



Application Guidelines for the 2021 Young Investigator Grant

*Application Due: July 12, 2021
before 8:00 PM (ET)*



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About Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation

Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation (ALSF) emerged from the front yard lemonade stand of 4-year-old Alexandra "Alex" Scott, who was fighting cancer and wanted to raise money to find cures for all children with cancer. Her spirit and determination inspired others to support her cause, and when she passed away at the age of 8, she had raised \$1 million. Since then, the Foundation bearing her name has evolved into a national fundraising movement. Today, ALSF is one of the leading funders of pediatric cancer research in the U.S. and Canada, funding more than 1,000 research projects and providing programs to families affected by childhood cancer. ALSF is also the only childhood cancer research organization that has been given the NCI peer-reviewed funder designation for rigorous selection of research grants. The mission of ALSF is to change the lives of children with cancer through funding impactful research, raising awareness, supporting families, and empowering everyone to help cure childhood cancer.

ALSF Young Investigator Grant Program Description

The Young Investigator grant is a three-year award designed to support early career researchers, such as postdoctoral, clinical fellows or instructors, pursuing promising childhood cancer research ideas. These grants aim to cultivate the best and brightest researchers of the future who demonstrate a commitment to a research career in pediatric cancer. A mentor is required, and a career development plan must be included. The Young Investigator grant offers up to \$50,000 in direct costs per year for three years.

Application Timeline and Review

- A full proposal must be submitted that meets all guideline criteria as well as all eligibility criteria; otherwise, applications will be administratively rejected.
- Proposals will be reviewed by an independent panel of experts according to the NIH recognized peer-review process.

APPLICATION TIMELINE

PROPOSALS DUE	July 12, 2021, 8:00 PM (ET)
AWARD NOTIFICATION	November 2021
PROJECTED START/END DATE	February 2022 - January 2025
GRANT DURATION	36 months

Applicant Eligibility

- Applicants must have an MD, PhD, or MD/PhD or equivalent and must not have achieved an appointment higher than Instructor. Assistant Professors, including adjuncts at this level, will not be considered. In addition:



- Applicants from accredited clinical fellowship programs are automatically eligible for the duration of their training and during their first three years at the Instructor level.
- For all other applicants in 2021, they must be within six years from the granting of the last doctoral degree.
- A minimum of 75% of the applicant's time during the Young Investigator period must be allocated as protected time for all research activities. This percentage of time includes both Young Investigator activities and the applicant's other research responsibilities.
- At the time of application or successful award, the applicant must not hold an NIH independent (R or P Award) or individual training (F or K Award) grant. Institutional training grants (K12, T32) are permitted. Funding from other foundations is also permitted provided there is no scientific or budgetary overlap.
- A research mentor(s) must be identified and have a track record in pediatric cancer research. If no such record exists, a co-mentor with such a record must be identified. The application must document the mentor(s) involvement in experimental design and execution. A detailed plan for training activities is expected.
- Applicant institutions must be based in the United States or Canada. Applicants need not be United States citizens. Funds must be granted to nonprofit institutions or organizations.

Scope of Proposal

- Proposals must fall within the scope of Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation's mission, focused on childhood cancers. Proposals with a sole/primary focus on patients >21 years of age will not be considered.

Budget

The requested budget should be in proportion to the scope of the proposed project and should be at or under \$150,000 USD in direct costs over 3 years. A maximum of \$50,000 in direct costs may be requested per year.

- Restrictions:
 - ALSF adheres to the NIH salary cap for principal investigator(s).
 - Indirect costs are not allowed.
 - The grant may not be renewed; requests for no-cost extension are allowed.
 - Other budget items may include fringe, travel, supplies and small pieces of equipment. ALSF funds may not be used for tuition remission.
- If utilizing a subcontract or subaward, you must include this expense in the budget.
 - No indirect costs will be paid.



- The PI's institution is responsible for disbursing funds for subawards and/or subcontracts.

