Program Announcement for the Defense Health Agency

Melanoma Research Program
Melanoma Academy Scholar Award

Funding Opportunity Number: HT942526MRPMASA

Pre-Application Due: September 22, 2026

Application Due: October 14, 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: Supports the addition of independent, ***early career investigators (Scholars)*** who are no more than seven years from their initial faculty appointment to the Melanoma Research Program (MRP) Melanoma Academy. The Melanoma Academy is a unique, interactive virtual academy focused on bringing together established investigators and Scholars to develop a network of successful, highly productive melanoma researchers in a collaborative research and career development environment.

Distinctive Features:

- This award mechanism focuses on both the Scholar's research and career potential in the melanoma field.
- Scholars must designate a Career Guide. The Career Guide must have a track record of successful mentorship coupled with a strong record of funding and publications ***in melanoma***.
- Preliminary data are ***not required***.

Funding Details: The Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs expects to allot roughly $1.54M to fund approximately two Melanoma Academy Scholar Award applications with total cost caps of $0.77M per award. The maximum period of performance is 3 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 22, 2026
- **Application Submission Deadline:** 11:59 p.m. ET, October 14, 2026
- **End of Application Verification Period:** 5:00 p.m. ET, October 20, 2026
- **Peer Review:** December 2026
- **Programmatic Review:** March 2027

Announcement Type: Initial

Funding Opportunity Number: HT942526MRPMASA

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

- **Scholar**

  To be named as the Principal Investigator (PI) on the application, the Scholar:

  - Must be an independent investigator no more than seven years from obtaining their first faculty-level appointment as of the full application submission deadline, excluding time spent on family medical leave.
  - Must have an organizational commitment of independent laboratory space.
  - May be in a non-tenure track or tenure track position.
  - If recommended for funding, must not have a concurrent career-development-like award at the time this award is made.
  - May be named on only one FY26 Melanoma Academy Scholar Award (MASA) full application as a PI.

  A Statement of Eligibility is required with the submission of the full application.

  An investigator in a mentored position (e.g., postdoctoral fellow, clinical fellow) at the time of full application submission is NOT considered an independent investigator and is NOT eligible to be named as the PI on the MASA application.

- **Career Guide**

  To be named as the Career Guide on the application, the Career Guide:

  - Must be an independent, established melanoma researcher at or above the level of Associate Professor (or equivalent).
  - Must have melanoma research funding (past and present).
  - Must have a record of melanoma publications in peer-reviewed journals.
  - Must demonstrate a commitment to develop and sustain the Scholar's independent career in the field of melanoma.
  - Must be committed to fully participating in Melanoma Academy (MA) activities as requested by the Scholar and MA Leadership throughout the MASA period of performance.
  - ***Must not*** be the current Director or the Deputy Director of the MA.
  - ***Must not*** be the named Career Guide on any previously funded (FY21-FY25) MASA applications.

- ***Must not*** be named on more than ONE FY26 MASA application.

Note: The Scholar and Career Guide DO NOT need to be located at the same organization.

Independent investigators affiliated with an eligible organization are eligible to be named PI on the application, regardless of ethnicity, nationality or citizenship status.

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 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 Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs (CDMRP) is the program office managing this FY26 funding opportunity as part of the Melanoma Research Program (MRP). 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 MRP in 2019 to provide support for research of high potential impact and exceptional scientific merit. Appropriations for the MRP from FY19 through FY25 totaled $220 million (M). The FY26 appropriation is $40M.

The vision of the MRP is to prevent melanoma initiation and progression and reduce hardship. The mission is to support development of earlier interventions to enhance mission readiness, diminish melanoma burden, and improve quality of life for Service Members, Veterans, their Families and the American public.

Studies involving non-melanoma skin cancers are not allowed under the FY26 MRP.

The MRP identified three strategic priorities to ensure that funded research addresses unmet needs and/or underfunded areas of melanoma research and patient care. These three priorities are:

Prevention and Interception: Individuals diagnosed with melanoma have significantly improved prognoses when the disease is diagnosed and treated before it metastasizes. Although primary prevention (use of sunscreen, sun avoidance, etc.) is critical, the MRP seeks to fund research that will lead to improved detection and monitoring capabilities (particularly for individuals at highest risk) as well as inhibition of melanoma initiation, early dissemination, emergence from tumor dormancy and metastases (i.e., interception).

With the exception of studies investigating rare melanomas, the FY26 MRP is not requesting research into established macrometastatic disease or developing treatments for macrometastatic disease.

Rare Melanomas: Rare melanoma subtypes can have distinct characteristics compared to cutaneous melanoma, which makes up the majority of melanoma diagnoses. Rare melanoma subtypes are typically less well-studied, and this has led to a variety of prevention, diagnosis, and treatment challenges. The MRP seeks to fund research across the entire cancer research spectrum addressing unmet needs and knowledge gaps associated with rare melanomas. Although the FY26 MRP accepts applications addressing topics relevant to uveal melanoma, the MRP is particularly interested in receiving applications that address other uncommon presentations of melanoma, including but not limited to:

- Genetic (molecular subtypes).
- Histologic (desmoplastic and acral lentiginous).
- Tissue of origin (mucosal, acral).
- Clinical presentation (pediatric, leptomeningeal disease).

