

# Dr. Ralph and Marian Falk Medical Research Trust Awards Programs

## Catalyst Award

*A program of the Dr. Ralph and Marian Falk Medical Research Trust  
Bank of America, N.A., Trustee*

### Application Guidelines

Grant Cycle 2020

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**Submission Deadline:**

August 11, 2020  
2:00 PM, Eastern Time

**Award Period:** November 30, 2020 – November 29, 2021

**Award Amount:** One-year awards of up to \$300,000 (inclusive of 10% indirect costs)  
*The number of Catalyst Awards available will be determined by the Trustee each year, depending on the availability of funds and the merit of the applications received.*

**Invited Institutions** (please see page 3): Select institutions may internally nominate up to two applicants for submission to the Program.

**Program Overview and Statement of Purpose:**

The Dr. Ralph and Marian Falk Medical Research Trust was created by Marian Falk in 1979 and was fully funded upon her death in 1991. Mrs. Falk had very strong views on how best to support biomedical research. She sought out brilliant investigators and supported them, as well as the young investigators who worked with them, by funding “**medical research to improve treatments of the past and eventually find cures for diseases for which no definite cure is known.**”

In 2014, the Falk Medical Research Trust launched a new program to fund transformational research focused on increasing the impact of its funding. These new award programs provide support in moving insights gained from basic science into clinical practice. In keeping with the intention to fund breakthrough research designed to overcome roadblocks in scientific progress, there are two separate linked awards:

- The **Catalyst Research Award** provides one-year seed funding to help investigators lay the foundation for the Transformational Award. Select institutions are invited to submit up to two applications per grant cycle.
- The **Transformational Research Award** provides two years of additional research funding to support successful projects funded by a Catalyst Award and help them achieve their final goals. Applications will be accepted only from prior Catalyst awardees that have successfully achieved the proposed benchmarks and milestones outlined in their Catalyst Award proposals. Catalyst Awardees may only apply for a Transformational Award once.

The Catalyst Awards provide an opportunity to conduct preliminary work on high-risk, high-reward research addressing a wide variety of clinical disease areas. The target of the Falk Catalyst's funding are projects at the intersection of technology and clinical science, intended to move from insights gained from basic science towards creating solutions, techniques and tools that can be transferred to clinical practice in the near term. The Catalyst Awards are a steppingstone to eligibility for the Falk Transformational Awards Program. Catalyst research projects must describe specific **milestones and benchmarks** that if successfully met, would then enable recipients to apply for additional funding through the two-year Transformational Awards program.

The Dr. Ralph and Marian Falk Medical Research Trust Awards Programs are administered by The Medical Foundation, at *Health Resources in Action*, (the Administrator) on behalf of the Trustee, Bank of America, N.A. (the Funder). HRiA is a nonprofit organization in Boston, MA that advances public health and medical research through the creation and oversight of biomedical research grant programs.

**Research Focus:**

This program is designed to support high-risk, high-reward projects that address critical scientific and therapeutic roadblocks. If successful, these projects will open new avenues for treating and curing disease. The Program has three principal areas of focus:

1. Identification of biological markers of disease activity and progression,
2. Identification of targets for therapeutic interventions, and
3. Development of therapeutic agents that will disrupt, arrest, or prevent the disease process.

***Catalyst Research Award Guidelines:***

The Catalyst Research Award Program provides one-year of seed funding to enable planning and development of projects, teams, tools, techniques and management infrastructure necessary to successfully compete for two-year awards through the Transformational Research Award Program. Successful applications will describe the objectives of an overall research program, and provide a detailed timeline outlining the milestones and benchmarks expected to be achieved during the course of the one-year Catalyst Research Award. The work proposed in the Catalyst submission will serve to demonstrate the scientific promise, infrastructure, methods and preliminary data in support of further transformational research. Achievement of the milestones in the Catalyst proposal should indicate that the proposed innovation has sufficient promise to warrant further investment through a subsequent Transformational Award.

Applications should be responsive to one of the three principle areas of Research Focus of this program, listed above. Applications must include clear, achievable milestones that will result in projects that will be expected to have high impact on improving the lives of individuals suffering from disease. Applications for clinical trials will not be accepted.

