

CANSEARCH Research Grant

Version of March 1st, 2024

“CANSUPPORT PEDIATRIC ONCO-HEMATOLOGY RESEARCH IN SWITZERLAND CANCURE FOR KIDS”

Preamble

Since its creation in 2011 in collaboration with the University Hospitals of Geneva (HUG) and the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Geneva (UNIGE), the CANSEARCH Foundation has developed Geneva’s first research platform in paediatric oncology and haematology. It currently employs over twenty researchers, laboratory technicians and students.

The platform focuses primarily on the following research areas: pharmacogenomics-individualised therapy, oncogenetics, liver tumours, stem cell transplantation and paediatric neuro-oncology. Additional activities include the a paediatric biobank project and a related study on complications encountered by some cancer survivors as well as various research projects at the Institute for Social and Preventive Medicine in Bern and in Canada.

As it celebrates its 10 year anniversary and the generous donors who have made this possible, the CANSEARCH Foundation has decided to further expand its support of research in the field of paediatric oncology and haematology by offering, for the first time, a CANSEARCH Fellowship to young researchers initially based in the French-speaking part of Switzerland. In the fullness of time and depending on the availability of funds, the fellowship may subsequently be extended to researchers from other regions of Switzerland, or even from abroad.

The following sections define the conditions and modalities for the award of this grant.

Call for proposals for a research grant in paediatric oncology and haematology (Call for proposals)

Type of grant

- Support for innovative research projects in paediatric oncology and haematology only
- Projects conducted in academic institutions in the French-speaking part of Switzerland (GE, VD, VS, NE, JU, FR, including BE), with an obligation for applicants to be affiliated with an academic research institute or laboratory. Priority will be given to projects benefiting from the collaboration of several institutions based in French-speaking Switzerland
- For new or ongoing projects

Fields in oncology or paediatric haematology

- Only for research in paediatric oncology and haematology
- Clinical, epidemiological, basic or translational research in paediatric
- All types of paediatric cancers or haematological diseases
- Priority is given to paediatricians (in training or with completed training or PhDs in paediatric institutions)

Before a call for proposals is published, the CANSEARCH Foundation's Scientific Committee will determine which theme(s) will be given priority. It is anticipated that these will change from year to year.

Objectives

To promote research in the fields of paediatric oncology and haematology.

Number of projects to be supported per year

This will be dependent on the quality of the submissions received but it is expected that at least one project will be accepted each year.

Maximum awarded amount of the grant

CHF 250,000.

The board of the CANSEARCH Foundation reserves the right to change this amount, either upward or downward, to reflect the future evolution of the financial health of the foundation.

Use of the CANSEARCH grant

Amount to be used for: salaries/equipment/consumables/IT/travel expenses/ training.

Maximum duration of the project

1 to 2 years in principle, depending of the project's budget.

Periodicity of the grant

Every 2 years with a start in the year 2022. Other frequency to be defined according to the financial capacities of the foundation and the decision of the CANSEARCH Foundation Board.

Use of funds

Under the responsibility and at the discretion of the the researcher. Scientific and financial reports will need to be submitted to the Foundation at least once a year.

What the CANSEARCH grant does not support

- 1) Education, laboratory material or equipment not directly linked to the project for which a grant has been awarded
- 2) Material or equipment for direct patient treatment or patient comfort

Special features

Projects with collaboration of several institutions in French-speaking Switzerland.

Renewal of funding / Re-submission to the grant

Renewal of funding for a project already supported by a CANSEARCH grant is possible provided that the project is submitted for re-selection and is accepted in the re-selection process.

How to submit a project

- 1) Prepare a letter of intent with a brief description of the project (2 pages) according to the format available on the CANSEARCH Foundation website and submit it to the CANSEARCH Foundation by e-mail at the address valerie@cansearch.ch by March 31st of the year of publication of the grant
- 2) In case of positive pre-selection by the Scientific Committee of the CANSEARCH Foundation on the basis of the letter of intent, submit a full proposal by e mail to the CANSEARCH foundation at the address valerie@cansearch.ch. The CANSEARCH foundation will then send it to the Swiss Cancer League (SCL). The scientific committee of the SCL will evaluate the projects and transmit its scientific review of the projects to the Scientific Committee of the CANSEARCH Foundation
- 3) The Scientific Committee of the CANSEARCH Foundation will submit to the Board of the CANSEARCH Foundation their proposal for the final decision on the award of the grant by the end of September of the same year at the latest. The General Secretariat will notify the researcher(s) of the acceptance or not

Method of awarding the grant

By written confirmation (letter).

