicants to submit and verify full applications following their pre-application submission.

Grants.gov (https://grants.gov) is a federal system that must be used by funding agencies to announce extramural grant applications. Full applications for CDMRP funding opportunities can only be submitted to Grants.gov after submission of a pre-application through eBRAP.



DOD FY24 Ovarian Cancer Pilot Award

Extramural Submission: An application submitted by an <u>extramural organization</u> for an extramural or intramural PI working within an extramural or intramural organization. For example, a research foundation submitting an application for a DOD employee working within a DOD organization would be considered an extramural submission and should follow instructions specific to extramural submissions. Download application package components for HT942524OCRPPA from Grants.gov (https://grants.gov). Full applications from extramural organizations *must* be submitted through Grants.gov.

Intramural Submission: An application submitted by an <u>intramural DOD organization</u> for an investigator employed by that organization. Intramural DOD organizations <u>may</u> submit full applications to either eBRAP or Grants.gov. Download application package components for HT942524OCRPPA from the anticipated submission portal eBRAP (https://ebrap.org) or Grants.gov.

The submission process should be started early to avoid missing deadlines. Regardless of submission type or portal used, all pre- and full application components must be submitted by the deadlines stipulated on the first page of this program announcement. There are no grace periods for deadlines; failure to meet submission deadlines will result in application rejection. *The USAMRAA cannot make allowances/exceptions for submission problems encountered by the applicant organization using system-to-system interfaces with Grants.gov.*

II.D.2. Content and Form of the Application Submission

Submitting applications that propose essentially the same research project to different funding opportunities within the same program and fiscal year is prohibited and will result in administrative withdrawal of the duplicative application(s).

Unnecessary duplication of funding, or accepting funding from more than one source for the same research, is prohibited. See the CDMRP's full position on research duplication at https://cdmrp.health.mil/funding/researchDup.

Including classified research data within the application and/or proposing research that may produce classified outcomes, or outcomes deemed sensitive to national security concerns, may result in application withdrawal. Refer to the General Application Instructions, Appendix 7, Section B.

FY24 OCRP Programmatic Panel members should not be involved in any pre-application or full application. For questions related to panel members and pre-applications or applications, refer to Section II.H.2.c, Withdrawal, or contact the eBRAP Help Desk at help@eBRAP.org or 301-682-5507.

II.D.2.a. Step 1: Pre-Application Submission

All pre-application components must be submitted by the PI through eBRAP (https://eBRAP.org/).

During the pre-application process, eBRAP assigns each submission a unique log number. This unique log number is required during the full application submission process. The eBRAP log

number, application title, and all information for the PI, Business Official(s), performing organization, and contracting organization must be consistent throughout the entire preapplication and full application submission process. Inconsistencies may delay application processing and limit or negate the ability to view, modify, and verify the application in eBRAP. If any changes need to be made, the applicant should contact the eBRAP Help Desk at help@eBRAP.org or 301-682-5507 prior to the application submission deadline.

II.D.2.a.i. Pre-Application Components

Pre-applications will be screened based on the merits of the proposed research. Therefore, reviewers will be blinded to the identity of the PI, collaborators, and their organization(s). Due to the blinded nature of the review process, identifying or making references to the PI, collaborators, or their organization(s) within the Preproposal Narrative is prohibited and will result in administrative rejection of the pre-application and preclude invitation to submit a full application. In addition, the use of "I," "we," "our," "this organization," or similar wording in phrases that refer to the PI, collaborators, or their organization(s) through the references listed will also result in administrative rejection of the pre-application and preclude invitation to submit a full application. Do not define the organization in the acronyms listing.

Pre-application submissions must include the following components (refer to the General Application Instructions, Section III.B, for additional information on pre-application submission):

Note: Upload documents as individual PDF files unless otherwise noted.

• **Preproposal Narrative (two-page limit):** The Preproposal Narrative page limit applies to text and non-text elements (e.g., figures, tables, graphs, photographs, diagrams, chemical structures, drawings) used to describe the project. Inclusion of URLs that provide additional information to expand the Preproposal Narrative and could confer an unfair competitive advantage is prohibited and may result in administrative withdrawal of the pre-application.

The Preproposal Narrative should include the following:

- o **Research Idea:** State the ideas and reasoning on which the proposed work is based and how the application addresses a critical problem in ovarian cancer. If cell lines or animals are to be used, *justify why the proposed cell line(s) or animal model(s) were chosen.*
- o **Innovation:** Briefly describe what is innovative about the proposed research. Describe how the research will introduce a new paradigm, challenge current paradigms, look at existing problems from new perspectives, or provide new insights *or* technologies *or* applications that have the potential to meet the OCRP mission. Describe how the proposed research is not a continuation of a previous research project, or not an incremental advance of published data.

