



## Melanoma Research Foundation 2024 Medical Student Research Grants Application Instructions

**Background:** The Melanoma Research Foundation (MRF) has been awarding Medical Student Research Grants since 2011. Since that time, 108 grants have been awarded to students at 53 different institutions.

**Purpose:** To promote research opportunities to medical students early in their careers by funding clinical or laboratory-based research projects focused on better understanding the prevention, early detection, behaviors that impact melanoma risk, biology and treatment of melanoma, including cutaneous, ocular, mucosal, pediatric, etc. In 2024, in addition to awards focused on any aspect of melanoma research, the MRF is please to also offer at least one award focused specifically on ocular melanoma research.

**Grant Amount:** Grant award is \$3,000 per award period. Length of award period is one year from the date of disbursement of the award. Funds will be disbursed once all required paperwork is submitted to the MRF. A 1-year no-cost extension may be considered. Requests can be sent to [research@melanoma.org](mailto:research@melanoma.org).

### **Deadline:**

Applications will be accepted until **November 15, 2023 at 5:00 PM ET**. Decisions will be made and sent out via email by **January 29, 2024**.

### **Eligibility Requirements:**

- Applicants are required to have at least one research mentor. The research mentor should be an MD and/or PhD engaged in melanoma research. Co-mentors are allowed.
- The research project may be with a mentor at an institution other than the one where she or he is enrolled.
- The applicant's proposed research project is expected to be applicant-led and not merely an extension of ongoing research of their research mentor.
- The applicant does not need to be a U.S. citizen.
- Applicants must be a medical student in good academic standing at a Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) accredited or American Osteopathic Association Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation (COCA) medical school or institution in the United States.
- MD and/or MD/PhD students are eligible to apply.
- Applications will not be accepted from previous recipients of MRF Medical Student Research Grant Awards.

### **Review Process:**

All proposals will be graded on a 3-point scale in three major categories: applicant,



application and mentor. Each proposal will be reviewed by two independent melanoma experts. Each reviewer will assign a point score to the relevant areas noted below and a final score will be generated by the average of the two reviewer's scores. In the event that a major discrepancy exists between the two scores of the reviewers, a third reviewer will be selected whose score will be averaged with the prior two scores. No reviewer shall review a proposal for which he or she may have a conflict of interest. The top ranked grants are recommended for funding to the MRF Board of Directors. The number of grants selected for funding is determined by the MRF Board of Directors, based on available funds.

<b>Selection Criteria:</b>	<b>Below Average (1 POINTS)</b>	<b>Average (2 POINT)</b>	<b>Exceptional (3 POINTS)</b>
<b>Applicant</b>			
<b>Academic Achievement/ Leadership Potential</b>			
<b>Research Background Related to Project</b>			
<b>Interest in a Career in Research</b>			
<b>Application</b>			
<b>Content</b>			
<b>Clarity</b>			
<b>Methodology</b>			
<b>Achievability</b>			
<b>Mentor</b>			
<b>Experience in the proposed Technique</b>			
<b>External Grant Support</b>			
<b>Time and Interest to Train Applicant</b>			
<b>Research Environment</b>			

**Reporting:**

Recipients will be required to complete and return the Final Report Form (available in Proposal Central) no later than 60 days following the completion of the research study time period.

Acknowledgment of support from the MRF must accompany any published report using data or findings from research conducted under an award from the MRF. The intellectual property reviewed remains solely within the institution.

**Step-by-Step Application Instructions:**

All submissions, notifications and critiques will be completed entirely online through ProposalCENTRAL (<https://proposalcentral.altum.com/>).

**Please read the instructions carefully prior to beginning the online grant submission process.**

**Step 1: Title Page**

The project title should not exceed the space provided (75 characters, including spaces). Choose the grant program, from the list noted below, to which you are applying. You can



only select one grant program; therefore, please select the most specialized grant for which you qualify.

