Program Announcement for the Defense Health Agency

Rare Cancers Research Program Concept Award

Funding Opportunity Number: HT942526RCRPCA

Pre-Application Due: September 16, 2026

Application Due: September 30, 2026

This program announcement must be read in conjunction with the General Application Instructions, version CD26_01.

Content

Before You Begin

- **Active SAM.gov, eBRAP.org and Grants.gov registrations are required for application submission.** User registration for each of these websites can take several weeks or longer. Each applicant must ensure their registrations are active and up to date prior to application preparation.
- **Read this funding opportunity announcement in the order it is written before beginning to prepare application materials.** It is the responsibility of the applicant to determine whether the proposed research meets the intent of this funding opportunity and that all parties meet eligibility requirements.
- **To support application preparation, additional resources are available** including an application process FAQ, a Guide for Intragovernmental & Intramural Applicants and a CDMRP Video Series detailing the application process.

Who to Contact for Support

eBRAP Help Desk

301-682-5507
help@eBRAP.org

Questions regarding funding opportunity submission requirements, as well as technical assistance related to pre-application or intramural application submission.

Grants.gov Support Center

800-518-4726
International: 1-606-545-5035
support@grants.gov

Questions regarding Grants.gov registration and Workspace.

This document uses internal links; you can go back to where you were by pressing the Alt + left arrow keys (Windows) or command + left arrow keys (Macintosh) on your keyboard.

Click ⓘ to be taken to additional guidance and instructions within the General Application Instructions (GAI).

1. Basic Information About the Funding Opportunity

Summary: The fiscal year 2026 (FY26) Rare Cancers Research Program (RCRP) Concept Award (CA) supports highly innovative, untested, potentially groundbreaking novel concepts in rare cancers. Applications must describe how the new idea will be innovative and present as a novel course of investigation in the field of rare cancers.

Distinctive Features:

- **Preliminary data are not required.**
- **Due to the blinded nature of the review process, identifying or making references to the Principal Investigator (PI), collaborator(s), or their organization(s) in the proposal** Project Narrative, Supporting Documentations, Impact Statement, Justification Statement, and Statement of Work [SOW]) **is prohibited and will result in administrative rejection of the application.**

Funding Details: The Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs (CDMRP) expects to allot roughly $2.52M to fund approximately 18 Concept Award applications with total cost caps of $0.14M per award. The maximum period of performance is 2 years. It is anticipated that awards made from this fiscal year 2026 (FY26) funding opportunity will be funded with FY26 funds, which will expire for use on September 30, 2032. Awards supported with FY26 funds will be made no later than September 30, 2027.

Submission and Review Dates and Times

- **Pre-Application (Letter of Intent) Submission Deadline:** 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time (ET), September 16, 2026
- **Application Submission Deadline:** 11:59 p.m. ET, September 30, 2026
- **End of Application Verification Period:** 5:00 p.m. ET, October 7, 2026
- **Peer Review:** December 2026
- **Programmatic Review:** March/April 2027

Announcement Type: Initial

Funding Opportunity Number: HT942526RCRPCA

Assistance Listing Number: 12.420

2. Eligibility Information

2.1. Eligible Applicants

2.1.1. Organization

Extramural and intramural U.S. Department of War (DOW) organizations are eligible to apply, ***including foreign and domestic organizations, for-profit and nonprofit organizations, and public or private entities***.

2.1.2. Principal Investigator

Independent investigators at or above the level of postdoctoral fellow (or equivalent) affiliated with an eligible organization are eligible to be named Principal Investigator (PI) on the application, regardless of ethnicity, nationality or citizenship status. The investigators do not have to be from academic organizations.

An investigator may be named on only one FY26 RCRP CA application as PI.

2.2. Cost Sharing

Cost sharing is not an eligibility requirement.

2.3. Other

Awards are made to eligible ***organizations***, not to individuals. Refer to the General Application Instructions (GAI) for additional recipient qualification requirements.

3. Program Description

The Defense Health Agency Contracting Activity (DHACA) is soliciting applications to this funding opportunity using delegated authority provided by United States Code, Title 10, Section 4001 (10 USC 4001). The CDMRP is the program office managing this FY26 funding opportunity as part of the Rare Cancers Research Program (RCRP). The CDMRP is located within the Defense Health Agency Research and Development (DHA R&D), which is a part of the Department of Defense, DOD, herein referred to using the secondary title Department of War, DOW. Congress initiated the RCRP in 2020 to provide support for research of exceptional scientific merit in the area of rare cancers. Appropriations for the RCRP from FY20 through FY25 totaled $95.0 million (M). The FY26 appropriation is $17.5M.

The vision of the RCRP is to improve outcomes for people with rare cancers through discovery and community building, and expansion of knowledge across cancer landscape. To achieve this vision, the program promotes rare cancers research by catalyzing knowledge building and enabling clinically impactful discoveries. Through these efforts, the RCRP seeks to benefit patients, Service Members, their Families, Veterans and the American public.