- Area of Emphasis Relevance: Explain how the proposed research will lead to promising outcomes for one or more of the <u>FY24 OCRP Areas of Emphasis</u> in Section II.A.1.
- o **Impact:** Describe how the proposed research will impact a critical problem or question in ovarian cancer or patient care/survivorship. Articulate how the project, if successful, could ultimately lead to critical discoveries or major advancements and accelerate progress toward eliminating ovarian cancer.
- **Pre-Application Supporting Documentation:** The items to be included as supporting documentation for the pre-application *must be uploaded as individual files* and are limited to the following:
 - o **References Cited (one-page limit):** List the references cited (including URLs if available) in the Preproposal Narrative using a standard reference format that includes the full citation (i.e., author[s], year published, reference title, and reference source, including volume, chapter, page numbers, and publisher, as appropriate).
 - Do not include links or URLs to publications that identify the PI or any collaborator or their organization(s).
 - o **List of Abbreviations, Acronyms, and Symbols:** Provide a list of abbreviations, acronyms, and symbols used in the Preproposal Narrative. Do not include information that will identify the organization(s) of the PI or any collaborator.

II.D.2.a.ii. Pre-Application Screening Criteria

To determine the technical merits of the pre-application and the relevance to the mission of the Defense Health Program (DHP) and the OCRP, pre-applications will be screened based on the following criteria:

- **Research Idea:** How well the proposed work addresses a critical problem in ovarian cancer.
- **Innovation:** Whether the research will introduce a new paradigm, challenge current paradigms, look at existing problems from new perspectives, or provide new insights or technologies or applications that have the potential to meet the OCRP mission. To what degree the proposed research is not a continuation of a previous research project, or not an incremental advance of published data.
- **Area of Emphasis Relevance:** Whether the proposed project addresses at least one of the <u>FY24 OCRP Areas of Emphasis</u> in Section II.A.1. To what degree the proposed research may lead to promising outcomes for one or more of the selected FY24 OCRP Areas of Emphasis, as stated in Section II.A.1.
- **Impact:** To what degree the proposed study will impact a critical problem or question in ovarian cancer or patient care/survivorship. To what degree the project could ultimately lead to critical discoveries or major advancements and accelerate progress toward eliminating ovarian cancer.

• Blinded Content: Identifying or making references to the PI, collaborators, or their organizations will result in administrative rejection of the pre-application.

II.D.2.a.iii. Notification of Pre-Application Screening Results

Following the pre-application screening, PIs will be notified as to whether they are invited to submit full applications. The estimated date when PIs can expect to receive notification of an invitation to submit a full application is indicated in Section I, Overview of the Funding Opportunity. No feedback (e.g., a critique of the pre-application's strengths and weaknesses) is provided at this stage. Because the invitation to submit a full application is based on the contents of the pre-application, investigators should not change the title or research objectives after the pre-application is submitted.

Applicants must receive an invitation to submit a full application. Uninvited full application submissions will be rejected.

II.D.2.b. Step 2: Full Application Submission

II.D.2.b.i. Full Application Submission Type

Extramural Submissions: Full applications from extramural organizations *must* be submitted through Grants.gov Workspace. Full applications from extramural organizations, including non-DOD federal organizations, received through eBRAP will be withdrawn. Refer to the General Application Instructions, Section IV, for considerations and detailed instructions regarding extramural full application submission.

Intramural Submissions: Intramural DOD organizations may submit full applications through either eBRAP or Grants.gov. There is no preference from the CDMRP for which submission portal is utilized; submission through one portal or the other does not provide the application any advantage during the review process. Intramural DOD organizations that choose to submit through Grants.gov should follow Extramural Submission instructions. Intramural DOD organizations that are unable to submit through Grants.gov should submit through eBRAP. For the remainder of this program announcement, it will be assumed intramural DOD submissions will proceed through eBRAP. Refer to the General Application Instructions, Section V, for considerations and detailed instructions regarding intramural DOD full application submission.

II.D.2.b.ii. Full Application Submission Components

Each application submission must include the completed full application package for this program announcement. See <u>Section II.H.3</u> of this program announcement for a checklist of the required application components.

(a) SF424 Research & Related Application for Federal Assistance Form (Extramural Submissions Only): Refer to the General Application Instructions, Section IV.B, for detailed information

(b) Attachments:

Each attachment to the full application components must be uploaded as an individual file in the format specified and in accordance with the formatting guidelines listed in the General Application Instructions, Appendix 2.

Attachment 1: Project Narrative (seven-page limit): Upload as "ProjectNarrative.pdf". The page limit of the Project Narrative applies to text and non-text elements (e.g., figures, tables, graphs, photographs, diagrams, chemical structures, drawings) used to describe the project. Inclusion of URLs (uniform resource locators) that provide additional information that expands the Project Narrative and could confer an unfair competitive advantage is prohibited and may result in administrative withdrawal of the application.

The full application is NOT blinded; reviewers will NOT be blinded to the identity of the PI, collaborators, and their institutions during the peer and programmatic reviews.

Describe the proposed project in detail using the outline below. The Project Narrative should demonstrate logical reasoning and a sound scientific rationale that is established through a critical review and analysis of the literature. In addition, the Project Narrative should demonstrate how the proposed research is innovative and has potential to make an impact on ovarian cancer.