Survivorship: The widely accepted definition of cancer, and therefore melanoma, survivorship spans ***the time from an individual receiving their initial diagnosis through the balance of their life. Under this definition, an individual is considered a melanoma survivor beginning at the time they receive their initial diagnosis.*** For the purposes of the MRP, the needs and impact of a melanoma diagnosis on family members, friends and care partners of

melanoma survivors are also included within the purview of "melanoma survivorship." With the increasing incidence of melanoma and the increased availability of effective treatment options for patients with melanoma, the number of melanoma survivors is also increasing. Melanoma survivorship research covers a broad range of research areas that have the goal of improving the health and well-being of melanoma survivors and their families/care partners. The MRP seeks to fund innovative and impactful research that advances studies in preservation of function (physical ability), quality of life improvement, symptom management, treatment outcomes and support for psychological and social issues related to melanoma diagnosis, treatment and life post-treatment.

3.1. Award History

The Melanoma Academy Scholar Award (MASA) mechanism was first offered in FY21. Since then, 60 MASA applications were received and 13 were recommended for funding.

Melanoma Academy Background:

The MRP Melanoma Academy (MA) is a unique, multi-institutional virtual academy providing intensive monitoring, national networking, collaborations and a peer group for early-career investigators initiated in FY21. The overarching goal of the MA is to develop a network of successful, highly productive melanoma researchers in a collaborative research and career development environment.

The MA members include Scholars (i.e., the investigator named as the PI on the MASA application) and their Career Guides (primary mentors) and the MA is led by a Director and Deputy Director (i.e., the MA Leadership).

The MA Leadership facilitates collaboration and communication among all Scholars and Career Guides as well as with national research and patient advocacy communities, and fosters connections between Scholars and other national and international melanoma experts who may not be directly affiliated with the MA. In addition to fostering scientific development, the MA Leadership provides opportunities for professional and leadership development of the Scholars, including the skills and competencies needed to fund and manage a productive laboratory. Information about currently funded MA Leadership and Scholar Awards is available on the MRP webpages here and here.

3.2. Intent of the Melanoma Academy Scholar Award

The intent of the FY26 MASA is to solicit applications for Scholars to join the MA. This award mechanism enables the Scholar to pursue a melanoma project, with the guidance of a Career Guide, that may be basic, translational, and/or clinical research and addresses at least one of the FY26 MRP Focus Areas. ***The Career Guide does not have to be at the same institution as the Scholar.*** In addition to the activities described above, the Scholar and their Career Guide are required to attend a DOW MRP biennial multi-day MA workshop. In alternate years, they must also attend a DOW MRP MA one-day workshop.

The MRP encourages MASA applications from those whose ability to commit to conducting melanoma research is limited by minimal or a lack of resources at their institution (such as lack of a qualified Career Guide), access to melanoma research tools, opportunities for establishing collaborations or other obstacles.

3.2.1. Focus Areas for the MASA

All applications to the FY26 MRP MASA must address at least one of the following FY26 MRP Focus Areas that support the MRP strategic priorities:

Prevention and Interception:

- Identify, understand and mitigate risk factor determinants and develop biomarkers for melanoma.
- Develop new technology for the detection, diagnosis and monitoring of melanoma that can distinguish lesions and/or individuals at higher risk for progression from lesions and/or individuals requiring only surveillance.
- Define the ***mechanisms*** of:
    - Melanoma initiation
    - Response and/or resistance to adjuvant and/or neoadjuvant therapy, including cellular-based therapies
    - Progression
    - Recurrence
    - Emergence from tumor dormancy
    - Metastatic spread

  Mechanism-focused studies may include the role of the tumor microenvironment and/or microbiome in these processes.
- Develop new preclinical models that faithfully represent disease evolution observed in humans, from melanomagenesis through progression. New models may represent cutaneous melanoma or any rare melanoma subtype.

Rare Melanomas:

- Address unmet needs across the entire cancer research spectrum for rare melanomas, as defined above, which includes studies of biology, etiology, prevention, early diagnosis and detection, prognosis, treatment or survivorship.

Survivorship:

- Address the psychological and social impacts of a melanoma diagnosis, symptom trajectories, adverse effects of treatment and other outcomes affecting melanoma survivors and their family members/care partners.
- Address the physical impacts of symptom trajectories; acute and late-occurring adverse effects of treatment, including lymphedema, toxicities, reproductive and sexual health issues, and side effects that may not manifest until after treatment ends; role of diet, exercise and other lifestyle factors on treatment outcomes and/or quality of life; etc.

3.2.2. Key Elements for the MASA

Principal Investigator: The PI (i.e., Scholar) must be an independent, early-career researcher or physician-scientist ***no more than seven years from obtaining their first faculty-level appointment***. The PI's record of accomplishments and the proposed research will be evaluated regarding their potential for contributing to the FY26 MRP Focus Area(s). Not all of the PI's accomplishments need to be in the field of melanoma. The PI's organization must demonstrate a commitment to the PI through confirmation of independent laboratory space.