FY26 RCRP definition of rare cancers: Cancers affecting six or fewer persons per 100,000 per year in the United States. Applicants will be required to provide a justification statement explaining the relevance of the investigated cancer types/subtypes that fall under the RCRP's definition of rare cancers.

The proposed research must be relevant to active-duty Service Members, Veterans, military beneficiaries and the American public. Data from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) suggests that rare cancers are the most prevalent types or subtypes of cancers among the Veteran population.

3.1. Award History

The RCRP Concept Award (CA) mechanism was first offered in FY20. Since then, 979 CA applications were received, and 90 were recommended for funding.

3.2. Intent of the Concept Award

The FY26 RCRP CA supports highly innovative, untested, potentially groundbreaking novel concepts in rare cancers. The CA is not intended to support an incremental progression of an already established research project. Instead, this award mechanism allows PIs the opportunity to pursue serendipitous observations. **Presentation of preliminary data is not consistent with the intent of this funding opportunity.** This award mechanism supports high-risk studies that have the potential to reveal entirely new avenues for investigation. Applications must describe how the new idea will enhance the existing knowledge of rare cancers or develop an innovative and novel course of investigation. Research completed through a CA may generate sufficient preliminary data to enable the PI to prepare an application for future research.

3.2.1. Focus Areas for the Concept Award

To meet the intent of the funding opportunity, applications for the FY26 RCRP CA must address one or more of the following focus areas:

- **Biology:** Identify disease-defining molecular pathways, cell context, and microenvironment.

- **Preclinical Research Model:** Develop and validate rare tumor-specific models that can support clinical trial readiness.
- **Therapy:** Identify novel therapeutic strategies, including drug repurposing.
- **Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) Model:** Establish use of AI and/or ML tools in discovery, preclinical studies, and clinical trial readiness.

3.2.2. Key Elements for the Concept Award

Preliminary data are not required.

Reviewers will be blinded to the identity of the Principal Investigator (PI), collaborator(s), and their organization(s). Refer to Section 4.3. Full Application Components for more information.

3.2.3. Other Important Considerations for the Concept Award

In accordance with the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2026, Section 732, the CDMRP does not support the conduct of painful research (U.S. Department of Agriculture pain category D or E) involving domestic cats or dogs, except for studies relating to military or service animals.

Clinical trials are not allowed within this funding opportunity.

For the purposes of this funding opportunity, research that meets the definition of a clinical trial is distinct from clinical research. Clinical research encompasses research with human data, human specimens, and/or interaction with human subjects.

Excluded from the definition of clinical research are in vitro studies that utilize human data or specimens that cannot be linked to a living individual and meet the requirements for exemption under §46.104(d)(4) of the Common Rule.

The FY26 RCRP CA is designed for preliminary investigations. Research involving human subjects or specimens must be either exempt under 32 CFR 219.104(d) or eligible for expedited review (21 CFR 56.110). Exemption or expedited status is first determined by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of record. Investigators must review their institutional requirements and guidelines for filing with the IRB for exempt or expedited status. **Studies that do not qualify for exempt or expedited status will be administratively withdrawn.**

All projects should adhere to a core set of standards for rigorous study design and reporting to maximize the reproducibility and translational potential of clinical and preclinical research, such as those described in the STROBE, CONSORT, SPIRIT and ARRIVE 2.0 guidelines.

Applications from investigators within the DOW and applications involving multidisciplinary collaborations among academia, industry, the DOW, the VA and other federal government agencies are highly encouraged. These relationships can leverage knowledge, infrastructure and access to unique clinical populations that the collaborators bring to the research effort, ultimately advancing research that is of significance to Service Members, Veterans, their Families and the American Public. If the proposed research relies on access to unique resources or databases, the application must describe the access at the time of submission and include a plan for maintaining access as needed throughout the proposed research.

The following encouragement is broadly applicable across many CDMRP programs, including the RCRP: A congressionally mandated Metastatic Cancer Task Force was formed with the purpose of identifying ways to help accelerate clinical and translational research aimed at

extending the lives of advanced state and recurrent patients. As a member of the Metastatic Cancer Task Force, CDMRP encourages applicants to review the recommendations and submit research ideas to address these recommendations provided they are within the limitations of this funding opportunity and fit within the FY26 RCRP priorities.

3.3. Funding Instrument

The funding instrument for awards made under the program announcement will be grants (31 USC 6304).

3.4. Funding Details

Period of Performance: The maximum period of performance is **2** years.

Cost Cap: The application's total costs budgeted for the entire period of performance should not exceed **$140,000**. If indirect cost rates have been negotiated, indirect costs are to be budgeted in accordance with the organization's negotiated rate. Collaborating organizations should budget associated indirect costs in accordance with each organization's negotiated rate.

All direct and indirect costs of any subaward or contract must be included in the direct costs of the primary award.

The applicant may request the entire maximum funding amount for a project that may have a period of performance less than the maximum **2** years.