## 2020 Invited Institutions:

Brown University	RI*
Case Western Reserve University	OH
Cincinnati Children's Hospital	OH
Cleveland Clinic	OH
Indiana University	IN
Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, Illinois Chapter	IL
Lurie Children's Hospital (formerly Children's Memorial Hospital)	IL
Loyola University	IL
Mayo Clinic	MN
Medical College of Wisconsin	WI
Northwestern University	IL
Ohio State University	OH
Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago	IL
Rush University	IL
Stanford University	CA*
Thomas Jefferson University	PA*
University of Chicago	IL
University of Cincinnati	OH
University of Illinois - Chicago	IL
University of Iowa	IA
University of Michigan	MI
University of Minnesota	MN
University of Wisconsin	WI
Wayne State University	MI
Yale University	CT*

\* Institutions outside of the Midwest

## Eligibility Requirements:

Invited Institutions may nominate up to two eligible individual investigators to submit an application:

- Hold a full-time faculty appointment
- Are independent investigator(s) with demonstrated institutional support and the specialized space and facilities needed to conduct the proposed research
- Applicants may not have funding support for a similar project
- United States citizenship is not required; visa documentation is not required
- Each PI may only submit one application

**Collaborations:**

The Trust encourages the use of synergistic collaborations between industry, government, academic and disease-advocacy organizations that integrate complementary expertise capable of addressing roadblocks and accelerating achievement of critical research objectives. Proposals that extend or apply such ongoing collaborations are encouraged, as are those that establish new ones. Awards will be made via a contract awarded to a single invited institution responsible for satisfying the administration, performance and reporting requirement of the contract. Other collaborating organizations, both non-profit and for-profit, may be sub-contracted to the lead institution and must designate a lead principal investigator who is responsible for performance under the contract.

In support of this collaborative approach, the Catalyst Program may provide funding to investigators for:

- Identifying any competencies necessary to complete the project that are not available within the applicant institution,
- Identifying collaborators who will provide those competencies,
- Building relationships and negotiating contracts between institutions,
- Internal development of critical expertise or tools that are not available from external sources, and
- Building the management infrastructure to support future project proposals.

**Project Key Personnel:**

- **Principal Investigator (PI):** One principal investigator (Applicant) must be identified as the lead or administrative PI of the award, who will be responsible for all grant reporting and fiscal management. The lead or administrative PI will be the main contact for budget and reporting management.
- **Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI):** If applicable, up to one Co-Principal Investigator may be identified; the application should describe the need for a Co-PI and multiple PI management coordination.
- **Co-Investigators:** Co-Investigators must provide a major intellectual contribution to the project. Co-Investigators may share Award funding.

**Review Criteria:**

The Scientific Review Committee uses the following criteria to evaluate application proposals:

- Relevance of the proposal to the Program focus (addresses critical scientific or therapeutic roadblock, near term translational potential, if successful will open a new avenue for treating or curing a disease)
- Hypothesis and Research Aims that are clearly stated, based on sound precedents and supported by relevant literature and preliminary data (if applicable)
- Objectives that are well thought out, realistic, and technically feasible
- Research methodology, data collection, and data analyses that are realistic and appropriate to the proposal's aims
- Quality and originality of the research project

- Qualifications of the applicant and prior experience in conducting innovative research

**Notification Schedule:**

Final notification to applicants will occur by October for the November 30<sup>th</sup> funding start date, upon completion of the approval process. Critiques of the grant applications are not typically provided to successful or unsuccessful applicants, nor is applicant ranking.

**Terms of the Award**

**Overview:** Awards are made to invited non-profit academic, medical or research institutions in the United States on behalf of the Award Recipients. The Award Recipient Institution is responsible for the administrative and financial management of the project, including any subcontracts, and maintaining adequate supporting records and receipts of expenditures.

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**Award Amount and Funding Period:** One-year Awards totaling up to \$300,000 will be awarded for the funding period. The start date of the Award may be postponed for up to three months without a formal request. Any longer delays must be approved by The Medical Foundation. A delayed start date will not reduce the total Award Period (i.e., a project start date of February 28<sup>th</sup> will revise the project end date to February 27<sup>th</sup>).