Impact: The impact of the proposed research must relate to at least one of the FY26 MRP Focus Areas. Impactful research, including basic research, should expedite the advancement of promising ideas toward clinical and/or public utility. The application must articulate the short- and long-term impact the proposed research will have on ***melanoma research and/or patient care***.

Career Development: A Career Development and Sustainment Plan is required and the Career Guide should provide appropriate guidance during its preparation. It should include a clearly articulated strategy for establishing collaborations and acquiring the necessary skills, competencies and expertise to ***advance and sustain an independent career at the forefront of the melanoma field***. The Scholar must show milestones and career pathways toward achieving the milestones. The Scholar must articulate commitment to interactions with the MA.

Career Guide: The Scholar must designate a Career Guide, an experienced melanoma researcher, as demonstrated by a strong record of funding and publications in melanoma. In addition, the Career Guide must demonstrate a commitment to advancing the Scholar's career in the melanoma field. The Career Guide must meet the stated eligibility criteria.

MA Participation Expectation: The ***Scholar*** is expected to participate in all development and training activities hosted by the MA Leadership, such as participation in monthly webinars and one-on-one mentoring sessions. The ***Career Guide*** must also commit to fully participating in the MA throughout the award period of performance, including interacting with other MA Scholars and Career Guides and participating in MA activities (e.g., serving on the MA Advisory Board) as requested by MA Leadership. Additionally, ***both the Scholar and Career Guide*** are expected to communicate and form collaborations with the ***other members*** of the MA and build relationships and collaborations within the melanoma patient advocacy community.

Preliminary Data NOT Required: Preliminary data are not required. However, any unpublished, preliminary data presented should originate from the laboratory of the PI or a member of the research team.

3.2.3. Other Important Considerations for the MASA

Melanoma Resources: When appropriate and feasible, PIs are encouraged to utilize existing, well-characterized data and specimens. Examples of such resources are listed below. PIs are encouraged to explore the utility of these and/or other resources to ensure the use of the most appropriate data and/or models to conduct impactful melanoma research. The list is not all-inclusive, and the information provided below, including external links and references, is not to be construed as endorsement by the DOW, CDMRP or MRP.

- National Cancer Institute (NCI) Patient-Derived Models Repository (PDMR). The PDMR is a national repository of patient-derived models (PDMs) comprised of patient-derived xenografts (PDXs), *in vitro* patient-derived tumor cell cultures (PDCs), and cancer-associated fibroblasts (CAFs), as well as patient-derived organoids. In addition to model generation, NextGen sequencing data are available for all models, as well as DNA, RNA

and flash-frozen fragments for protein extraction from early-passage PDXs. The PDMR's catalog currently contains numerous melanoma PDXs, PDCs, organoids and CAF cultures, including some for rare melanoma subtypes.

- Human Cancer Models Initiative (HCMI). The goal of the HCMI is to create up to 1,000 patient-derived next-generation cancer models such as organoids, conditionally reprogrammed cells, neurospheres, or optimal growth condition models as a community resource. The HCMI aims to provide the models' case-associated data which include quality-checked clinical, biospecimen and molecular characterization data from the models, the tissues from which they were derived, and normal tissues, when available. Available harmonized data are accessible through NCI's Genomic Data Commons.
- NCI-Funded Skin Specialized Programs of Research Excellence (SPOREs). There are currently three skin SPOREs whose programs focus predominantly on melanoma. Historically, each SPORE site includes a biospecimen core.
- VA Science and Health Initiative to Combat Infectious and Emerging Life-Threatening Diseases (VA SHIELD). The VA SHIELD is a comprehensive, secure biorepository of specimens and associated data that provides researchers and clinicians with high-quality biosamples and comprehensive associated medical and sample data to accelerate the discovery-to-therapy pipeline for the benefit of Veterans. **NOTE:** These specimens and data are available ONLY to authorized U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) investigators.
- Million Veteran Program. The Million Veteran Program (MVP) is the nation's largest genomic biorepository of Veteran data and is one of the most diverse cohorts of any genetic research program in the world. **NOTE:** Access to MVP data is currently limited to ONLY VA-affiliated researchers.
- American Association for Cancer Research Project Genomics Evidence Neoplasia Information Exchange (GENIE®). Project GENIE is a publicly accessible cancer registry of real-world clinico-genomic data assembled through data sharing between 19 international cancer centers. As of the January 2024 release there were over 198,000 sequenced samples from more than 172,000 patients, with melanoma samples, including uveal melanoma, being well-represented.
- Patient-Derived Cancer Models. CancerModels.Org provides harmonized and integrated model attributes to support consistent searching for PDX, organoid and cell line models and to facilitate researchers' search for models and associated data across multiple commercial and academic resources.
- The Community United for Research and Education of Ocular Melanoma (CURE OM) Virtual Information System to Improve Outcomes and Networks (VISION) Platform. The CURE OM VISION Platform is a patient-powered OM research project funded and sponsored by the Melanoma Research Foundation's CURE OM initiative. The registry launched in the United States in May 2021 and was made available to participants worldwide soon thereafter. The CURE OM initiative's patient community and collaborators are now actively participating, sharing data and joining researchers in the work toward more effective treatments and, one day, a cure.
- INSIGHT: A Global Ocular Melanoma Patient Registry. The ocular melanoma INSIGHT patient registry is a collaborative effort between A Cure In Sight, the University of California San Francisco Beckman Vision Center and the National Organization for Rare Disorders. This participant-driven registry launched in 2019 to enhance the understanding of ocular melanoma, collect data for medical research and facilitate the development of new diagnostic and treatment options.