The appropriateness of the budget for the proposed research will be assessed during peer review.

Direct Cost Restrictions: For this award mechanism, direct costs:

May be requested for (not all-inclusive):

- Travel in support of multi-institutional collaborations.
- Costs for one investigator to travel to one scientific/technical meeting per year. The intent of travel to scientific/technical meetings should be to present project information or disseminate project results from the RCRP CA.

Must not be requested for:

- Costs for travel to scientific/technical meeting(s) beyond the limits stated above.
- Clinical trial costs.

4. Application Contents and Format

4.1. Application Overview

Application submission is a two-step process requiring both a ***pre-application*** submitted via the Electronic Biomedical Research Application Portal (eBRAP) and a ***full application*** submitted through eBRAP or Grants.gov. Depending on the submission portal, certain aspects of the application will differ.

Intramural DOW organizations submitting a full application should follow instructions for submission through eBRAP.

Extramural organizations submitting a full application must follow instructions for submission through Grants.gov.

4.2. Pre-Application Components

Pre-application submissions must include the following components.

Letter of Intent (LOI) (one-page limit): Provide a brief description of the research to be conducted. Include the FY26 RCRP CA focus area(s) to be addressed.

*LOIs are used for program planning purposes only (e.g., reviewer recruitment) and will not be reviewed during either the peer or programmatic review**. An invitation to submit a full application is NOT provided after LOI submission. Applicants are encouraged to develop pre-application and full application components concurrently and submit a full application AFTER successful submission of the pre-application.***

4.3. Full Application Components

Reviewers will be blinded to the identity of the PI, collaborator(s), and their organization(s). Due to the blinded nature of the review process, identifying or making references to the PI(s), collaborator(s), or their organization(s) in the Project Narrative, Supporting Documentation, Impact Statement, Justification Statement and Statement of Work (SOW) **is prohibited and will result in administrative rejection of the application. In addition, the use of "I," "we," "our," "this organization," or similar phrases that refer to the PI(s), collaborator(s), or their organization(s) through the references listed,** or the use of formatting (e.g., bolding, underlining, names in headers/footers), inclusion of citations to unpublished manuscripts, inclusion of URLs (uniform resource locators, or web addresses), or in any other way highlighting the names of the PI(s), collaborator(s), or their organization(s), **is prohibited and will result in administrative rejection of the application and preclude invitation to submit a full application**.

The following forms **are required** but will not be forwarded for peer review or programmatic review: Research & Related Budget, Research & Related Subaward Budget Attachment(s) Form (if applicable), biographical sketch, previous/current/pending support, and Project/Performance Site Location(s) Form. These documents will be used for administrative purposes only.

Each application submission must include the completed full application package for this program announcement. See Appendix 1 for a checklist of the full application components.

(a) SF424 Research & Related Application for Federal Assistance Form *(Grants.gov submissions only)*:

IMPORTANT: *When completing the SF424 R&R, enter the* ***eBRAP log number*** *assigned during pre-application submission into* ***Block 4a – Federal Identifier****.*

(b) Attachments:

Each attachment of the full application components must be uploaded as an individual file in the format specified and in accordance with the formatting guidelines in the GAI.

- **Attachment 1: Project Narrative (two-page limit): Upload as "ProjectNarrative.pdf".**

  The page limit of the Project Narrative applies to text and non-text elements (e.g., figures, tables, graphs, photographs, diagrams, chemical structures, drawings) used to describe the project. Inclusion of URLs (uniform resource locators) that provide additional information that expands the Project Narrative and could confer an unfair competitive advantage is prohibited and may result in administrative withdrawal of the application. Consult appropriate guidelines to ensure relevant aspects of rigorous and reproducible research are adequately planned for and, ultimately, reported.

  Preliminary data are not required.

  Describe the proposed project in detail using the outline below.

  - **Innovation:** Describe how the proposed research is innovative and may introduce a new paradigm, challenges existing paradigms, looks at existing problems from new perspectives or exhibit other highly creative qualities.
  - **Rationale:** Articulate clearly the sound scientific rationale that supports the proposed research.
  - **Objectives:** State concisely the specific aims and/or study objectives.
  - **Methods:** Describe the experimental design, methods, and analyses, including appropriate controls, if applicable. Address potential problem areas and present alternative methods and approaches. Details should include how the study is designed to achieve reproducible and rigorous results, including the choice of model and measurable endpoints/outcomes.
  - **Outcomes:** Articulate how the study has the potential to generate preliminary data or findings that can be used as a foundation for future research projects.

  Due to the blinded nature of the review process, identifying or making references to the PI, collaborator(s), or their organization(s) in the Project Narrative is prohibited and will result in administrative rejection of the application.

- **Attachment 2: Supporting Documentation: Combine and upload as a single file named "Support.pdf".** Start each document on a new page. The Supporting Documentation attachment should not include additional information such as figures, tables, graphs, photographs, diagrams, chemical structures, or drawings. These items should be included in the Project Narrative.

