



CANCER PREVENTION & RESEARCH
INSTITUTE OF TEXAS

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

RFA R-24.1-RRS

Recruitment of Rising Stars

**Please also refer to the Instructions for Applicants document,
which will be posted on June 21, 2023**

Application Receipt Dates:

June 21, 2023-June 20, 2024

FY 2024

Fiscal Year Award Period

September 1, 2023-August 31, 2024

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. ABOUT CPRIT	4
1.1. ACADEMIC RESEARCH PROGRAM PRIORITIES	4
2. RATIONALE	5
3. RECRUITMENT OBJECTIVES	6
4. INSTITUTIONAL COMMITMENT	7
5. FUNDING INFORMATION	7
6. ELIGIBILITY	8
7. RESUBMISSION POLICY	10
8. RESPONDING TO THIS RFA	11
8.1. APPLICATION SUBMISSION GUIDELINES	11
8.2. APPLICATION COMPONENTS	12
8.2.1. <i>Summary of Nomination (2,500 characters)</i>	12
8.2.2. <i>Layperson's Summary (2,000 characters)</i>	12
8.2.3. <i>Summary of Specific Aims and Sub Aims (2,000 characters)</i>	12
8.2.4. <i>Specific Aims and Sub Aims</i>	12
8.2.5. <i>Institutional Commitment (3 pages)</i>	13
8.2.6. <i>Letter of Support from Department Chair (up to 2 pages)</i>	15
8.2.7. <i>Curriculum Vitae (CV)</i>	15
8.2.8. <i>Research (4 pages)</i>	15
8.2.9. <i>Publications/References (1 Page)</i>	16
8.2.10. <i>Research Collaboration/Synergy Plan (2 pages)</i>	16
8.2.11. <i>Publications</i>	16
8.2.12. <i>Timeline (1 page)</i>	17
8.2.13. <i>Current and Pending Support</i>	17
8.2.14. <i>Research Environment (1 page)</i>	17
8.2.15. <i>Descriptive Biography (Up to 2 pages)</i>	17
9. APPLICATION REVIEW	18
9.1. REVIEW PROCESS.....	18
9.1.1. <i>Confidentiality of Review</i>	18
9.2. REVIEW CRITERIA.....	19
10. KEY DATES	20
11. AWARD ADMINISTRATION	20
12. REQUIREMENT TO DEMONSTRATE AVAILABLE FUNDS	22
13. CONTACT INFORMATION	23
13.1. HELPDESK.....	23
13.2. SCIENTIFIC AND PROGRAMMATIC QUESTIONS	23

RFA VERSION HISTORY

6/21/23 RFA release

1. ABOUT CPRIT

The State of Texas has established the Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas (CPRIT), which may issue up to \$6 billion in general obligation bonds to fund grants for cancer research and prevention.

CPRIT is charged by the Texas Legislature to do the following:

- Create and expedite innovation in the area of cancer research and in enhancing the potential for a medical or scientific breakthrough in the prevention of, or cures for, cancer
- Attract, create, or expand research capabilities of public or private institutions of higher education and other public or private entities that will promote a substantial increase in cancer research and in the creation of high-quality new jobs in the State of Texas
- Develop and implement the Texas Cancer Plan

1.1. Academic Research Program Priorities

The Texas Legislature has charged the CPRIT Oversight Committee with establishing program priorities on an annual basis. These priorities are intended to provide transparency with regard to how the Oversight Committee directs the orientation of the agency's funding portfolio.

To accomplish CPRIT's long-term vision, the Oversight Committee has identified these 2024 priorities:

- Investing in the cancer research capacity of Texas institutions through recruitment of cancer scholars, investment in core facilities, and investment in individual investigator awards in all regions of the state;
- Building the Texas cancer life science ecosystem across Texas by bridging discovery and translational research into early-stage company products with high impact on cancer patient care and creating economic development for the State of Texas; and
- Increasing the capacity for Texas to have a significant impact on cancer prevention and early detection, ultimately decreasing cancer incidence and mortality.

