

## **Breaking Barriers in Cancer Research Grant: Recognizing Excellence from Unique Perspectives V Scholar or Translational 2026 Request for Applications**

### **PURPOSE OF AWARD:**

Varied perspectives fuel innovation in cancer research. The objective of this Request for Applications (RFA) is to support exceptional, creative researchers who have navigated unique challenges to establish their careers. All scientists have personal journeys shaped by their unique experiences and perspectives, which bring valuable and potentially overlooked insights to cancer research. Applicants will be asked to describe how their unique experiences have influenced their career paths and research focus. This RFA includes two grant mechanisms, Translational and V Scholar (**adult cancers**).

### **GRANT OBJECTIVES:**

**V Scholar** – This V Scholar grant supports tenure-track faculty in the early stages of their cancer research careers by funding laboratory-based fundamental research **or** translational projects in any area of **adult** cancer research. This grant mechanism is designed to advance exceptional **early-career investigators at the Assistant Professor level**, positioning them to successfully compete for larger, sustaining grants such as R01s.

**Translational** – Translational research is a critical part of the research continuum, advancing basic laboratory discoveries toward clinical application to improve human health. This grant supports **adult** cancer research in the preclinical or translational space, with a focus on bench-to-bedside strategies. Research on any adult cancer type is eligible. Applicants may propose projects that:

- 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 establish mechanisms.

The research **must** apply in a direct way to human beings within 3 years of the grant's completion. If biomarker research is undertaken, a validation set or independent clinical trial is essential. Proposals must include a plan for biomarker validation, if applicable. 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 hypotheses.

Please note that research areas **not** included in this scope for either grant type are *epidemiology, behavioral science, and health services research*.

### **BIostatISTICS:**

A detailed biostatistical or bioinformatics plan is **mandatory** for all proposals and is required for funding consideration.

### **GRANT SPECIFICS:**

**V Scholar:** The total grant award is \$800,000 over four years, with annual payments of \$200,000. No indirect costs allowed.

**Translational:** The total grant award is \$800,000 over four years, with annual payments of \$200,000. This amount includes both direct and indirect costs. Indirect costs are allowed up to 10% of total grant amount.

The V Foundation follows NIH Guidelines regarding salary caps. Institutions are welcome to supplement a grant recipient's salary with institutional funds if desired.

### **WHO MAY APPLY?**

- Each invited institution may submit **one nominee** to apply for this Breaking Barriers in Cancer Research Grant.
- The **SOLE** nominee may apply in **either** the V Scholar **or** Translational grant type.

### **INSTITUTION ELIGIBILITY:**

Only research institutions that received this invitation may submit a single nominee for consideration. Other affiliates of the institution that did not receive the email are not eligible to nominate an applicant.

### **Applicants may apply to EITHER V Scholar OR Translational**

#### **APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY:**

##### **V Scholar**

**Inclusion:** Nominee must meet **all** the following criteria by the nomination due date.

- Nominated by their Cancer Center Director or similar high ranking research official.
- Employed at the invited non-profit research institution (e.g., 501c3, Section 170).
- Either a U.S. Citizen or lawful permanent resident. This requirement does not apply to invited Canadian institutions.
- Have completed at least two years postdoctoral (MD or PhD) fellowship training. For MDs, a minimum of one year is acceptable if one year is standard for their specialty.
- Clinical scientists must have full institutional support (e.g., dedicated lab space, protected research time, start-up funds).
- Hold a full-time, tenure-track or tenured faculty position (e.g., eligible to apply as PI on an R01 at their institution). Non-promotable adjunct, affiliated, temporary, part-time, or acting faculty positions are not eligible.
- Have been appointed to their first full-time, tenure-track Assistant Professor position **within five years** of the nomination due date and **not yet promoted to Associate Professor**.
  - Extensions to the 5-year limit may be granted on a case-by-case basis for nominees who have taken parental or other qualifying leave during this period.
  - To request approval **before** submitting the nomination form, email grants@v.org with:
    - Appointment start date
    - Length of leave
    - Any institutional tenure-clock stoppages or extensions, if applicable

**Exclusion:** By the nomination due date, nominee must:

- NOT be a previous or current V Scholar Award recipient.
- NOT have accepted or received notification of an R01 or R01-equivalent award.
- NOT have accepted or received notification of any peer-reviewed, non-mentored **single grant** totaling \$750K or more in total direct funding at ANY point in their professional career (*exclude indirect costs and institutional funds.*)
- NOT have accepted or received notification of any peer-reviewed, non-mentored funding exceeding \$1M in **aggregate total direct funding** at ANY point in their professional career (*exclude indirect costs and institutional funds.*)

*Note: The V Scholar Award is intended to support investigators as they establish their research programs and position themselves to compete for larger, sustaining awards. Therefore, nominees who have already received such awards are not eligible.*

**Translational** - Nominee must be the lead Principal Investigator (PI) on the Translational research team and must meet **all** the following criteria by the nomination due date:

- Nominated by their Cancer Center Director or similar high ranking research official.
- Employed at a non-profit research institution (e.g., 501c3, Section 170).
- Must be a U.S. Citizen or have a legal permit (temporary or permanent) to work in the US. This requirement does not apply to invited Canadian institutions.
- 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 PI nomination.