  There are no page limits for these components unless otherwise noted. Include only components described below; inclusion of items not requested or viewed as an extension of the Project Narrative will result in the removal of those items or may result in administrative withdrawal of the application.

References Cited: List the references cited in the Project Narrative using a standard reference format (include URLs, if available).

Do not include URLs that identify the PI(s), collaborator(s), or the organization(s) of the PI(s) or collaborator(s).

List of Abbreviations, Acronyms and Symbols: Provide a list of abbreviations, acronyms and symbols.

Sex as a Biological Variable Strategy (two-page limit is recommended): Describe the strategy for how sex will be considered as a biological variable. This strategy should include a brief discussion of what is currently known regarding sex differences in the applicable research area. Clearly articulate how sex as a biological variable will be factored into the data analysis plan and how data will be collected and disaggregated by sex. If needed, provide a strong rationale for proposing a single-sex study, based on justification from scientific literature, preliminary data or other relevant considerations. Refer to the CDMRP Directive on Sex as a Biological Variable in Research for additional information.

Identifying or making references to the PI(s), collaborator(s), or their organization(s) in the Supporting Documentation is prohibited and will result in administrative rejection of the application.

- **Attachment 3: Statement of Work (three-page limit): Upload as "SOW.pdf".** Refer to eBRAP for the Suggested SOW Format.

  For guidance on preparing the SOW, refer to the Example: Assembling a Generic Statement of Work. Include milestones for data or research resource(s) sharing.

  Identifying or making references to the PI(s), collaborator(s), or their organization(s) in the SOW is prohibited and will result in administrative rejection of the application.

- **Attachment 4: Impact Statement (one-page limit): Upload as "Impact.pdf".** State how the project will have a major impact on at least one of the FY26 RCRP Focus Area(s). Describe how the proposed research will make an original and important contribution toward advancing basic, translational, or clinical rare cancers research or on improving outcomes for people with rare cancers. Describe how the high-risk proposed research project is novel **in the field of rare cancers**. Proposed research may apply or adapt existing methods or technologies for novel rare cancers research or clinical purposes that differ fundamentally from those originally intended. Provide a brief statement describing the short- and/or long-term impact(s) of this research on the field of rare cancers.

  If applicable, describe how the anticipated outcomes of the proposed study will make an impact in understanding health differences between sexes.

  Due to the blinded nature of the review process, identifying or making references to the PI(s), collaborator(s), or their organization(s) in the Impact Statement is prohibited and will result in administrative rejection of the application.

- **Attachment 5: Justification Statement (one-page limit): Upload as "Justification.pdf" (for programmatic review only).** Describe how the cancer or cancer subtype is defined as rare under the definition of the **RCRP (incidence rate six or fewer persons per 100,000 per year),** including citations on incidence rates, mortality, and status of disease research.

Due to the blinded nature of the review process, identifying or making references to the PI(s), collaborator(s), or their organization(s) in the Justification Statement is prohibited and will result in administrative rejection of the application

- **Attachment 6: Representations *(Grants.gov submissions only)*: Upload as "RequiredReps.pdf".** All extramural applicants must complete and submit the Required Representations document available on eBRAP.
- **Attachment 7: Suggested Intragovernmental/Intramural Budget Form *(if applicable)*: Upload as "IGBudget.pdf".** If an intramural DOW organization will be a collaborator in the performance of the project, complete a separate budget for that organization using the Suggested Intragovernmental/Intramural Budget form available on eBRAP.

(c) Additional Application Materials:

The following are additional forms for application submission. Follow the instructions specific to the submission portal, as found within the GAI.

Grants.gov	eBRAP.org
i. Research & Related Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded) ○ **Biographical Sketch** ○ **Current/Pending Support** *Intragovernmental applicants must include their internally supported research and development programs.*	
ii. Research & Related Budget	
iii. Project/Performance Site Location(s)	
iv. Research & Related Subaward Budget Attachment(s) *(if applicable, Grants.gov submissions only)*	

4.4. Other Application Elements

If recommended for funding, a data management plan compliant with Section 3.c, Enclosure 3, DoD Instructions 3200.12 will be requested

If recommended for funding, applicants will be requested to provide Technical and Lay abstracts prior to award.

The government reserves the right to request a revised budget, budget justification and/or additional information for applications recommended for funding.

5. Submission Requirements

5.1. Location of Application Package

Download the application package components for HT942526RCRPCA from Grants.gov or eBRAP, depending on which submission portal will be used.