**COVID-19 Related Research Disturbances:** Upon award funding recommendation notification, the recommended Principal Investigator and their Institution shall confirm that the Principal Investigator's laboratory (and any laboratories/facilities/staff included in the proposed research) will be operational, and able to start the work described in the Research Proposal by funding start date or within the standard 3-month delayed start timeframe. Start dates beyond the 3-month timeframe will be considered with Institutional assurances.

**Institutional Assurances:** The Award Recipient must adhere to all federal, state, and local regulations regarding the use of human subjects (including informed consent), animals, radioactive or hazardous materials, and recombinant DNA in this research project. It is the Institution's responsibility to ensure that all approvals have been secured prior to releasing the Award funds. An Authorized Institutional Representative must acknowledge understanding of these responsibilities on the submitted Application and the Institutional Officer must confirm this oversight before award funds are released.

**Liability:** The Administrator and the Funder do not assume any liability or responsibility for activities supported by this Award including, without limitation, incidents or accidents

involving any project personnel or study subjects (whether on travel, in the laboratory or classroom, or elsewhere).

**Scientific Misconduct:** The appropriate federal, state, and local guidelines with regard to scientific misconduct must also be in place and enforced at the Award Recipient Institution. In the unlikely event that an Award Recipient is involved in an investigation of scientific and/or financial misconduct, as it relates to this award, he or she will be subject to the procedures in place at the Institution. To the extent legally possible, the Institution must notify the Administrator of both the investigation and the procedures that the Institution will follow. According to the NIH/U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, research misconduct is defined as the “fabrication, falsification, or plagiarism in proposing, performing, or reviewing research, or in reporting research results.” A finding of scientific and/or financial misconduct must be reported to the Administrator and may affect the Award Recipient’s continued eligibility for support under this Program.

**Financial Responsibilities of Award Recipient Institution:** The Institution will keep systematic records of all expenditures relating to this Award. Vouchers consisting of bills, invoices, cancelled checks, receipts, etc. will be retained by the Institution for three (3) years after the close of the Award period and will be available for inspection by representatives of the Funder during normal business hours and upon reasonable notice throughout this period. The Funder may, at its expense, examine, audit, or have audited the records of the Institution insofar as they relate to activities supported by this Award.

**Use of the Award Funds:** The laws of the United States place certain restrictions on the manner in which funds awarded to organizations by charitable trusts and foundations may be expended. The award from the Falk Trust may be used to support the Award Recipient’s salary and fringe benefits; salaries and fringe benefits of postdoctoral fellows, technicians or graduate students; publication of scientific data; travel to scientific meetings; laboratory and data processing supplies; and other direct expenses such as equipment essential to the project. Salaries must be in proportion to the percent effort on the research project. However, percent effort may exceed the percent of total salary support requested from this Award.

Funds may not be used for new construction, the renovation of existing facilities, fundraising projects or endowments. Funds may not be used for any political activity, accumulated deficits, or for any other purpose prohibited by the Internal Revenue Service Code. Funds awarded for the direct costs of the project may not be used for general operating costs. The grant monies which have been awarded, including any interest earned therein, may only be used for the purposes stated in this agreement.

**Indirect costs (institutional overhead):** Indirect Costs may not exceed 10% of direct costs. In instances where there is a subcontract, the combined dollar amount for indirects taken by both the Award Recipient Institution and the contracting institution may not exceed total allowed indirects per award.

**Re-Budgeting:** Expenditures are expected to be within reasonable range of the Budget that was submitted in the Award Recipient's original application. All requests for re-budgeting or reallocation of grant funds over \$20,000 must be conveyed by email to the Administrator. The request must include the current allocation of resources along with specific detail and justification for the reallocation.

**Financial Responsibilities of the Award Recipient Institution:** The Award Recipient Institution will keep systematic records of all expenditures relating to this Award. Vouchers consisting of bills, invoices, cancelled checks, receipts, etc. will be retained by the Institution for three (3) years after the close of the Award period and will be available for inspection by representatives of the Funder, during normal business hours and upon reasonable notice throughout this period. The Funder may, at their expense, examine, audit, or have audited the records of the Institution insofar as they relate to activities supported by this Award.