Established Principles:

- Scientific excellence and impact on cancer
- Increasing the life sciences infrastructure in all regions of the state

- Reducing cancer disparities

The program priorities for academic research adopted by the Oversight Committee include funding projects that address the following:

- Recruitment of outstanding cancer researchers to Texas
- Investment in core facilities
- A broad range of innovative, investigator-initiated research projects
- Implementation research to accelerate the adoption and deployment of evidence-based prevention and screening interventions and population research addressing cancer disparities.
- Computational oncology and analytic methods
- Childhood and adolescent cancers
- Hepatocellular cancer
- Expanding access to innovative clinical trials, particularly to regions of the state currently with limited access.

2. RATIONALE

The aim of this award mechanism is to bolster cancer research in Texas by providing financial support to attract individuals whose work has outstanding merit, who show a marked capacity for self-direction, and who demonstrate the promise for continued and enhanced contributions to the field of cancer research (“Rising Stars”). Awards are intended to provide institutions with a competitive edge in recruiting the world’s best talent in cancer research, thereby advancing cancer research and prevention efforts, and promoting economic development in the State of Texas.

The recruitment of outstanding scientists will greatly enhance programs of scientific excellence in cancer research and will position Texas as a leader in the fight against cancer. Applications may address any research topic related to cancer biology, causation, prevention, detection or screening, treatment, or survivorship. Principal Investigators (PIs) with research programs addressing CPRIT’s priority areas for research are encouraged. These include implementation research to accelerate the adoption and deployment of evidence-based prevention and screening interventions, research including population-based research, computational oncology and

analytic methods, childhood and adolescent cancers, hepatocellular cancer, and expansion of access to innovative clinical trials.

3. RECRUITMENT OBJECTIVES

The goal of this award mechanism is to recruit exceptional faculty to universities and/or cancer research institutions in the State of Texas. Having already demonstrated extraordinary accomplishments during their initial years of independent research, Rising Stars represent a unique blend of scholastic aptitude, scientific rigor, and commitment to exploring transformational research through the development of creative ideas with high potential.

PIs who have not historically worked in cancer research but are proposing creative hypotheses and research plans for this field are encouraged to apply. Similarly, PIs pursuing original and potentially high-impact basic science programs that have the potential to be translated toward clinical investigations or provide “proof of principle” are also encouraged to apply. It is expected that the PI will contribute significantly to, and have a major impact on, the institution’s overall cancer research initiative. Funding will be given for exceptional PIs who will continue to develop new research methods and techniques in the life, population-based, physical, engineering, or computational sciences and apply them to solving outstanding problems in cancer research that have been inadequately addressed or for which there may be an absence of an established paradigm or technical framework.

Ideal PIs will have specific expertise in cancer-related areas needed to address an institutional priority. PIs are expected to be approximately at the career level of a late assistant/early associate professor or equivalent. This funding mechanism considers expertise, accomplishments, and breadth of experience vital metrics for guiding CPRIT’s investment in that person’s originality, insight, and potential for continued contribution. Relevance to cancer research and to CPRIT’s priority areas are important evaluation criteria for CPRIT funding.

Applications nominating individuals who carry out patient-oriented research and who have demonstrated exceptional ability to lead innovative discovery campaigns through conduct of clinical trials are appropriate for this mechanism and are encouraged.

Additionally, population research that addresses the burden of cancer in Texas is a priority for CPRIT. Applications nominating individuals who have demonstrated exceptional ability to lead

innovative research programs involving any component across the continuum of cancer prevention and control research are appropriate for this mechanism and are highly encouraged.

Applications that include purposeful collaborations with institutions eligible for a CPRIT Texas Regional Excellence in Cancer Award are highly encouraged.

Unless prohibited by policy, the institution is also expected to bestow on the newly recruited faculty member the prestigious title of “CPRIT Scholar in Cancer Research,” and the faculty member should be strongly encouraged to use this title on letterhead, business cards, publications, and other appropriate documents. The title is to be retained as long as the individual remains in Texas.

4. INSTITUTIONAL COMMITMENT

CPRIT recruitment awards are intended to provide institutions with a competitive edge in recruiting the world’s best talent in cancer research to Texas. The funds provided by CPRIT for the Recruitment of a Rising Star (RRS) Award must be complemented by a strong institutional commitment to the recruitment. The institutional commitment should be clearly documented in the application (see [section 8.2.5](#)) and include the amount and sources of salary support and all additional financial support that will be available to the PI’s research program through the course of the CPRIT award. The financial commitments made to the PI by the recruiting institution are required to be equal to or exceed 50% of the proposed CPRIT award across the course of the CPRIT award.