- Background: Present the ideas and scientific rationale behind the proposed research, to include relevant literature citations.
- **Hypothesis:** State the hypothesis to be tested.
- Specific Aims: Concisely explain the project's specific aims to be supported by this
 application. If this research project is part of a larger study, present only tasks that
 this OCRP award would fund.

Research Strategy and Feasibility:

- Describe the experimental design, methods, and analyses (including appropriate controls) in sufficient detail for scientific evaluation that will include an assessment of overall project feasibility. *Preliminary data are not required but are allowed*.
- If cell lines or animals are to be used, justify why the proposed cell line(s) or animal model(s) were chosen.
- If applicable, describe the statistical and other data analyses to be used to justify the number of research subjects or samples (animal or human) and assess the data collected.
- If human subjects, human biological samples, or datasets will be used, describe the study population and include a detailed plan for the recruitment of human

subjects or the acquisition of samples. This award may not be used to conduct clinical trials.

- If applicable, describe the strategy for the inclusion of minorities appropriate to the objectives of the study, including a description of the composition of the proposed study population in terms of racial, and ethnic group, and an accompanying rationale for the selection of subjects. It is not expected that every study will include all genders and racial and ethnic groups. Studies utilizing human biospecimens or datasets that cannot be linked to a specific individual, gender, ethnicity, or race are exempt from this requirement.
- Address potential problem areas and present alternative methods and approaches.
- Attachment 2: Supporting Documentation: Combine and upload as a single file named "Support.pdf". Start each document on a new page. The Supporting Documentation attachment should not include additional information such as figures, tables, graphs, photographs, diagrams, chemical structures, or drawings. These items should be included in the Project Narrative.

There are no page limits for any of these components unless otherwise noted. Include only those components described below; inclusion of items not requested or viewed as an extension of the Project Narrative will result in the removal of those items or may result in administrative withdrawal of the application.

- References Cited: List the references cited (including URLs, if available) in the Project Narrative using a standard reference format.
- List of Abbreviations, Acronyms, and Symbols: Provide a list of abbreviations, acronyms, and symbols.
- Facilities, Existing Equipment, and Other Resources: Describe the facilities and equipment available for performance of the proposed project and any additional facilities or equipment proposed for acquisition at no cost to the award. Indicate whether government-furnished facilities or equipment are proposed for use. If so, reference should be made to the original or present government award under which the facilities or equipment items are now accountable. There is no form for this information.
- Publications and/or Patents: Include a list of relevant publication URLs and/or patent abstracts. If articles are not publicly available, then copies of up to five published manuscripts may be included in Attachment 2. Extra items will not be reviewed.
- Letters of Organizational Support: Provide a letter (or letters, if applicable) signed by the Department Chair or appropriate organization official, confirming the laboratory space, equipment, and other resources available for the project. Letters of support not requested in the program announcement, such as those from members of Congress, do not impact application review or funding decisions.

- Letters of Collaboration (if applicable): Provide a signed letter from each collaborating individual and/or organization demonstrating that the PI has the support and resources necessary for the proposed work. If an investigator at an intramural DOD organization is named as a collaborator on a full application submitted through an extramural organization, the application must include a letter from the collaborator's Commander or Commanding Officer at the intramural DOD organization authorizing the collaborator's involvement.
- Intellectual Property: Information can be found in the 2 CFR 200.315, "Intangible Property."
 - Intellectual and Material Property Plan (if applicable): Provide a plan for resolving intellectual and material property issues among participating organizations.
 - Commercialization Strategy (*if applicable*): Describe the commercialization plan. The plan should include intellectual property, market size, financial analysis, strengths and weaknesses, barriers to the market, competitors, and management team. Discuss the significance of this development effort, when it can be anticipated, and the potential commercial use for the technology being developed.
- DOD Data Management Plan (two-page limit is recommended): Describe the data management plan in accordance with Section 3.c, Enclosure 3, <u>DoD Instructions 3200.12</u>. Do not duplicate the Data and Research Resources Sharing Plan. Refer to General Application Instructions, Section IV.B, Attachments Form, Attachment: Supporting Documentation, for detailed information regarding Data Management Plan content.
- Data and Research Resources Sharing Plan: Describe the type of data or research resource to be made publicly available as a result of the proposed work. Describe how data and resources generated during the performance of the project will be shared with the research community. Include the name of the repository(ies) where scientific data and resources arising from the project will be archived, if applicable. If a public repository will not be used for data or resource sharing, provide justification. Provide a milestone plan for data/results dissemination including when data and resources will be made available to other users, including dissemination activities with a particular focus on feeding back the data to affected communities and/or research participants. Refer to the CDMRP's Policy on Data & Resource Sharing located on the eBRAP "Funding Opportunities & Forms" web page https://ebrap.org/eBRAP/public/Program.htm for more information about the CDMRP's expectations for making data and research resources publicly available.
- Use of DOD Resources (*if applicable*): Provide a letter of support signed by the lowest-ranking person with approval authority confirming access to active-duty military populations and/or DOD resources or databases.