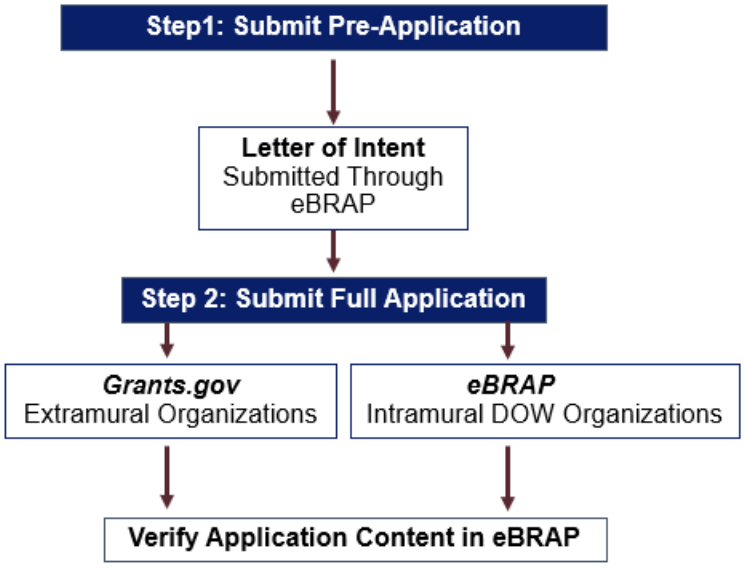
5.2. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management

The applicant organization must be registered as an entity in the System for Award Management (SAM), SAM.gov, and receive confirmation of an "Active" status before submitting an application through Grants.gov. Organizations must include the unique entity identifier (UEI) generated by the SAM in applications to this funding opportunity and maintain an active registration in the SAM at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application under consideration.

5.3. Submission Instructions

The CDMRP uses two portal systems to accept pre- and full application submissions. The workflow below shows which portal system to use for pre- and full application submissions, respectively.

Application Submission Workflow



5.3.1. Pre-Application Submission

All pre-application components must be submitted by the PI through eBRAP.

During the pre-application process, eBRAP assigns each submission a unique log number. This unique log number is required during the full application submission process. The eBRAP log number, application title and all information for the PI, Business Official(s), performing organization, and contracting organization must be consistent throughout the entire

pre-application and full application submission process. Inconsistencies may delay application processing and limit or negate the ability to view, modify and verify the application in eBRAP. Contact the eBRAP Help Desk if any changes need to be made.

When starting the pre-application, PIs should ensure that they have selected the appropriate "Cancer Type" category. After selecting one of the offered Cancer Types, a textbox will appear where the applicant should enter a specific name for the cancer that will be studied (60-character limit). PIs should also select "age groups".

Refer to the GAI for considerations and detailed instructions regarding pre-application submission.

5.3.2. Full Application Submission

Grants.gov Submissions: Full applications from extramural organizations *must* be submitted through the Grants.gov Workspace.

eBRAP Submissions: Only intramural DOW organizations may submit full applications through eBRAP.

5.3.3. Applicant Verification of Full Application Submission in eBRAP

Independent of the submission portal, once the full application is submitted, it is transmitted to and processed in eBRAP; the transmission to eBRAP may take up to 48 hours. At this stage, the PI and organizational representatives will receive an email from eBRAP instructing them to log in to eBRAP to review, modify and verify the full application submission. ***The Project Narrative and Research & Related Budget Form cannot be changed after the application submission deadline.*** Other application components, including subaward budget(s) and subaward budget justification(s), may be changed until the application verification period ends. The full application cannot be modified once the application verification period ends.

5.4. Submission Dates and Times

The pre-application and full application submission process should be started early to avoid missing deadlines. Regardless of submission portal used, all pre- and full application components must be submitted by the deadlines stipulated in this program announcement. There are no grace periods for deadlines; failure to meet submission deadlines will result in application rejection. ***The DHACA cannot make allowances/exceptions for submission problems encountered by the applicant.***

Submission dates and times are specified in Section 1, Basic Information.

5.5. Intergovernmental Review

Not applicable for this funding opportunity.

6. Application Review Information

6.1. Application Compliance Review

Submitting applications that propose essentially the same research project to different funding opportunities within the same program and fiscal year is prohibited and will result in administrative withdrawal of the duplicative application(s).

While it is allowable to propose similar research projects to different programs within the CDMRP or to other organizations, duplication of funding or accepting funding from more than one source for the same research is prohibited. See the CDMRP's Directive on Research Duplication.

Including classified research data within the application and/or proposing research that may produce classified outcomes or outcomes deemed sensitive to national security concerns, may result in application withdrawal.

Members of the FY26 RCRP Programmatic Panel must not be involved in any pre-application or full application including, but not limited to, concept design, application development, budget preparation and the development of any supporting documentation, including personal letters of support/recommendation for the research and/or PI. Programmatic panel members ***may*** provide letters to confirm PI eligibility and access to laboratory space, equipment and other resources necessary for the project if that is part of their regular roles and responsibilities (e.g., as Department Chair). ***A list of the FY26 RCRP Programmatic Panel members can be found on the CDMRP website.***

Additional restrictions and associated administrative responses are outlined in Section 9.2, Administrative Actions.

6.2. Review Criteria

6.2.1. Pre-Application Screening Criteria

Pre-applications submitted to this funding opportunity are used for program planning purposes only (e.g., reviewer recruitment) and will not be screened.