- The RARE® Registry. The RARE Registry is an initiative led by the Melanoma Research Alliance primarily for patients with acral and mucosal melanoma. It provides a free, interactive, web and mobile-friendly tool to share information, experiences and disease history; advance research and awareness; and get potential matches to clinical trials.

Relevance to Military Health: Advancing knowledge in melanoma research, patient care and/or treatment options in the Military Health System is critical. Therefore, the MRP seeks to support research that is relevant to the health care needs of Service Members, Veterans and/or their Families. The MRP encourages investigators to consider the following examples of how a project may demonstrate relevance to military health:

- Use of military or Veteran populations, biospecimens, data, databases or programs in the proposed research.
- Applications from investigators within the DOW and applications involving multidisciplinary collaborations among academia, industry, DOW, 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 and/or their Families.
- Explanation of how the project addresses an aspect of melanoma that has relevance or is unique to Service Members, Veterans, and/or their Families.

If the proposed research involves access to active-duty military and/or VA patient populations and/or DOW or VA 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. Refer to the Full Application Submission Components, for detailed information. Refer to the GAI, Appendix 4, for additional information.

A list of websites that may be useful in identifying additional information about ongoing DOW and VA areas of research interest or potential opportunities for collaboration can be found in Appendix 10 of the GAI.

Preclinical Research: 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 guidelines 2.0.

For Research Involving Animals: In accordance with the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2026, Section 732, 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.

The MRP acknowledges that domestic dogs can spontaneously develop mucosal melanoma. FY26 applications proposing mucosal melanoma studies involving pets that are voluntarily enrolled in studies at the owner's discretion may be considered (e.g., a pet owner enrolling their domestic dog in a clinical trial administered in a veterinary hospital setting). Such studies, if recommended for funding, must obtain a waiver of National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2026, Section 732 before initiating. Receipt of such a waiver is not guaranteed.

For Research Involving Human Data, Human Anatomical Substances, Human Subjects, or Human Cadavers:

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.

Metastatic Cancer Task Force: 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 MRP strategic 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 **3** years.

Cost Cap: The application's total costs budgeted for the entire period of performance should not exceed **$770,000**. 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 **3** 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:

Must be requested for:

- Travel costs associated with attending workshops described in Section 8.3. For planning purposes applicants may assume that the MA Workshops will be located in the national Capital Region. The specific dates and locations will be determined during the period of performance.

May be requested for (not all-inclusive):

- Maximum allowable funding for the Career Guide(s) is $30,000 per year in direct costs.
- Travel costs in support of multi-institutional collaborations.
- Costs associated with participating in the MA (e.g., hardware and/or software for audio- or video-teleconferencing or web-based communications).
- Costs for one investigator to travel to two scientific/technical meetings per year in addition to the required MA meeting/workshops described above. The intent of travel to scientific/technical meetings should be to present project information or disseminate project results and/or attend workshops as designated in the Career Development and Sustainment Plan.

Must not be requested for:

- Tuition of graduate students.
- 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.

4.3. Full Application Components

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 (eight-page limit): Upload as "ProjectNarrative.pdf".**

  Describe the proposed project in detail using the outline below.

  - **Background:** Present the scientific rationale to support the proposed research project and its feasibility, as established through the demonstration of logical reasoning and a critical review and analysis of published literature; include relevant literature citations. ***Preliminary data are not required.*** Any unpublished preliminary data presented should originate from the laboratory of the PI or a member of the research team.
  - **Hypothesis and Objective:** State the hypothesis to be tested or the objective to be reached.
  - **Specific Aims:** State the specific aims of the study. If proposed research is part of a larger study, ***present only tasks that this award would fund.***