Resource and Data Sharing

Grant recipients are expected to share unique resources developed under this funding award, and as part of the application, applicants are required to submit a Resource Sharing Plan. Applicants should describe their track record of generating resources that are broadly re-used, the specific resources that will be generated in this proposed project, and the mechanisms by which those resources will be shared. To demonstrate a commitment to sharing that will be actualized, applicants should provide information in their sharing plan that clearly states the type of resource that will be shared, the method, characterization and timing of such sharing, and the anticipated resources (budget, personnel, etc.) required by the applicant and the resource user. Reviewers will consider the extent to which the dissemination of resources produced under the award will enhance or diminish the impact of the proposed work. For a full description see the [Resource Sharing Form](#).

Resubmissions

One resubmission of an application previously reviewed by ALSF's Review Board is permitted. Applicants should respond to the prior ALSF critique of the proposal in the Resubmission section of the application. The response to critique will be scored in the review process, and resubmissions compete with new applicants for funding.

Restrictions

- ALSF does not fund projects utilizing human embryonic or fetal stem cells or non-human primates. Research with human induced pluripotent stem cells is permissible.
- ALSF will not consider Young Investigator grant applications in psychosocial aspects of pediatric cancer in this category. Please see our Psychosocial Grant categories for inquiries regarding psychosocial research topics.
- The Young Investigator grant is not transferrable to another investigator or to the mentor. Transfer of the Young Investigator grant to another institution will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Grant Reporting Requirements

- Annual progress reports, and each year of funding is contingent upon demonstration of satisfactory progress toward the completion of proposed research objectives and appropriate budget expenditures.



- Minor carry-over of funds (25% or less) is permitted each year with justification. Each year's budget will be approved subsequent to the review of project progress and milestones.
- ALSF may elect to partially fund or to hold new funds if carry-over is excessive.
- A final report is required at the conclusion of funding. Report must state findings, expenditures, as well as publications and presentations which acknowledge ALSF funding. The grant may not be renewed; no-cost extensions must be requested in the final report.
- Publications, presentations and posters featuring results of the experiments funded by this grant mechanism should acknowledge "Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation (Grant #)". Copies should be sent to Grants@AlexsLemonade.org.

Application Package Instructions

- All sections described below should be combined into one PDF (max 20 MB) and uploaded to the ALSF online application form ([see Application Submission Instructions](#)).
- All templates mentioned can be found at ALSF's [Information for Grant Applicants](#) page.

Format Instructions

- **PAGE HEADER:** All pages of the application should be numbered; the name of the principal investigator should appear in the upper right-hand corner of each page.
- **FORMAT:** Follow NIH format guidelines: Arial, Helvetica, Palatino Linotype, or Georgia fonts with a font size of 11 points or larger with a minimum of ½ inch margins.
- **ORDER & LENGTH:** The order of the application should be followed, adhering to the maximum number of pages allowed for each subsection indicated in parentheses.

Section Descriptions

1. Project Information

- a. **Cover Page (1 page):** Download and complete the [Cover Page Template](#).
- b. **Table of Contents (1 page):** Provide a Table of Contents with page numbers to the corresponding sections.
- c. **Scientific Abstract (0.5 page):** Summarize the research objectives and rationale.
- d. **Impact Statement (0.5 page):** How will this project impact childhood cancer?

2. Budget/Justification (3 pages):

- a. **Budget Template (1.5 pages):** Complete the [ALSF budget template](#). The signature from an institutional representative on the cover page of this grant application specifically acknowledges and accepts this budget and that no indirect costs will be paid.



- i. The award amount is \$150,000 USD over 3 years. The maximum to be requested each year is \$50,000.
- ii. ALSF adheres to the NIH salary cap for Principal Investigator(s)/Co-Investigator(s).
- iii. Indirect costs are not allowed.
- iv. If utilizing a sub-contractor, you must include their budget. No indirect costs will be paid to the sub-contractor.
- v. Reasonable travel expenses to national/international research meetings to disseminate findings may be budgeted as well as career development opportunities.

b. Budget Justification (1.5 pages)