5. FUNDING INFORMATION

This is a 5-year award and is not renewable. Grant funds of up to \$4,000,000 (total costs) over a 5-year period may be requested. Exceptions to this limit will be entertained only if there is compelling written justification. Annual allocations of this award are at the discretion of the awardee as long as the total award does not exceed \$4,000,000. The award request may include indirect costs of up to 5% of the total award amount (5.263% of the direct costs). CPRIT will make every effort to be flexible in the timing for disbursement of funds; recipients will be asked at the beginning of each year for an estimate of their needs for the year. Funds may not be carried over beyond 5 years except under extraordinary circumstances with strong justification for a no-

cost extension. In addition, funds for extraordinary equipment needs may be awarded in the first year of the grant if very well justified and a detailed justification is provided along with an institutional plan should the additional funds not be approved. Scholars may request funds for travel for 2 project staff to attend CPRIT's conference.

Funds from this award mechanism may be used for salary support of this PI but may not be used to construct or renovate laboratory space.

No annual limit on the number of grant application submissions by institutions has been set.

Note that the annual salary (also referred to as direct salary or institutional base salary) that an individual may be reimbursed from a CPRIT award for FY 2024 is limited to a maximum of \$200,000. In other words, an individual may request salary proportional to the percent of effort up to a maximum of \$200,000. Salary does not include fringe benefits and/or facilities and administrative costs, also referred to as indirect costs. An individual's institutional base salary is the annual compensation that the applicant organization pays for an individual's appointment, whether that individual's time is spent on research, teaching, patient care, or other activities.

Base salary excludes any income that an individual may be permitted to earn outside of his or her duties to the applicant organization.

Note: In the event of insufficient funds, specific recruitment categories may be eliminated (example REI/RRS/RFTTFM) and nominations for specific categories may be closed for the remaining cycles of the fiscal year. Additionally, depending on the availability of funds, review cycles may be reduced, and/or the number of applications per institution may be capped, and recommended nominations submitted in response to this Request for Applications (RFA) during the current receipt period may be announced and awarded either in the current fiscal year (prior to August 31, 2024) or in the first quarter of the next fiscal year (starting September 1, 2024).

6. ELIGIBILITY

- The applicant must be a Texas-based entity. Any not-for-profit institution that conducts research is eligible to apply for funding under this award mechanism. A public or private company is not eligible for funding under this award mechanism.
- PIs must be nominated by the president, provost, vice president for research, or appropriate dean of a Texas-based public or private institution of higher education,

including academic health institutions. The application must be submitted on behalf of a specific PI.

- A PI may be nominated by only 1 institution. If more than 1 institution is interested in a given PI, negotiations as to which institution will nominate him or her must be concluded before the nomination is made.
- There is no limit to the number of applications that an institution may submit during a review cycle.
- A PI who has already accepted a position at the recruiting institution prior to the time that the Scientific Review Council reviews the PI for a recruitment award is not eligible for a recruitment award, as an investment by CPRIT is obviously not necessary. No award is final until approved by the Oversight Committee at a public meeting. However, in recognition of the timeline involved with recruiting highly sought-after PIs who are often considering multiple offers, CPRIT's Academic Research program staff will notify the nominating institution of the Scientific Review Council's review decision following the Review Council meeting. If a position is offered to the PI during the period following the Scientific Review Council's review decision but prior to the Oversight Committee's final approval, the institution does so at its own risk. There is no guarantee that the recruitment award will be approved by the Oversight Committee.
- The PI must have a doctoral degree, including MD, PhD, DDS, DMD, DrPH, DO, DVM, or equivalent, **and reside in Texas for the duration of the appointment**. The PI must devote at least 70% time to research activities. PIs whose major responsibilities are clinical care, teaching, or administration are not eligible.
- At the time of the application, the PI should hold an appointment at the rank of assistant or associate professor tenure track or tenured (or equivalent) at an accredited academic institution, research institution, industry, government agency, or private foundation. The PI must not reside in Texas at the time the application is submitted.
- An applicant is eligible to receive a grant award only if the applicant certifies that the applicant institution or organization, including the nominator, any senior member or key personnel listed on the grant application, or any officer or director of the grant applicant's institution or organization (or any person related to 1 or more of these individuals within

the second degree of consanguinity or affinity), has not made and will not make a contribution to CPRIT or to any foundation specifically created to benefit CPRIT.