Use of VA Resources (*if applicable*): Provide a letter of support signed by the VA Facility Director(s) or individual designated by the VA Facility Director(s), such as the Associate Chief of Staff for Research and Development (ACOS/R&D) or Clinical Service Chief, confirming access to VA patients, resources, and/or VA research space. If the VA-affiliated non-profit corporation is not identified as the applicant organization for administering the funds, include a letter from the VA ACOS/R&D confirming this arrangement and identifying the institution that will administer the funds associated with the proposed research.

• Attachment 3: Technical Abstract (one-page limit): Upload as "TechAbs.pdf". The technical abstract is used by all reviewers. Abstracts of all funded research projects will be posted publicly. Use only characters available on a standard QWERTY keyboard. Spell out all Greek letters, other non-English letters, and symbols. Graphics are not allowed.

Technical abstracts should be written using the outline below. Clarity and completeness within the space limits are highly important.

- **Background:** Present the scientific rationale behind the proposed research project.
- Area of Emphasis: State the <u>FY24 OCRP Area(s) of Emphasis</u> that will be addressed.
- **Hypothesis:** State the hypothesis to be tested.
- Specific Aims: State the specific aims of the study. Provide evidence or rationale that supports the hypothesis.
- **Study Design:** Describe the study design, including appropriate controls.
- **Innovation:** Briefly describe how the proposed research is innovative in the ovarian cancer field.
- Impact: Describe how the proposed research will impact a critical problem or question in ovarian cancer or patient/survivor care. Articulate how the project, if successful, could ultimately lead to critical discoveries or major advancements and accelerate progress. Describe the potential impact of the proposed research on the health and well-being of Service Members, Veterans, their Family members, and all women impacted by this disease.
- Attachment 4: Lay Abstract (one-page limit): Upload as "LayAbs.pdf". The lay abstract is used by all reviewers, and addresses issues of particular interest to the affected community. Abstracts of all funded research projects will be posted publicly. Use only characters available on a standard QWERTY keyboard. Spell out all Greek letters, other non-English letters, and symbols. Graphics are not allowed. Do not duplicate the technical abstract.

Lay abstracts should address the points outlined below *in a manner that will be readily understood by readers without a background in science or medicine*. Avoid overuse use of scientific jargon, acronyms, and abbreviations.

- Summarize the objectives and rationale for the proposed research.
- Describe the critical problem in ovarian cancer addressed in the proposed research.
- Explain how the proposed research will provide new paradigms, insights, technologies, or applications in ovarian cancer.
- Describe how the proposed research is relevant to the mission of the OCRP.
 - Which FY24 OCRP Area(s) of Emphasis is addressed?
 - What population will the research help, and how will it help them?
 - What is the potential impact of the proposed research on the health and well-being of Service Members, Veterans, their Family members, and all women impacted by this disease?
- Attachment 5: Statement of Work (SOW) (three-page limit): Upload as "SOW.pdf". Refer to the eBRAP "Funding Opportunities & Forms" web page (https://ebrap.org/eBRAP/public/Program.htm) for the suggested SOW format and recommended strategies for assembling the SOW.
 - For the Pilot Award mechanism, refer to the "Example: Assembling a Generic Statement of Work" for guidance on preparing the SOW. Use the "Suggested SOW Format" to develop the SOW for the proposed research. Submit as a PDF.
- Attachment 6: Innovation Statement (one-page limit): Upload as "Innovation.pdf". Briefly describe what is innovative about the proposed research. Describe how the research will introduce a new paradigm, challenge current paradigms, look at existing problems from new perspectives, or provide new insights or technologies or applications that have the potential to meet the OCRP mission.
- o Attachment 7: Impact Statement (one-page limit): Upload as "Impact.pdf". State explicitly how the proposed work addresses critical component of at least one of the FY24 OCRP Areas of Emphasis. Describe how the research will address a critical need in the field of ovarian cancer research and/or patient care/survivorship. Describe the anticipated outcomes from the proposed research, either short- or long-term, that will drive the field of ovarian cancer research and/or patient care/survivorship.
- Attachment 8: Inclusion of Minorities Inclusion Enrollment Report (Attachment 8 is only applicable and required for applications proposing clinical research studies):
 Upload as "IWAM.pdf". Describe the strategy for the inclusion of minorities appropriate to the objectives of the study, including a description of the composition of the proposed study population in terms of racial, and ethnic group, and an accompanying

rationale for the selection of subjects. Provide an anticipated enrollment table(s) with the proposed enrollment distributed on the basis of race and ethnicity. The Public Health Service (PHS) Inclusion Enrollment Report is a three-page fillable PDF form, which can be downloaded from eBRAP at https://ebrap.org/eBRAP/public/ Program.htm.

