

## 2-Year (2012-14) CLL Research Initiative “CLL Collaborative Grant”

### ***Guidelines and General Instructions for Application***

#### **KEY DATES:**

Application Release Date:	December 12, 2011
Application Deadline:	February 13, 2012
Peer Review Process:	February – April, 2012
<i>Earliest Applicant</i>	
Notification Date:	May 15, 2012
<i>Earliest Project Start Date:</i>	July 15, 2012

#### **SUMMARY:**

The Lymphoma Research Foundation (LRF) CLL Consortium seeks proposals for high quality research studies in chronic lymphocytic leukemia (CLL). **Applications to this initiative must include the study of primary CLL/MBL patient samples to assure relevance to the human disease. In addition, applicants are required to explicitly delineate how the proposed research will incorporate collaborative interactions between/among investigators in different disciplines (e.g. pathology & medical oncology, basic science research & clinical investigators) and/or different institutions.**

#### **AMOUNT OF GRANT:**

Applications may be for a time frame of up to 2 years duration for a budget of no more than \$250,000 in **total** (\$125K per year). LRF allows 25 percent overhead, smaller overhead amounts are preferred.

#### **RESEARCH OBJECTIVES:**

The proposed study should:

- Investigate the pathogenesis, epidemiology, diagnosis or therapy of CLL or monoclonal B cell lymphocytosis (MBL).

Priority areas identified for funding include:

- **Genomic/genetic analysis of CLL.** What are the critical pathways involved in lymphomagenesis and what are the molecular predictors of tumor behavior?
- What **biologic features of CLL** and which biomarkers are predictive of outcome of CLL?

The Lymphoma Research Foundation uses an electronic grants submission process. **All interested grant applicants must submit their applications online through proposalCENTRAL (<https://proposalcentral.altum.com>).**

Please find more information about this system on page 3 of this RFP.

- **Host-Tumor Interactions in CLL.** How does the immune system modulate CLL? Does the tumor microenvironment influence resistance of CLL to therapies?
- **Transformation of CLL.** What are the molecular events involved in transformation and what signaling pathways are impacted? How can transformation be delayed or prevented?
- **Heterogeneity of CLL Behavior.** What are the molecular, biologic, immunologic and microenvironmental factors determining the variability in clinical behavior of CLL?
- **Drug Resistance.** What are the molecular, biologic, immunologic and microenvironmental factors determining resistance to rituximab and other key anti-lymphoma agents?
- **Development of Cell Lines and Animal Models of untransformed CLL.** There are currently no good cell lines or mouse models of untransformed CLL to facilitate research progress in this field.
- **Enhancement of Accrual of CLL patients to clinical trials.** Despite a plethora of attractive agents for clinical trials, progress is slow due to the low accrual rate of patients to clinical trials in the USA. Convincing strategies with measurable endpoints documenting improvement in CLL trial accrual will be considered for funding.
- **Novel therapies.** Projects focused on new therapeutics should explore and elucidate the mechanisms of action.
- **Monoclonal B-cell lymphocytosis (MBL) in CLL families** -- MBL is now recognized as the precursor state to CLL. What biologic factors contribute to, or are associated with, MBL developing into CLL?

### **ELIGIBILITY:**

All principal investigators holding an academic faculty appointment, at non-profit organizations, or public or private institutions such as universities, colleges, hospitals, and laboratories, may apply for the ***LRF CLL Research Initiative “CLL Pathways Grant”***. Eligible investigators must have a title of assistant, associate, or full professor or its equivalent. More junior investigators should apply for other LRF awards (Career Development Awards or Fellowship Awards). For-profit entities are not eligible to apply for LRF funds, however, these types of institutions may contact LRF management to discuss possible public-private partnerships if they have a relevant therapeutic or research project.

### **APPLICATION PROCESS:**

All interested applicants must submit their applications online through proposalCENTRAL (<https://proposalcentral.altum.com>) by 5 pm Eastern Time, February 13, 2012.

### **MECHANISM OF SUPPORT:**

Applicants may request a project period of up to two years as deemed necessary by the requesting Principal Investigator. Applications under this RFA may not exceed \$125,000 total costs per year. The LRF will fund up to 2 applications for this special research initiative.

## **CONTENT AND PROPOSAL FORMAT:**

Proposals should include a 7-10 page narrative that consists of:

1. Scientific abstract
2. Lay abstract
3. Short background section
4. Research plan
5. Specific aims to be accomplished within duration of requested award
6. Quantitative milestones for both the middle and end of the project period

*In addition to this narrative*, applicants should attach additional appendices including a list of references cited in the narrative and a 2-page NIH-format biographical sketch of the project principal investigator (PI). The appendices should include a listing of all other research funding received by the PI, highlighting funding for lymphoma.