- **Research Strategy and Feasibility:** Describe the experimental design, methodology, and analyses, including appropriate controls, in sufficient detail for evaluation of their appropriateness and feasibility. Describe how the studies are designed to achieve reproducible and rigorous results that support successful completion of the project aims. Address potential problem areas and pitfalls, and present alternative methods and/or approaches.
  - Clearly describe the statistical plan and the rationale for the statistical methodology. If applicable, describe an appropriate power analysis, how it supports the sample size, and how it adequately represents an assessment of the population or subpopulation proposed. If a power analysis was not used to determine the proposed sample size, justify why a power analysis is not essential to the statistical evaluation. Ensure sufficient information is provided to allow thorough evaluation of all statistical calculations and/or the power of the proposed studies during review of the application. If there are sample size limitations (budget limitations, availability of specimens, etc.) justify how results from the proposed sample size(s) will yield meaningful information. A separate Sex as a Biological Variable (SABV) Strategy is required as part of Attachment 2.
  - If cell lines are to be used, justify why the proposed cell line(s) are appropriate to achieve the goals the proposed study(ies) and clearly articulate the source(s) of the proposed cell line(s).
  - If animal studies are proposed, including the use of PDX models, justify why the proposed animal model was chosen and clearly articulate the source of the model(s). Describe how the animal studies are conducted in accordance with the appropriate guidelines to ensure relevant aspects of rigorous and reproducible research are adequately planned for and, ultimately, reported.
  - If human data sets, human anatomical substances (blood, tumor tissue, etc.), and/or human participants will be used, provide evidence supporting the availability of and access to the proposed specimens/populations required for the study. Include a detailed plan for the acquisition of samples or the recruitment of participants, and for acquiring any additional research resources necessary for conducting the proposed research project. If there are sample size limitations (funding restraints, availability of rare specimens, etc.), justify how the proposed sample size(s) will provide sufficient information to support moving forward with the line of research.
  - For all applications that propose clinical research, describe the strategy for the inclusion of women and minorities appropriate to the objectives of the study, including a description of the composition of the proposed study population in terms of sex, racial and ethnic group, and an accompanying rationale for the selection of specimens/subjects. Studies utilizing human biospecimens or datasets that cannot be linked to a specific individual, ethnicity, or race (typically classified as exempt from Institutional Review Board [IRB] review) are exempt from this requirement. ***This award cannot be used to conduct clinical trials.*** See Attachment 2 for instructions regarding the Inclusion Enrollment Report that is required with all applications that propose clinical research.
  - If the proposed research involves access to military and/or VA patient populations and/or DOW or VA resources or databases, describe the access at the time of submission and include a plan for maintaining access as needed throughout the proposed research. Also include a plan for obtaining any required data sharing,

memorandum of understanding or other agreements required to access and publish data. Refer to the General Application Instructions, Appendix 4, for additional considerations.

- **Attachment 2: Supporting Documentation: Combine and upload as a single file named "Support.pdf".**

  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).
  - **List of Abbreviations, Acronyms and Symbols:** Provide a list of abbreviations, acronyms and symbols.
  - **Facilities, Existing Equipment and Other Resources:** Describe the facilities and equipment available for performance of the proposed project; include any additional facilities or equipment proposed for acquisition at no cost to the award. Indicate whether government-furnished facilities or equipment are proposed for use. If so, reference the original or present government award under which the facilities or equipment items are now accountable. There is not a standardized form for this information.
  - **Publications and/or Patents:** Include a list of relevant publication URLs and/or patent abstracts. If articles are not publicly available, then copies of up to five published manuscripts may be included in Attachment 2. Extra items will not be reviewed.
  - **Letters of Support (two-page limit per letter is recommended):** Provide individual letters signed by collaborating individuals and/or organizational officials demonstrating that the PI has the support and resources necessary for the proposed work. Letters from the PI's Department Chair, or appropriate organization official, should also confirm that the PI meets eligibility criteria. If applicable, provide a letter of support, signed by the lowest-ranking person with approval authority, confirming participation of intramural DOW collaborator(s) and/or access to military populations, databases or DOW resources. If applicable, provide a letter of support signed by the VA Facility Director(s), or an individual designated by the VA Facility Director(s), confirming access to VA patients, resources and/or VA research space.
  - **SABV 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.
  - **Research Sharing Plan:** Describe the type of data or research resources (e.g., bio-specimen, analysis tool/software, training material) to be made publicly available as a result of the proposed work. Describe the mechanism (e.g., direct sharing,

repository, mixed mode) by which data and resources generated during the period of performance will be shared with the research community and other affected communities, including clinical research participants. Include the name of the repository(ies) where scientific data and resources arising from the proposed study will be archived, if applicable. Identify and provide the rationale for any data or resources that will not be shared (e.g. for intellectual property, feasibility, cost or other considerations). The plan should also protect participant privacy, confidential and proprietary data, and performer/third-party intellectual property. Provide a milestone plan for disseminating data/results including when data and resources will be made available to other users. In cases where the study participant could potentially derive medical or other benefit from the information, explain whether the results of screening and/or study participation will be shared with the participant or their primary care provider, including results from any screening or diagnostic tests performed as part of the study.

Do not submit a copy of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Data Management and Sharing Plan or duplicate the Data Management Plan which will be requested only after a recommendation for funding is made.

Refer to the CDMRP Directive on Sharing Data and Research Resources for more information about the CDMRP's expectations for making data and research resources publicly available.

- **Inclusion Enrollment Report *(only required if clinical research is proposed)*:** Provide an anticipated enrollment table(s) for the inclusion of women and minorities using the "Public Health Service (PHS) Inclusion Enrollment Report", a three-page fillable PDF form, that can be downloaded from eBRAP. The enrollment table(s) should be appropriate to the objectives of the study with the proposed enrollment distributed on the basis of sex, race and ethnicity. Studies utilizing human biospecimens or datasets that cannot be linked to a specific individual, ethnicity or race (typically classified as exempt from IRB review) are exempt from this requirement.