- Attachment 9: Representations (Extramural Submissions Only): Upload as "RequiredReps.pdf". All extramural applicants must complete and submit the Required Representations template available on eBRAP (https://ebrap.org/eBRAP/ public/Program.htm). For more information, see the General Application Instructions, Appendix 8, Section B, Representations.
- Attachment 10: Suggested Intragovernmental/Intramural Budget Form (if applicable): Upload as "IGBudget.pdf". If an intramural DOD organization will be a collaborator in performance of the project, complete a separate budget using the "Suggested Intragovernmental/Intramural Budget Form", available for download on the eBRAP "Funding Opportunities & Forms" web page (https://ebrap.org/eBRAP/public/Program.htm). The budget should cover the entire period of performance for each intramural DOD site and include a budget justification as instructed. The total costs per year for each subaward (direct and indirect costs) should be included on the Grants.gov Research & Related Budget Form under subaward costs. Refer to the General Application Instructions, Section V.A.(e), for additional information and considerations.
- (c) Research & Related Personal Data: For extramural submissions, refer to the General Application Instructions, Section IV.B.(c), and for intramural submissions, refer to the General Application Instructions, Section V.A.(c), for detailed instructions.
- (d) Research & Related Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded): For extramural submissions, refer to the General Application Instructions, Section IV.B.(d), and for intramural submissions, refer to the General Application Instructions, Section V.A.(d), for detailed instructions.
 - o **PI Biographical Sketch (five-page limit):** Upload as "Biosketch LastName.pdf".
 - **PI Previous/Current/Pending Support (no page limit):** Upload as "Support LastName.pdf".
 - **Key Personnel Biographical Sketches (five-page limit each):** Upload as "Biosketch LastName.pdf".
 - Key Personnel Previous/Current/Pending Support (no page limit): Upload as "Support_LastName.pdf".
- (e) Research & Related Budget: For extramural submissions, refer to the General Application Instructions, Section IV.B.(e), and for intramural submissions, refer to the General Application Instructions, Section V.A.(e), for detailed instructions.

- Budget Justification (no page limit): For extramural submissions, refer to the General Application Instructions, Section IV.B.(e), Section L, for instructions. For intramural submissions, refer to General Application Instructions, Section V.A.(e), Budget Justification Instructions.
- (f) **Project/Performance Site Location(s) Form:** For extramural submissions, refer to the General Application Instructions, Section IV.B.(f), and for intramural submissions, refer to the General Application Instructions, Section V.A.(f), for detailed instructions.
- (g) Research & Related Subaward Budget Attachment(s) Form (*if applicable, Extramural Submissions Only*): Refer to the General Application Instructions, Section IV.B.(g), for detailed instructions.
 - Extramural Subaward: Complete the Research & Related Subaward Budget Form and upload through Grants.gov.
 - o **Intramural DOD Subaward:** Complete a separate "Suggested Intragovernmental/Intramural Budget Form" for each intramural DOD subaward and upload as a single document titled **IGBudget.pdf** to Grants.gov as Attachment 10.

II.D.2.c. Applicant Verification of Full Application Submission in eBRAP

Independent of submission type, once the full application is submitted it is transmitted to and processed in eBRAP. At this stage, the PI and organizational representatives will receive an email from eBRAP instructing them to log into eBRAP to review, modify, and verify the full application submission. Verification is strongly recommended but not required. eBRAP will validate full application files against the specific program announcement requirements, and discrepancies will be noted in the "Full Application Files" tab in eBRAP. However, eBRAP does not confirm the accuracy of file content. It is the applicant's responsibility to review all application components and ensure proper ordering as specified in the program announcement. The Project Narrative and Research & Related Budget Form cannot be changed after the application submission deadline. If either the Project Narrative or the budget fails eBRAP validation or needs to be modified, an updated full application package must be submitted prior to the full application submission deadline. Other application components, including subaward budget(s) and subaward budget justification(s), may be changed until the end of the application verification period. The full application cannot be modified once the application verification period ends.

II.D.3. Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and System for Award Management (SAM)

The applicant organization must be registered as an entity in SAM (https://www.sam.gov/content/home) and receive confirmation of an "Active" status before submitting an application through Grants.gov. Organizations must include the UEI generated by SAM in applications to this funding opportunity.

II.D.4. Submission Dates and Times

The pre-application and application submission process should be started early to avoid missing deadlines. There are no grace periods. Failure to meet either of these deadlines will result in submission rejection.

All submission dates and times are indicated in Section I, Overview of the Funding Opportunity.

II.D.5. Funding Restrictions

The maximum period of performance is **2** years.

The application's direct costs budgeted for the entire period of performance should not exceed \$300,000. If indirect cost rates have been negotiated, indirect costs are to be budgeted in accordance with the organization's negotiated rate. Collaborating organizations should budget associated indirect costs in accordance with each organization's negotiated rate.

All direct and indirect costs of any subaward or contract must be included in the direct costs of the primary award.

The applicant may request the entire maximum funding amount for a project that may have a period of performance less than the maximum 2 years.

For this award mechanism, direct costs may be requested for (not all-inclusive):

- Travel in support of multi-institutional collaborations.
- Costs for one investigator to travel to one scientific/technical meeting per year. The intent of travel to scientific/technical meetings should be to present project information or disseminate project results from the OCRP Pilot Award.

Must not be requested for:

- Tuition
- Clinical trial costs

II.D.6. Other Submission Requirements

Refer to the General Application Instructions, Appendix 2, for detailed formatting guidelines.