- An applicant is not eligible to receive a CPRIT grant award if the applicant nominator, any senior member, or key personnel listed on the grant application, or any officer or director of the grant applicant's institution or organization is related to a CPRIT Oversight Committee member.
- The applicant must report whether the applicant institution or organization, the nominator, or other individuals who contribute to the execution of the proposed project in a substantive, measurable way, whether or not the individuals will receive salary or compensation under the grant award, are currently ineligible to receive federal grant funds or have had a grant terminated for cause within 5 years prior to the submission date of the grant application.

CPRIT grants will be awarded by contract to successful applicants. Certain contractual requirements are mandated by Texas law or by administrative rules. Although applicants need not demonstrate the ability to comply with these contractual requirements at the time the application is submitted, applicants should make themselves aware of these standards before submitting a grant application. Significant issues addressed by the CPRIT contract are listed in [section 11](#) and [section 12](#). All statutory provisions and relevant administrative rules can be found at www.cprit.texas.gov.

7. RESUBMISSION POLICY

Resubmissions will not be accepted for the RRS Award mechanism. Any nomination for the RRS Award that was previously submitted to CPRIT and reviewed but was not recommended for funding may not be resubmitted. A nomination for the RRS Award that was previously submitted to CPRIT for the Recruitment of First-Time, Tenure Track Faculty Member or RRS Award and reviewed and recommended for funding but declined by the PI may be submitted in response to this RFA if the PI meets the eligibility criteria described in [section 6](#) and the application is not in the same fiscal year as the previous application. If a nomination was administratively rejected prior to review, it can be resubmitted in the following cycles.

Applications being resubmitted according to the criteria permitted by this section should be submitted as a new application (refer to the Instructions for Applicants [IFA] for more details).

8. RESPONDING TO THIS RFA

8.1. Application Submission Guidelines

Applications must be submitted via the CPRIT Application Receipt System (CARS) (<https://CPRITGrants.org>). **Only applications submitted through this portal will be considered eligible for evaluation.** The applicant is eligible solely for the grant mechanism specified by the RFA under which the grant application is submitted. PIs must be nominated by the institution's president, provost, vice president for research, or appropriate dean. The individual submitting the application (nominator) must create a user account in the system (which includes the nominator's credentials and email address) to start and submit an application. Furthermore, the Application Signing Official, who is the person authorized to sign and submit the application for the organization, and the Grants Contract/Office of Sponsored Projects Official, who is the individual who will manage the grant contract if an award is made, also must create a user account in CARS.

Dependent upon available funding, applications will be accepted on a continuous basis throughout FY24.

In order to manage the timely review of nominations, it is anticipated that applications submitted by 11:59 PM central time on the 20th day of each month will be reviewed by the 15th day of the following month. For an application to be considered for review during the monthly cycle, that application must be submitted on or before 11:59 PM central time. In the event that the 20th falls on Saturday or Sunday, applications may be submitted on or before 11:59 PM central time the following Monday. CPRIT will not extend the submission deadline. During periods when CPRIT does not receive an adequate number of applications, the review may be extended into the following month. **Submission of an application is considered an acceptance of the terms and conditions of the RFA.**

8.2. Application Components

Applicants are advised to follow all instructions to ensure accurate and complete submission of all components of the application. For details, please refer to the *Instructions for Applicants* document that will be available when the application receipt system opens.

Submissions that are missing 1 or more components or do not meet the eligibility requirements listed in [section 6](#) will be administratively withdrawn without review.

8.2.1. Summary of Nomination (2,500 characters)

Provide a brief summary of the nomination. Include the PI's name, organization from which the PI is being recruited, and also the department and/or entity within the nominator's organization where the PI will hold the faculty position.

8.2.2. Layperson's Summary (2,000 characters)

Provide a layperson's summary of the proposed work. **This section must be completed by the PI.** Describe, in simple, nontechnical terms, the overall aims of the proposed work, the type(s) of cancer addressed, the potential significance of the results, and the impact of the work on advancing the field of cancer research, early detection, prevention, treatment, or survivorship. The information provided in this summary will be made publicly available by CPRIT, particularly if the application is recommended for funding. Do not include any proprietary information in the layperson's summary.

8.2.3. Summary of Specific Aims and Sub Aims (2,000 characters)

Please provide a summary of the aims of the proposal. **This section must be completed by the PI.** The specific aims summary should identify the problem or gap in our current knowledge. It should present a hypothesis and briefly describe the aims and approaches and address the proposal's innovation, novel approaches, and significance and impact on the field and cancer research.

8.2.4. Specific Aims and Sub Aims

List specific aims and sub aims to be achieved during this award. **This section must be completed by the PI.** These aims/sub aims will also be used during the submission and evaluation of progress reports and assessment of project success. Refer to the template for

specific aims and sub aims document located in [Current Funding Opportunities](#) for Academic Research in CARS.

8.2.5. Institutional Commitment (3 pages)

CPRIT recruitment awards are intended to provide institutions with a competitive edge in recruiting the world's best talent in cancer research to Texas. The funds provided by CPRIT for the recruitment of a Rising Stars PI must be complemented by a strongly documented institutional commitment to the recruitment. The financial commitments made to the PI by the recruiting institution are required to be equal to or exceed 50% of the proposed CPRIT award across the course of the CPRIT award.

The following guidelines should be followed when documenting the institutional commitment to the PI:

- The institutional commitment should be clearly documented in the form of a letter signed by the applicant institution's president, provost, or appropriate dean and include the amount and sources of salary support and all additional financial support that will be available to the PI's research program through the course of the CPRIT award. The financial commitments made to the PI by the recruiting institution are required to be equal to or exceed 50% of the proposed CPRIT award across the course of the CPRIT award.
- The institutional commitment letter must include the following statement regarding the institution's financial commitment required to meet the 50% match.
 - This institutional financial commitment will not be offset by funds from an investigator-initiated award received by the PI. If an award dictates that such funds must be used for salary, the corresponding amount of institutional funds committed to pay the PI's salary will be redirected to allow the PI to use them for program support.
- Institutional commitment as described above must be presented in a table (example below), that clearly identifies the salary amount, sources of salary, and any additional research support from institutional sources over the course of the CPRIT award. Sources of support for the PI's full salary, including summer salary, for the duration of the award must be documented. If the PI is expected to provide salary support from grants during

the award period, the institutional commitment must identify the source for salary support in the event grant support is not available. Note that a federal indirect cost rate credit cannot be used to demonstrate an institutional commitment to the PI.

- Include a brief job description of the PI should recruitment be successful.
- Describe the institutional environment and any professional commitments to the PI including, but not limited to, dedicated personnel, access to students, space assignment, and access to shared equipment, and discuss all other agreements between the institution and the PI.
- Institutions may provide additional information in support of a PI’s research plan to demonstrate how the institutional commitment through development of strategic collaborations will foster a PI’s cancer research. This additional information is highly encouraged when proposing a PI with exceptional expertise and/or talent that can be directed to cancer research such as a computational biologist, chemist, etc, whose prior experience has not been directly focused on cancer research.
- Note that Texas law allows an institution of higher learning to use its federal indirect cost rate credit to comply with the requirement to demonstrate that it has an amount of funds equal to one-half of the CPRIT funding dedicated to the research that is the subject of the award (see [section 12](#)). However, a federal indirect cost rate credit cannot be used to demonstrate an institutional commitment to the PI.

Example of an acceptable Institutional Commitment table:

PI’s Name, Institutional Commitments

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Salary/Benefits					
Research Support					
Administrative Support					
Moving Expenses					

Total =

Note: CPRIT acknowledges that the institutional commitments by category may change during the course of the award; however, the total financial commitment to the PI must remain equal to or greater than 50% of the CPRIT award.

8.2.6. Letter of Support from Department Chair (up to 2 pages)

Provide the letter of support from and signed by the chair of the department to which the PI is being recruited. The following information should be included in the letter:

Recruitment Activities: CPRIT is committed to increasing the life sciences infrastructure in Texas via the recruitment of exceptional cancer researchers, as well as expanding research resources. The letter should provide a description of the recruitment activities, strategies, and priorities that have led to the nomination of this PI. Provide the necessary context by describing the institution's vision for the cancer programs, how the work of the nominee contributes to achieving these goals—including impact on diversity, equity, and inclusion, if applicable—and the expected impact of the recruitment on the institution (or department) and the burden of cancer in Texas (if applicable).

Caliber of PI: The letter should include a description of the caliber of the PI and justification of nomination of the PI by the institution. CPRIT recognizes that there is variability in the metrics of impact applicable across the continuum of cancer research. For example, in some disciplines, research findings—although highly impactful on the field—are less likely to be published in the highest ranked journals, ie, *Science*, *Cell*, or *Nature* series. Thus, it is incumbent on the institution to describe the impact of a nominee's work, including paradigm-shifting, practice-changing, or influence on public policy, population health behavior, or cancer disparities.

Description of PI Duties and Certification of 70% Time Commitment to Research: While scholars may engage in direct patient care activities and/or have some administrative or teaching duties, at least 70% of the PI's time must be available for research. Breach of this requirement will constitute grounds for discontinuation of funding. The certification that 70% time will be spent on research must be included.

8.2.7. Curriculum Vitae (CV)

Provide a complete CV and list of publications for the PI.

8.2.8. Research (4 pages)

Summarize the key elements of the PI's research accomplishments and provide an overview of the proposed research by outlining the background and rationale, hypotheses and aims, strategies, goals, and projected impact of the focus of the research program. Highlight the

innovative aspects of this effort and place it into context with regard to what pressing problem in cancer will be addressed. **This section of the application must be prepared by the PI. References cited in this section should be included in the Publications/References Section (see [8.2.9](#)).**

PIs for CPRIT Scholar Awards must include the following signed statement at the end of this section. **Applications that do not contain this signed statement will be returned without review.**

“I understand that I do not need to have made a commitment to *<nominating institution>* before this application has been submitted. However, I also understand that only 1 Texas institution may nominate me for a CPRIT Recruitment Award, and this is the nomination that I have endorsed. I understand that requests to change the recruiting institution during the recruitment process are not allowed after the application is submitted to CPRIT.”

8.2.9. Publications/References (1 Page)

Provide a concise and relevant list of publications/references cited in the Research section of the application. Any appropriate citation format is acceptable; official journal abbreviations should be used.

8.2.10. Research Collaboration/Synergy Plan (2 pages)

Institutions may provide additional information in support of a PI’s research plan to demonstrate how the institutional commitment through development of strategic collaborations will foster a PI’s cancer research. This additional information is highly encouraged when proposing a PI with exceptional expertise and/or talent that can be directed to cancer research, such as a computational biologist, chemist, etc, whose prior experience has not been directly focused on cancer research. Biographical sketches of collaborators established in the research collaborative plan must be uploaded as part of the application. This will be in addition to the 2-page synergy plan (see IFA).

8.2.11. Publications

Provide the 5 most significant publications that have resulted from the PI’s research efforts. Publications should be uploaded as PDFs of full-text articles. Only articles that have been published or that have been accepted for publication (“in press”) should be submitted.

8.2.12. Timeline (1 page)

Provide a general outline of anticipated major award outcomes to be tracked. Timelines will be reviewed during the evaluation of annual progress reports. If the application is approved for funding, this section will be included in the award contract. Applicants are advised not to include information that they consider confidential or proprietary when preparing this section.

8.2.13. Current and Pending Support

State the funding source, duration, and title of all current and pending research support held by the PI. If the PI has no current or pending funding, a document stating this must be submitted. Refer to the sample current and pending support document located in [Current Funding Opportunities](#) for Academic Research in CARS.

8.2.14. Research Environment (1 page)

Briefly describe the research environment available to support the PI's research program, including core facilities, training programs, and collaborative opportunities.

8.2.15. Descriptive Biography (Up to 2 pages)

Provide a brief descriptive biography of the PI, including his or her accomplishments, education and training, professional experience, awards and honors, publications relevant to cancer research, and a brief overview of the PI's goals if selected to receive the award. **This section of the application must be prepared by the PI.** If the application is approved for funding, this section will be made publicly available on CPRIT's website. PIs are advised not to include information that they consider confidential or proprietary when preparing this section.

