

Vanderbilt-wide Limited Submission Opportunity

2026 Pew-Stewart Scholars for Cancer Research Program

Applications due March 4, 2025

Vanderbilt (VU + VUMC): *This is a joint competition for VU and VUMC investigators. All investigators should follow these instructions.*

Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center may nominate one candidate for the Pew Charitable Trusts' [2026 Pew-Stewart Scholars for Cancer Research Program](#). This program supports **Assistant Professors** of outstanding promise in science relevant to the advancement of a cure for cancer. The award provides **\$300,000 in flexible support**—\$75,000 per year for a four-year period. Not more than 8 percent of the total award may be allocated for overhead costs.

Candidates should demonstrate outstanding promise as contributors in science relevant to the field of cancer. Strong proposals will incorporate particularly **creative and pioneering approaches to basic, translational, and applied cancer research**. Candidates whose work is based on biomedical principles but who bring in concepts and theories from more diverse fields are encouraged to apply. This program does not fund clinical trials research.

Ideas with the potential to produce an unusually high impact are encouraged. Selection of the successful candidates will be based on a detailed description of the work that the applicant proposes to undertake, evaluations of the candidate's performance, and notable past accomplishments, including honors, awards, and publications. In evaluating the candidates, the Committee gives considerable weight to both the project proposal and the researcher, including evidence that the candidate is a successful independent investigator and has the skill set needed to carry out their high-impact proposal.

Pew recognizes the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion in scientific progress and innovation and seeks applicants from all backgrounds. Pew encourages applications from candidates who are diverse, in terms of gender, minority status, and cancer research field.

For examples of Pew-Stewart scholar projects, a directory of past scholars can be found [here](#), including previous Vanderbilt awardee, Alexander Bick '22.

This program is distinct from the Pew Biomedical Scholars Program, but candidates may apply to both internal competitions.

Eligibility Criteria:

- Candidates must have been awarded a doctorate in biomedical sciences, medicine, or a related field, including engineering or the physical sciences
- As of August 27, 2025, candidates must run an independent lab and hold a full-time appointment at the rank of Assistant Professor. (Appointments such as Research Assistant Professor, Adjunct Assistant Professor, Assistant Professor Research Track, Visiting Professor or Instructor are not eligible. Associate Professors are not eligible.)

- Must *not* have been appointed as an assistant professor at any institution prior to June 11, 2021, whether or not such an appointment was on a tenure track. Time spent in clinical internships, residencies, in work toward board certification, or on parental leave does not count as part of this four-year limit. (Candidates who took parental leave should note this on their internal application to make their eligibility clear.)
 - Please note that eligibility criteria have been temporarily expanded to account for COVID-related lab shutdowns and research disruptions. This extension will end after this upcoming application cycle. Beginning next year, the eligibility window for the 2027 grant will revert to the three-year period. Please direct any questions to the program office at scholarsapp@pewtrusts.org.
- Qualified candidates should be conducting creative, interdisciplinary, basic, or translational cancer research. This program does not fund clinical trials research.
- It is expected that Pew-Stewart scholars will spend at least 80 percent of their time in work or activities related to the accomplishment of their overall research goals (which are not restricted to the specific aims proposed for this award).
- The selected candidate may not be nominated more than two times in total, regardless of institution.
- Funding from the NIH, other government sources, and project grants from non-profit associations do not pose a conflict.

See the [program details](#) for more information.

Internal Application Process:

Anyone interested in being considered as Vanderbilt's nominee must submit the following (in a single PDF) to LSO@vanderbilt.edu by **5 p.m. on March 4, 2025:**

1. Brief research plan including summary budget (2 page max);
2. Letter of support from department chair/center director;
3. NIH Biosketch or abbreviated CV (5 page max)

Submissions should reference "**PEW-STEWART SCHOLARS**" in the subject line of the email.

Following the internal review, the nominee's name will be submitted to the Pew Charitable Trusts by May 14, 2025 and the complete application will be due August 27, 2025.

Any questions about this opportunity or the LSO process may be directed to LSO@vanderbilt.edu.