II.E. Application Review Information

II.E.1. Criteria

II.E.1.a. Peer Review

To determine technical merit, all applications will be individually evaluated according to the following **scored criteria**, which are of equal importance:

Innovation

 To what extent the proposed research will introduce a new paradigm, challenge current paradigms, look at existing problems from new perspectives, or provide new insights or technologies or applications that have the potential to meet the OCRP mission.

Research Strategy and Feasibility

- o To what extent the scientific rationale supports the hypothesis and feasibility of this pilot project, as demonstrated by a review and analysis of the literature.
- How well the hypotheses, experimental design, and methods support the feasibility of completing the aims.
- o If preliminary data are included, how well they support the proposed research.
- o If applicable, whether the strategy for the inclusion of minorities and distribution of proposed enrollment are appropriate for the proposed research.
- How well potential problems are identified, and alternative approaches are addressed.

Impact

- Whether the application stated explicitly how the proposed work addresses a critical component in at least one of the FY24 OCRP Areas of Emphasis.
- How well the proposed research addresses a critical need in the field of ovarian cancer research and/or patient care/survivorship.
- To what extent the anticipated outcomes from the proposed research, either short-term or long-term, will drive the field of ovarian cancer research and/or patient/survivor care forward.

In addition, the following criteria will also contribute to the overall evaluation of the application, but will not be individually scored and are therefore termed **unscored criteria**:

Personnel

- To what extent the research team's background and experience are appropriate to execute the proposed work.
- To what degree the levels of effort by the PI and other key personnel will ensure success of the proposed work.

Budget

• Whether the direct costs exceed the allowable direct costs as published in the program announcement.

• Whether the budget is appropriate for the proposed research.

Environment

- To what extent the scientific environment is appropriate for the proposed research project.
- How well the research requirements are supported by the availability of and accessibility to facilities and resources.
- o If applicable, to what degree the intellectual and material property plan is appropriate.

• Application Presentation

To what extent the writing, clarity, and presentation of the application components influence the review.

II.E.1.b. Programmatic Review

To make funding recommendations and select the application(s) that, individually or collectively, will best achieve the program objectives, the following criteria are used by programmatic reviewers:

- Ratings and evaluations of the peer reviewers
- Relevance to the priorities of the DHP and FY24 OCRP, as evidenced by the following:
 - Relative innovation
 - Relative impact on ovarian cancer
 - Program portfolio balance and composition

II.E.2. Application Review and Selection Process

All applications are evaluated by scientists, clinicians, and consumers in a two-tier review process. The first tier is **peer review**, the evaluation of applications against established criteria to determine technical merit, where each application is assessed for its own merit, independent of other applications. The second tier is **programmatic review**, a comparison-based process in which applications with high scientific and technical merit are further evaluated for programmatic relevance. Final recommendations for funding are made to the Commanding General, USAMRDC. *The highest-scoring applications from the first tier of review are not automatically recommended for funding. Funding recommendations depend on various factors as described in <u>Section II.E.1.b</u>, <u>Programmatic Review</u>. Additional information about the two-tier process used by the CDMRP can be found at https://cdmrp.health.mil/about/2tierRevProcess.*

All CDMRP review processes are conducted confidentially to maintain the integrity of the meritbased selection process. Panel members sign a statement declaring that application and evaluation information will not be disclosed outside the review panel. Violations of confidentiality can result in the dissolution of a panel(s) and other corrective actions. In addition, personnel at the applicant or collaborating organizations are prohibited from contacting persons involved in the review and approval process to gain protected evaluation information or to influence the evaluation process. Violations of these prohibitions will result in the administrative withdrawal of the organization's application. Violations by panel members or applicants that compromise the confidentiality of the review and approval process may also result in suspension or debarment from federal awards. Furthermore, the unauthorized disclosure of confidential information of one party to a third party is a crime in accordance with 18 USC 1905.

II.E.3. Integrity and Performance Information

Prior to making an assistance agreement award where the federal share is expected to exceed the simplified acquisition threshold, as defined in 2 CFR 200.1, over the period of performance, the federal awarding agency is required to review and consider any information about the applicant that is available in SAM.

An applicant organization may review SAM and submit comments on any information currently available about the organization that a federal awarding agency previously entered. The federal awarding agency will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to other information in the designated integrity and performance system, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under federal awards when determining a recipient's qualification prior to award, according to the qualification standards of the Department of Defense Grant and Agreement Regulations (DoDGARs), Section 22.415.

II.F. Federal Award Administration Information

II.F.1. Federal Award Notices

Each applicant organization and PI will receive email notification when the funding recommendations are posted to eBRAP. At this time, each PI will receive a peer review summary statement on the strengths and weaknesses of the application and an information paper describing the funding recommendation and review process for the OCRP award mechanisms. The information papers and a list of organizations and PIs recommended for funding are also posted on the program's page within the CDMRP website.

If an application is recommended for funding, after the email notification is posted to eBRAP, a government representative will contact the person authorized to negotiate on behalf of the recipient organization.

Only an appointed USAMRAA Grants Officer may obligate the government to the expenditure of funds to an extramural organization. No commitment on the part of the government should be inferred from discussions with any other individual. The award document signed by the Grants Officer is the official authorizing document (i.e., assistance agreement).