3. **Biographical Sketch(es):** Use the NIH five-page biographical sketch (SF424) format for the principal investigator and all key personnel.
4. **Mentoring Plan (1 page):** Describe the mentor's role in the experimental design and execution. Describe in detail the plan for career development including strategies for mentorship in pediatric oncology research, continued education and future research/funding.
5. **Mentor Letter of Recommendation:** This letter is separate from the mentoring plan and should confirm the role and activities outlined in the mentoring plan.
6. **Research Plan**
 - a. **Resubmissions (1 page, if applicable):** If this proposal was previously submitted to ALSF and did not receive funding, describe any changes in response to the reviewer critiques (e.g. changes in experimental design, scope, new data)
 - b. **Specific Aims (1 page):** List the goals, long-term objectives and what the specific research proposed in this application is intended to accomplish. State the hypothesis to be tested and relevance to childhood cancer research.
 - c. **Significance (1 page):** Describe the relevant background that supports the current research plan. State the significance and importance of your proposed project with respect to childhood cancer research. Relate the specific aims to the goals and long-term objectives.
 - d. **Impact (1 page):** Describe how this project will modify or add to the pediatric oncology body of knowledge within the area of research and state how the integration of recent technology or novel approaches will directly affect outcomes.
 - e. **Approach (4 pages):** Describe the experimental approach to the research question and how the research will be realistically accomplished within the proposed funding period. This section must include but is not limited to:



- i. PI's preliminary studies pertinent to the project.
 - ii. A timeline, including the deliverables that will be generated, and the anticipated timeframe for each deliverable.
 - iii. Anticipated potential problems and plans to address these issues.
7. **Resource Sharing (1-2 pages):** Use the [Resource Sharing Form](#) to complete this section of the application to describe the outputs from the proposed project and how they will be shared. Reviewers will be asked to consider the manner in which outputs from this project will be shared and the extent to which this plan will increase or decrease the impact of the proposed project.
8. **Literature Cited (no limit):** Use Vancouver or NIH style (numbered citations within text) format.
9. **Human Subjects (1 page):** If approved, include the IRB approval letter or equivalent. If approval is pending, indicate the expected approval date. Any funds awarded will be held until the letter is received. If IRB approval is not applicable, include a note in this section.
10. **Vertebrate Animals (1 page):** If approved, include the IACUC approval letter or equivalent. If approval is pending indicate the expected approval date. Any funds awarded will be held until the letter is received. If IACUC approval is not applicable, include a note in this section.
11. **Letters of Support (4 letter max):** In addition to the mentor letter, include any appropriate letters from individuals confirming their roles in the project. There should be no more than four letters of support (one from the mentor and up to three from other individuals).
12. **Appendix:** No appendices are permitted.

Application Submission Instructions

Applicants must not use the Internet Explorer (IE) browser as it is not compatible with the online portal. Chrome and Firefox browsers are recommended.

1. To start an application, navigate to the portal at ALSfapps.force.com.
 - a. Returning applicants: login with your username and password.
 - b. First time applicants: click the "New User?" link and complete your one-time registration and then login. Please enter the full name of your institution as the Account name.
2. After you've logged in, follow the directions on the dashboard to submit your application. Complete the online form with applicant contact and project information.
 - a. Enter the Project Title first, even if tentative. Then Save.



- b. Applicant will be asked for basic contact information for themselves, co-PI(s) if applicable, grant manager and institution. If someone other than the PI is entering information into the portal, the “Contact Person” name entered **must** be the PI’s name.
 - c. In the respective sections enter the project title, budget request amount, type of childhood cancer the project focuses on, as well as a 250-word summary of the research project in lay terms. The applicant will be asked to release this summary for use at ALSF’s discretion (website, press releases etc.) should the proposal be funded. The applicant may copy and paste information from other documents into these sections.
3. The application document must be uploaded as **one PDF** (maximum of 20 MB).
 4. You may save your application to finish later. Go to ALSFapps.force.com and login again. You will land on your dashboard. Click “Applications” to edit your application in progress.
 5. Once completed, submit the application by clicking Review & Submit. You will see error messages for any required fields that need to be completed.
 6. After your application has been successfully submitted an email confirmation will be sent. You will not be able to amend the application after submission.

Contact

- If you have any questions regarding the ALSF Young Investigator Grant, please contact Judy Oliver, Sr. Grants Coordinator, by email at J.Oliver@AlexsLemonade.org.