Applications that are missing 1 or more of these components; exceed the specified page, word, or budget limits; or do not meet the eligibility requirements listed above will be administratively withdrawn without review.

9. APPLICATION REVIEW

9.1. Review Process

All eligible applications will be evaluated and scored by the CPRIT Scientific Review Council using the criteria listed in this RFA. Applications may be submitted continuously in response to this RFA but will generally be reviewed on a monthly basis by the CPRIT Scientific Review Council. Council members may seek additional ad hoc evaluations of PIs. Scientific Review Council members will review applications and provide an individual Overall Evaluation Score that conveys the members' recommendation related to the proposed recruitment. Applications recommended by the Council will be forwarded to the CPRIT Program Integration Committee (PIC) for review, prioritization, and recommendation to the CPRIT Oversight Committee for approval and funding. Approval is based on an application receiving a positive vote from at least two-thirds of the members of the Oversight Committee. The review process is described more fully in CPRIT's Administrative Rules, in [Texas Administrative Code, Title 25, Chapters 701 to 703](#).

The decision of the Scientific Review Council not to recommend an application is final, and such applications may not be resubmitted for a recruitment award. Notification of review decisions is sent to the nominator.

9.1.1. Confidentiality of Review

Each stage of application review is conducted confidentially, and all CPRIT Scientific Review Council members, PIC members, CPRIT employees, and Oversight Committee members with access to grant application information are required to sign nondisclosure statements regarding the contents of the applications. All technological and scientific information included in the application is protected from public disclosure pursuant to Health and Safety Code §102.262(b).

Individuals directly involved with the review process operate under strict conflict-of-interest prohibitions. All CPRIT Scientific Review Council members are non-Texas residents.

By submitting a grant application, the applicant agrees and understands that the only basis for reconsideration of a grant application is limited to an undisclosed conflict of interest as set forth in CPRIT's Administrative Rules, [Texas Administrative Code, Title 25, Chapters 701 to 703](#).

Communication regarding the substance of a pending application is prohibited between the grant applicant (or someone on the grant applicant's behalf) and the following individuals: an Oversight Committee member, a PIC member, or a Scientific Review Council member. Applicants should note that the CPRIT PIC comprises the CPRIT Chief Executive Officer, the Chief Scientific Officer, the Chief Prevention Officer, the Chief Product Development Officer, and the Commissioner of the Department of State Health Services. The prohibition on communication begins on the first day that grant applications for the particular grant mechanism are accepted by CPRIT and extends until the grant applicant receives notice regarding a final decision on the grant application. Intentional, serious, or frequent violations of this rule may result in the disqualification of the grant applicant from further consideration for a grant award.

9.2. Review Criteria

Applications will be assessed based on evaluation of the quality of the PI and his or her potential for continued superb performance as a cancer researcher. **Also, of critical importance is the strength of the institutional commitment to the PI. Recruitment efforts are not likely to be successful unless there is a strong commitment from CPRIT and the host institution.** It is not necessary that a PI agrees to accept the recruitment offer at the time an application is submitted. However, applicant institutions should have an expectation that the recruitment will be successful if an award is granted by CPRIT. It is the expectation that the nominating institution provides CPRIT with a status of the award acceptance as soon as status is known.

Review criteria will focus on the overall impression of the PI, his/her proposed research program, and his/her long-term contribution to, and impact on, the field of cancer research.

Questions to be considered by the reviewers are as follows:

Quality of the PI: Has the PI demonstrated extraordinary accomplishments during his or her initial years of independent research? Does the PI show promise of making important contributions with significant impact to basic, translational, clinical, or population-based cancer research in the future? Has the PI demonstrated strong self-direction, motivation, and commitment for transformative cancer research?

Scientific Merit of Proposed Research: Is the research plan comprehensive and well thought out? Does the proposed research program demonstrate innovation, creativity, and feasibility? Will it have a significant impact on the field of cancer research? Will it expand the boundaries of

cancer research beyond traditional methodology by incorporating novel and interdisciplinary techniques?

Relevance of PI's Research: Is the proposed research likely to have a significant impact on reducing the burden of cancer in the near term, or address unique aspects of the burden of cancer in Texas. Does the research contribute to basic, translational, clinical, or population-based cancer research?