**No-Cost Extension:** A no-cost extension for up to 12 months may be granted upon receipt and approval for a no-cost extension request. The request will contain a section for justifying the extension, the unexpended balance, and a timeline for expenditure of the remaining funds. A Final Scientific report is due at the completion of the extension period. Any portion of the Award not expended at the conclusion of the extended project period must be made payable to the Funder and returned to the Administrator within thirty (30) days.

**Transfer or Termination of Award:** Awards are made to the Institution where the named Award Recipient is conducting research. If the Award Recipient is planning a move to another nonprofit research institution during the Award Period, transfer of funds to continue the project must be requested via email to the Administrator. This communication must include a letter from the new Department Chair confirming the availability of resources to continue the project as well as a Fiscal Report stating the remaining fund balance. If the transfer is approved, the Award Recipient and the new Institution will be responsible for notifying the Administrator of the new payee information and coordinating the fund transfer.

If the Award Recipient is not continuing the research in another nonprofit research setting, the Award will be cancelled, and unused funds must be returned within sixty (60) days. Disposition of any equipment purchased by the Award Recipient with Falk Trust Award funds will be evaluated on a case by case basis. Transfer of this Award to another PI is not permitted.

**Change in Award Recipient Status:** It is also the responsibility of the Award Recipient as well as the Award Recipient Institution to notify the Administrator of any change in employment status of the Award Recipient **at least 30 days prior to such change.**

**Unused Funds and Reversion:** Should any of the following events occur, the Administrator, on behalf of the Funder, may demand repayment of all unexpended Award funds; moreover, all

unpaid installments may be cancelled. The Award Recipient Institution is also required to give written notice if there is a change in the Institution's status as noted below:

- A determination, preliminary or otherwise, is made by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service that the grant does not constitute a qualifying distribution.
- The Institution fails to perform any of its duties, in the judgment of the Administrator or its Scientific Review Committee, required by the terms of this Award. In such cases, the Administrator shall provide no less than thirty (30) days termination notice in writing to the Institution, upon which the Institution shall have an additional thirty (30) days following receipt of such notice within which to cure any deemed failures.
- The Award Recipient Institution ceases to be exempt from income taxes under the U.S. Internal Revenue Service Code or becomes a private foundation.
- There is a material change in the purpose, character, or method of operation of the Institution such as to jeopardize its tax status.

**Medical and Family Leave:** The Award Recipient may continue to expend any Award funds allocated to salary during medical or parental leave consistent with the Institutional level of paid leave for such purposes. Medical leave may be taken for a serious health condition of the employee or to care for the employee's spouse, child, or parent who has a serious health condition. Family leave may be taken by either parent for the adoption or the birth of a child.

**Reporting Requirements:** A Progress Narrative and Financial Report is due six (6) months after the funding start date. The Award Recipient will receive an email notice and forms for these reports, approximately three weeks prior to their due dates. Final Narrative and Fiscal reports are due sixty (60) days following conclusion of the Award Period. The Funder and the Administrator reserve the right to place a hold on funds in cases where the Award Recipient is non-compliant with these Reporting Requirements.

**Patents, Copyright and Intellectual Property:** The Award Recipient should follow the Institution's policies regarding discoveries or any other intellectual property that results from research conducted under this Award. Neither the Funder nor the Administrator will retain any rights to published results or patents that result from the research.

**Confidentiality and Third-Party Release:** Application materials as well as Scientific Progress and Final Reports are considered confidential. The Administrator engages third parties who have the necessary expertise to review the submitted materials and evaluate each project. Although the Administrator makes its best efforts to protect the confidentiality of the reports by requiring reviewers to sign confidentiality agreements, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. The Administrator and Funder are not responsible for any consequences resulting from the disclosure of the content of these materials to such third parties.

The Administrator and the Funder reserves the right to public acknowledgement of Award information (Award Recipient Name, Institution, Project Title, and Research Project Summary). This information will be made available through the website of the Administrator and may be posted on other affiliated organization websites, publicly accessible databases of privately funded

awards, or published in print form or other media. Noted in the online application form, it alerts the applicant that the project summary will be posted on the Administrator's website if the project is funded.

