

Frequently Asked Questions

What are the qualifications to become an MRF advocate reviewer?

If you would like to become an advocate in the MRF grant review process, you **must**:

1. Possess good verbal and written communication skills with the English language
2. Express interest in and have some basic knowledge of the medical research process
3. **Complete [questionnaire](#)**
4. **Provide a copy of a current resume**
5. **Complete a science-based training.** This training requirement shall be considered fulfilled if the advocate can provide documentation of completion from *at least one* of the programs below:
 - A. Attendance of a science-based training program (typically a one-day time commitment):
 1. The American Association for Cancer Research (AACR) Survivor-Scientist Program
 2. Research Advocacy Network (RAN) Advocate Institute Basics for Research Advocacy
 3. National Breast Cancer Coalition (NBCC) Project LEAD
 4. A similar type of program as those outlined above
 - B. Completion of [the MRF's Friends of Cancer Research \(FOCR\) Training Program](#) (a 3-5 hour stop/start program with various modules).
6. **Sign the MRF Conflict of Interest & Confidentiality Statement (email advocacy@melanoma.org to receive)**
7. **If selected, advocate must be available for a mandatory orientation call on Wednesday, April 29, 2026, at 12-1PM EST via Zoom.** *Please note: all advocate reviewers are required to attend the virtual orientation.*

**If you have previously served as an advocate in the MRF grant review process, you will only need to provide a copy of a current resume and re-sign the Conflict of Interest & Confidentiality Statement. Another full application is not required.*

What orientation is provided to MRF advocates?

To become an MRF advocate grant reviewer, an applicant must possess experience with medical research either by attending a science-based training program, participating in a previous grant review or by completing the MRF's Friends of Cancer Research (FOCR) Training Program online. Although this ensures that the advocate reviewers possess some familiarity with melanoma research, if selected, advocates will also participate in a pre-grant orientation session (either a webinar or conference call) to discuss the MRF research program, grant review process and timeline.

What is the time commitment required to be an MRF advocate?

Although application review time varies among advocates, it takes approximately 10-15 hours of pre-meeting preparation over a 4-week period. The pre-meeting preparation includes: a pre-grant orientation call, the review of assigned applications and the preparation of written comments for those applications.

How many advocates participate in each grant review panel?

The MRF would like to incorporate a minimum of 5 advocates per grant review panel, though it can largely depend on the number of applications.

Are advocate comments taken into consideration during the funding discussions?

Yes, comments provided by advocates will be presented by an advocate designee on the final review conference call. This designee will have full voting rights.

Are advocates compensated?

No, neither advocates nor scientific reviewers will be financially compensated for participating in the MRF grant review process.

How will the advocates be chosen?

The main factor in selecting the advocates will be the number of applications received in response to the MRF RFP.

Who should I contact with any additional questions/concerns?

Please visit www.melanoma.org for additional information on the MRF and to learn more about our research program. Specific questions/concerns can be directed to advocacy@melanoma.org or by calling (202) 347-9675.