**INTERNAL COMPETITION GUIDELINES:**

Letters of Intent (not to exceed 2 pages) with applicable cover page (see below) are due **Monday, January 19, 2026 at 11:59 pm** and must be emailed as a single PDF document to [winshipgrants@emory.edu](mailto:winshipgrants@emory.edu). Letters of Intent should also include the PI's NIH Biosketch, a proposed title for the research project, and a brief 1-2 page abstract of the proposed research project **with a description of how the PI's unique experiences have influenced their career path and research focus**. The selected investigator will be notified and invited to submit a full application by Winship Cancer Institute of Emory University. Please direct any questions you have regarding this funding opportunity to [winshipgrants@emory.edu](mailto:winshipgrants@emory.edu).

**2026 Breaking Barriers in Cancer Research Grant - V Scholar or Translational**

**CYCLE COMPONENT**

Date of RFA Announcement:

Winship Letter of Intent Due Date:

Winship Announcement of Nominee Selection:

Nomination with Letter of Recommendation Due Date (to V Foundation):

V Foundation Application Due Date:

**DATE**

Friday, December 19, 2025

Monday, January 19, 2026

Monday, January 26, 2026

Monday, February 9, 2026 by 5:00 pm ET

Wednesday, March 11, 2026 by 4:00 pm ET

## Letter of Intent Cover Page (V Scholar)

### APPLICANT Contact Information:

Complete below ↓

|  |  |
|--|--|
| First and last name (including degrees):       |  |
| Name of Cancer Institute:                      |  |
| Professional Title (i.e. Assistant Professor): |  |
| E-mail address:                                |  |
| Phone number:                                  |  |

Please confirm ALL the following eligibility items are true by the nomination due date.

(Please check the boxes below):

- Will be able to describe how your unique experiences have influenced your career path and research focus.
- Is a U.S. Citizen or lawful permanent resident. Does not apply to invited Canadian institutions.
- Has completed at least two years postdoctoral (MD or PhD) fellowship training. For MDs, a minimum of one year is acceptable if one year is standard for your specialty.
- If a clinical scientist, must have full institutional support (e.g., dedicated lab space, protected research time, start-up funds).
- Hold a full-time, tenure-track or tenured faculty position (e.g., eligible to apply as PI on an R01 at their institution). Non-promotable adjunct, affiliated, temporary, part-time, or acting faculty positions are not eligible.
- Appointed to their first full-time, tenure-track Assistant Professor position **within five years** of the nomination due date and not yet promoted to Associate Professor.

Please provide appointment start date here: \_\_\_\_\_

- If an extension to the 5-year eligibility rule was approved by V Foundation, please check here.
- Is NOT a previous or current V Scholar Award recipient.
- Has NOT accepted or received notification of an R01 or R01-equivalent award.
- Has not accepted or received an award notification of any peer-reviewed, non-mentored **single grant** totaling \$750K or more in total direct funding at ANY point in their professional career (*exclude indirect costs and institutional funds.*)
- Must NOT have accepted or received notification of any peer-reviewed, non-mentored funding exceeding \$1M in **aggregate total direct funding** at ANY point in their professional career (*exclude indirect costs and institutional funds.*)

**Project Title and Key words (Include important key words related to the specific type of scientific expertise needed to select reviewers for your application):**

|   |
|---|
| <b>Project Title:</b>   |
| <b>Key words (minimum of six key words such as breast cancer, immunology, imaging techniques, epigenetics, microbiome, etc.):</b> |

## Letter of Intent Cover Page (Translational)

### LEAD APPLICANT Contact Information:

Complete below ↓

|  |  |
|--|--|
| First and last name (including degrees):       |  |
| Name of Cancer Institute:                      |  |
| Professional Title (i.e. Associate Professor): |  |
| E-mail address:                                |  |
| Phone number:                                  |  |

**Please confirm ALL the following eligibility items are true by the nomination due date.**

*(Please check the boxes below):*

- Will be able to describe how your unique experiences have influenced your career path and research focus.
- Must be the lead Principal Investigator (PI) on the Translational research team.
- Is either a U.S. Citizen or has a legal permit (temporary or permanent) to work in the US. Does not apply to invited Canadian institutions.
- Holds 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 PI nomination.

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