Intra-DOD obligations of funding will be made according to the terms of a negotiated Inter-Agency Agreement and managed by a CDMRP Science Officer.

Funding obligated to *intragovernmental and intramural DOD organizations* will be sent through the Military Interdepartmental Purchase Request (MIPR), Funding Authorization Document (FAD), or Direct Charge Work Breakdown Structure processes. Transfer of funds is contingent upon appropriate safety and administrative approvals. Intragovernmental and intramural DOD investigators and collaborators must coordinate receipt and commitment of funds through their respective Resource Manager/Task Area Manager/Comptroller or equivalent Business Official.

An organization may, at its own risk and without the government's prior approval, incur obligations and expenditures to cover costs up to 90 days before the beginning date of the initial budget period of a new award. For extramural submissions, refer to the General Application Instructions, Section IV.B.(e), Pre-Award Costs section, and for intramural submissions, refer to the General Application Instructions, Section V.A.(e), Pre-Award Costs section, for additional information about pre-award costs.

If there are technical reporting requirement delinquencies for any existing CDMRP awards at the applicant organization, no new awards will be issued to the applicant organization until all delinquent reports have been submitted.

II.F.2. PI Changes and Award Transfers

Unless otherwise restricted, changes in PI or organization will be allowed on a case-by-case basis, provided the intent of the award mechanism is met.

An organizational transfer of an award will not be allowed in the last year of the (original) period of performance or any extension thereof.

Refer to the General Application Instructions, Appendix 7, Section F, for general information on organization or PI changes.

II.F.3. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Applicable requirements in the DoDGARs found in 32 CFR, Chapter I, Subchapter C, and 2 CFR, Chapter XI, apply to grants and cooperative agreements resulting from this program announcement.

Refer to the General Application Instructions, Appendix 7, for general information regarding administrative requirements.

Refer to the General Application Instructions, Appendix 8, for general information regarding national policy requirements.

Refer to full text of the latest <u>DoD R&D Terms and Conditions</u> and the <u>USAMRAA Research</u> <u>Terms and Conditions</u>: <u>Addendum to the DoD R&D Terms and Conditions</u> for further information.

Applications recommended for funding that involve animals, human data, human specimens, human subjects, or human cadavers must be reviewed for compliance with federal and DOD animal and/or human subjects protection requirements and approved by the USAMRDC OHARO) prior to implementation. This administrative review requirement is in addition to the local IACUC, Institutional Review Board, or Ethics Committee review. Refer to the General Application Instructions, Appendix 6, for additional information.

II.F.4. Reporting

Annual technical progress reports as well as a final technical progress report will be required. Annual and final technical reports must be prepared in accordance with the Research Performance Progress Report.

The Award Terms and Conditions will specify whether additional and/or more frequent reporting is required.

Award Expiration Transition Plan: An Award Expiration Transition Plan must be submitted with the final progress report. Use the one-page template, "Award Expiration Transition Plan," available on the eBRAP "Funding Opportunities & Forms" web page (https://ebrap.org/eBRAP/public/Program.htm) under the "Progress Report Formats" section. The Award Expiration Transition Plan must outline whether and how the research supported by this award will progress and must include source(s) of funding, either known or pending.

PHS Inclusion Enrollment Reporting Requirement (*only required for clinical research studies*): Enrollment reporting on the basis of race and ethnicity will be required with each annual and final progress report. The PHS Inclusion Enrollment Report is available on the "Funding Opportunities & Forms" web page (https://ebrap.org/eBRAP/public/Program.htm) in eBRAP.

Awards resulting from this program announcement may entail additional reporting requirements related to recipient integrity and performance matters. Recipient organizations that have federal contract, grant, and cooperative agreement awards with a cumulative total value greater than \$10M are required to provide information to SAM about certain civil, criminal, and administrative proceedings that reached final disposition within the most recent 5-year period and that were connected with performance of a federal award. These recipients are required to disclose, semiannually, information about criminal, civil, and administrative proceedings as specified in the applicable Representations (see General Application Instructions, Appendix 8, Section B).

II.G. Federal Awarding Agency Contacts

II.G.1. eBRAP Help Desk

Questions regarding program announcement content or submission requirements as well as technical assistance related to pre-application or intramural application submission:

Phone: 301-682-5507

Email: help@eBRAP.org

II.G.2. Grants.gov Contact Center

Questions regarding Grants.gov registration and Workspace:

Phone: 800-518-4726; International 1-606-545-5035

Email: support@grants.gov

II.H. Other Information

II.H.1. Program Announcement and General Application Instructions Versions

Questions related to this program announcement should refer to the program name, the program announcement name, and the program announcement version code 901a. The program announcement numeric version code will match the General Application Instructions version code 901.

II.H.2. Administrative Actions

After receipt of pre-applications or full applications, the following administrative actions may occur.

II.H.2.a. Rejection

The following will result in administrative rejection of the pre-application:

- Blinding of the pre-application is not followed.
- Preproposal Narrative is missing.

The following will result in administrative rejection of the full application:

- Project Narrative exceeds page limit.
- Project Narrative is missing.
- Budget is missing.

