



**Kids Beating Cancer
Robert G. Owens Memorial Leukemia Research Grant
Application Guidelines**

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About Kids Beating Cancer

Kids Beating Cancer's Mission

Kids Beating Cancer provides access to life-saving treatments through the science of cellular therapy and advancing pediatric innovative, novel, research, moving new discoveries to patient care, while supporting the children and their families throughout the journey to a cure.

Kids Beating Cancer's Story - How One Boy Impacted the Lives of Thousands

The love for a child and the unspeakable sadness that comes from the loss of that child is the opening page of the Kids Beating Cancer Story and how one little boy's life has impacted over 14,000 children since 1992. Five-year-old John was not able to understand the rare and highly fatal disease with which he had been stricken. John had Myelodysplastic Syndrome (MDS), which had evolved into acute myeloblastic leukemia (AML), an often universally fatal disease. His only hope for a cure was a bone marrow transplant. With no options close to home, his young mother, Margaret, had to leave her home in Orlando, Florida to seek treatment at a pediatric transplant center in Seattle, Washington. With a slim chance for survival, the next four years consisted of hospital rooms, painful treatments and two bone marrow transplants. A cure was not to be - John was nine years old when he died.

John was not able to beat his disease, but the battle continues for others like John, who deserve a chance at a cure. Kids Beating Cancer was established in 1992, just six months after John's death, with two objectives: 1) to provide to treatments access close to home without compromising quality of care or outcome; 2) funding research to ultimately bring an end to childhood cancer.

The result every parent prays for is a cure, and they hope the family stays intact throughout the long treatment process. They all echo John's question, "Mommy why do kids get leukemia?" Today, John's question still can't be answered, but the outcome of the efforts in his memory is changing thousands of children's lives, offering them access to a cure and advancing discoveries to one day find a cure.

John's grandfather, Robert G. Owens, served as a paternal figure in John's life. He was deeply affected by John's diagnosis and the subsequent years he struggles with Leukemia. Despite extensive treatments, John succumbed to his disease, profoundly impacting his grandfather. In his honor and in the pursuit of ending leukemia, this grant has been established.

Program Description

Kids Beating Cancer continues to build the blueprint for a cure through its research grants. From molecular discoveries to innovative treatments. The *Robert G. Owens Memorial Leukemia Research Grant* aims to fund translational pediatric leukemia research that will translate to long-term improvements for pediatric leukemia patients. The *Robert G. Owens Memorial Leukemia Research Grant* funds pediatric leukemia research in a two-step format totaling \$200,000 over two years.

The aim of this award is to fund pediatric leukemia research, excluding AML. Apply for the *John Voight Memorial Leukemia Research Grant* if your project is geared toward translational AML.

Application Timeline

A letter of intent must be received by the submission deadline indicating interest in applying for the *Robert G. Owens Memorial Leukemia Research Grant*. If invited, a full proposal must be submitted by the specific cycle deadline that meets all Kids Beating Cancer guidelines and criteria to be accepted and reviewed by the Kids Beating Cancer Scientific Advisory Board.

- Letter of Intent Submission Due Date July 3, 2026
- Invitation to Apply notificationSeptember 4, 2026
- Proposal SubmissionOctober 16, 2026
- Grant award notificationDecember 2026–January 2027

Application Guidelines

Eligibility Criteria

- Research must be original, novel and focus on pediatric leukemia, excluding AML.
- Authors must submit original work that has not been previously published; or, if previously submitted abstracts from recent prominent research conferences, such as ASPHO, ASH, ASCO, or AACR, there must be a noted significant change or advancement to the research to be eligible.
- Applicants MAY be involved in other research grants, but there must be clear documentation of mechanisms to avoid scientific and/or budgetary overlap.
- Research institutions must be based in the United States.
- Research institutions must have nonprofit or academic status.
- Applicants must have an MD, PhD, or MD/PhD or equivalent and be appointed as faculty (or equivalent) at an academic institution. Post doctoral researchers are eligible to apply.
- Applicants must have a demonstrated track record of pediatric cancer research.

Application Submission Instructions

- Letters of Intent must be submitted through Proposal Central.
- Full proposals must be submitted through Proposal Central.
- Upon submission of your proposal, you will receive confirmation of receipt via email. If your submission did not meet the requirement standards, you will be notified and given an opportunity to rectify it prior to the submission deadline.

Resubmissions

Resubmission of a full proposal previously reviewed and rejected by Kids Beating Cancer’s Scientific Advisory Board will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Budget

The *Robert G. Owens Memorial Leukemia Research Grant* is structured into two tiers. The first tier is a \$100,000 award for one year that is used to pilot and/or demonstrate feasibility of the research project. Following successful completion of the first award, investigators are invited to apply for the second tier, which provides \$100,000 for one year to continue to expand upon the discoveries made with the first tier award.

Budget Restrictions:

- Kids Beating Cancer adheres to the NIH salary cap for principal investigator(s).
- Grant funds may not be used for indirect costs such as travel associated with research, administrative supplies, advertising or PR, student or university memberships and parking, or other facility-related fees.
- If utilizing a subcontract or subaward, you must include this expense in the budget.
- Grant recipients may use the funds as direct costs, including salary, research supplies and equipment.

Letter of Intent

Applicants are required to submit a letter of intent prior to being invited to submit a full application. In the letter of intent (one page), please describe the following:

- Brief introduction and description of the proposed 1 year (first tier) project
- Principal investigators and/or collaborators
- Specific aims
- Future directions and expansion into the second tier award (one additional year of funding)

Format Instructions

- Proposal format must 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.
- 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.
- The order of the application proposal should follow the proposal content section, adhering to the maximum number of pages allowed for each subsection as indicated.

Full Proposal Instructions

1. Cover Page
 - a. Table of Contents
 - b. Title of Project
 - c. Research team
 - i. Principal Investigator(s)
 - ii. Institution(s)
2. Elevator Pitch (400 word limit)
 - a. Short description of your research which explains the concept such that it can be understood by a lay audience in less than 2 minutes.
3. Scientific Abstract (400 word limit)
 - a. Summarize the research objectives and rationale.
4. Response To Reviewers (If Applicable 1 page limit)
 - a. Only required for resubmission.
 - b. Additional data can be included in response to reviewers' comments, but responses and data cannot exceed the 1 page limit.

5. Research Plan (5 page limit). Preliminary data is required but must be included in the five page limit.
 - a. Introduction
 - i. Provide background on the proposed project and its relevancy to pediatric leukemia.
 - b. Objectives/Specific Aims/Hypothesis
 - i. Briefly state the specific aims and project goals.
 - ii. Include Gantt chart with milestones corresponding to the specific aims.
 - c. Innovation and Impact
 - i. State how the research project will improve our knowledge of a currently unknown and/or poorly understood part of pediatric leukemia.
 - ii. Explain the long term impact on childhood leukemias of your proposed project.
 - d. Approach/Methodology
 - i. Describe in detail the experimental approach and how it will be accomplished.
 - ii. Address alternative directions, expected results, and potential pitfalls.
 - e. Future Directions
 - i. Explain how, if successful, the proposed research can be expanded with the second tier award (\$100,000 for one year)
6. Budget (1 page limit)
 - a. Brief explanations of the purpose and necessity of each item in the budget to be used towards
 - i. Equipment
 - ii. Supplies
 - iii. Graduate student/postdoc/research scientist/technician salaries
 - iv. Subcontractors/consultants
 - v. Other
7. Biosketches of the principal investigator(s) and collaborators.
8. Letters of support (optional – no more than 4)
 - a. Include any appropriate letters from individuals confirming their roles in the project. Institutional letters of support are not required, but can be included, especially if there are issues of feasibility that can be addressed

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.
- For multi-year grants, a carry-over of funds (no more than 20%) is permitted each year with justification. Each year's budget will be approved after a review of progress reports.
- Kids Beating Cancer may elect to partially fund or to hold new funds if carry-over exceeds the 20% mark.
- A final progress report is required at the conclusion of funding.

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- Final progress report must state findings, expenditures, as well as publications and presentations which acknowledge Kids Beating Cancer funding.
- Publications, presentations, and posters featuring results of the research funded by this grant should acknowledge “Kids Beating Cancer” and made available to Kids Beating Cancer by furnishing copies to sam@kidsbeatingcancer.com

Contact

For questions or information on the *Robert G. Owens Research Grant*, contact:

- Sam Azar, COO & VP of Research – sam@kidsbeatingcancer.com
- Ian Henrich, PhD, Chair, Scientific Advisory Board – ian@kidsbeatingcancer.com