- **Attachment 3: Technical Abstract (one-page limit): Upload as "TechAbs.pdf".**

Write the technical abstract using the outline below. Clarity and completeness within the space limits are highly important.

- **Background:** Present the scientific rationale behind the proposed research project.
- **Hypothesis/Objective(s):** State the hypothesis to be tested and/or objective(s) to be reached.
- **Specific Aims:** State the specific aims of the study.
- **Study Design:** Describe the study design, including the model system(s) that will be used and appropriate controls.
- **Impact:** Summarize how the proposed project will make an important contribution toward at least one of the FY26 MRP Focus Areas.

- **Attachment 4: Lay Abstract (one-page limit): Upload as "LayAbs.pdf".**

The lay abstract should address the points outlined below ***in a manner that is readily understood by readers without a background in science or medicine.*** Avoid

overuse of scientific jargon, acronyms and abbreviations. ***Do not duplicate the technical abstract.***

- State the FY26 MRP Focus Area(s) addressed by the research project.
- Summarize the scientific rationale, objective and aims for the proposed project.
- Summarize the Scholar's career goals in melanoma research. How will the proposed research, participation in the MRP MA, and the Career Development and Sustainment Plan support the Scholar in attaining these goals? Explain the Scholar's potential as a leader in the melanoma field.
- Summarize the applicability of the research to melanoma patients and/or survivors by considering the following points:
  - What populations will the proposed research help?
  - What are the potential applications, benefits and risks?
  - How will the proposed research outcomes benefit Service Members, Veterans, their Families and the American public?

- **Attachment 5: 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.

- **Attachment 6: Impact Statement (one-page limit): Upload as "Impact.pdf".** ***Using language readily understood by readers without a background in science or medicine***, state how the proposed work uniquely addresses a critical problem in at least one of the FY26 MRP Focus Areas. Define a reasonable expectation for success for the proposed research and explain how the anticipated research outcome(s) and/or product(s) resulting from the proposed research will advance the melanoma field and/or impact patient care in the short term. If the research is too basic for short-term clinical applicability, describe the interim research outcomes expected and their applicability to the field of melanoma. Basic research should have the long-term goal of advancing the melanoma field and/or impacting patient care. Describe the long-term vision for how the Scholar's specific career and research goals, if accomplished, will impact the lives of melanoma patients and/or survivors. Describe the relevance of the proposed research to the health and well-being of Service Members, Veterans, their Families and all people affected by melanoma. If applicable, describe how the anticipated outcomes of the proposed study will make an impact in understanding health differences between sexes.

- **Attachment 7: Career Development and Sustainment Plan (two-page limit): Upload as "CareerSustain.pdf".**
  - Discuss the Scholar's record of accomplishments (awards, honors, first and/or corresponding author publications, publications in high-impact journals, presentations/speaking engagements, committees, etc.) demonstrating the potential for becoming an established investigator at the forefront of the melanoma field.
  - Describe the Scholar's motivation and commitment to participating in the MA, including networking and collaborating with the other Scholar/Career Guide pairs and the MA Leadership. If the Scholar is impacted by resource limitations at their institution, describe the obstacles and explain how participation in the MA will overcome these obstacles.

  - Describe an individualized career and professional development plan, which may include classes, workshops, conferences, seminars, journal clubs, teaching responsibilities and/or clinical responsibilities. Include milestones to be achieved during the award period of performance and pathways toward achieving the milestones. Explain how this development plan will enable the Scholar to obtain independent melanoma research funding and publish in peer-reviewed journals.
  - Explain how the Career Development and Sustainment Plan is supported by the environment. This should include a description of resources available to the Scholar at their institution, and, if different, at the Career Guide's institution.
  - Outline how the Scholar and Career Guide, together, will evaluate the Scholar's progress of achieving and sustaining a productive and independent career in melanoma research.

- **Attachment 8: Career Guide's Letter (two-page limit): Upload as "GuideLetter.pdf".**

  The Career Guide's letter should:

  - Describe the Scholar's background and potential to become an established melanoma researcher.
  - Summarize the Career Guide's background and experience in the field of melanoma, success in acquiring funding in melanoma research, publication record in melanoma and record of mentoring and training early-career investigators. This information should be substantiated by details provided in the Career Guide's biographical sketch and previous/current/pending support documentation.
  - Describe the specific resources that the Career Guide has/had access to that will facilitate success for the Scholar.
  - Specify the commitment of the Career Guide and their staff to the Scholar's professional development and career sustainment. If the Career Guide and Scholar are located at different organizations, describe how appropriate direction and oversight will be accomplished.
  - Describe the Career Guide's motivation and commitment to participating in the MA throughout the MASA period of performance.

- **Attachment 9: Statement of Eligibility (one-page limit): Upload as "Eligibility.pdf".** Provide a letter signed by the PI (the Scholar) and the Department Chair, Dean or equivalent organization official to verify that the eligibility requirements have been met. The letter should verify that the PI is ***no more than seven years from their first faculty-level appointment***, excluding time spent on family medical leave, and include the organizational commitment for independent laboratory space. (Refer to the Eligibility Information.)