• Submission of an application for which a pre-application was not received or for which a letter of invitation was not issued.

II.H.2.b. Modification

- Pages exceeding the specific limits will be removed prior to review for all documents other than the Project Narrative.
- Documents not requested will be removed.

II.H.2.c. Withdrawal

The following may result in administrative withdrawal of the full application:

- An FY24 OCRP Programmatic Panel member is named as being involved in the research proposed or is found to have assisted in the pre-application or application processes including, but not limited to, concept design, application development, budget preparation, and the development of any supporting documentation, including letters of support/recommendation.
 A list of the FY24 OCRP Programmatic Panel members can be found at https://cdmrp.health.mii/OCRP/panels/panels24.
- The application fails to conform to this program announcement description.
- Inclusion of URLs, with the exception of links in References Cited and Publication and/or Patent Abstract sections.
- Applications that include names of personnel from either of the CDMRP peer or
 programmatic review companies. For FY24, the identities of the peer review contractor and
 the programmatic review contractor may be found at the CDMRP website
 (https://cdmrp.health.mil/about/2tierRevProcess).
- Personnel from applicant or collaborating organizations are found to have contacted persons involved in the review or approval process to gain protected evaluation information or to influence the evaluation process.
- Applications from extramural organizations, including non-DOD federal agencies, received through eBRAP.
- Applications submitted by a federal government organization (including an intramural DOD organization) may be withdrawn if (a) the organization cannot accept and execute the entirety of the requested budget in current fiscal year (FY24) funds and/or (b) the federal government organization cannot coordinate the use of contractual, assistance, or other appropriate agreements to provide funds to collaborators.
- Application includes research data that are classified and/or proposes research that may produce classified outcomes, or outcomes deemed sensitive to national security concerns.

- Submission of the same research project to different funding opportunities within the same program and fiscal year.
- The PI does not meet the eligibility criteria.
- The invited application proposes a different research project than that described in the preapplication.
- A clinical trial is proposed.

II.H.2.d. Withhold

Applications that appear to involve research misconduct will be administratively withheld from further consideration pending organizational investigation. The organization will be required to provide the findings of the investigation to the USAMRAA Grants Officer for a determination of the final disposition of the application.

II.H.3. Full Application Submission Checklist

Full Application Components	Uploaded	
SF424 Research & Related Application for Federal Assistance		
(Extramural submissions only)		
Summary (Tab 1) and Application Contacts (Tab 2) (Intramural submissions only)		
Attachments		
Project Narrative - Attachment 1, upload as "ProjectNarrative.pdf"		
Supporting Documentation – Attachment 2, upload as "Support.pdf"		
Technical Abstract – Attachment 3, upload as "TechAbs.pdf"		
Lay Abstract – Attachment 4, upload as "LayAbs.pdf"		
Statement of Work – Attachment 5, upload as "SOW.pdf"		
Innovation Statement – Attachment 6, upload as "Innovation.pdf"		
Impact Statement – Attachment 7, upload as "Impact.pdf"		
Inclusion of Minorities Inclusion Enrollment Report (<i>if applicable</i>) – Attachment 8, upload as "IWAM.pdf"		
Representations (Extramural submissions only) – Attachment 9, upload as "RequiredReps.pdf"		
Suggested Intragovernmental/Intramural Budget Form (<i>if applicable</i>) – Attachment 10, upload as "IGBudget.pdf"		
Research & Related Personal Data		
Research & Related Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded)		
Attach PI Biographical Sketch (Biosketch_LastName.pdf)		
Attach PI Previous/Current/Pending Support (Support_LastName.pdf)		
Attach Biographical Sketch (Biosketch_LastName.pdf) for each senior/key person		
Attach Previous/Current/Pending (Support_LastName.pdf) for each senior/key person		
Research & Related Budget (Extramural submissions only) Include budget justification		
Budget (Intramural submissions only) Include budget justification		
Project/Performance Site Location(s) Form		
Research & Related Subaward Budget Attachment(s) Form (if applicable)		

APPENDIX 1: ACRONYM LIST

ACOS/R&D Associate Chief of Staff for Research and Development

ACURO Animal Care and Use Review Office

CDMRP Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs

CFR Code of Federal Regulations
DHP Defense Health Program
DOD Department of Defense

DoDGARs Department of Defense Grant and Agreement Regulations

eBRAP Electronic Biomedical Research Application Portal

ET Eastern Time

FAD Funding Authorization Document

FY Fiscal Year

IACUC Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee

M Million

MIPR Military Interdepartmental Purchase Request

OCRP Ovarian Cancer Research Program

OHARO Office of Human and Animal Research Oversight (previously Office of

Research Protections)

PDF Portable Document Format

PHS Public Health Service
PI Principal Investigator

SAM System for Award Management

SOW Statement of Work

STEM Science, Technology, Engineering, and/or Mathematics

UEI Unique Entity Identifier
URL Uniform Resource Locator

USAMRAA U.S. Army Medical Research Acquisition Activity

USAMRDC U.S. Army Medical Research and Development Command

USC United States Code

VA U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs