

Announcement of Federal Funding Opportunity

Summary

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

A. Title of Award: Investigator-Initiated Research Award (IIRA)

B. Program Name: Department of Defense (DOD) Fiscal Year 2003 (FY03) Neurofibromatosis Research Program (NFRP).

C. Funding Opportunity Number: DAMD17-NF03-IIRA.

D. Agency Name: US Army Medical Research and Materiel Command (USAMRMC), Office of the Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs (CDMRP), 1077 Patchel Street, Fort Detrick, Maryland 21702-5024.

E. Agency Contact(s)

1. Questions related to the Program, proposal format, or required documentation may be addressed to the CDMRP at:

Phone: 301-619-7079
Fax: 301-619-7792
E-mail: cdmrp.pa@det.amedd.army.mil
Mail: Commander
US Army Medical Research and Materiel Command
ATTN: MCMR-PLF (DAMD17-NF03-IIRA)
1077 Patchel Street (Building 1077)
Fort Detrick, MD 21702-5024

2. Questions related to electronic submission: The help line phone numbers are provided on the web or may be requested by e-mail as follows:

Website: <https://cdmrp.org/proposals> (the proposal submission website)
E-mail: help-proposals-cdmrp@cdmrp.org

F. Anticipated Instrument Type(s): Grants/Cooperative Agreements.

G. Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number(s): 12.420; Military Medical Research and Development.

H. Website Address to Access Application Package: Proposals must be submitted electronically at <https://cdmrp.org/proposals>. The website contains all the information, forms, documents, and links you will need to apply.

II. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

The intent of Investigator-Initiated Research Awards is to sponsor basic and clinically oriented research that will (1) provide insight into the molecular mechanisms underlying the development of neurofibromatosis (NF) and related diseases, (2) result in substantial improvement(s) over today's approach to the diagnosis and treatment of NF1, NF2, and/or Schwannomatosis, and (3) enhance the quality of life for persons with the disease.

III. AWARD INFORMATION

- Type of award: grant/cooperative agreement.
- Approximately \$4.2 million (M) is available for this award mechanism.
- There are no total dollar amount restrictions to these awards. Funding can be requested for up to 4 years. Funding for Nested Postdoctoral Traineeships can be requested for a maximum of \$60,000 per year inclusive of direct and indirect costs for a maximum of \$240,000 per trainee for up to 4 years. Depending on the number and quality of the applications, it is anticipated that approximately three proposals will be funded.

IV. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Applicants: Applicants should be at a level equivalent to or above that of Assistant Professor.

B. Institutions: Eligible institutions include for-profit, non-profit, public, and private organizations. All individuals, regardless of ethnicity, nationality, or citizenship status, may apply as long as they are employed by, or affiliated with, an eligible institution.

C. Cost Sharing: Not required.

D. Other Eligibility Criteria: Please see the Full Text of Program Announcement description for details regarding duplicate submissions, applications from Historically Black Colleges and Universities/Minority Institutions, and administrative compliance issues.

V. PROPOSAL PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. Proposal Information: Applicants are required to submit the Proposal Information prior to upload of the proposal. Complete the Proposal Information as described at <https://cdmrp.org/proposals>.

B. Proposal Preparation: All proposals must be converted into an electronic PDF (Portable Document Format) file for electronic proposal submission. Please see the Full Text of Program Announcement for details.

C. Submission Dates and Times: Deadline Date: August 20, 2003. Proposals must be approved on the CDMRP eReceipt system by the Contract Representative at the applicant's institution's Sponsored Programs Office (or equivalent) by 5:00 p.m. (Eastern time).

D. Electronic Submission Requirements: Electronic submission is required. No paper copy submissions will be accepted. Proposals must be submitted electronically at <https://cdmrp.org/proposals>. Please see the Full Text of Program Announcement for details.

VI. PROPOSAL REVIEW INFORMATION

The CDMRP uses a two-tiered review process for proposals: scientific peer review, followed by programmatic review. Details of both tiers of review can be found in the Full Text of Program Announcement.

VII. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

A. Award Notices and Administrative Requirements: Details of award notification procedures and administrative requirements including Regulatory Compliance and Quality documents (Certificate of Environmental Compliance, Research Involving Human Subjects and/or Anatomical Substances, Research Involving Animals, and Safety Program Plan) can be found in the Full Text of Program Announcement.

B. Reporting Requirements: Annual reporting requirements apply.

VIII. OTHER INFORMATION

Details pertaining to Disclosure of Proprietary Information outside the Government, Government Obligation, Information Service, Inquiry Panel Review, and Title to Inventions and Patents can be found in the Full Text of the Program Announcement.

Full Text of Program Announcement

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

A. Title of Award: Investigator-Initiated Research Award (IIRA).

B. Program Name: Department of Defense (DOD) Fiscal Year 2003 (FY03) Neurofibromatosis Research Program (NFRP).

C. Funding Opportunity Number: DAMD17-NF03-IIRA.

D. Agency Name: US Army Medical Research and Materiel Command (USAMRMC), Office of the Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs (CDMRP), 1077 Patchel Street, Fort Detrick, Maryland 21702-5024.

E. Agency Contact(s):

1. Questions related to the Program, proposal format, or required documentation. Applicants should submit questions as early as possible. Every effort will be made to answer questions within 5 working days.

Phone: 301-619-7079
Fax: 301-619-7792
E-mail: cdmrp.pa@det.amedd.army.mil
Mail: Commander
US Army Medical Research and Materiel Command
ATTN: MCMR-PLF (DAMD17-NF03-IIRA)
1077 Patchel Street (Building 1077)
Fort Detrick, MD 21702-5024

2. Questions related to electronic submission: Help lines will be available to answer specific questions regarding the preparation of proposals for electronic submission, or the process of electronic submission. The help line phone numbers are provided on the web or may be requested by e-mail as follows:

Website: <https://cdmrp.org/proposals> (the proposal submission website)
E-mail: help-proposals-cdmrp@cdmrp.org

F. Anticipated Instrument Type(s): The USAMRMC implements its extramural research program predominantly through the award of grants and cooperative agreements. More information on these funding instruments may be obtained by request from:

Fax: 301-619-2937
E-mail: q&a.baa@det.amedd.army.mil
Mail: Director
US Army Medical Research Acquisition Activity
ATTN: MCMR-AAA
820 Chandler Street
Fort Detrick, MD 21702-5014

G. Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number 12.420: Military Medical Research and Development.

H. Website to Access Application Package: Proposals must be submitted electronically at <https://cdmrp.org/proposals>. This website will contain all the information, forms, documents, and links you will need to apply. If you experience difficulties in downloading documents, contact the CDMRP as indicated in Section E.1 above.

II. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. Program History: The Investigator-Initiated Research Award is part of the DOD NFRP, which was established in FY96 to promote research directed toward decreasing the impact of neurofibromatosis (NF). Appropriations for the NFRP since FY96 total \$110.3 million (M). The program history of the FY96-02 NFRP is shown in Table 1. The FY03 appropriation is \$20M.

Table 1: History of the DOD’s Peer Reviewed NFRP

Program History	FY96-01	FY02 ¹
Congressional Appropriations for NFRP	\$69.3M	\$21M
Total Proposals Received	223	76
Total Proposals Funded	85	~17
Investigator-Initiated Research Award Proposals Received	127	24
Investigator-Initiated Research Award Proposals Funded	42	~7

¹ Award negotiations will be finalized by September 2003.

B. Program Objectives: The overall goal of the FY03 NFRP is to develop effective therapies for NF1, NF2, and Schwannomatosis. Within this context, support for the training of NF researchers, the encouragement of established scientists in the field, and the attraction of new scientific expertise from other fields are essential to the NF community. Proposals to the NFRP are sought across all areas of laboratory, clinical, behavioral, and epidemiological research including all disciplines within the basic, clinical, psychosocial, behavioral, sociocultural, and environmental sciences; nursing; occupational health; alternative therapies; public health and policy; and economics. Additionally, proposals that address the needs of minority, low-income, rural, and other underrepresented and/or medically underserved populations may be submitted from any eligible institutional source. Proposals are encouraged from investigators working at Historically Black Colleges and Universities/Minority Institutions (HBCU/MI).

C. Award Mechanism Description: The intent of Investigator-Initiated Research Awards is to sponsor basic and clinically oriented research that will (1) provide insight into the molecular mechanisms underlying the development of NF and related diseases, (2) result in substantial improvement(s) over today’s approach to the diagnosis and treatment of either NF1, NF2, and/or Schwannomatosis, and (3) enhance the quality of life for persons with the disease. These grants are intended to fund independent investigators across a broad spectrum of disciplines. All Investigator-Initiated Research Award proposals must include preliminary data relevant to NF research and the proposed project. **In addition, the proposal should include a clear statistical plan of analysis.**

The FY03 NFRP encourages investigators to submit Investigator-Initiated Research Award proposals that:

- Attempt to define the genetic and nongenetic factors and modifiers that play a role in the manifestations of NF1, NF2, and/or Schwannomatosis, including tumor formation, growth, and progression in NF1 and NF2 tumors;
- Study the hormonal effects of puberty, pregnancy, and aging on disease progression and tumor growth;
- Develop new approaches for the quantification of the size, number, and/or growth rate of dermal neurofibromas;
- Address early childhood developmental and psychosocial aspects (e.g., learning disabilities and other cognitive aspects) of NF1;
- Develop new methods of imaging and measurement of lesions; and
- Develop surrogate markers for disease progression

Investigator-Initiated Research Awards with Nested Postdoctoral Traineeship(s): Nested Postdoctoral Traineeships are being offered as an optional part of Investigator-Initiated Research Award proposals. The intent of the Nested Postdoctoral Traineeship is to enable doctoral degree graduates to either extend ongoing research related to NF or broaden the scope of their research to include work relevant to NF under the guidance of a designated mentor who is participating in the proposal. It is expected that the training will provide a valuable opportunity to further develop the experience necessary to advance the trainee's research career in NF.

A trainee is defined as a postdoctoral student with 3 years or less of postdoctoral experience at the time of proposal submission. Eligible postdoctoral candidates must have successfully defended a doctoral thesis and completed all academic requirements at the time of award negotiations.

There is no limit to the number of postdoctoral trainees that can be nested within a given Investigator-Initiated Research Award proposal. However, these Nested Postdoctoral Traineeships can only be obtained as an optional part of the Investigator-Initiated Research Award mechanism. Applicants must submit a biographical sketch of no more than three pages for each trainee and include it in the biographical sketch section. "To be named" trainees are acceptable for the proposal submission. For proposals approved for funding, the US Army Medical Research Acquisition Activity (USAMRAA) must be provided with the name and biographical sketch of each applicant for review and approval.

III. AWARD INFORMATION

Although there are no total dollar amount restrictions to these awards, funding for Investigator-Initiated Research Awards can only be requested for up to 4 years. Direct costs can cover salary, expenses including research supplies, costs for research-related injury medical costs (if applicable), and travel to scientific meetings. The amount for travel may not exceed \$1,800 per year per investigator. Institutional support and commitment must be evident to foster the applicant's research career, such as the provision of access to adequate laboratory facilities and equipment. While not required, multi-institutional and multidisciplinary research collaborations are encouraged.

For the Nested Postdoctoral Traineeship portion of Investigator-Initiated Research Award proposals, funding can be requested for a maximum of \$60,000 per year inclusive of direct and indirect costs for a maximum of \$240,000 per trainee for up to 4 years. Direct costs can cover salary, stipends, seminars and

courses, expenses including research supplies, equipment, and travel to scientific meetings. Expenses relevant to the traineeship should be listed under the “Other” category on the Detailed Cost Estimate form.

The nature of this Program does not allow for renewal of grants or supplementation of existing grants. Approximately \$4.2M is available for this award mechanism. Depending on the number and quality of the applications, it is anticipated that approximately three proposals will be funded.

IV. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Applicants: All individuals, regardless of ethnicity, nationality, or citizenship status, may apply as long as they are employed by, or affiliated with, an eligible institution as defined below.

B. Institutions: Eligible institutions include for-profit, non-profit, public, and private organizations. Examples include universities, colleges, hospitals, laboratories, companies, and agencies of local, state, and federal governments. The USAMRMC is especially interested in receiving applications from HBCU/MI.

C. Cost Sharing: Cost sharing is not a requirement for this award.

D. Other Eligibility Criteria:

1. Duplicate Submissions: Submission of the same research project to the FY03 NFRP under different award mechanisms or to other CDMRP programs is not allowed. This includes duplicate submissions under different award mechanisms by different Principal Investigators (PIs). The Government reserves the right to reject duplicative proposals.

2. HBCU/MI: A goal of the DOD is to allocate funds for the CDMRP’s peer reviewed research to fund proposals from HBCU/MI. This provision is based upon guidance from Executive Orders.¹ Proposals submitted to the DOD are assigned HBCU/MI status if the submitting institution is so designated by the Department of Education on the date that the program announcement is released. The Department of Education list is posted on the CDMRP website at <http://cdmrp.army.mil/funding/pdf/minfrp030703.pdf> under Minority Institutions.

3. Administrative Compliance Issues: Compliance guidelines have been designed to ensure the presentation of all proposals in an organized and easy-to-follow manner. Peer reviewers expect to see a consistent, prescribed format for each proposal. Nonadherence to format requirements makes proposals difficult to read, may be perceived as an attempt to gain an unfair competitive advantage, and may result in proposal rejection or a lower global priority score.

Failure to comply with any of the five items listed below will result in administrative rejection of the entire proposal prior to peer review:

- Proposal body exceeds page limit.
- Proposal body is missing.
- Detailed cost estimate is missing.

¹Executive Orders 12876, 12900, and 13021

- Proposal is submitted after the deadline.
- Required administrative documentation is not included.

For any other sections of a proposal with a defined page limit, any pages over the specified limit will be removed from the proposal and not forwarded for peer review.

Unless specifically requested by the CDMRP, any material submitted after the submission deadline will not be forwarded for peer review.

V. PROPOSAL PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. Proposal Components Summary: This subsection is a summary of submission requirements. Details, URLs, and other links are provided in the appropriate subsections of this program announcement.

The PI is responsible for uploading the following information:

- **Proposal Information:** The Proposal Information consists of two parts, both of which are entered as data fields. A Letter of Intent is generated when Part 1 of the Proposal Information is saved.
- **Statement of Work (SOW) and Proposal Abstracts:** The SOW, Technical Abstract, and Public Abstract are each entered as a separate data field.
- **Proposal:** The proposal is uploaded as a PDF (Portable Document Format) file under the “File Upload” tab.
- **Budget Information:** The budget information is uploaded as a PDF file under the “File Upload” tab.
- **Regulatory Compliance and Quality (RCQ) Documents:** The Certificate of Environmental Compliance and the Principal Investigator Safety Program Assurance Form are each uploaded as separate PDF files under the “File Upload” tab.

The Contract Representative (or equivalent) from the applicant’s institution is responsible for the following:

- **US Army Medical Research Acquisition Activity Documents:** The institute’s currently negotiated “Rate Agreement,” “Certifications and Assurances for Assistance Agreements” and the “Representations for Assistance Agreements” are to be uploaded as separate PDF files under the Contract Representative’s My Profile” tab.
- **Approval:** The Contract Representative must provide approval of all proposal components (Proposal Information, SOW, Abstracts, Proposal, Budget Information, and RCQ documents). Contract Representative approval must occur prior to the submission deadline of 5:00 p.m. (Eastern time) August 20, 2003. Otherwise, the entire proposal will be considered to be a “LATE” submission and will not be forwarded for review.

B. Proposal Information: Applicants are required to submit the Proposal Information, Parts 1 and 2, (referred to in previous years as the “Proposal Cover Booklet”) prior to upload of the proposal and the budget information. Complete the Proposal Information as described in <https://cdmrp.org/proposals>. The Proposal Information must include the e-mail address of a representative from the Sponsored Programs Office who is authorized to negotiate on behalf of the institute.

- **Letter of Intent:** All applicants considering submission of a proposal in response to this program announcement are expected to submit an electronic Letter of Intent no later than 4 weeks prior to the August 20, 2003 deadline. To accomplish this, the applicant should complete Part 1 of the Proposal Information section at <https://cdmrp.org/proposals>, then save the information by clicking on the “Save and Forward Letter of Intent” button. This information may be changed at any time until the applicant submits the final Proposal Information by clicking on the “Submit Final” button.

C. SOW – 11,400-character limit, including spaces (approximately two pages): The SOW is captured as a data field under the “SOW/Abstract” tab in the CDMRP eReceipt system. To submit the SOW, the applicant may either type in the SOW or “cut and paste” it from a word processing application into the data field. Sample SOWs can be found at <https://cdmrp.org/samples.cfm>.

The SOW is a concise restatement of the research proposal that outlines, step by step, how each of the major goals or objectives of the proposed research/services will be accomplished during the timeline for which the USAMRMC will provide financial support.

As appropriate, the SOW should:

- Describe the work to be accomplished as tasks (tasks may relate to specific aims),
- Identify the timeline and milestones for the work over the period of the proposed effort,
- Indicate the numbers of research subjects (animal or human) projected or required for each task,
- Identify methods, and
- Identify products/deliverables for each phase of the project.

D. Proposal Abstracts – 5,700-character limit, including spaces (approximately one page), for each abstract. Both a structured technical abstract and a public (nontechnical) abstract are required. These abstracts are vitally important to both the peer and programmatic review process.

Programmatic review is based upon the Integration Panel’s (IP’s) review of these two abstracts as part of the peer review summary statements; therefore, it is paramount that the investigator submit abstracts that fully describe the proposed work.

Each abstract must contain the title of the proposal and the name of the PI. Each abstract must be submitted as a data field under the “SOW/Abstracts” tab of the CDMRP eReceipt system. Applicants can either type in their abstracts, or “cut and paste” them from a word processing application into the respective data fields. Do not include figures or tables in either abstract. Spell out all Greek or other non-English letters.

Abstracts of all funded proposals will be posted on the CDMRP website at <http://cdmrp.army.mil/>. Thus, proprietary or confidential information should not be included in the abstract.

1. Technical Abstract: Sample technical abstracts can be found at <https://cdmrp.org/samples.cfm>. The structured technical abstract should provide a clear and concise overview of the proposed work, including the background, objective or hypothesis and its supporting rationale, specific aims of the study, study design, and significance of the proposed work to the program’s goals.