6.2.2. Peer Review Criteria

To determine technical merit, all applications will be evaluated individually according to the following **scored criteria**, which are of equal importance***:***

- **Innovation**
  - To what degree the research introduces innovative new paradigms, novel challenges to existing paradigms, interrogates existing problems from new perspectives or exhibits other highly creative qualities.
- **Research Strategy and Feasibility**
  - To what degree the proposed research is supported by a sound scientific rationale.
  - To what degree the experimental design and methodology are appropriate to address the stated specific aims and/or objectives.

- Whether the application addresses potential problem areas and presents alternative methods and approaches.
- To what extent the research has the potential to generate preliminary data or findings that can be used as a foundation for future research projects.
- How well researchers design studies to achieve reproducible and rigorous results, including the choice of model and measurable endpoints/outcomes.
- Whether the strategy for considering sex as a biological variable is appropriate to the objectives of the study or whether the justification for a single-sex study is sufficiently strong.

- **Impact**
  - How well the proposed research addresses at least one of the FY26 RCRP Focus Areas.
  - How the high-risk proposed research project is novel in the field of rare cancers.
  - To what extent the proposed research will, in the short term or long term, lead to an original and important contribution toward advancing basic, translational, or clinical rare cancers research or on improving outcomes for people with rare cancers.
  - To what extent the anticipated outcomes of the proposed study will make an impact in the field.
  - If applicable, to what extent the anticipated outcomes of the proposed study will make an impact in understanding health differences between sexes.
- **Application Presentation**
  - To what extent the writing, clarity and presentation of the application components influence the review.

6.2.3. Programmatic Review

To make funding recommendations and select the application(s) that, individually or collectively, will best achieve the program objectives, the following criteria are used by programmatic reviewers:

- Ratings and evaluations of peer reviewers
- Relevance to the priorities of the FY26 RCRP, as evidenced by the following:
  - Adherence to the intent of the funding opportunity
  - Program portfolio composition
  - Relative impact in the field of rare cancers
  - Relevance of the study to the FY26 RCRP definition of rare cancers

6.3. Application Review and Selection Process

6.3.1. Pre-Application

There is no review and selection process for pre-applications submitted to this funding opportunity. ***CDMRP will NOT provide an invitation to submit a full application after pre-application submission***. Applicants are encouraged to develop pre-application and full

application components concurrently and submit a full application AFTER successful submission of the pre-application.

6.3.2. Full Application

All applications are evaluated by scientists, clinicians and consumers in a two-tier review process. The first tier is **peer review**, the evaluation of applications against established criteria to determine technical merit, where each application is assessed for its own merit, independent of other applications. The second tier is **programmatic review**, a comparison-based process in which applications with high scientific and technical merit are further evaluated for programmatic relevance. Final recommendations for funding are subject to review and approval by a designated official. ***The highest-scoring applications from the first tier of review are not automatically recommended for funding. Funding recommendations depend on various factors as described in Section 6.2.3, Programmatic Review.*** Additional information about the two-tier process used by the CDMRP can be found on the CDMRP website. For this program announcement, reviewers at both tiers of review will be blinded to the identity of the PI, collaborator(s), and their organization(s).

Funding of applications received is contingent upon the availability of federal funds for this program, the number of applications received, the quality and merit of the applications as evaluated by peer and programmatic review, and the requirements of the government. Funds to be obligated on any award resulting from this funding opportunity will be available for use for a limited time period based on the fiscal year of the funds.

6.4. Risk, Integrity and Performance Information

Prior to making an assistance agreement award where the federal share is expected to exceed the simplified acquisition threshold, as defined in the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 2, Part 200.1 (2 CFR 200.1), over the period of performance, the federal awarding agency is required to review and consider any information about the applicant that is available in the SAM.

An applicant organization may review the SAM and submit comments on any information currently available about the organization that a federal awarding agency previously entered. The federal awarding agency will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to other information in the designated integrity and performance system, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics and record of performance under federal awards when determining a recipient's qualification prior to award, according to the qualification standards of the Department of Defense Grant and Agreement Regulations (DoDGARs), Section 22.415.

In accordance with National Security Presidential Memorandum-33 and all associated laws, all fundamental research funded by the DOW must be evaluated for affiliations with foreign entities. All applicant organizations must disclose foreign affiliations of all key personnel named on applications. Failure to disclose foreign affiliations of key personnel shall lead to withdrawal of recommendations to fund applications. Applicant organizations may be presented with an opportunity to mitigate identified risks, particularly those pertaining to influence from foreign entities specified in law. Implementation of mitigation discussions and utilization of the DOD Component Decision Matrix must decrease risk of foreign influence in accordance with the above-mentioned laws and guidance prior to award.

