



**Prostate Cancer Foundation
2026 PCF Challenge Awards
For Prostate Cancer with Lethal Potential
REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS**

The Prostate Cancer Foundation (PCF) is pleased to announce a Request for Applications for PCF Challenge Awards for Team Science investigations of prostate cancer with lethal potential. These awards will be funded depending on the level of innovation in applications received. PCF seeks high-risk, currently unfunded projects from academic and community research institutions around the world.

PCF Challenge Awards:

- Composed of a team of at least three (3) investigators from non-profit academic research centers or community organizations, including one young investigator (see PCF Challenge Award Team requirements below).
- Support large-scale research projects concerning prostate cancer with lethal potential over a duration of two years.
- Provide up to a total of \$1 million per team.
- Cover only direct research costs and travel to the Annual PCF Scientific Retreat.
- **Clinical trial direct costs are not allowed**; however, correlative research to support high impact clinical trials for advanced prostate cancer is encouraged. IRB submission and preferably approval is desired at time of application.
- All studies involving patients must include plans for including diverse participant populations with appropriate representation of ethnic and racial minority groups. Comprehensive statistical plans and power calculations are required.

Research proposal topic areas:

PCF seeks applications for highly innovative currently unfunded research projects that will ultimately reduce death and suffering from prostate cancer. This includes basic, translational, clinical, and community-based research that will significantly contribute to preventing prostate cancer metastasis, morbidity or mortality. Research proposals submitted in consideration for this award should, if successful, provide high impact to the field. "Small-step" or incremental proposals, and projects that do not address lethal or potentially-lethal prostate cancer such as diagnostics and treatments for low-risk localized disease, are usually non-competitive. Highly innovative basic science programs will be carefully considered, but priority will be given to "bench to bedside" translational research proposals with strong potential to deliver near term benefit to patients. **Preference will be given to teams able to deliver on major aims within the two-year funding period.**

The PCF Challenge Award Team:

- Should be composed of at least 3 investigators capable of providing unique scientific expertise to the solution of this significant problem in prostate cancer research.
- May be assembled from one institution, or several institutions.
- Must embed at least one young investigator as an integral contributor to the team. To qualify as a young investigator, this team member must have a doctoral-level degree and be within six years of completion of their terminal degree or subsequent mentored academic or clinical training program including postdoctoral or clinical fellowships.
- To improve the health and wellness of our treasured US military veterans, applicants with Veterans Administration (VA) appointments are highly encouraged to apply. Projects that involve a VA Medical Center in their research proposal planning will be appreciated.

Eligibility:

Investigators representing academic research centers and community organizations are eligible to apply for PCF Challenge Awards. Investigators from for-profit companies and government institutions, with the exception of the VA, are ineligible.

Application Online Submission Guidelines

The **Primary Investigator** should log into <https://pcf.smartsimple.com>, click the 'Open RFAs' tab', then click the orange 'Apply Now' button for the 2026 Challenge Award RFA. *Unsubmitted draft applications are located under the 'Applications' tab.* Drafts will be deleted in the system sometime after the submission deadline.

Names and contact information for all team members listed in the Research Proposal must be added to the online application. Collaborators who are not team members but will collaborate on the project, wrote letters of recommendation or otherwise contributed to the application must also be listed on the online application.

All documents listed below (except the abstract) should be uploaded as separate PDF files. Please note that item 7 should be submitted only if your project involves clinical trial correlative research and item 8 is optional. **PCF does not fund direct clinical trial costs.**

1. **Scientific Abstract (500 words maximum):** Concisely describe the background, rationale, specific aims, experimental approach and anticipated outcomes and impact of the project is required (fill-in form field).
2. **Lay Abstract (500 words maximum):** Concisely describe the background & rationale, major project goals and outcomes and impact of the project if successful (fill-in form field). This abstract may be used for fundraising efforts and will be posted on PCF.org for awarded applications. Please follow the required formatting and tips in the Smart Simple application portal.
3. **Statement of Originality** (1-page limit): This statement delineates why the work is first-in-field, original, and currently unfunded. PCF seeks new and never-before tested ideas, not derivatives of ongoing investigations or incremental research.
4. **Research Proposal:** The narrative text and any preliminary data supporting a 2-year research proposal, limited to 10 pages, plus a list of references cited (references not to be counted toward the 10-page limit). For investigations that involve clinical trials, inclusion of a statistician and a clear statistical plan to justify the size of the study population is mandatory.
5. **NIH Biosketch:** Please submit a NIH Biographical Sketch for each investigator (5-page max), including a list of relevant publications and currently funded research projects (include award or grant type, project title, funding source, amount, and beginning and end dates of funding). NIH Biosketches for all investigators (except collaborators) on the team science proposal should be combined and uploaded as a single PDF document.
6. **Budget page(s):** Please include an annual budget breakout grid and budget justification for the proposal. PCF will cover only direct costs (no overhead). The budget can be prepared using NIH Budget forms like PHS 398; however, use of these forms is not mandatory. All PCF Challenge Award PIs and Co-PIs must use funds from the PCF Challenge Award to cover travel and registration expenses to attend the Annual PCF Scientific Retreat. Attendance by at least one member of the team each year is required for the 2-year duration of the award. The 2026 Retreat will be held in Carlsbad, CA. PCF does not fund direct clinical trial costs.
7. **Clinical trial protocol and a timeline for activation of the clinical investigation:** If applicable, such as for proposals involving clinical trial correlative research.
8. **Supplemental Information (Optional):** Supplemental information in support of the application such as previous highly relevant publications or accepted manuscripts, letters of collaboration and letters of support can be uploaded as a single PDF document. IRB or animal use approvals may also be uploaded here if available when applying.

If applicable, at the time of the award, an IRB-approved protocol ready for activation is required for all human-related studies, including specimen acquisition. In addition, documentation of the availability of the experimental agent to be studied is required.

Funding decisions will be made following peer and programmatic review. Reporting results and the budget process will be discussed at the time of announcement of the awards. All Challenge Award recipients are required to submit progress reports on time to receive additional payments. Challenge Award activation dates are ongoing throughout the fiscal year.

Visit <https://pcf.smartsimple.com> on or after **Monday, January 12, 2026**, to complete the online application form and attach the PDFs.

Please direct questions to applications@pcf.org.

The deadline for application submission is:

Monday, March 16, 2026, 3:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time (EDT)

***** In fairness to all there will be no exceptions to this deadline. *****