- Medical Student Award (MED) – up to \$3,000 for one-year
- Ocular Melanoma Medical Student Award (OM MED) – up to \$3,000 for one-year

Please note that the award period runs from February 1, 2024 – February 1, 2025.

### **Step 2: Enable Other Users to Access This Proposal**

You have the option to allow other individuals access to your application. You can choose from three different levels of permission.

### **Step 3: Applicant/PI**

Profile information is pre-loaded in this section. You may update your profile information here as well.

### **Step 4: Additional Applicant/PI Information**

Additional applicant/ PI information is requested in this section. All answers for this step are optional. This information will only be used for internal MRF purposes.

### **Step 5: Institution and Contacts**

Institution information and contact information can be updated and/or changed here.

### **Step 6: Key Personnel**

Key personnel, other than the applicant, who will provide support to the project, will be listed here. **At least one mentor must be included in this section.**

### **Step 7: Personal Statement**

Please provide a personal statement describing your professional goals/ career plans. The total length of the statement should not exceed 3,000 characters (including spaces).

### **Step 8: Abstracts**

#### **Scientific Abstract**

In the space provided, include a summary of the proposal that gives a brief description of the objectives, rationale, methods and expected results. The total length of the summary may not exceed 2,000 characters (including spaces) and should be written in scientific terms.

#### **Lay Abstract**

In the space provided, include a brief (<2,000 characters, including spaces) summary of the proposal. The lay level abstract needs to be written so that the everyday person can understand the significance, impact and innovation of the proposed research.

#### **Keywords**

Please select up to six appropriate keywords (from the list provided) that characterize the proposed research project.



*If the project is awarded, portions of the abstracts may be used in the MRF's various publications, press releases, fundraisers and educational events.*

### **Step 9: Budget Summary**

Provide a high-level summary for what the funds will be used. Grant awards are to be used for direct laboratory costs and/or salary support. They are not to be used for indirect/administrative costs, to hire a consultant or contractor, or for travel expenses.

### **Step 10: Organization Assurances**

Information regarding human subjects, vertebrate animals, and/or recombinant DNA will be entered here (if relevant). If an application has just been submitted, please note that as well.

### **Step 11: Upload Attachments**

All attachments must be in PDF form. Uploaded documents should fall under one of the following descriptions:

- **Letter of Support** – A letter of support from at least one research mentor approving the proposed research, as well as outlining their role/ expectations must be included. Further, the mentor should comment on the applicant's potential for a career as a physician-scientist.
- **Research Plan** – The research plan is limited to **5 pages, Arial font, at least 11pt font with 1 inch margins**. Single line spacing is acceptable. The text of the Research Plan should contain sufficient information for the evaluation by the reviewer panel and should cover:
  - Background/ Rationale/ Significance
  - Hypothesis
  - Specific Aims
  - Preliminary Data, if available (please note: as the applicant may not have much laboratory experience, the research proposal does not need preliminary data to support the application)
  - Experimental design and procedures
  - References (References ARE NOT counted in the 5-page limit)
- **NIH Biosketch** – NIH Biosketches for the applicant, all mentors, and key personnel are required.
- **Other Support Page** – Other Support pages for the applicant, all mentors, and key personnel are required. The Other Support page must include information about all types of available research support including direct costs and percent effort.

### **Step 12: Validate**



Click the 'Validate' button here to check for any missing required information or files. All missing required information will be listed on the screen. Please correct any missing information before proceeding to the next step.

**Step 13: Signature Page(s)**

You may print the signature page(s) after you have completed all the proposal sections.

**Step 14: Submit**

Submit your application. You will be unable to submit if you have not provided all the required information. We encourage you to submit your application as early as possible so that we can assist you with any issues that may arise. As a reminder, deadline is **November 15, 2023 at 5:00 PM ET** (decisions will be made and sent out via email by **January 29, 2024**).

**If you have questions about this research opportunity, please contact our office at (800) 673-1290 or email [research@melanoma.org](mailto:research@melanoma.org).**