

Grant Review Process

Each year, innovative grants are solicited from young investigators, established investigators or teams of investigators in a review process that is overseen by the Foundation's Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) and managed by the Chief Scientific Officer (CSO) and Scientific Research Officer (SRO). The Research Grant Program includes the spectrum of research from preclinical, translational and clinical projects that address critical problems pertaining to prevention, diagnosis, staging and treatment of melanoma. After assessment of any potential conflict of interest, scientific reviewers are then selected based on their expertise in diverse areas of melanoma research. All proposals undergo a rigorous review process. Reviewers use the NIH scoring system which ranges from 1 (Exceptional) to 9 (Poor). The highest scoring applications will then be discussed on a final review conference call. Advocates will review each of the high scoring proposals for its significance/innovation/overall impact on the melanoma community and relevance to the patient experience. To ensure these comments/concerns are taken into consideration when the final votes are placed, an advocate designee (not each individual advocate) will participate on the final review conference call to provide a summary of the advocate evaluations. In the final review conference call, applications are subjected to a vote by Committee--including the advocate designee--and ultimately ranked by score.

How to Apply

To be eligible for consideration, the advocate grant reviewer must complete the Eligibility Form [here](#) and meet the following criteria:

1. Possess good verbal and written communication skills
2. Express interest in and have some basic knowledge of the medical research process
3. Provide a copy of a current resume
4. Complete science-based training. This training requirement shall be considered fulfilled if the advocate can provide documentation of completion of at least one of the programs below:
 - A. Attendance of a science-based training program from (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 program with various modules that allows you to stop/start numerous times before you complete the training). Log-in information is copied below.

1. Self-Sign up Link: <http://friends.litmos.com/self-signup/>
2. Code: mrf
5. Sign the MRF Conflict of Interest & Confidentiality Statement (email advocacy@melanoma.org to receive)
6. If selected, participate in a pre-grant conference call

If you have previously served as an advocate in the MRF grant review process, you only need to provide a copy of a current resume, re-sign the Conflict of Interest & Confidentiality Statement, and complete the MRF Advocate Eligibility Form.

Questions? Email advocacy@melanoma.org.

Timeline

The MRF Grant RFP (Request for Proposals) was released in early January with a submission deadline of March 31, 2025. All proposals undergo a rigorous grant review process. Reviews occur in April-June 2025; the review conference call will be held at the end of July 2025.

Advocate application materials must be received by April 15, 2025. The introductory conference call will be held in early May 2025. Grant proposals will be assigned and sent for review in mid-May; evaluations will be due approximately two to three weeks later. A debriefing call with the melanoma advocates involved in the review process as well as a feedback survey will be held and distributed in early September, upon announcement of the grant recipients.

MRF Advocate Reviewer Form Checklist

Please use this list as a guide to help ensure you have submitted all necessary documents.

- Complete the [MRF Advocate Eligibility Form](#)
- Sign the MRF Conflict of Interest & Confidentiality Policy (email advocacy@melanoma.org to receive)
- Provide a copy of a current resume
- Provide documentation of completion of a science-based training program. At least one of the following must be included:
 - Attendance of a science-based training program from:
 - The American Association for Cancer Research (AACR) Survivor-Scientist Program
 - Research Advocacy Network (RAN) Advocate Institute Basics for Research Advocacy
 - National Breast Cancer Coalition (NBCC) Project LEAD
 - A similar type of program as those outlined above
 - Completion of the MRF's Friends of Cancer Research Training Program. Log-in information is copied below.
 - Self-sign-up: <http://friends.litmos.com/self-signup/>
 - Code: mrf
- *Participation in the following may be considered in lieu of the science-based trainings mentioned above. Documentation of completion required:*
 - National Institutes of Health (NIH)
 - Department of Defense (DoD) Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs (CDMRP)
 - Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI)
 - A similar type of program as those outlined above

If possible, all components of the application (application, resume, certificates, documentation, etc.) should be scanned and emailed as one PDF document to advocacy@melanoma.org.