

Vanderbilt-wide Limited Submission Opportunity 2026 V Foundation Pediatric Cancer Research Awards

Applications due March 4, 2026

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

Vanderbilt (VU + VUMC, collaboratively) has been invited to participate in the **V Foundation 2026 Pediatric Cancer Research Grant Program**. Vanderbilt may choose **up to two nominees** for the Pediatric Cancer Research Grant Program: 1 V Scholar OR Translational nominee and 1 All-Star nominee.

Please review each award type below and submit internal proposals for either program by **March 4**.

NOTE:

These awards are specifically for **pediatric** cancer research. Please note that research areas **not** included in this scope are epidemiology, behavioral science, and health services research.

A biostatistical or bioinformatics plan is required for all proposals. Proposals without this element will not be considered for funding.

Pediatric Cancer Translational Research Award

The V Foundation seeks to support translational research projects within the scope of pediatric cancer research. The Translational Research Award is an \$800,000 grant awarded in four annual installments of \$200,000. Indirect costs up to a maximum of 10% within the total award are permitted.

Definition of a translational research project: Translational projects should move a novel strategy from the laboratory into a human clinical trial or use specimens from a clinical trial to test hypotheses, develop biomarkers or mechanisms. The research must apply in some direct way to human beings within the time frame of less than 3 years from the end of the grant. If biomarker research is undertaken, a validation set or independent clinical trial is essential. A plan for biomarker validation, if applicable, must be included in any proposal. The endpoint of the project should be the planning or initiation of a new clinical trial or conducting an investigator-initiated trial with laboratory correlates that test hypothesis.

Applicant Eligibility: By external nomination due date (anticipated March 23, 2026), applicants who will lead this research team must have all the following:

- Must hold a full-time faculty appointment at the Assistant Professor or Assistant Professor-equivalent level or above. Non-promotable adjunct, affiliated, temporary, part-time or acting faculty positions are not eligible for Principal Investigator nomination.
- Applicants must be either US citizens or have a legal permit (temporary or permanent) to work in the US.

Pediatric Cancer V Scholar Award

The Pediatric Cancer V Scholar Award supports young tenure-track faculty early in their cancer research career by funding projects that are either **laboratory-based fundamental research or translational research**. Emphasis for this grant mechanism is on supporting exceptional early career investigators at the Assistant

Professor stage to be better positioned to leverage large R01 or similar sustaining grants. The total amount of the grant is \$800,000 awarded in four annual installments of \$200,000, each. No indirect costs are permitted.

Applicant Eligibility: By external nomination due date (anticipated March 23, 2026), applicants must meet all the following:

- Hold a full-time tenure-track faculty position as an assistant professor (e.g., must be eligible to apply for PI status on an R01 at your institution). Non-promotable, adjunct, affiliated, temporary, part-time or acting faculty positions are not eligible for the Scholar award.
- Have been appointed to their first full-time assistant professor position **within the last 5 years**, and not yet been promoted to Associate Professor. *Note: Extensions may be given on a case-by-case basis.*
- **Clinical scientists are eligible** if their Department can demonstrate that it will fully support the research applicant (e.g., dedicated lab space, start-up funds, dedicated research time).
- Possess at least 2 years post-doctoral (MD or PhD) fellowship training. For MDs, a minimum of one year is acceptable if only one year is required for their specialty.
- Applicant must be a US Citizen or permanent legal resident in the US
- **Applicants must NOT have accepted or received notification of an R01 or R01 equivalent award by this nomination due date.**
- **Applicants must NOT have accepted or received award notification of any peer-reviewed, non-mentored *single grant* that totals or exceeds \$750k in total direct funding at ANY point in their professional career. This calculation should exclude indirect costs.**
- **Applicants must NOT have accepted or received award notification of any peer-reviewed, non-mentored funding that exceeds \$1M in *aggregated (total)* direct funding at ANY point in their professional career. This calculation should exclude indirect costs.**
 - *The V Scholar award is intended to support research to leverage these larger awards; so, the nominee should not have already received such awards.*

View the [V Scholar Eligibility: Are they Eligible](#) handout for additional guidance.

Pediatric Cancer All-Star Grant

This All-Star Translational grant is a reinvestment in the most exceptional prior V Foundation grantees and their most innovative ideas. This grant provides funding for high-risk, high-reward, transformative projects that will have a significant impact on our understanding and/or treatment of cancer. Please note it is not required that the previously funded grant was focused on pediatric research nor do the previously funded grant and the newly proposed project need to be linked.

The total amount of the grant is \$1,000,000 paid in five annual installments of \$200,000. Indirect costs up to 10% of direct costs allowed.

Applicant Eligibility: By external nomination due date (anticipated March 23, 2026), the applicant must meet all the following:

- Hold a full-time faculty appointment at the Assistant Professor or Assistant Professor-equivalent level or above. Non-promotable, adjunct, affiliated, temporary, part-time or acting faculty positions are not eligible for Principal Investigator nomination.
- Must have previously been awarded a V Foundation **research** grant as the lead PI and must meet at least **ONE** of the following criteria by the nomination deadline:
 - Have a completed V Foundation research grant or

- Be in the final year of an active V Foundation grant (received final payment and on track to finish by grant end date).
- Must have been the lead PI on the V Foundation research grant from start to finish.
- Must have all financial and progress reports up to date.
- Must not have a current V Foundation All-Star grant.
- Must not have only received V Foundation non-research/Mission grant(s).
- Must be either a US Citizen or have a legal permit (temporary or permanent) to work in the US. This requirement does not apply to invited Canadian institutions.

View the [2026 All-Star Grant Eligibility Guide](#) for additional guidance

Internal Selection Process:

Anyone interested in being considered as Vanderbilt's nominee for either of the Pediatric Awards above must submit the following (in PDF format) to LSO@vanderbilt.edu by **11:59 p.m. on March 4, 2026**. **Late applications will not be considered.**

1. Brief (2 page maximum) research plan including summary budget;
2. Letter of support from department chair/center director;
 - a. **V Scholar** award does not allow indirect costs. V Scholar letters must acknowledge that this grant does not allow indirect costs. This statement can be used/modified within the letter: "The Department recognizes that this grant does not allow indirect costs and will commit to covering any associated indirect costs per applicable institutional/school policy." Consult LSO@vanderbilt.edu for further guidance.
 - b. **Translational and All-Star** awards allow 10% indirect costs; indirect cost statement is not required.
3. NIH Biosketch or 5-page CV
4. **For V Scholar only:** Financial Worksheet (download template [here](#))
 - a. Please fill out the Grant Awards table and any "Notes and Remarks." Other information and signatures not required for internal selection process.

Submissions should reference the award type (Translational Research Award, V Scholar, or All-Star) in the subject line of the email.

Please contact us at LSO@vanderbilt.edu if you have any questions about the program, foundation, or internal review process.