## **REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS:**

Applications will be reviewed by a panel of experts in lymphoma research from the LRF Scientific Advisory Board who will make recommendations on applications to the LRF Board of Directors. The LRF Board of Directors will make final funding decisions based on available funds and program priorities. Applicants will be notified by **May 15, 2012** of funding decisions. The goals of LRF-supported research are to advance the understanding of the biological systems underlying CLL and improve treatment of the disease. Reviewers will be asked to evaluate the application in order to judge the likelihood that the proposed research will have a substantial impact on the pursuit of these goals. The Scientific Advisory Board will then consider each of these criteria in assigning the application's final ranking:

1. Applicant qualifications and research experience
2. Innovation of proposed research strategy and objectives
3. Responsiveness of application to the priority research areas listed above
4. Evidence of cross-discipline and/or cross-institutional collaboration
5. Quality and impact of previous work in CLL and lymphoma in general
6. Clinical application to advancing treatment of CLL patients
7. Reviewers estimation of likely success and impact of the project
8. Financial resources available from other sources and overlap with possible LRF funding.
9. Resources, such as facilities and patient study group, available to support the project.

The application does not need to be strong in all categories to be judged as likely to have major scientific impact and thus be worthy of a high ranking. Ranking will be assigned based on the overall merit of the proposal. However, applications that do not address one of the priority research areas or do not show strong evidence of collaboration will be disqualified.

### ***Additional review considerations:***

1. Feasibility of research studies, patient accrual (if applicable), and other methodological considerations
2. Budget: the reasonableness and justification of the proposed budget and the requested period of support in relation to the proposed research

3. Adequacy of proposed statistical analysis
4. If the study is related to a larger project, discuss the degree to which it will contribute to the outcome of this larger project

### **AGENCY CONTACTS:**

LRF Leadership:

Kathy Brown

Director of Research

[kbrown@lymphoma.org](mailto:kbrown@lymphoma.org), Telephone: 212-349-2910

### **TO APPLY – THE PROCESS:**

The Lymphoma Research Foundation will be using an electronic grants submission process. All interested grant applicants must submit their applications online through **proposalCENTRAL** (<https://proposalcentral.altum.com>).

To avoid being rushed at deadline time, applicants are encouraged to register and complete a professional profile at proposalCENTRAL now. Applicants should make sure their grants and contracts office has registered their institution and signing officials with proposalCENTRAL.

A proposalCENTRAL helpline is available for questions from applicants during normal business hours (8:30 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.), Monday-Friday, EST.

Phone: 1-800-875-2562 (toll free)

E-mail: [pcsupport@altum.com](mailto:pcsupport@altum.com)

Grant applicants will find many benefits to this new e-grant application process, including:

- Easy-to-complete applications that can be developed, stored, revised, and submitted on-line;
- Paper copies of the application will no longer be required;
- Immediate confirmation of application submission throughout the process
- Toll-free (1-800-875-2562) and e-mail ([pcsupport@altum.com](mailto:pcsupport@altum.com)) technical and customer support;
- On-line tutorials available for preparing your proposal online;

### **Important: Please Read!**

Lymphoma Research Foundation will require that applicants submit portions of their proposal (e.g., research plan, biosketches) in portable document format (.pdf). Unlike MS Word or other word processors, the PDF format preserves the formatting of the document: what applicants see/submit is what reviewers see.

In order to save documents as PDFs, applicants will need to use PDF generator software. There are a number of software products available for both PCs and Macs that will convert documents to PDFs. There are also websites that will convert the document.

Below is a sampling of some of the PDF generators on the market (list provided from the website of the National Endowment for Humanities <http://www.neh.gov/grants/grantsgov/pdf.html>).

Please consult vendor websites for additional information. Lymphoma Research Foundation and proposalCENTRAL do not endorse any particular software.

The vendor websites are listed in alphabetical order:

**Adobe:** <http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobatstd/main.html>

Print driver that will work with any application. For PC or Mac.

**BLC Technologies:** <http://www.gohtm.com/>

Web-based converter. Can be used by PC or Mac. Vendor e-mails PDF back to you.

**Blue Squirrel:** <http://www.bluesquirrel.com/products/Click2PDF/>

Print driver that will work with any application. For PC.

**Create Adobe PDF Online:** <http://createpdf.adobe.com/>

Web-based converter. Can be used by PC or Mac. Vendor e-mails PDF back to you.

**CutePDF:** <http://www.cutepdf.com>

Print driver that will work with any application. For PC.

**Go2PDF:** <http://www.go2pdf.com>

Print driver that will work with any application. For PC.

**PdfF995:** <http://site4.pdf995.com/>

Print driver that will work with any application. For PC.

**Win2PDF:** <http://www.win2pdf.com/>

Print driver that will work with any application. For PC.

**Zeon Corporation:** <http://www.pdfwizard.com/>

Print driver that will work with any application. For PC.