Research Environment: Does the institution have the necessary facilities, expertise, and resources to support the PI's research? Is there evidence of strong institutional support? Will the PI be free of major administrative/clinical responsibilities so that he or she can focus on maintaining and enhancing his or her research program? Will the PI be provided with adequate professional development opportunities to grow as a leader?

10. KEY DATES

RFA

RFA Release June 21, 2023

11. AWARD ADMINISTRATION

Texas law requires that CPRIT grant awards be made by contract between the applicant and CPRIT. CPRIT grant awards are made to institutions or organizations, not to individuals. Awards made under this RFA are not transferable to another institution. Award contract negotiation and execution will commence once the CPRIT Oversight Committee has approved an application for a grant award. CPRIT may require, as a condition of receiving a grant award, that the grant recipient use CPRIT's electronic Grant Management System to exchange, execute, and verify legally binding grant contract documents and grant award reports. Such use shall be in accordance with CPRIT's electronic signature policy as set forth in [Texas Administrative Code, Title 25, Chapters 701 to 703](#).

Texas law specifies several components that must be addressed by the award contract, including needed compliance and assurance documentation, budgetary review, progress and fiscal monitoring, and terms relating to revenue sharing and intellectual property rights. These contract

provisions are specified in CPRIT's Administrative Rules, which are available at www.cprit.texas.gov.

Applicants are advised to review CPRIT's Administrative Rules related to contractual requirements associated with CPRIT grant awards and limitations related to the use of CPRIT grant awards as set forth in [Texas Administrative Code, Title 25, Chapters 701 to 703](#).

Prior to disbursement of grant award funds, the grant recipient organization must demonstrate that it has adopted and enforces a tobacco-free workplace policy consistent with the requirements set forth in CPRIT's Administrative Rules, [Texas Administrative Code, Title 25, Chapters 701 to 703](#).

CPRIT requires award recipients to submit an annual progress report. These reports summarize the progress made toward the research aims and address plans for the upcoming year. In addition, fiscal reporting, human studies reporting, and vertebrate animal use reporting will be required as appropriate. CPRIT requires funding acknowledgement to include the award grant ID on all print and visual materials that are funded in whole or in part by CPRIT grants. Examples of print and visual materials include, but are not limited to, publications, brochures, pamphlets, project websites, videos, and media materials. Grantees must have written approval from CPRIT prior to the purchase of any equipment. If the equipment is clearly defined in the grantee's budget submitted with the initiating award requirements, then approval of the grant award constitutes "prior approval" for the purchase. Unless prohibited by policy, the institution is also expected to bestow on the newly recruited faculty member the prestigious title of "CPRIT Scholar in Cancer Research," and the faculty member should be strongly encouraged to use this title on letterhead, business cards, publications, and other appropriate documents. The title is to be retained as long as the individual remains in Texas.

Continuation of funding is contingent upon the timely receipt of these reports. Failure to provide timely and complete reports may waive reimbursement of grant award costs and may result in the termination of the award contract. Forms and instructions will be made available at www.cprit.texas.gov.

12. REQUIREMENT TO DEMONSTRATE AVAILABLE FUNDS

Texas law requires that prior to disbursement of CPRIT grant funds, the award recipient must demonstrate that it has an amount of funds equal to one-half of the CPRIT funding dedicated to the research that is the subject of the award. The demonstration of available matching funds must be made at the time the award contract is executed and annually thereafter, not when the application is submitted. Grant applicants are advised to consult CPRIT's Administrative Rules, Texas Administrative Code, [Title 25, Chapters 701 to 703](#), for specific requirements regarding the demonstration of available funding.

13. CONTACT INFORMATION

13.1. Helpdesk

Helpdesk support is available for questions regarding user registration and online submission of applications. Queries submitted via email will be answered within 1 business day. Helpdesk staff members are not in a position to answer questions regarding scientific aspects of applications.

Hours of operation: Monday through Friday, 8 AM to 6 PM central time

Tel: 866-941-7146

Email: Help@CPRITGrants.org

13.2. Scientific and Programmatic Questions

Questions regarding the CPRIT Program, including questions regarding this or other funding opportunities, should be directed to the CPRIT Director for Academic Research.

Email: Research@cprit.texas.gov

Website: www.cprit.texas.gov