- **Attachment 10: Representations *(Grants.gov submissions only)*: Upload as "RequiredReps.pdf".** All extramural applicants must complete and submit the Required Representations document available on eBRAP.

- **Attachment 11: 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.

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 HT942526MRPMASA from Grants.gov or eBRAP, depending on which submission portal will be used.

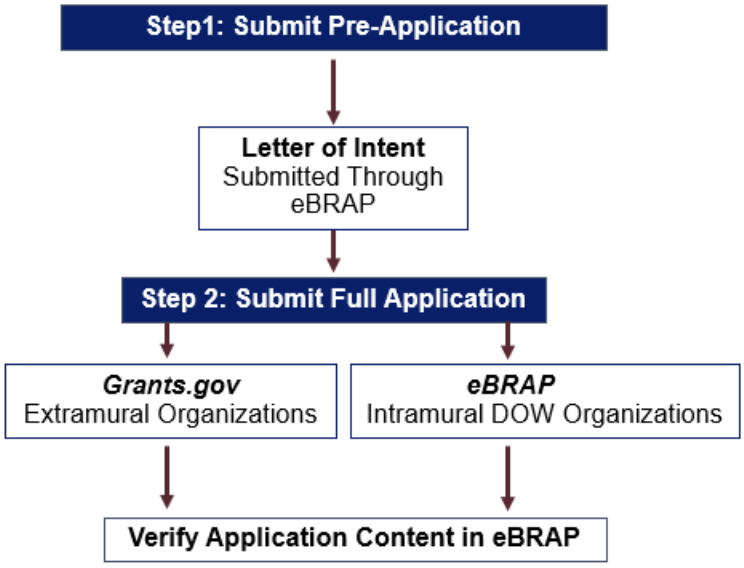
5.2. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management

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.

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 MRP 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 MRP 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:

- **Research Strategy and Feasibility**
    - To what extent the scientific rationale supports the project and its feasibility, as demonstrated by a critical review and analysis of the literature, relevant preliminary data *(**if included; preliminary data not required**)* and logical reasoning.
    - To what extent the hypothesis or objective, research strategy, methods and analyses are described in sufficient detail and are designed to achieve reproducible and rigorous results to support successful completion of the specific aims .
    - How well the application acknowledges potential problem areas and pitfalls and presents alternative methods and/or approaches.

- To what extent it is feasible to complete the proposed research within the allowed budget and period of performance limits.
- To what extent the statistical plan is appropriate for the proposed research.
- If applicable, whether the use of the proposed cell lines is appropriately justified.
- If applicable, to what extent the animal studies are designed to achieve the research objectives, to include the use of appropriate models.
- If applicable, to what extent the application demonstrates the availability of human data sets, human anatomical substances and/or human participants, including a detailed plan for the acquisition of samples/resources and/or recruitment of human participants necessary for conducting the proposed research.
- If applicable, whether the strategies for the inclusion of women and minorities are appropriate to the objectives of the study, including a description of the composition of the proposed study population in terms of sex, racial and ethnic group, and an accompanying rationale for the selection of subjects. Whether a completed Inclusion Enrollment Report providing anticipated enrollment table(s) for the inclusion of women and minorities is included with the application.
- 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**
  - To what extent the proposed research uniquely addresses a critical problem in at least one of the FY26 MRP Focus Areas.

  Assuming the objectives/aims of the proposed research are realized, to what degree:

  - The anticipated research outcomes and/or product(s) resulting from the research project will advance the melanoma field and/or impact patient care in the short term.
  - The long-term vision for how the Scholar's specific career and research goals, if accomplished, impact the lives of melanoma patients and/or survivors.
  - The proposed research is relevant to the health and well-being of Service Members, Veterans, their Families and all people affected by melanoma.
  - If applicable, to what extent the anticipated outcomes of the proposed study will make an impact in understanding health differences between sexes.
- **Scholar**
  - To what extent the Scholar's record of accomplishments demonstrates their potential for becoming an established investigator at the forefront of the melanoma field.
  - To what extent the application describes the Scholar's motivation and commitment to participating in the MA, to include networking and collaborating with the other Scholar/ Career Guide pairs and the MA Leadership.
  - How well the Career Guide's letter describes the Scholar's background and supports the potential of Scholar to become established in the melanoma field.

- **Career Development and Sustainment Plan**
  - To what extent the individualized Career Development and Sustainment Plan will enable the Scholar to obtain independent melanoma research funding and publish in peer-reviewed journals.
  - Whether milestones and career pathways toward the milestones are included and achievable within the allotted period of performance.
  - How well the Career Development and Sustainment Plan is supported by the environment, including a description of resources available to the Scholar at their institution, and, if different, at the Career Guide's institution.
  - If applicable, to what extent the Scholar explains how participation in the MA will overcome resource limitations at their institution.
  - To what extent the Career Guide and their staff will assist the Scholar in not only developing, but also sustaining, a career as an independent melanoma researcher.
- **Career Guide**
  - To what extent the Career Guide's background and experience in the field of melanoma, success in acquiring funding in melanoma research, publication record in melanoma and record of mentoring and training early-career investigators are appropriate for their role in the MA.
  - To what degree the Career Guide is motivated and committed to participating in the MA.