7. Federal Award Notices

For each compliant full application received, the organizational representative(s) and PI will receive email notification when the funding recommendations are posted to eBRAP, typically within 6 weeks after programmatic review. At this time, each PI will receive a peer review summary statement on the strengths and weaknesses of the application and an information paper describing the application receipt and review process for the RCRP award mechanisms. The information papers and a list of organizations and PIs recommended for funding are also posted on the program's page within the CDMRP website. After all awards are made, the CDMRP includes individual award information in a searchable database.

If an application is recommended for funding, after the email notification is posted to eBRAP, a government representative will contact the person authorized to negotiate on behalf of the recipient organization.

Only an appointed DHACA Grants Officer may obligate the government to the expenditure of funds to an extramural organization. No commitment on the part of the government should be inferred from discussions with any other individual. ***The award document signed by the Grants Officer is the official authorizing document (i.e., assistance agreement).***

Intragovernmental obligations of funding will be made according to the terms of a negotiated Inter-Agency Agreement and managed by a CDMRP Science Officer.

Funding obligated to ***intragovernmental and intramural DOW organizations*** will be sent through the Military Interdepartmental Purchase Request (MIPR), Funding Authorization Document (FAD) or Direct Charge Work Breakdown Structure processes. Transfer of funds is contingent upon appropriate safety and administrative approvals. Intragovernmental and intramural DOW investigators and collaborators must coordinate receipt and commitment of funds through their respective Resource Manager/Task Area Manager/Comptroller or equivalent Business Official.

An organization may, at its own risk and without the government's prior approval, incur obligations and expenditures to cover costs up to 90 days before the beginning date of the initial budget period of a new award.

8. Post-Award Requirements

8.1. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Applicable requirements in the DoDGARs found in 32 CFR, Chapter I, Subchapter C, and 2 CFR, Chapter XI, apply to grants and cooperative agreements resulting from this program announcement.

The GAI contain information regarding administrative requirements and national policy requirements.

Refer to full text of the latest DoD R&D Terms and Conditions and the DHACA Terms and Conditions for further information.

If there are delinquencies in technical reporting requirements for any existing DHA or U.S. Army Medical Research and Development Command awards at the applicant organization, DHACA will not issue any new awards to the applicant organization until all delinquent reports have been submitted.

Applications recommended for funding that involve animals, human data, human specimens, human subjects or human cadavers must be reviewed for compliance with federal animal and/or human subjects protection requirements and must be approved by the DHA R&D Office of Research and Regulatory Compliance (ORRC), prior to implementation. This administrative review requirement is in addition to the local Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC), IRB or Ethics Committee (EC) review.

8.2. Reporting

Annual technical progress reports as well as a final technical progress report will be required. Annual and final technical progress reports must be prepared in accordance with the Research Performance Progress Report (RPPR).

The Award Terms and Conditions will specify whether additional and/or more frequent reporting is required.

Award Expiration Transition Plan: An Award Expiration Transition Plan, using the template available on eBRAP, must be submitted with the final progress report.

Awards resulting from this program announcement may entail additional reporting requirements related to recipient integrity and performance matters. Recipient organizations that have federal contract, grant and cooperative agreement awards with a cumulative total value greater than $10M are required to provide information to the SAM about certain civil, criminal and administrative proceedings that reached final disposition within the most recent 5-year period and that were connected with their performance of a federal award. These recipients are required to disclose, semiannually, information about criminal, civil and administrative proceedings as specified in the applicable Representations.

8.3. Additional Requirements

Unless otherwise restricted, changes in the PI or organization will be allowed on a case-by-case basis, provided the intent of the award mechanism is met.

An organizational transfer of an award will not be allowed in the last year of the original period of performance or any extension thereof.

9. Other Information

9.1. Program Announcement Version

Questions related to this program announcement should refer to the program name, the program announcement name and the program announcement version code CD26_01d.

9.2. Administrative Actions

After receipt of full applications, the following administrative actions may occur.

9.2.1. Rejection

The following will result in administrative rejection of the full application:

- Pre-application (LOI) was not submitted.
- The Project Narrative is missing.
- The Budget is missing.

9.2.2. Modification

- Pages exceeding the specified limits will be removed prior to reviewing all documents.
- Documents not requested will be removed.

9.2.3. Withdrawal

The following may result in administrative withdrawal of the full application:

- A member of the FY26 RCRP Programmatic Panel is named as being involved in the development or execution of the research proposed or is found to have assisted in the pre-application or application processes.
- The application includes the name(s) of personnel from either of the CDMRP peer or programmatic review companies for which conflicts cannot be adequately mitigated. For FY26, the identities of the peer review contractor and the programmatic review contractor may be found on the CDMRP website.
- Personnel from applicant or collaborating organizations are found to have contacted persons involved in the review or approval process to gain protected evaluation information or to influence the evaluation process.
- The application from an extramural organization, including non-DOW federal agencies, is received through eBRAP.
- The federal government recipient organization (including an intramural DOW organization): (a) cannot accept and execute the entirety of the requested budget in FY26 funds; and/or (b) cannot coordinate the use of contractual, assistance or other appropriate agreements to provide funds to collaborators.
- The application fails to conform to this program announcement description.