Conditions

- Applicant :
 - A scientist (physician, MD, MD-PhD, PhD or PhD student)
 - Areas of expertise: pediatrics, oncology, hematology, genetics, biomedicine, biostatistics, molecular biology, transplantation, cell therapies, immuno-oncology, etc.
 - No age limit at the time of project submission (priority given to researcher <45 years old)
 - Clearly identified protected time for this project
 - The applicant needs to have a stable position during the time of the grant in Suisse Romande
 - A researcher attached to the CANSEARCH research platform in paediatric oncology and haematology at the University of Geneva (the Platform) may apply for the CANSEARCH grant but only as a co-investigator, not as a principal applicant.
- Language: English
- Typographical requirements: use the SCL typography

Documents and information to be submitted

- Letter of intent
- Purpose and description of the project (as per CANSEARCH form)
- Detailed budget (as per CANSEARCH form)
- Equipment and consumables already at the applicant's disposal must be indicated and accompanied by a letter of support from the supervisor indicating that the equipment required for the research is provided by the University. Salaries to be assessed according to the SNSF salary scale
- CV
- Summary of professional achievements and their impact on pediatric cancer control

- Complete list of publications including H-index and identifying the 5 most recent publications in the field relevant to the CANSEARCH award
- 3 Letters of recommendation for a MD, MD-PhD or PhD student (<45 years old): 1 from the supervisor, 1 from another person familiar with the researcher's work and 1 from the organization or institute to which the researcher is attached
- No letters of recommendation are required for a Senior researcher (>45 years old) or a Professor

Selection criteria

Scoring system according to SCL with scores from 1-6 (1 being the lowest, 6 the highest) and 4 criteria:

1. Originality or innovative research aspects or social-economic aspect and timeliness (for clinical projects)
2. Adequacy of proposed research methods
3. Feasibility of the PI's group
4. Past accomplishments (of the PI, the leading group, as well as the other groups)

Place of notification of the grant

Websites of all universities in French-speaking Switzerland teaching medicine and science, websites of the French-speaking Swiss university hospitals (subject to the agreement of the UNIGE).

Deadline for submission of the project

Every 2 years on March 31st, at midnight.

Deadline for decision on the project(s)

30 September of the same year, in writing.

Start of the project

Within 12 months after the receipt of the CANSEARCH Research Grant.

Selection procedure

- 1) The Scientific Committee of the CANSEARCH Foundation will make a pre-selection of the candidates, based on their letters of intent (2 pages). Successful applicants are invited to submit a full application file to the CANSEARCH foundation. The Foundation will then transmit them to the SCL for evaluation.

The SCL evaluates the projects and transmits its evaluation and proposal for ranking the projects to the Scientific Committee of the CANSEARCH Foundation.

- 2) The Scientific Committee of the CANSEARCH Foundation proposes the final selection and the winner(s) to the Board of the Cansearch Foundation for the award of the grant by the end of September of the same year and notifies the researcher(s) of the acceptance or not. The Board of Cansearch has the final decision.

Reporting requirements

- Annual scientific report on the progress of the project to be submitted to the Board of the CANSEARCH Foundation
- Annual financial report on the use of funds to be submitted to the Board of the CANSEARCH Foundation
- Submission for publication in a peer-reviewed scientific journal
- Publication on open access platforms
- Popularised summary of the project for the general public in French or English
- Participation in photos or videos of the project or researcher for promotion on CANSEARCH distribution channels
- Mention of the CANSEARCH logo or "project supported by the CANSEARCH Foundation" on communications and publications of the supported project (press articles, presentations, etc.)
- Participation in CANSEARCH award ceremonies, if applicable

ANNEX – Flowchart showing the various stages of the selection process