In addition, the following criteria will also contribute to the overall evaluation of the application, but will not be individually scored and are therefore termed **unscored criteria**:

- **Personnel**
  - If applicable, to what degree is the background and expertise of the research team (other than the Scholar and Career Guide), based on biographical sketches, appropriate to accomplish the proposed research.
- **Research Sharing Plan**
  - To what extent the plan for sharing of project data and research resources is appropriate and reasonable and includes dissemination to affected communities, study participants and/or the scientific community. If applicable, whether specific repository(ies) are named where data and research resources arising from the project will be stored.
- **Budget**
  - Whether the budget is appropriate for the proposed research.
- **Environment**
  - Whether there is clear commitment from the institution that supports the career development of the Scholar, including time for participating in MA activities, as directed by MA Leadership.
  - How well the research requirements are supported by the availability of and accessibility to facilities and resources.
- **Application Presentation**
  - To what extent the writing, clarity and presentation of the application components influence the review.

- Whether the lay abstract and impact statement are written with clarity for persons without a background in science or medicine.

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 MRP, as evidenced by the following:
  - Adherence to the intent of the funding opportunity
  - Relevance to at least one of the FY26 MRP Focus Areas
  - Relative impact
  - Program portfolio balance
  - Relevance to military health

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.

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 MRP 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 Defense Health Agency (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.

PHS Inclusion Enrollment Reporting ***(Required for projects involving clinical research)***: Enrollment reporting on the basis of sex, race and/or ethnicity will be required with each annual and final progress report. The PHS Inclusion Enrollment Report is available on eBRAP.

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

Changes in PI are not allowed, except under extenuating circumstances that will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

The Scholar and Career Guide are required to attend a biennial multi-day MRP Melanoma Academy-sponsored workshop and, in alternate years, a one-day MRP Melanoma Academy-sponsored workshop.

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:

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

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 MRP 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.
- An investigator may only be named as a PI on a single FY26 MRP full application. If an investigator is named as a PI, Initiating PI or Partnering PI on multiple full application submissions, only the first application received for the PI will be accepted; additional full applications may be administratively withdrawn.
- The application does not address at least one of the FY26 MRP Focus Areas.
- The PI (i.e., Scholar) does not meet the eligibility criteria.
- The named Career Guide does not meet the eligibility criteria.
- A clinical trial is proposed.
- The main subject of the research is non-melanoma skin cancers.

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.

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"	☐
Technical Abstract – Attachment 3, upload as "TechAbs.pdf"	☐
Lay Abstract – Attachment 4, upload as "LayAbs.pdf"	☐
Statement of Work – Attachment 5, upload as "SOW.pdf"	☐
Impact Statement – Attachment 6, upload as "Impact.pdf"	
Career Development and Sustainment Plan – Attachment 7, upload as "CareerSustain.pdf"	
Career Guide's Letter – Attachment 8, upload as "GuideLetter.pdf"	
Statement of Eligibility – Attachment 9, upload as "Eligibility.pdf"	
Representations ***(Grants.gov submissions only)*** **– Attachment 10, upload as "RequiredReps.pdf"**	☐
Suggested Intragovernmental/Intramural Budget Form ***(if applicable)*** **– Attachment 11, 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
CAF	Cancer-Associated Fibroblast
CDMRP	Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CURE OM	Community United for Research and Education of Ocular Melanoma
DHA	Defense Health Agency
DHA R&D	Defense Health Agency Research and Development
DHA R&D-MRDC	Defense Health Agency Research and Development Medical Research and Development Command
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
GENIE	Genomics Evidence Neoplasia Information Exchange
HCMI	Human Cancer Models Initiative
IACUC	Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee
IRB	Institutional Review Board
LOI	Letter of Intent
M	Million
MA	Melanoma Academy
MASA	Melanoma Academy Scholar Award
MIPR	Military Interdepartmental Purchase Request
MRP	Melanoma Research Program
MVP	Million Veteran Program
NCI	National Cancer Institute
NIH	National Institutes of Health
OM	Ocular Melanoma
ORRC	Office of Research and Regulatory Compliance
PDC	Patient-Derived Tumor Cell Cultures
PDF	Portable Document Format

PDM	Patient-Derived Model
PDMR	Patient-Derived Models Repository
PDX	Patient-Derived Xenograft
PHS	Public Health Service
PI	Principal Investigator
R&D	Research and Development
RPPR	Research Performance Progress Report
SABV	Sex as a Biological Variable
SAM	System for Award Management
SF424 R&R	Standard Form 424 (Application for Federal Assistance, Research & Related)
SOW	Statement of Work
SPORE	Specialized Programs of Research Excellence
UEI	Unique Entity Identifier
URL	Uniform Resource Locator
USC	United States Code
VA	U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
VA SHIELD	VA Science and Health Initiative to Combat Infectious and Emerging Life-Threatening Diseases
VISION	Virtual Information System to Improve Outcomes and Networks