- The application includes URLs, with the exception of links in the References Cited and Publication and/or Patent sections.
- The application includes research data that are classified and/or proposes research that may produce classified outcomes, or outcomes deemed sensitive to national security concerns.
- The same research project is submitted to different funding opportunities within the same program and fiscal year.
- The PI does not meet the eligibility criteria.
- The PI(s), collaborator(s), or their organization(s) are identified or referenced in the ***Project Narrative, List of Abbreviations, Acronyms, and Symbols, SOW, Supporting Documentations, Statement of Work, Impact Statement and/or Justification Statement.***
- Use of "I," "we," "our," "this organization," or similar phrases that refer to the PI(s), collaborator(s), or their organization(s) through the references listed, or the use of formatting (e.g., bolding, underlining, names in headers/footers), inclusion of citations to unpublished manuscripts, or in any other way highlighting (and therefore revealing) the names of the PI(s), collaborator(s), or their organization(s).
- The application does not address at least one of the FY26 RCRP Focus Areas.
- The cancer or cancer subtype proposed in the application does not meet the FY26 RCRP definition of rare cancers.
- An investigator may be named as a PI on a single application to this program announcement. If an investigator is named multiple times as a PI, only the first application received will be accepted; additional applications will be administratively withdrawn.
- A clinical trial is proposed.
- Studies that do not qualify for exempt or expedited status will be administratively withdrawn.

9.2.4. Withhold

Applications that appear to involve research misconduct will be administratively withheld from further consideration pending organizational investigation. The organization will be required to provide the findings of the investigation to the DHACA Grants Officer for a determination of the final disposition of the application.

9.2.5. Other Funding Opportunities

The RCRP is committed to leveraging efforts with other funding organizations to accelerate progress in rare cancers research. At the time of funding notifications, the RCRP may inform highly rated, unfunded applicants about opportunities to provide their RCRP applications and peer review summary statements to non-governmental and other governmental funders, who will determine the specific criteria for funding consideration.

Appendix 1. Full Application Submission Checklist

Full Application Components	Uploaded
SF424 Research & Related Application for Federal Assistance ***(Grants.gov submissions only)***	☐
Summary (Tab 1) and Application Contacts (Tab 2) ***(eBRAP submissions only)***	☐
Attachments	
Project Narrative – Attachment 1, upload as "ProjectNarrative.pdf"	☐
Supporting Documentation – Attachment 2, upload as "Support.pdf"	☐
Statement of Work – Attachment 3, upload as "SOW.pdf"	☐
Impact Statement – Attachment 4, upload as "Impact.pdf"	☐
Justification Statement – Attachment 5, upload as "Justification.pdf"	☐
Representations ***(Grants.gov submissions only)*** **– Attachment 6, upload as "RequiredReps.pdf"**	☐
Suggested Intragovernmental/Intramural Budget Form ***(if applicable)*** **– Attachment 7, upload as "IGBudget.pdf"**	☐
Additional Application Materials	
Research & Related Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded)	☐
Attach Biographical Sketch for Senior/Key Persons (Biosketch_LastName.pdf)	☐
Attach Current/Pending Support for Senior/Key Persons (Support_LastName.pdf)	☐
Research & Related Budget	☐
Project/Performance Site Location(s)	☐
Research & Related Subaward Budget Attachment(s) ***(if applicable)***	☐

Appendix 2. Acronym List

ARRIVE	Animal Research: Reporting *In Vivo* Experiments
CDMRP	Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CONSORT	Consolidated Standards of Reporting Trials
DHA	Defense Health Agency
DHA R&D	Defense Health Agency Research and Development
DHACA	Defense Health Agency Contracting Activity
DOD	U.S. Department of Defense
DoDGARs	Department of Defense Grant and Agreement Regulations
DOW	U.S. Department of War
eBRAP	Electronic Biomedical Research Application Portal
EC	Ethics Committee
ET	Eastern Time
FAD	Funding Authorization Document
FY	Fiscal Year
GAI	General Application Instructions
IACUC	Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee
IRB	Institutional Review Board
LOI	Letter of Intent
M	Million
MIPR	Military Interdepartmental Purchase Request
ORRC	Office of Research and Regulatory Compliance
PDF	Portable Document Format
PHS	Public Health Service
PI	Principal Investigator
PRCRP	Peer Reviewed Cancer Research Program
RCRP	Rare Cancer Research Program
R&D	Research and Development
RPPR	Research Performance Progress Report
SAM	System for Award Management
SF424 R&R	Standard Form 424 (Application for Federal Assistance, Research & Related)
SPIRIT	Standard Protocol Items: Recommendations for Interventional Trials
STROBE	STrengthening the Reporting of OBservational studies in Epidemiology
SOW	Statement of Work

UEI	Unique Entity Identifier
URL	Uniform Resource Locator
USC	United States Code
VA	U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs