



Fall 2022 ASPIRE Award Request for Proposals



New Frontiers in Tackling Pediatric Brain Tumors

Brain tumors kill more children than any other cancer. Despite remarkable progress in our understanding of the biology and origins of these cancers, few targeted therapies are available and prognosis for most patients remains grim. In October 2022, The Mark Foundation for Cancer Research held a meeting at The Banbury Center at Cold Spring Harbor that brought together a diverse group of pediatric brain tumor experts to discuss new findings, review challenges, and set goals for translating fundamental discoveries into therapeutic interventions.

To continue the momentum of workshop, The Mark Foundation is holding a request for proposals through our [ASPIRE Award](#) program for projects focused on pediatric brain tumor research that will lay the foundations for ultimately translating the findings into clinical impact.

The application process will begin with a letter of intent stage consisting of a 2-page description of the project. **The portal for the letter of intent is currently open** and letters are due on December 2. Invitations for full applications will be issued in January 2023.

To Apply:

[Click here](#) to access the application and instructions.

Key Dates

Friday October 28th, 2022: Letter of intent portal opens

Friday December 2nd, 2022: Letter of intent submission deadline

January 2023: Invitations for full application

Spring 2023: Anticipated award start dates

Concept Letter Guidelines

The Project Concept Letter can be a maximum of 2 pages, including any references, figures, or tables. The PDF must contain the following information:

- Project title
- Brief abstract (less than 200 words)
- Problem statement describing unmet need and opportunity to enable substantial and differentiated impact for cancer research and cancer patients
- Synopsis of research plan, including key feasibility or proof-of-concept question(s) to be answered, methods overview, and list of specific aims
- Statement of innovation

Full applications will be accepted by invitation only, after review of the Project Concept Letter. Additional guidelines will be provided to invited applicants.

ASPIRE Program Overview

The Mark Foundation for Cancer Research [ASPIRE Awards](#) are designed to enable innovative approaches to solving high-impact problems in cancer research that tend to fall outside the scope of other funding opportunities. These awards will be used to support high-risk, high-reward projects with research plans designed to answer key feasibility and proof-of-concept questions in an accelerated timeframe, typically one year. Projects that successfully demonstrate feasibility may be selected to apply for additional funding in a second phase to further develop their innovative concepts and increase the speed to impact for cancer patients.

Eligibility

- Proposed projects must address pediatric brain tumors.
- Although any project that focuses on pediatric brain tumors is potentially in scope, there are some types of projects that may have lower chances of success, including:
 - Projects directly funding clinical trials. The timeframe and size of the grant is likely insufficient to support a clinical trial. If you already have funding and approvals in place for a relevant clinical trial, an ASPIRE award could be appropriate for analysis of samples from that trial (e.g., for deeper biomarker analysis).
 - Projects designed to collect pre-clinical support for re-purposing of non-oncology drugs for treatment of pediatric brain tumors (alone or in combination) are unlikely to be a good fit for our current priorities as a foundation.
- Applications will be accepted from both U.S. and non-U.S. entities.
- Researchers are limited to one application as principal investigator but may be co-investigators on other proposals without limitation.
- Collaborative proposals are encouraged.

Terms of Award

- Applicants may request funding to support a total budget up to \$250,000 for a period of up to 12 months.
- The budget and duration requested for the grant must match a realistic estimate of the cost and timeline for the proposed work.
- The budget limit includes both direct and indirect costs, with indirect costs not to exceed 10% of the direct costs.
- For more details on award terms, visit the [ASPIRE Award](#)

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