

**INTERNATIONAL WALDENSTROM MACROGLOBULINEMIA FOUNDATION-
BLOOD CANCER UNITED**

***Acceleration and Expansion Research Grants Initiative*
2026 Request for Proposals**

The International Waldenstrom Macroglobulinemia Foundation (IWMF) and Blood Cancer United, formerly known as the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society (LLS), are proud to announce the 2026 INTERNATIONAL WALDENSTROM MACROGLOBULINEMIA FOUNDATION-BLOOD CANCER UNITED ACCELERATION AND EXPANSION RESEARCH GRANTS INITIATIVE – a Request for Proposals (RFP).

Program Description: Acceleration and Expansion Research Grants

Under this Grant program, IWMF seeks proposals to: 1) accelerate existing and prior IWMF Grants that require further funding based on a novel, testable hypothesis that drives the prior funded research work toward translational and clinical applications (an Acceleration Grant); or 2) expand funding support for novel, translational targets or mechanisms, based on prior proof-of-concept work that may or may not have prior evidence of activity in B cell malignancies (an Expansion Grant). For Expansion Grants, investigators outside the field of plasma cell malignancies are encouraged to apply. The subject work may apply new techniques such as single-cell analysis, epigenetic profiling, or state-of-the art cell-free DNA methodology, among others, as applied to Waldenstrom macroglobulinemia (WM).

Acceleration and Expansion Research Grants will be issued as one-year Grants, with the IWMF having the option to renew these for one additional year. Renewal after the first year will be considered if substantive and significant progress against the Aims, as defined in the application, are demonstrated. The progress review will be considered by an IWMF Scientific Advisory Subcommittee that will meet by videoconference with Grant Awardees, approximately 12 months after the start of the Grant Award, to review the recipient's progress against milestones, discuss potential opportunities for collaboration that may enhance the achievement of project goals, and provide mentoring and constructive review input. The IWMF retains the right, in its sole discretion, to decide whether to renew Grants for a second year.

Grant Award Structure

- Each Grant will be one year in duration, with the IWMF retaining the option to renew the Grant for an additional year, for a maximum total Grant Award of \$250,000 over 2 years. No more than \$125,000 will be paid in the first 12 months, and this total shall include indirect costs.
- Indirect costs included in the total Grant Award are limited to 20% of the total Grant Award value (i.e., \$25,000 per year for a \$250,000 total Grant Award of 2 years).
- For institutions that choose not to use the full amount of available indirect funds for indirect costs, the Grant allows these funds to be applied toward the approved Budget for direct costs.
- Final Grant Awards will be subject to an approved application Budget and Budget Justification.

Research Focus

The IWMF's research funding is focused on advancing translational research breakthroughs that elucidate the molecular basis and pathogenesis of WM and on facilitating innovative clinical-enabling studies poised to significantly improve patient outcomes. The IWMF seeks applications for research and clinical studies that will have a meaningful impact on WM patients within the next 3-5 years. Therefore, the proposed preclinical or clinical research studies should demonstrate clear clinical relevance with the potential to improve patient-centered outcomes, inform evidence-based clinical decision making, or address gaps in current therapeutic insights and approaches. Applications lacking a well-defined link to advancing patient outcomes or translating research findings into meaningful therapeutic advances will be considered non-responsive.

Note: Grant applications that require access to investigational new drugs or approved drugs should have previously secured agreement from the manufacturing sponsor for access to study drug supply. The Grant funds should not be used to pay for or offset the cost of the drug.

The IWMF's Research Goal: to Accelerate the Cure for WM

The IWMF stands at the forefront of a global mission: to transform WM from an incurable malignancy into a disease that can be fully eradicated. The IWMF defines "cure" not simply as remission, but as the achievement of sustained, treatment-free survival—where patients are liberated from both the clinical burden and molecular traces of disease, as confirmed by innovative diagnostic technologies.

As the world's leading patient-centered organization dedicated exclusively to WM, the IWMMF leverages its unrivaled network, Scientific Advisory Committee expertise, and global commitment to drive groundbreaking research, fund innovative therapeutic discoveries, advance novel clinical trials, and foster collaborations reshaping the future for all affected by this rare disease.

The IWMMF's broader strategic research agenda and efforts to support WM patients are driven by several key objectives: (1) expanding philanthropic support to advance all facets of WM research and patient care; (2) demonstrating that both short- and long-term research investments yield measurable and meaningful clinical benefits; (3) attracting and sustaining a cadre of highly skilled investigators and clinicians, including developing early-career talent to ensure ongoing innovation in the WM field; (4) strengthening collaborative partnerships with leading non-profit organizations—including Blood Cancer United and the Lymphoma Research Foundation—to enhance support resources for WM patients; (5) maintaining active engagement with pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies to encourage continued research, development, and regulatory approvals of novel WM therapeutics; and (6) facilitating targeted funding for premier world-class academic institutions to accelerate the translation of research discoveries into transformative therapies for WM patients.

The IWMMF has invested in 116 WM research Grants and 67 different researchers since 1999 and currently supports 32 research Grants, with total committed research funding of \$33 million as of September 2025.

Blood Cancer United, formerly known as the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society (LLS)

Blood Cancer United is the world's largest voluntary (nonprofit) health organization dedicated to funding blood cancer research and providing education and patient services. Since 1949, Blood Cancer United has invested nearly \$1.8 billion in groundbreaking research, pioneering many of today's most innovative approaches to blood cancer research and therapies. Blood Cancer United works tirelessly to find cures and ensure patients can access the lifesaving treatments they need, funding leading-edge research for every type of blood cancer, including leukemia, lymphoma, myeloma, and other rare types of blood cancers. For more information, visit the Blood Cancer United website at <https://bloodcancerunited.org/>.

How to Apply for a Research Grant: the IWMF's Process

The Grant application process for the *Acceleration and Expansion Research Grants Initiative* will follow the National Institutes of Health's (NIH) review guidelines.

For the 2026 RFP application process:

- *Introduction of a Letter of Intent (LOI) phase: Applicants are encouraged to submit an abbreviated LOI in advance of a full application to ensure alignment with the RFP objectives for 2026.*

Submissions:

Letter of Intent (LOI): A 3–5-page LOI should be submitted within the *Acceleration and Expansion Research Grants* via email (timeline and addresses listed below). The LOI should include project title, project summary, lay description, brief biography (for Principal Investigator), scientific and clinical significance of the work, goals and objectives, expected outcomes, translational relevance as defined by clinical significance, research methods, summary of previous relevant studies/preliminary data, IRB status, amount requested, proposed start/end date. After a review process that follows the timeline noted below, you will be notified by mid-December if your LOI is invited for a full application submission.

Full Application (FA): A FA for a research project can be submitted within the *Acceleration and Expansion Research Grants Initiative* via email (timeline and addresses listed below). The project description, significance, Aims, six-month timeline, and scientific approach should not exceed 12 pages in length and follow the **Research Application** located on the IWMF website at <https://iwmf.com/applying-for-a-research-grant>. Additional pages should include references, biographical sketches, detailed budget with budget justification, list of other projects, and appendices as necessary. Following a review process that follows the timeline noted below, Grant Awards will be made to successful applicants.

Who Can Apply: Applicants must hold an MD, PhD, or equivalent degree and work in domestic or foreign non-profit organizations, such as universities, colleges, hospitals, or laboratories. Applicants should have an independent research or academic position. Applicants need not be

U.S. citizens, and there are no restrictions on applicant age, race, gender, or creed. Applicants can apply for more than one Grant. Applicants from non-academic facilities and postdoctoral positions are not eligible.

Multi-Institutional Collaborations: Multi-institutional or multi-disciplinary applications are acceptable. This can be in the form of a single application, with or without other Principal Investigators (PI) or collaborators included from different institutions or from different sections within one institution. One PI and that PI's institution would be designated as the lead Party for all communications, reports, payments, etc. to the IWMF per their project Funding Agreement. Alternatively, two (or more) institutions can submit separate stand-alone applications and indicate that the applications are to be linked if they are both selected for funding.

Proposal Review Process: Research proposals are reviewed by an independent committee composed of selected members of the IWMF Research Committee, the IWMF Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC), and other experts in the field. This independent committee may in turn respond to the research proposal applicant(s) with questions and/or request clarification regarding certain aspects of the proposal itself. The proposals are ranked according to NIH review criteria. The final decision for funding is made by the IWMF Board of Trustees. Any final decision to fund a proposal is based on funding availability. Applicants will be notified by the IWMF as soon as a decision is made.

Note: Per the program description above, all Grant Awardees are also subject to an annual review.

Budget: A detailed Budget and Budget Justification should provide itemized detail for each major category for all the years of the project. This Budget can be summarized for year one and extrapolated for the remaining year if this is a two-year proposal. All totals and subtotals should be included. The maximum total Grant Award costs may be up to \$250,000, inclusive of 20% for indirect costs. The aggregate costs over the first 12 months of the project cannot exceed \$125,000.

Permissible direct costs include the following with the specified limitations:

- Personnel expenses including salary, wage, or stipend with fringe benefits.
- In total, no more than 40% of the direct costs may be requested for the salary and fringe benefit expenses of professional staff with a postgraduate degree (i.e., MD, PhD, DVM) regardless of function or role. This restriction does not apply to technical staff (lab assistants, nurses, etc.).
- Supplies and materials requests should be itemized by category.

- Equipment purchase requests must identify each item of equipment with an acquisition cost of more than \$4,000.

Permissible indirect costs (often referred to as Institutional Overhead, IDC, M&A, G&A, or pooled costs) are those costs incurred for common or joint objectives that cannot be readily identified with a particular project (general maintenance, utilities, library, etc.). Indirect costs are limited to 20% of the total Grant Award. For sponsoring institutions that do not need to use all the indirect funds allocated for indirect costs, the remaining funds can be applied to the project's direct costs, or the applicant may elect to only request their true indirect costs.

Impermissible costs include membership dues, tuition, books, journals, publication costs, and travel costs.

Payment Guidelines: Prior to executing the Funding Agreement, the Awardee and the IWMF will agree upon a Budget (per above) that is based on the amount requested in the application and which may be modified by the IWMF. Additionally, a payment schedule, a bi-annual Progress Report schedule, and research milestones will be agreed upon and specified in the Funding Agreement. In all cases, payments will be tied to research milestones. The IWMF, in its sole discretion, reserves the right to cease payments and terminate the Grant Award if the IWMF determines that insufficient progress toward a milestone is achieved within the specified and agreed-upon timeframe.

- For laboratory-based study Grants, the IWMF will pay a *pro rata* amount for six months at the start of the project. Future payments will be made at designated six-month intervals after each Interim or Final Progress Report and accompanying Lay Summary has been received, and the IWMF Research Committee has reviewed it for satisfactorily meeting the IWMF reporting requirements (see below). Payments will be made after all reporting guidelines in the Funding Agreement have been met.
- For clinical-based study Grants, the IWMF will pay amounts based on clinical progress, patient accrual, interim and final analyses, abstract and/or publication submissions, and/or other clinical research progress metrics. A Gantt chart and milestones for the proposed research Grant are required in the application with a request for payment schedule that is consistent with a Budget Justification (per above). It is anticipated that the IWMF will award up to 20% of the total agreed-upon Budget at Grant launch. Subsequent payments will be

tied to achievement of agreed-upon clinical research milestones. The IWMF recognizes that clinical research can be unpredictable. The final Budget will serve as a guideline that can be adjusted based on resource needs as the trial progresses and amended in the sole discretion of the IWMF.

Reporting Requirements: Progress Reports are required to be submitted to the IWMF by the PI every six months for the duration of the project. Interim Progress Reports must be submitted no later than 30 days after the six-month period ends. Such Progress Reports will describe the activities and results with respect to each specific Aim that has occurred during the preceding six-month period. Each Progress Report will include a proposed path forward over the next six-month period. Project Aims should not be changed during the research process without prior notification, justification, and agreement of the IWMF Research Committee. The PI must show in the reports that they are performing the obligations stated in the submitted and approved research proposal for each reporting period. Deviations from the six-month period timeline need to be explained to ensure that the project is on track. A Final Progress Report which describes the results and findings as they relate to the stated goals of the project for the full term of the project is required no later than 45 days after the project ending date. The PI should expect on occasion to receive requests for clarification of Progress Reports. A Lay Summary must accompany each Interim Progress Report and the Final Progress Report. The reports must be submitted in Microsoft Word or PDF file format. A final detailed expenditure report must also be sent no later than 90 days after the project ending date. Failure to submit timely progress reports and summaries may result in suspension of payment.

Note: Per the program description above, all Grant Awardees are subject to an annual review. As such, an interim progress update may be requested before or after the annual anniversary date.

Review Criteria

An application will be judged on these criteria:

- The probability of a significant advance in WM treatment outcomes based on the research.
- The conceptual basis for the proposal.
- The novelty of the concept and strategy.
- A thoughtful and clear presentation.
- Preliminary data to indicate the likelihood of project success.
- The plan for bringing the research findings to clinical application.

- Experience, background, and qualifications of the PI and/or additional investigator(s).
- Adequacy of resources and environment (facilities, data management, data analysis, etc.).
- Adequacy of provisions for protection of human subjects.
- Access to sufficient patient samples (if appropriate to the project), either from the PI's own institution or from documented collaborations must be adequate. If a PI does not have access to sufficient samples, the IWMF encourages the PI to collaborate with another researcher or bone marrow banks who will share samples with them pre-proposal. The PI may contact the IWMF before submitting the proposal to discuss ways to obtain samples. Failure to have adequate samples to achieve project Aims and agreed-upon milestones may result in a cancellation of the project.

Timeline

Email Call for Proposals	September 18, 2025
Letter of Intent Deadline	November 28, 2025
Notification of Full Application Invitation	Mid-December
Full Application Deadline	February 27, 2026 (No exceptions)
Review of Submitted Full Applications Completed	April 21, 2026
Notification of Awards	May 2026
Projects Must Start From	July 1, 2026, to February 26, 2027

Submissions

All proposals and other correspondence regarding the *Acceleration and Expansion Research Grants Initiative* should be sent to the following to: grantadmin@iwmf.com.

The IWMF Office will acknowledge receipt of each proposal within one business day via email. If you do not receive such an acknowledgment, please contact Robin Tucker, IWMF Finance Director, at tucker@iwmf.com or call the IWMF Office at 941-927-4963.