**Scientific Meetings:** Awardees will be expected to share ideas and present research findings throughout the Award period at scientific meetings or symposiums.

**Additional Support:** Awards from the Funder are made for the specified award period. In making this Award, the Funder assumes no obligation to provide additional support to the Award Recipient beyond the original award period.

**Scientific Publications:** Publications or presentations resulting from research supported by this Award must acknowledge the **Dr. Ralph and Marian Falk Medical Research Trust Awards Programs**.

**Acknowledgements:** The Award Recipient and Institution are encouraged to announce receipt of this Award entitled, the **Dr. Ralph and Marian Falk Medical Research Trust Catalyst Awards Program** and credit financial support to the **Dr. Ralph and Marian Falk Medical Research Trust, Bank of America, N.A., Trustee**. Disclosure of additional details regarding the Falk Trust must be approved by the Falk Trust.

**Post Award:** Award Recipients to make good faith efforts to update the Administrator about any new position, affiliation, or contact information (especially email address) and respond to reasonable requests for information on his/her research progress and contact information following the Award period. The Recipient may be requested to provide a current Biosketch or update information in an online database. The Recipient understands that this obligation survives the Award period.

## APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Use this link to begin a **NEW** application:

[https://www.GrantRequest.com/SID\\_738?SA=SNA&FID=35089](https://www.GrantRequest.com/SID_738?SA=SNA&FID=35089)

Return to a **SAVED** application:

[https://www.GrantRequest.com/SID\\_738?SA=AM](https://www.GrantRequest.com/SID_738?SA=AM)

### **Sharing/Transferring your application with your Institutional Representative(s) for Certification:**

- The Applicant is considered the “Owner” of this request. The Applicant/Owner is required to secure sign off from their Institutional Representatives, such as OSP and Finance, by “transferring ownership” temporarily to complete the Institutional Representative Information
- Transfer takes place on the applicant’s account page:  
[https://www.GrantRequest.com/SID\\_738?SA=AM](https://www.GrantRequest.com/SID_738?SA=AM)
- All contacts must have an Account to share applications
- New users will Create an Account with their own email and password
- Use the transfer  icon under the **Action** heading to transfer ownership
- The Institutional Representative will transfer ownership back to the Applicant prior to submission

**Please complete the following tabs in the online form:**

- Institution’s Tax ID Number**
- Eligibility Quiz**
- Applicant Data:** Institution, Contact, and Educational background information. Provide the PI’s ORCID identification number, if available. If there are two **Co-PIs**, one must be designated as the “Administrative or Lead” PI and only that person will complete the Face Sheet.
- Key Personnel:** Co-PI and Co-Investigator’s name and institutional affiliation should be supplied in the Key Personnel fields, if applicable.
- Research Project:** Project Title, Keywords, Project Summary, Non-technical Summary and Overview, Experimental Systems, Description of Relevance, and Applicant’s initials to certify the accuracy of submitted information
- Institutional Contact Information:** Complete Institutional Contact fields. Certification by the Institutional Representative on the application will acknowledge understanding of the terms of the Program, and that the proposal has been reviewed and has been approved for submission to the Program.
- Attachments:** All items must be combined into ONE PDF for upload. On the final PDF, make sure all pages are numbered sequentially starting with the Application Face Sheet as page #1. This PDF must be named LastName, FirstName 2020C.pdf (for example, Doe, Jane 2020C.pdf).
- Templates** for Forms A-C (Word), D and E (Excel): <https://hria.org/tmf/FalkCAP>

