LUNG CANCER RESEARCH FOUNDATION
Living. Breathing. Science.

Request for Proposals: 2020 LCRF Research Grant on Disparities in Lung Cancer

1. Program Summary

Lung cancer continues to be the number one cause of cancer deaths worldwide, accounting for an estimated 136,000 deaths annually in the United States alone[1]. While scientific advances continue to reduce lung cancer incidence and deaths, the disease disproportionately affects various groups such as African Americans, Native Americans, low socioeconomic status populations and people from certain geographic locations. Despite progress to reduce the burden of tobacco, disparities in tobacco-related morbidity and mortality remain, and inequitable receipt of evidence-based lung cancer care continues to compound these disparities.[2-5] To help address these and related challenges, with support from the Stavros Niarchos Foundation in loving memory of Kathryn Louloudis, LCRF will support two research projects in 2020 with a focus on overcoming disparities in lung cancer. We encourage applications on a wide variety of disparities-related topics including but not limited to the following:

- Gender disparities in lung cancer burden
- Causes and risk factors for lung cancer among never smokers
- Influence of social and biological risk factors on lung cancer outcomes, access to and use of care, and quality of care
- Genetic and gene-environment interactions
- Interactions and contributions of multiple factors (e.g. smoking, genetics, environment, societal factors) to disparities in lung cancer outcomes
- Contribution of healthcare access and quality to disparities in outcomes
- Disparities related to other factors such as geography, socioeconomic status, and age

2. Eligibility Criteria

Investigators must be affiliated with a non-profit academic or research institution and must fall into one of the following categories:

- Students and fellows
- Tenure and non-tenure track investigators including assistant/associate/full professors, researchers, staff scientists, and clinicians

Applicants from US-based and international institutions are eligible to apply and may hold any residency/citizenship status.

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[1] American Cancer Society. Cancer Facts & Figures 2020. Atlanta: American Cancer Society; 2020.

[2] American Cancer Society. Cancer Facts & Figures for African Americans 2019-2021. Atlanta: American Cancer Society; 2020.

[3] Bach, P. B., L. D. Cramer, J. L. Warren, and C. B. Begg. "Racial Differences in the Treatment of Early-Stage Lung Cancer." The New England Journal of Medicine 341, no. 16 (October 14, 1999): 1198–1205.

[4] Corso, Christopher D., Henry S. Park, Anthony W. Kim, James B. Yu, Zain Husain, and Roy H. Decker. "Racial Disparities in the Use of SBRT for Treating Early-Stage Lung Cancer." Lung Cancer (Amsterdam, Netherlands) 89, no. 2 (August 2015): 133–38.

[5] Yang, Relin, Michael C. Cheung, Margaret M. Byrne, Youjie Huang, Dao Nguyen, Brian E. Lally, and Leonidas G. Koniaris. "Do Racial or Socioeconomic Disparities Exist in Lung Cancer Treatment?" Cancer 116, no. 10 (May 15, 2010): 2437–47.

3. Budget Requirements

The maximum award amount is $150,000 for a period of two years (disbursed at $75,000 per year). Additional budget requirements and considerations include the following:

- LCRF will not support institutional indirect / facilities and administrative costs.
- The LCRF grant must be the primary source of support for the project. Additional secondary funding (e.g. for core services support) is permitted.
- There is no limit on the amount of salary support that may be requested. However, appropriate justification for all budget items is required. Any salary requests totaling in excess of 20% of the budget must be explicitly justified.
- Any equipment costs must be limited and directly applicable to the research project (i.e. large, general equipment costs are not permitted).
- Direct patient care costs that could be reimbursed by other sources will not be covered.
- Travel and publication costs are permitted.

4. Open Science and Data Sharing Policy

LCRF is committed to promoting open science by helping to increase access to investigators' findings and improving collaboration and data sharing among the lung cancer research community. Accordingly, it is a condition of LCRF funding that all peer-reviewed articles supported in whole or in part by LCRF funds must be made available in the PubMed Central online archive no later than twelve months after publication. In addition, LCRF grantees must indicate explicitly in all reports, publications, and other research communications whether the data, methods used in the analysis, and materials used to conduct the research will be made available to any researcher for purposes of reproducing the results or replicating the procedure. At the time of application, all investigators must indicate if they will or will not make their data, analytic methods, and study materials available to other researchers.

5. Application Instructions and Requirements

All applications for funding must be submitted through LCRF's online grants management system, which may be accessed at http://lcrf.org/grantinterface, and must include the following components:

- General Information / Demographics
- Proposal Summary
- Narrative (six pages maximum):
  - Background and Significance
  - Specific Aims
  - Experimental Approach
  - Preliminary Data (if applicable)
  - References (not included in page-limit)
- Success Factors
- Timeline
- Biosketch[1]
- Future Plans
- Budget
- Letter(s) of Support[2]

  Additional Considerations:
  1. The application must include a curriculum vitae (five pages maximum length) or NIH biosketch of the primary investigator and any key personnel involved in the project.
  2. The application must include at least one letter of support from the applicant's program director/advisor affirming the following statements:

o   The applicant will be formally affiliated with and/or employed by the institution/organization during the grant period.

o   There is adequate institutional space and equipment to accomplish the proposed project.

o   The program director/advisor confirms his/her commitment to and provision of institutional space and equipment for the grantee.

