FY25 Peer Reviewed Cancer Research Program (PRCRP)

Presented by

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May 2025

*Transforming Healthcare through Innovative and **Impactful** Research*

CDMRP
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
CONGRESSIONALLY DIRECTED MEDICAL RESEARCH PROGRAMS

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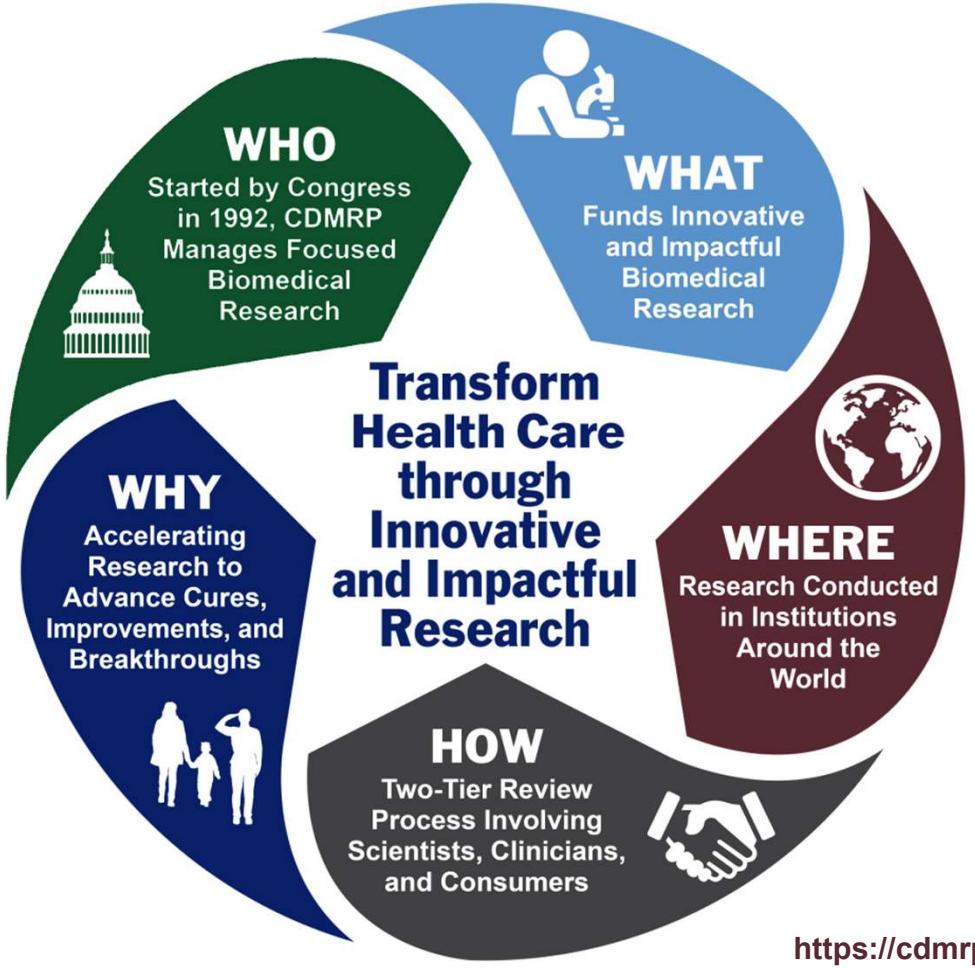
https://cdmrp.health.mil

About CDMRP

Mission

Responsibly manage collaborative research that discovers, develops, and delivers health care solutions for Service Members, their Families, Veterans and the American public



https://cdmrp.health.mil

Consumers are the "True North" and Foundation of the CDMRP

CDMRP includes consumers – patients, survivors, family members, and/or caregivers – in every aspect of the program lifecycle.

Consumers serve as full voting members on peer review and programmatic panels.

Through their lived experiences, consumers add valuable perspectives, a sense of urgency, and important input to the program mission, investment strategy, and research focus.

PROGRAM LIFECYCLE

- Stakeholder Meeting
- Vision Setting
- Pre-App Screening
- Peer Review
- Programmatic Review
- Funding Recommendations
- Award Execution
- Awards Management/ Closeout

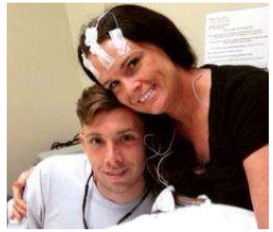
FY23 Consumer Involvement

93 consumers* were assigned as Programmatic Panel members and ad hoc reviewers representing **91** consumer advocacy organizations, Service Members, or Veterans

854 consumer reviewers** assigned to panels representing **334** consumer advocacy (nominating) organizations

Participate on research teams for funded projects

19 programs offered funding opportunities that incorporate consumer participation in the research project





* All unique individuals
** 734 unique individuals

Goal of the Two-Tier Review Process

To develop funding recommendations that balance ***the most meritorious science*** and offer the highest promise to ***fulfill the programmatic goals*** set forth in the funding opportunity

Peer Review

- Criterion-based evaluation of full proposal
- Determination of "absolute" scientific merit
- **Outcome: Summary Statements**
  - No standing panels; programs recruit reviewers based on expertise needed
  - No contact between applicants, reviewers, and program staff

Partnership

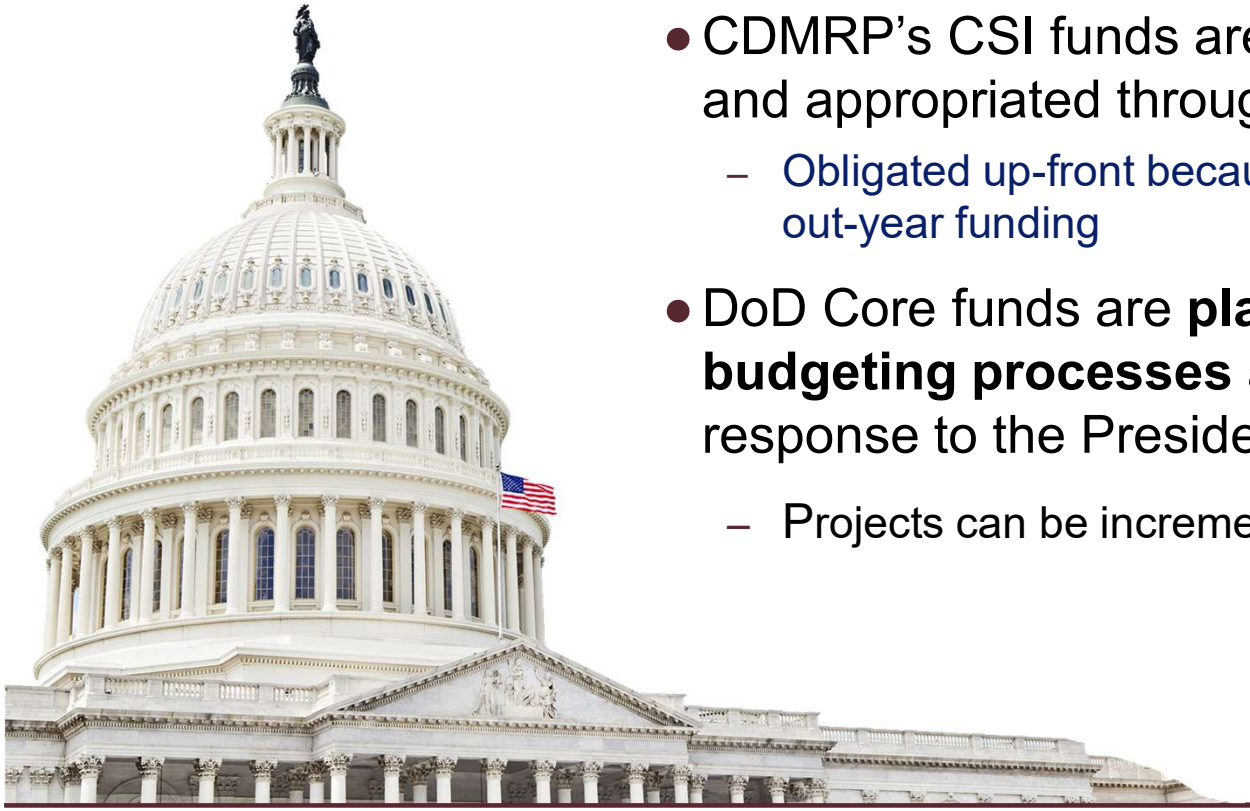
Programmatic Review

- Comparison among proposals of high scientific merit
- Determination of adherence to intent, program relevance, and potential for impact
- **Outcome: Funding Recommendations**
  - No "pay line" (portfolio balance)
  - Funds obligated up front; limited out-year budget commitments (but milestones imposed)
  - No continuation funding

Additional information available at: https://cdmrp.health.mil/about/2tierRevProcess

Understanding DOD Funding

Congressional Special Interest (CSI) versus DoD Core funding



- CDMRP's CSI funds are **directed by Congress** and appropriated through the DoD budget
  - Obligated up-front because there is no guarantee of out-year funding
- DoD Core funds are **planned through specific budgeting processes** and appropriated yearly in response to the President's DoD budget request
  - Projects can be incrementally funded in out-years

PRCRP Overview

History: Initiated in Fiscal Year (FY) 2009 with an appropriation of $16 Million (M) and 4 Topic Areas

- **FY09-FY24:** 35 Unique Topic Areas, $1.04B, 1,084* Awards
- **FY25: $130M Appropriation, 22 Topic Areas**

Vision: To advance the health and mission readiness of members of the U.S. military community affected by cancer.

Mission: To successfully promote high-impact research in cancer prevention, detection, treatment, quality of life, and survivorship for Service Members, their Families, Veterans, and the American public.

* Pending FY24 negotiations

FY25 Congressional Language
Peer Reviewed Cancer Research Program, 22 topic areas

- Bladder cancer
- Blood cancer
- Brain cancer
- Colorectal cancer
- Endometrial cancer
- Esophageal cancer
- Germ cell cancers
- Kidney cancer
- Liver cancer
- Lung Cancer
- Lymphoma
- Mesothelioma
- Metastatic cancer
- Myeloma
- Neuroblastoma
- Neuroendocrine tumors
- Pancreatic Cancer
- Pediatric, adolescent and young adult cancers
- Pediatric brain tumors
- Sarcoma
- Stomach cancer
- Thyroid cancer

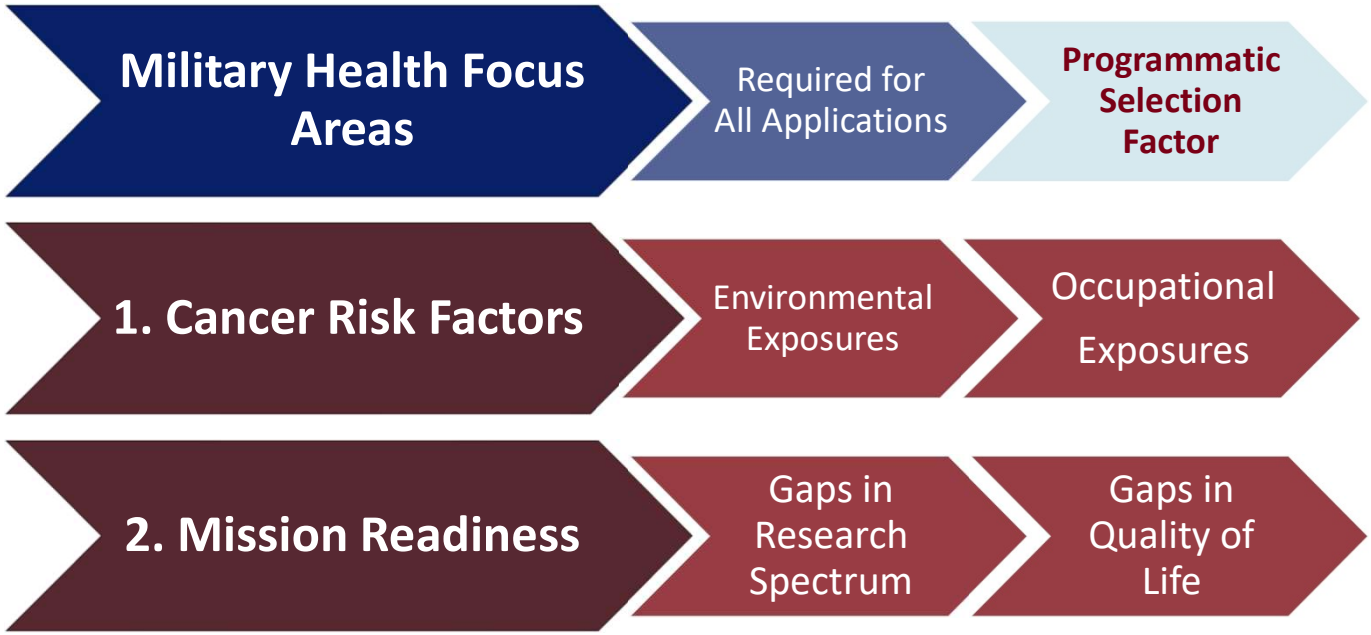
Applicants must address at least one of the Topic Areas, as directed by Congress

Research must be relevant to Service Members, their Families, Veterans, and other military beneficiaries

Funds may not be used for research into cancers originating in the breast, ovary, or prostate, or for melanoma, or rare cancers except those named topic areas which are rare by definition.

FY25 Congressional Language Military Relevance

The Committee directs the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs to provide a report not later than 12 months after the enactment of this Act to the congressional defense committees on the status of the ***peer-reviewed cancer research program****. For each research area, the report shall include the funding amount awarded, the* ***progress of the research****, and the* ***relevance of the research to servicemembers and their families.***

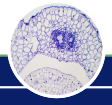


FY25 Topic Areas (22) and Portfolios (6)
Peer Reviewed Cancer Research Program - $130M

CDMRP DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Blood Cancers

- Blood cancers
- Lymphoma
- Myeloma



Gastroenterological Cancers

- Colorectal
- Esophageal
- Liver
- Stomach
- Pancreatic

Neurological Cancers

- Brain cancer
- Pediatric Brain Tumors

Pediatric Adolescent and Young Adult Cancers (PAYAC)

- PAYAC
- Germ Cell Cancers*
- Neuroblastoma
- Sarcoma*
- Thyroid Cancer*

Solid Tumors

- Bladder cancer
- Endometrial cancer
- Mesothelioma
- Sarcoma*
- Germ Cell Cancers*
- Thyroid Cancer*
- Kidney Cancer
- Lung Cancer
- Neuroendocrine Tumors

Metastatic cancers

- Metastatic Cancers, limited to PRCRP Topic Area Cancers

*present in more than one portfolio

Portfolio Strategic Goal Setting

Portfolio: Blood Cancers	
All applications under this portfolio must address one Topic Area and one Strategic Goal listed below.	
Topic Areas: Blood, Lymphoma, Myeloma	
Strategic Goals:	
Prevention and Etiology	• Improve risk assessment of pre-cancerous conditions • Develop early intervention strategies to prevent initiation disease progression • Investigate auto-immune disorders as risk factors for lymphoma to inform surveillance strategies • Understand the role of cancer stem cells and the tumor micro-environment in the development of blood cancers
Diagnosis and Prognosis	• Improve methods for early detection, prognostic evaluation, and/or therapeutic stratification • Develop more cost-effective molecular diagnostics • Identify biomarkers to predict progression from indolent disease • Identify unique prognostic factors in pediatric, adolescent, and young adult malignancies
Treatment	• Develop new, less toxic therapies • Develop methods to predict therapeutic vulnerabilities • Develop therapies that don't require hospitalization • Develop therapies employing gene editing technologies and cell therapies • Identify contribution of immune niche to initial treatment response and relapse • Develop therapeutic options for patients who fail last line therapies
Survivorship	• Develop strategies to minimize and mitigate treatment toxicities • Improve quality of life for survivors and/or caregivers • Identify long-term effects of gene editing and cell therapies and develop risk-based standards for surveillance of treated patients • Improve understanding of the effects of long-term immunosuppression
Epidemiology	• Design population-based studies to identify and characterize risk factors related to malignancy

Portfolio Strategic Goal Setting

Portfolio: Gastroenterological Cancers	
All applications under this portfolio must address one Topic Area and one Strategic Goal listed below.	
Topic Areas: Colorectal, Esophageal, Liver, Pancreatic, Stomach	
Strategic Goals	
Prevention and Etiology	• Identify modifiable and non-modifiable risk factors to inform prevention strategies • Identify factors driving the increasing rates of early-age onset disease • Identify environmental and genetic factors associated with an increased cancer risk • Identify key drivers of conversion from precancerous lesions into cancer • Explore the interplay between the microbiome and infectious agents in cancer initiation and progression • Conduct integrative studies that analyze stool, blood, and the microbiome as they impact disease onset and patient outcomes
Diagnosis and Prognosis	• Improve methods for early detection, prognostic evaluation, and/or therapeutic stratification • Develop cost-effective and minimally invasive tools for early detection • Develop pre-clinical models to study disease development
Treatment	• Develop new, less toxic therapies • Develop effective treatments for advanced disease • Develop immunotherapies, and novel targeting therapies • Identify combination therapies to improve patient outcomes • Identify predictive biomarkers to determine treatment response • Develop integrated treatment plans to address short and long-term impacts of cancer
Survivorship	• Develop strategies to minimize and mitigate treatment toxicities • Improve quality of life for survivors and/or caregivers • Improve post treatment surveillance guidelines • Develop validated tools to measure patient quality of life
Epidemiology	• Design population-based studies to identify and characterize risk factors related to malignancy • Implement systems to analyze disease patterns and track patient outcomes to inform best practices • Examine the influence of familial genetics and geographic location on disease onset and treatment outcome.

Portfolio Strategic Goal Setting

Portfolio: Neurological Cancers	
All applications under this portfolio must address one Topic Area and one Strategic Goal listed below.	
Topic Areas: Brain Cancer, Pediatric Brain Tumors	
Strategic Goals:	
Prevention and Etiology	• Identify biological and environmental exposures, including maternal exposures during pregnancy, that increase risk
Diagnosis and Prognosis	• Develop early detection methods that avoid diagnostic uncertainties • Develop effective monitoring for recurrence/refractory disease • Develop less invasive diagnostic procedures
Treatment	• Develop new, less toxic therapies • Prevent or overcome treatment resistance • Develop personalized oncological care and synergistic multi-modal therapies • Identify protective therapies to be used in conjunction with toxic therapies to reduce treatment-related damage • Develop less invasive treatment options • Develop therapies that cross the blood-brain-barrier
Survivorship	• Develop strategies to minimize and mitigate treatment toxicities • Improve quality of life for survivors and/or caregivers • Develop effective screening, monitoring, and provision of psychosocial support/care for the patient and family • Develop care for patients as they transition from pediatric to adult survivors
Epidemiology	• Analyze and assess the incidence/prevalence of brain tumors over time to identify changes in trends
Technology Development	• Advance the development or adoption of technologies in areas including artificial intelligence and machine learning, human microbiota, genomics, nanoparticles, and robotics

Portfolio Strategic Goal Setting

Portfolio: Pediatric Adolescent and Young Adult Cancers (PAYAC)	
All applications under this portfolio must address one Topic Area and one Strategic Goal listed below.	
Topic Areas: PAYAC, Germ cell cancers, Neuroblastoma, Sarcoma*, Thyroid Cancer "	
Strategic Goals:	
Prevention and Etiology	• Determine the molecular basis of cancer pre-disposition syndromes • Determine the extent to which development of disease is attributable to genetic versus environmental differences • Increase understanding of epigenetic influences on cancer development and progression • Identify biological and environmental exposures, including maternal exposures during pregnancy, that increase risk • Investigate the role of microbiome composition in cancer risk and outcomes
Diagnosis and Prognosis	• Improve methods for early detection, prognostic evaluation, and/or therapeutic stratification • Develop non-invasive techniques for monitoring progression and recurrence. • Identify biomarkers present in early-stage disease • Develop pre-clinical models that accurately mimic disease • Improve accurate and rapid diagnosis of sub-types of disease
Treatment	• Develop new, less toxic therapies • Develop treatments for relapse/recurrence, metastatic, and advanced disease • Increase the number of clinical trials, including ones that may not be curative but may improve the quality of life for terminal patients. • Generate evidence-based treatment and surveillance strategies to preserve fertility • Reduce secondary cancers arising from treatment regimen
Survivorship	• Develop strategies to minimize and mitigate treatment toxicities • Improve quality of life for survivors and/or caregivers • Develop strategies to improve the full implementation of survivorship guidelines • Develop survivorship guidelines based on current/modern therapeutic agents
Epidemiology	• Design population-based studies to identify and characterize risk factors related to malignancy

Portfolio Strategic Goal Setting

Portfolio: Solid Tumors	
All applications under this portfolio must address one Topic Area and one Strategic Goal listed below.	
Topic Areas: Bladder Cancer, Endometrial Cancer, Kidney Cancer, Lung Cancer, Mesothelioma, Neuroendocrine Tumors, Sarcoma*, Germ cell cancers, Thyroid cancer*	
Strategic Goals:	
Prevention and Etiology	• Develop methods that mitigate or identify risk • Develop prevention strategies • Explore the mechanistic relationship between novel and known risk factors and oncogenesis • Identify convergent etiologies underlining the development of malignancies
Diagnosis and Prognosis	• Improve methods for early detection, prognostic evaluation, and/or therapeutic stratification • Investigate the interactions of pre-existing autoimmune disease and cancer
Treatment	• Develop new, less toxic therapies • Develop feasible precision medicine approaches. • Identify ways to tailor therapeutic strategies to minimize toxicity
Survivorship	• Develop strategies to minimize and mitigate treatment toxicities • Improve quality of life for survivors and/or caregivers
Epidemiology	• Design population-based studies to identify and characterize risk factors related to malignancy

Portfolio Strategic Goal Setting

Portfolio: Metastatic Disease	
All applications under this portfolio must address one Topic Area and one Strategic Goal listed below.	
Topic Area: Metastatic Cancers, limited to PRCRP Topic Area Cancers	
Strategic Goals:	
Prevention and Etiology	• Identify biomarkers in primary disease that could predict metastatic potential • Prevent immune evasion by circulating tumor cells • Identify how dormant, disseminated tumor cells (DTCs) persist • Identify drivers that initiate DTCs progression to metastatic colonies • Prevent metastatic colonization by maintaining dormancy of DTCs • Investigate clonal divergence of primary tumor cells between metastatic sites to immunological disease
Diagnosis and Prognosis	• Improve early detection of metastasis and dormant residual disease • Develop biomarkers that predict and monitor treatment efficacy
Treatment	• Develop new, less toxic therapies • Revert metastatic cells to a dormant state • Identify strategies to prevent or overcome treatment resistance • Investigate abscopal effects of primary disease treatment • Determine optimal sequencing of treatments • Eliminate chemotherapy-induced metastasis
Survivorship	• Develop strategies to alleviate treatment toxicities • Improve quality of life for survivors and/or caregivers

Applications submitted under any PRCRP Topic Area, including the Metastatic cancers Topic Area, may not address or include research focused on cancers that originate in the breast, prostate, ovaries, or on melanoma, or rare cancers (excluding relevant subtypes of the FY25 PRCRP Topic Areas) as part of the research study.

Applying to the FY25 PRCRP

When starting the pre-application, applicants will be asked to identify the following:

- The **FY25 PRCRP Portfolio** addressed by the proposed research.
- The **FY25 PRCRP Strategic Goal** addressed by the proposed research.
- The **FY25 PRCRP Topic Area** addressed by the proposed research.
- **Where applicable, select a secondary FY25 PRCRP topic area**, instances such as (not all-inclusive):
  - Applications addressing more than one cancer type should select the two most applicable.
  - Applications addressing a topic area that is the subtype of another topic area (e.g. Lymphoma and Blood Cancers) should select both.
  - Applications addressing a cancer type in PAYA populations, should select both the cancer type and the PAYAC topic area.
  - Applications addressing metastatic disease in a cancer type should select both the metastatic disease and cancer type topic area.
- The **FY25 PRCRP Military Health Focus Area** addressed by the proposed research.

FY25 PRCRP Funding Mechanisms

FY25 Program Announcements to be released around May 12-16, 2025

Funding Opportunity	Idea Award	Impact Award (Partnering Option)	Clinical Trial Award	Career Development Awards (Fellow or Resident Option, Scholar Option)
Investment for FY25	$16M (25)	$44M (25)	$33.6M (7)	$16M (19)
Funding Rate FY18-23*	13.6%	13.8%+	22.6%	Fellow/Resident 30.5% Scholar, 48.4%

+Impact Award funding rate reflects Single PI Only
*Clinical Trial Award limited to FY23-24

FY25 PRCRP Career Development Award, Fellow or Resident Option

Fellow Option

- **Direct Costs:** $400K (3 years)
- **Eligibility:** Early-career scientist within 7 years of terminal degree
- **Postdoctoral fellows are not eligible**
- **Career Guide:** Experienced Cancer Researcher, Associate Professor (or equivalent)
- **Research Project and Career Development Plan**
- Clinical trials are not allowed
- Pre-application is only a Letter of Intent
- **Pre-App Deadline: July 12, 2025**
- **Full App Deadline: July 26, 2025**

Resident Options

- **Direct Costs:**
  - Level 1, $200K (1 year)
  - Level 2, $400K (2 years)
- **Eligibility:** Early-career scientist enrolled in an accredited graduate medical education program with an institutional letter of support
- **Postdoctoral fellows are not eligible**
- **Career Guide:** Experienced Cancer Physician Scientist, Associate Professor (or equivalent)
- **Research Project and Career Development Plan**
- Clinical trials are not allowed
- Pre-application is only a Letter of Intent
- **Pre-App Deadline: July 12, 2025**
- **Full App Deadline: July 26, 2025**

Application Deadlines subject to Program Announcement release

PRCRP Virtual Cancer Center (VCC)

- **Funded through the VCC Director Award and CDA- Scholar Award**
- **Director and Deputy Director:**
  - Cancer research **leaders with mentorship and convergent science experience**
  - Different cancer disciplines
  - Different institutions
- **VCC Cohorts of Scholars are comprised of Career Development Award- Scholar Option**
- VCC provides **intensive mentoring** and national networking in a **collaborative research** environment
  - Annual Workshops (e.g. Military Medicine, Artificial Intelligence)
  - Virtual Lab Meetings
  - Leadership coaching
  - Networking Interactions, including Patient Advocacy Organizations
  - Subaward funding opportunities for collaborative projects with other Scholars
- **Convergent Science Virtual Cancer Center: https://csvcc.org/**

FY25 PRCRP VCC Scholars

Career Development Award, Scholar Option

- **Direct Costs:** $800K (4 years)
- **Eligibility:**
  - Early-career scientist within 7 years of terminal degree
  - Tenure-track or equivalent position
  - Independent laboratory space
- **Career Guide:** Experienced Cancer Researcher
- **Research Project and Career Development Plan**
- Requires participation in the PRCRP **Convergent Science Virtual Cancer Center**
- Clinical trials are not allowed
- Pre-application is only a Letter of Intent
- **Pre-App Deadline: July 12, 2025**
- **Full App Deadline: July 26, 2025**

Application Deadlines subject to Program Announcement release

FY25 PRCRP Idea and Impact Awards

Idea Award

- **Direct Costs:** $400K (2 Years)
- **Eligibility:** Faculty or above
- **Supports basic research** that is innovative, untested, high-risk and potentially high-reward
- **Preliminary data is discouraged**
- Clinical Trials not allowed
- One-page pre-application followed by invitation to submit full application
- **Pre-App Deadline: June 21, 2025**
- **Invite to Submit: August 2, 2025**
- **Full App Deadline: September 26, 2025**

Impact Award

- **Direct Costs:** Single PI Option, $1M Partnering PI Option, $1.25M (3 years)
- **Eligibility:** Assistant Professor or above
- **Supports mature research** that has the potential to make a near-term, major impact on cancer patients
- **Preliminary data required**
- **Clinical Trials are allowed**
- One-page pre-application followed by invitation to submit full application
- **Pre-App Deadline: June 21, 2025**
- **Invite to Submit: August 2, 2025**
- **Full App Deadline: September 26, 2025**

Application Deadlines subject to Program Announcement release

FY25 Clinical Trial Award

Clinical Trial Award

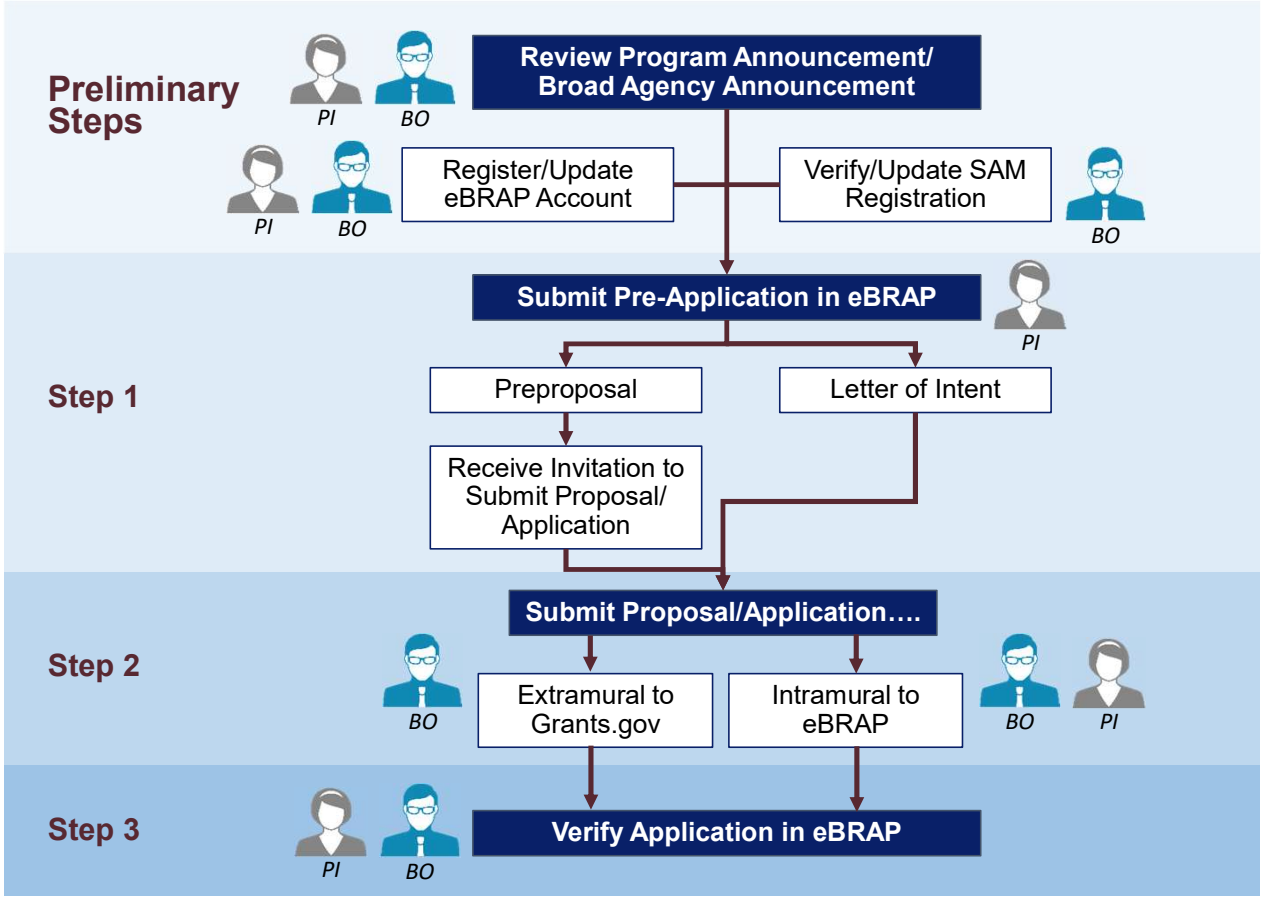
- **Direct Costs:** $3M (4 Years)
- **Eligibility:** Faculty-level appointment or above
- Supportive preclinical data is required; **no animal work allowed**
- **IND (or equivalent) application must be in place at the time of submission**
- **Trial expected to be open within the first 12 months**
- May evaluate pharmacologic agents (drugs or biologics), devices, clinical guidance, and/or emerging approaches and technologies
- Projects may range from small Phase 0 safety trials to large Phase III efficacy studies
- Three-page pre-application followed by invitation to submit full application
- **Pre-App Deadline: June 21, 2025**
- **Invite to Submit: August 2, 2025**
- **Full App Deadline: September 26, 2025**

Application Deadlines subject to Program Announcement release

Funding Opportunities

- Pre-announcements and funding opportunity release notifications
  - CDMRP website and email blasts
- Funding opportunity postings
  - CDMRP website (cdmrp.health.mil)
  - Grants.gov (CFDA 12.420)
  - electronic Biomedical Research Application Portal (eBRAP) system (ebrap.org)
  - Notification posted on SAM.gov (BAAs)
- Quickly find open CDMRP Funding Opportunities on the CDMRP website here:
  - Home > Funding Opportunities > Program Funding Opportunities

Application Process Overview



BO: Business Official from applicant organization
PI: Principal Investigator from applicant organization

eBRAP: electronic Biomedical Research Application Portal
SAM: System of Award Management

Goal of the Two-Tier Review Process

To develop funding recommendations that balance ***the most meritorious science*** across many disciplines and offer the highest promise to ***fulfill the programmatic goals*** set forth in the funding opportunity

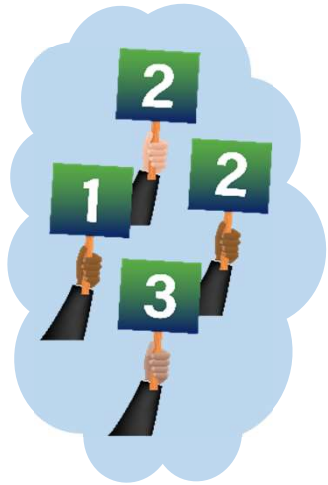
Peer Review Criteria

(PRMRP verbiage example)

II.E.1.a. Peer Review

To determine technical merit, all applications will be evaluated according to the following **scored criteria**, which are listed in decreasing order of importance:

Example Peer Review Criteria	
Scored	**Unscored**
Research Strategy and Feasibility	Environment
Impact	Budget
Transition Plan and Regulatory Strategy	Application Presentation
Personnel	



- **Impact**
  - To what extent the project impacts a critical problem or question in the PI-selected FY24 PRMRP Topic Area.
  - To what extent the proposed research project addresses the PI-selected FY24 PRMRP Strategic Goal.
  - How the proposed research project, if successful, will make important scientific advances in the relevant field of research or advance patient outcomes.
  - To what extent the proposed research has potential for impact, both short-term and long-term, on the field of study and/or patient care.

Programmatic Review Criteria

(PRMRP verbiage example)

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 Defense Health Program and FY24 PRMRP, as evidenced by the following:
  - Adherence to the intent of the funding opportunity
  - Relative impact
  - Relevance to the FY24 PRMRP Topic Areas
  - Relevance to the FY24 PRMRP Strategic Goals
  - Relevance to military health
  - Program portfolio composition
  - Relative outcomes from the PI's previous CDMRP-/PRMRP-funded research (if applicable)

Programmatic Panels

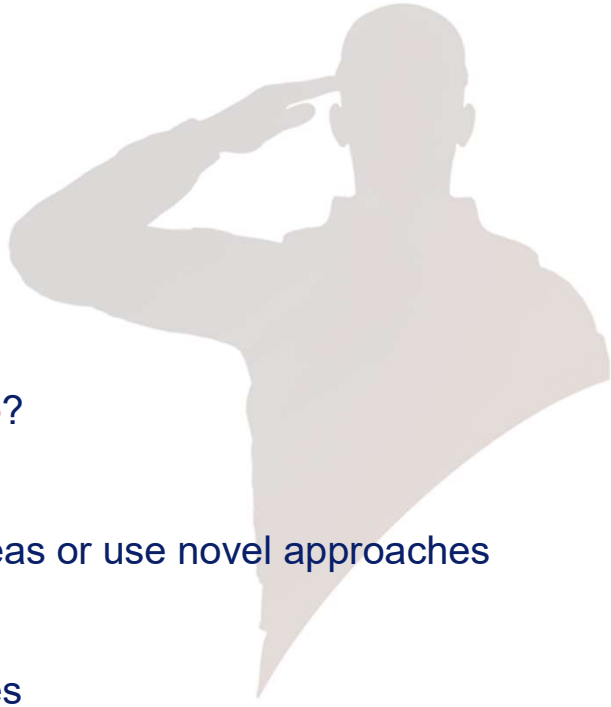
FY24 Programmatic Panel

Previous Years' Programmatic Panels

Programmatic Panel membership lists are available on the CDMRP website

Strategies for Success

- ✓ **Relevance**
  - Address program-specific goals
  - **Align** the proposed work with specific guidance from the announcement
- ✓ **Impact**
  - Propose **solutions** to important problems or gaps
  - Clearly articulate translatability – how will this work **make a difference**?
- ✓ **Innovation**
  - Provide clear rationale if proposing to test new, potentially high-risk ideas or use novel approaches
- ✓ **Feasibility**
  - Justify a technically sound plan with clear approaches for contingencies
  - Include evidence of appropriate **expertise** (collaboration, consultants, etc.)
  - Ensure the study is **appropriately powered** for the proposed research outcome
  - Demonstrate **availability** and **access** to critical resources, reagents, and/or subject populations



Strategies for Success

✓ Planning/Timelines

- Include and allow adequate time in project plan for **regulatory approvals** if required
- For multi-organizational efforts, show a clear plan for **coordination** and communication
- For DOD collaborations, understand rules and plan for differences in funding process

✓ Grantsmanship

- Explain the proposed work with **clarity** and **unburdened** by jargon
- Understand the different audiences of the peer and programmatic reviews and **communicate** effectively
- **Review** application documents carefully before submission – enlist experienced colleagues to help
- Don't break the rules for deadlines or requirements – **be compliant**

Questions?
For more information, please visit:

cdmrp.health.mil

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