### **Application Materials:**

- A. Face Sheet:** The Face Sheet (Form A) template must be reviewed by the Applicant and the Office of Sponsored Programs or the Institutional Officer administratively responsible for the oversight of the project. The Applicant on the Face Sheet confirms their responsibility for obtaining any required human subjects (IRB), animal use (IACUC), or institutional equivalent approvals. In addition, the Institutional Officer confirms that all eligibility requirements have been met. Endorsement by the Institutional Officer confirms that the Institution will commit to appropriate oversight if the project is funded. The Face Sheet is used as page 1.
- B. Table of Contents** (Form B): Follow the Table of Contents template and number all pages sequentially.
- C. Project Summary** (Form C): Copy the Project Summary from the Online Form into the Project Summary template. The 350-word summary should state the project's broad, long-term objectives and specific aims.
- D. Budget, Summary, and Justification** (Form D): Complete each tab in the Excel spreadsheet template. Indirect costs (institutional overhead) may not exceed 10% of direct costs or \$27,272 of a \$300,000 per year Award. In instances where there is a subcontract, the combined dollar amount for indirects taken by both the Award Recipient Institution and the contracting institution may not exceed total allowed indirects per award.
- E. Other Support Page** (Form E): Using the Other Support template:
- PI/Applicant should list all active and pending support, addressing potential overlap for each at the level of the specific aims with the submission.
  - Other Support includes all financial resources, whether Federal, non-Federal, commercial or institutional, available in direct support of an individual's research endeavors, including but not limited to research grants, cooperative agreements, contracts, and/or institutional awards. Training awards, prizes, or gifts do not need to be included.
  - Effort devoted to projects must be measured using person months. Indicate calendar, academic, and/or summer months associated with each project.
  - Guidance regarding the type and extent of information requested is included within the template. Please delete the example before submission.
  - **If applicable, please also provide grant overlap for co-investigator's/key personnel.**
- F. Research Proposal (maximum of nine pages, excluding references cited):** Outline succinctly how the proposed research project addresses critical scientific and therapeutic roadblocks that may open new avenues for treating and curing disease.

**Research Proposal Format:** Arial 11 font and size must be used in the text of the research proposal section. Use single spacing within paragraphs, double spacing between paragraphs

and ½ inch or larger margins on all four sides. Any figures, graphs, tables or pictures must be included within the nine-page limit. For these visuals, the minimum is an 8 point-font size. Supplementary material (e.g. reprints of publications, appendices, and additional data) are not permitted.

**Within the page limit, include these sections:**

- 1) **Background and Significance:** Provide a detailed rationale for the entire transformational research program, while providing a context for the proposed Catalyst Research Award.
  - 2) **Specific Aims (maximum one page):** These should be specific, measurable, and necessary preliminary steps for the overall research effort. These aims will form the basis of the Catalyst Award milestones.
  - 3) **Preliminary data** (if available)
  - 4) **Research design, experimental methods and analytical plan**
  - 5) **Research limitations and contingencies**
  - 6) **Catalyst Project Milestones and Research Plan Table:** Create a summary table (no more than one page) based on the specific aims, that shows each milestone, the associated benchmark measure(s) of success, estimated timeline; it may also include other explanatory material (including key personnel or collaborators). The successful completion of these activities will form the basis of subsequent Transformational Award applications. Please include specific data, methods, and benchmarks that will demonstrate achievement of each milestone. Quantitative benchmarks must include reference to statistical methods including sample size justification. Note: All personnel and collaborations should be related to the achievement of milestones.
  - 7) **Optional Sections, not included in page limit:** (a) management plan – required for multiple co-PI projects, optional for others. (b) Human or animal studies considerations, as applicable. For human studies, include an enrollment table that describes recruitment of women and minority participants.
  - 8) **Literature Cited (not included in page limit)**
- G. Biosketch of PI/Applicant (use the latest NIH biosketch, max 5 pages):** If applicable, please also include Co-Investigator Biographical Sketch(es) to the upload. It is not necessary to include a Collaborators biosketch unless they are key personnel.
- H. Department or Division Chair’s Letter:** This letter (forwarded to the Applicant for upload) must address the applicant’s qualifications to conduct the proposed research independently as well as note the space and equipment available for the completion of the project. If the applicant is Chair of his/her department, a letter of recommendation from the Dean should be submitted.
- I. Letter(s) of Collaboration (if applicable):** When applicable, letters confirming the availability of resources outside the Applicant’s institution or letters confirming any significant collaboration

may be included (forwarded to the Applicant for upload). These are not additional letters of recommendation.

*Out of fairness to applicants who adhere to the Guidelines, applications that do not conform to the stated instructions will be rejected.*

**Frequently Asked Questions:** <https://hria.org/tmf/falkcap/>

Or email Jeanne Brown, Director of Grantmaking: [jbrown@hria.org](mailto:jbrown@hria.org)

*Revised June 2020*