A preview of the full application including more detailed instructions is available at http://lcrf.org/application_preview.
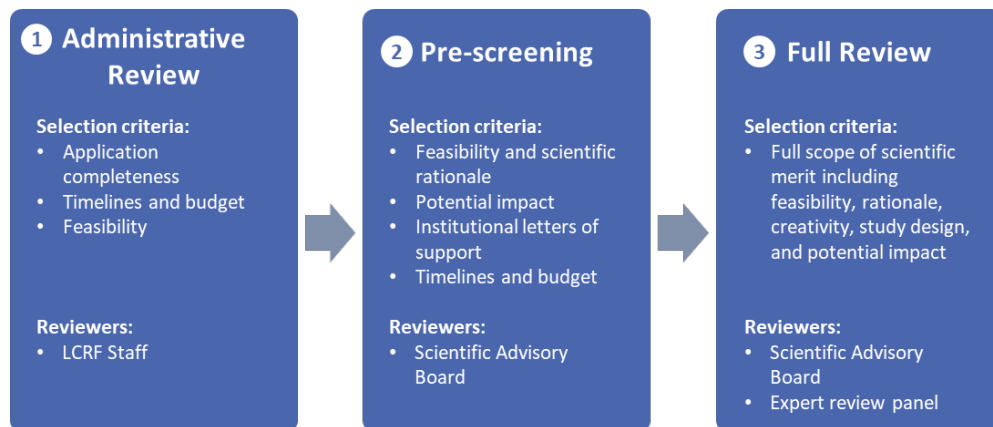
6.   Timeline

> *4/13/2020 Update: Due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the application deadline and timeline have been extended to provide additional flexibility as indicated below.*

- Application deadline: **May 29**[6]
- Notification of award: November 9
- Project start: December

7.   Evaluation of Applications

All applications will be evaluated using a three-stage review process consisting of an administrative review, a pre-screening round, and a full review by a panel of experts, which will include LCRF's Scientific Advisory Board and individual reviewers with relevant expertise (see figure below). Applications passing the administrative review will be evaluated in the pre-screening stage on criteria including feasibility, overall rationale, and the potential impact on reducing disparities. At the full review stage, submissions will be evaluated by three independent reviewers for sound scientific rationale, study design, feasibility, and creativity/innovation. [7] When scoring applications, reviewers are asked to provide a numerical overall impact score for the proposal. Similar to an NIH R21 award, reviewers will be asked to provide an impact score reflecting their assessment of the likelihood for the project to exert a sustained, powerful influence on understanding and/or overcoming disparities in lung cancer outcomes. The Stavros Niarchos Foundation will not be involved in the evaluation or selection of applications in any way.

① Administrative Review

Selection criteria:
- Application completeness
- Timelines and budget
- Feasibility

Reviewers:
- LCRF Staff

② Pre-screening

Selection criteria:
- Feasibility and scientific rationale
- Potential impact
- Institutional letters of support
- Timelines and budget

Reviewers:
- Scientific Advisory Board

③ Full Review

Selection criteria:
- Full scope of scientific merit including feasibility, rationale, creativity, study design, and potential impact

Reviewers:
- Scientific Advisory Board
- Expert review panel

Application review process.

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[6] LOIs and full proposals must be submitted by 11:59pm Eastern US time on the date indicated.

[7] Note regarding preliminary data: A grant application need not have extensive background material, and preliminary data are not required. Reviewers focus their evaluations on the conceptual framework, the level of innovation, and the potential to significantly advance our knowledge or understanding. Appropriate justification for the proposed studies can be provided through literature citations, data from other sources, or, when available, from investigator-generated data.

8. Award Notification and Announcement

All applicants will be notified of their award status by the date specified in the Timeline section above. Due to the high volume of submissions, LCRF does not provide specific feedback on applications that are not selected to receive an award. Awards will be publicly announced via press release, the LCRF website, and additional outlets such as social media.

9. Post-award Reporting Requirements

During the funding period, all investigators are required to submit at least two progress reports including the following:

Report Type	Due Date	Templates
Interim Report	At conclusion of year one of the grant term	http://lcrf.org/InterimReport-Disparities
Final Report (includes financial summary report)	Within sixty days of conclusion of grant term	http://lcrf.org/FinalReport-Disparities

All reports must be submitted via the LCRF online grants management system, and additional reports may be assigned when projects terms are amended (e.g. in the case of a no-cost extension or institutional transfer). Receipt of the second year of funding is contingent upon submission and approval of the interim progress report at the conclusion of the first year of the grant term.

10. Inquiries

For questions, please contact the LCRF office at grants@lcrf.org or via phone at +1 (212) 588-1902.