Use the outline below for preparing the structured technical abstract.

- **Background:** Provide a brief statement of the ideas and reasoning behind the proposed work.
- **Objective/Hypothesis:** State the objective/hypothesis to be tested. Provide evidence or rationale that supports the objective/hypothesis.
- **Specific Aims:** State concisely the specific aims of the study.
- **Study Design:** Briefly describe the study design.
- **Relevance:** Provide a brief statement explaining the potential relevance of the proposed work to the program's goals. For example, how the study will cure, prevent or improve the detection or treatment of the disease.

2. Public Abstract: Sample public abstracts can be found at <https://cdmrp.org/samples.cfm>. The public abstract is intended to communicate the purpose of, and rationale for, the study to non-scientific audiences. The public abstract is an important component of the proposal review process because consumer advocates, who are part of the review and funding decision process, use this abstract as a part of their review. It must be composed in a way to make the scientific objectives and rationale for the proposal understandable to non-scientifically trained readers. **The public abstract should not be a duplicate of the technical abstract**, but should describe the goals and objectives of the research project, and its relevance to the program.

In addition to describing the project, the public abstract must answer the following questions:

- (1) What will the ultimate applicability of the research be?
 - What types of patients will it help and how?
 - What are the potential clinical applications, benefits, and risks?
 - What is the projected time it may take to achieve a consumer-related outcome?
- (2) If the research is too basic for clinical applicability, what are the interim outcomes?
 - What types of contributions will this study make to advance research?
 - How will the research enhance this or other studies being conducted?

E. Proposal

1. Format: All proposals must be converted into an electronic PDF file for electronic submission. Proposals must be uploaded under the "File Upload" tab of the CDMRP eReceipt system. Applicants unfamiliar with the preparation of PDF files are encouraged to acquire appropriate software and learn the process before the submission deadline. To prepare proposals for PDF submission, the instructions in this subsection must be followed carefully.

The proposal must be clear and legible and conform to the following guidelines:

- **Type Font:** 12 point, 10 pitch.

- Type Density: No more than 15 characters per inch. (For proportional spacing, the average for any representative section of text should not exceed either 15 characters per inch or 114 characters per line.)
- Spacing: Single-spaced between lines of text, no more than five lines of type within a vertical inch.
- Margins: Minimum of 0.5-inch top, bottom, right, and 1-inch left.
- Color, Resolution, and Multimedia Objects: Proposals may include color, high resolution, or multimedia objects (e.g., MPEG, WAV, or AVI files) embedded in the PDF files, but applicants should keep in mind that some reviewers work from black and white printed copies. Applicants may wish to include text in the proposal directing the reviewer to the electronic file for parts of the proposal that may be difficult to interpret when printed in black and white.
- Spell out all acronyms the first time they are used. One page following the proposal body is allocated to spell out acronyms, abbreviations, and symbols.
- Language: English.
- Print Area: 7.0 x 10.0 inches (approximately 18 cm x 25.5 cm).

2. Title/Referral Page: No page limit. Complete the Title/Referral Page, which can be downloaded at <https://cdmrp.org/programAnnouncements.cfm>. Complete each section as described:

- a. Proposal title (up to 160 characters).
- b. Proposal log number (this will be automatically provided when the Proposal Information is completed and saved).
- c. PI's full name (first, middle initial, last).
- d. Submitting Institution.
- e. Award mechanism: Type in "Investigator-Initiated Research Award" or "Investigator-Initiated Research Award with Nested Postdoctoral Traineeship."
- f. Keyword descriptive technical terms: To assist the staff in assigning proposals to the appropriate scientific peer review panel, please specify the subject area of the proposal. Also, list specific keywords and descriptive technical terms that would best describe the technical aspects of the project.
- g. Conflicts of interest: To avoid real and apparent conflicts of interest during the peer review process, list the names of all scientific participants in the proposal including consultants, collaborators, and subcontractors. In addition, list the names of other individuals outside the scope of this proposal who may have a conflict of interest in review of this proposal. Provide the following information for each participant: name, institutional affiliation(s), and role(s) on the proposed project or perceived conflicts of interest.

3. Table of Contents/Checklist: Start section on a new page. Prepare a [Table of Contents/Checklist](#), with page numbers, using the form provided. Number all pages consecutively at the bottom center, beginning with the Title/Referral Page. If possible, provide headers throughout the proposal that include the PI's name (last name, first name, middle initial) and proposal log number (this will be automatically provided when the electronic Proposal Information is saved).

4. Proposal Relevance Statement: Start section on a new page; one-page limit. Applicants should state explicitly how the proposed work is relevant to NF research, and describe how the proposed research/services are pertinent to one or more critical issues of the disease.

5. Proposal Resubmission Statement (optional): Start section on a new page; two-page limit. Proposals that have been declined for funding in a previous year may be resubmitted to the NFRP. Resubmitted/revised proposals must meet all requirements for the Investigator-Initiated Research Award proposals described in this program announcement. Resubmitted/revised proposals should include a two-page section that addresses the issues identified in the peer review summary statement of the previously unfunded application. This section should address all aspects of the critique from the previous peer and programmatic reviews and should reference any new preliminary data included. A copy of the summary statement from the unfunded application should also be included and placed immediately after the resubmission statement.

6. Main Body: Start section on a new page; 20-page limit inclusive of any figures, tables, graphs, and photographs. The inclusion of preliminary data **is required** for all Investigator-Initiated Research Award proposal submissions. Investigators must submit promising and well-founded preliminary data relevant to NF and the proposed project.

Describe the proposed project using the outline provided below:

- a. Background: Describe the ideas and reasoning behind the proposed work and previous experience most pertinent to the proposal. Cite relevant literature references.
- b. Rationale: State the purpose of the study and the expected results.
- c. Objectives: State concisely the specific aims of the study.
- d. Preliminary Data: Provide pertinent data to support the necessity, feasibility, and potentiality of the proposed project.
- e. Methodology: Describe the experimental design and methodology, including statistical analysis.

7. Nested Postdoctoral Traineeship Proposal Body (optional): Start on a new page; two-page limit. Identify the staff members who are responsible for the trainees. Describe the research training in which the trainees will participate such as research, coursework, laboratory techniques, conferences, and journal clubs.

8. Abbreviations: Start section on a new page; one-page limit. Provide a list of all acronyms, abbreviations, and symbols used.

9. References: Start section on a new page; no page limit. List all relevant references using a standard reference format that includes the full citation (i.e., author(s), year published, title of reference, source of reference, volume, chapter, page numbers, and publisher, as appropriate).

10. Biographical Sketches: Three-page limit per individual. Biographical sketches should be included for each of the key personnel listed on the budget page, including collaborating investigators and support staff. These documents are a critical component of the review process. Incomplete or missing biographical sketches may result in lower priority scores. The [Biographical Sketch form](#) may be used. Use of this form is not mandatory, but the information requested shall be presented in a similar format.

11. Existing/Pending Support: Start section on a new page; no page limit. List on a separate page, the titles, time commitments, supporting agencies, durations, and levels of funding for all existing and pending research projects involving the PI and key personnel. If no support exists, state “none.” Proposals submitted under this program announcement should not duplicate other funded research projects.

12. Facilities/Equipment Description: No page limit. Describe the facilities available for performance of the proposed research/services. Describe the institutional commitment, including any additional facilities or equipment proposed for purchase or available for use at no cost to the USAMRMC. Indicate if government-owned facilities or equipment are proposed for use.

13. Questionnaires, Survey Instruments, or Clinical Protocols: No page limit. Include an appropriately titled page listing the documents you have included in this section.

14. Publications and/or Patent Abstracts: Five-document limit. Include up to five relevant publication reprints and/or patent abstracts. A patent abstract should provide a non-proprietary description of the patent application. If more than five such items are included in the submission, the extra items will not be peer reviewed.

15. Administrative Documentation: No page limit. Submit only material specifically requested or required in this program announcement. **This section is not for additional data, figures, or other similar information.** Unrequested material that is submitted may be construed as an attempt to gain a competitive advantage and will be removed; it may be grounds for administrative rejection of the proposal.

All administrative documentation must be incorporated into the electronic PDF version of your proposal. Support documentation will not be accepted separately from the electronic proposal submission. All documents or letters requiring signatures must be signed and then incorporated into the submitted proposal.

The first item in this section must be a list of all the items included in the Administrative Documentation section. Provide letters of support from any collaborating individuals or institutions in this section of the proposal.

F. Budget Information: Budget Information includes the [Detailed Cost Estimate forms and Budget Justification](#). Budget Information is uploaded under the “File Upload” tab of the CDMRP eReceipt system.

1. Funding Restrictions: There are no total dollar amount restrictions to these awards. Funding for Investigator-Initiated Research Awards can be requested for up to 4 years. Direct costs can cover salary, expenses including research supplies, costs for research-related injury medical costs (if applicable), and travel to scientific meetings. The amount for travel may not exceed \$1,800 per year per investigator.

For the Nested Postdoctoral Traineeship portion of Investigator-Initiated Research Award proposals, funding can be requested for a maximum of \$60,000 per year, inclusive of direct and indirect costs for a maximum of \$240,000 per trainee for up to 4 years. Direct costs can cover salary, stipends, seminars and courses, expenses including research supplies, equipment, and travel to scientific meetings. Expenses relevant to the traineeship should be listed under the “Other” category on the Detailed Cost Estimate form.

2. Detailed Cost Estimate Forms and Justifications Instructions: Budget is an important consideration in both peer and programmatic review, and applicants are cautioned to use discretion in budget requests. Budgets will also be reviewed during award negotiations. Complete justification must be provided for expenses in all categories. The Detailed Cost Estimate form and Justification for your proposal must be uploaded as a PDF file, separate from the proposal.

The following section provides instructions for preparing the Detailed Cost Estimate form. All amounts entered should be in U.S. dollars.

a. Personnel

i. Name: Starting with the PI, list the names of all participants who will be involved in the project during the initial budget period, regardless of whether salaries are requested. Include all collaborating investigators, research associates, individuals in training, and support staff. Only **ONE** person may be identified as the PI of the proposal.

ii. Role on Project: Identify the role of each individual listed on the project. Describe his or her specific functions in the “Justification” section of the Detailed Cost Estimate form.

iii. Type of Appointment (Months): List the number of months per year reflected in an individual’s contractual appointment with the applicant organization. The DOD staff assumes that appointments at the applicant organization are full time for each individual. If an appointment is less than full time, e.g., 50 percent, note this with an asterisk (*) and provide a full explanation in the “Justification” section of the Detailed Cost Estimate form. Individuals may have split appointments (e.g., for an academic period and a summer period). For each type of appointment, identify and enter the number of months on separate lines.

iv. Annual Base Salary: Enter the annual institutional base salary for each individual listed for the project.

v. Percentage of Effort on Project: The qualifications of the PI and the amount of time that he or she and other professional personnel will devote to the research are important factors in selecting research proposals for funding. For each key staff member identified on the budget form, list the percentage of each appointment to be spent on this project.

vi. Salaries Requested: Enter the salaries in whole dollar figures for each position for which funds are requested. The salary requested is calculated by multiplying an individual’s institutional base salary by the percentage of effort on the project.

vii. Fringe Benefits: Fringe benefits may be requested in accordance with institutional guidelines for each position, provided the costs are treated consistently by the applicant organization. Documentation to support the fringe benefits should be provided.

viii. Totals: Calculate the totals for each position and enter these as subtotals in the columns indicated.

b. Consultant Costs: Provide an itemized list of all consultant costs. In addition, regardless of whether funds are requested, provide the names and organizational affiliations of all consultants.

c. Major Equipment: It is the policy of the DOD that all commercial and non-profit recipients provide the equipment needed to support proposed research. In those rare cases where specific additional equipment is approved for commercial and non-profit organizations, such approved cost elements shall be separately negotiated.

d. Materials, Supplies, and Consumables: A general description and total estimated cost of expendable equipment and supplies are required. Itemize supplies in separate categories (e.g., glassware, chemicals, radioisotopes). Categories in amounts less than \$1,000 do not need to be itemized. If animals are to be purchased, state the species, strain (if applicable), and the number to be used. If human cell lines are to be purchased, state the source and the description.

e. Travel Costs: Travel costs may not exceed \$1,800 per year per investigator.

f. Research-Related Subject Costs: Itemize costs of subject participation in the research study. These costs are strictly limited to expenses specifically associated with the proposed study. The USAMRMC will not provide funds for ongoing medical care costs that are not related to a subject's participation in the research study.

g. Other Expenses: Itemize other anticipated direct costs such as publication and report costs, rental for computers and other equipment (provide hours and rates), and communication costs. Unusual or expensive items should be fully explained and justified. Estimate the costs of publishing and reporting research results, including direct charges for clerical preparation, illustrations, reprints, and distribution.

h. Subcontract Costs: A description of services or materials that are to be awarded by subcontract or subgrant is required. For awards totaling \$10,000 or more, provide the following specific information:

- Identification of the type of award to be used (e.g., cost reimbursement, fixed price);
- Identification of the proposed subcontractor or subgrantee, if known, and an explanation of why and how the subcontractor or subgrantee was selected or will be selected;
- Whether the award will be competitive and, if noncompetitive, rationale to justify the absence of competition; and
- The proposed acquisition price.

i. Indirect Costs (overhead, general and administrative, and other): The most recent rates, dates of negotiation, base(s), and periods to which the rates apply should be disclosed along with a statement identifying whether the proposed rates are provisional or fixed.

j. Total Costs for the Entire Proposed Period of Support (second page of the Detailed Cost Estimate form): Enter the totals under each budget category for all additional years of support requested and itemize these totals in the "Justification" section of the Detailed Cost Estimate form. Note with an asterisk (*) and explain any significant increases or decreases from the initial year budget. All amounts should be in U.S. dollars. Total costs for the entire proposed period of support should agree with the amount previously entered on-line in the Proposal Information <https://cdmrp.org/proposals>.

3. Justification (third page of the Detailed Cost Estimate form): Each item in the budget should be clearly justified under the “Justification” section of the Detailed Cost Estimate form.

G. RCQ Requirements: Completed and signed copies of the “[Certificate of Environmental Compliance](#)” and “[Principal Investigator Safety Program Assurance Form](#)” must be uploaded under the “File Upload” tab of the CDMRP eReceipt system as separate PDF files.

Do not submit other RCQ Documents (Research Involving Human Subjects and/or Anatomical Substances; Research Involving Animals) with the proposal. Instead, the applicant should provide these documents to the USAMRMC only upon request.

H. USAMRAA Documents: A copy of the institution’s negotiated “Rate Agreement,” the “[Certifications and Assurances for Assistance Agreements](#)”, and the “[Representations for Assistance Agreements](#)” must be uploaded by the Contract Representative from the Sponsored Programs Office. These documents must be uploaded as separate PDF files under the Contract Representative’s “My Profile” tab of the CDMRP eReceipt system.

I. Submission Dates and Times: Proposals must be approved on the CDMRP eReceipt system by the Contract Representative at the applicant’s institution’s Sponsored Programs Office (or equivalent) by the deadline. If your proposal is submitted and approved electronically after the deadline, it will not be considered for review.

The timeline for Investigator-Initiated Research Awards is:

On-Line Letter of Intent:	As soon as possible but no later than July 23, 2003.
On-Line Proposal Information:	Prior to proposal submission.
Proposal Submission/Approval Deadline:	5:00 p.m. Eastern time August 20, 2003.
Peer Review:	October 2003.
Programmatic Review:	December 2003.
Request for Additional Documents:	As early as 2 weeks after the completion of programmatic review.
Notification Letter:	Approximately 4 weeks after programmatic review.
Award Start Date:	Between January 2004 and September 2004.

J. Electronic Submission Requirements: Electronic submission is required. Proposals will be accepted only as PDF files submitted through the CDMRP eReceipt system at <https://cdmrp.org/proposals>.

Several steps are critical to successful proposal submission.

- The Proposal Information must be submitted prior to submission of the proposal. Applicants are encouraged to begin this part of the submission process early.
- The e-mail address of a Contract Representative from the Sponsored Programs Office must be included.
- Applicants are encouraged to coordinate early with their Sponsored Programs Office.
- The Contract Representative from the Sponsored Programs Office who is authorized to negotiate on behalf of the institution is required to provide final approval before the proposal is accepted.

- **If final approval is not accomplished by the submission deadline, the proposal will be considered to be a “LATE” submission and will not be considered for review.**
- Any supporting documentation that the applicant includes with the proposal must be incorporated into the PDF file prior to upload.
- Some items to be included in the proposal will need to be scanned. These items might include figures, tables, letters, or publications. All scanned documents, including figures, tables, and graphs, should be scanned at a resolution of 300-400 dpi or less.
- Budget Information includes the Detailed Cost Estimate form and the Budget Justification form. Budget Information must be uploaded under the “File Upload” tab of the CDMRP eReceipt system.
- The RCQ documents required at submission include a completed, signed Certificate of Environmental Compliance and a completed, signed PI Safety Program Assurance Form. These must be uploaded under the “File Upload” tab of the CDMRP eReceipt system.

VI. PROPOSAL REVIEW INFORMATION

A. Proposal Review and Selection Overview

1. Process: The CDMRP uses a two-tiered review process for proposal evaluation. The two tiers are fundamentally different. The first tier is a scientific peer review of proposals against established criteria for determination of scientific merit. The second tier is a programmatic review of proposals that compares submissions to each other and recommends proposals for funding based on scientific merit as well as overall program goals.

2. Peer Review: Peer review is conducted by panels organized according to scientific discipline or specialty area. The primary responsibility of the peer review panels is to provide unbiased, expert advice on the scientific/technical merit and relevance of proposals, based upon the review criteria published for each award mechanism.

Peer review panels are composed of a chair, scientific reviewers, consumer reviewers, and a nonvoting executive secretary. Scientific reviewers are selected based on their expertise and their experience with scientific peer review. Consumer reviewers are nominated by an advocacy or support organization and are selected on the basis of their leadership skills, commitment to advocacy, and interest in science. Consumers augment the peer review by bringing the patient perspective to the assessment of science and to the relevance of research.

Panel members rate each proposal based on specific evaluation criteria developed for each award mechanism (see below). Two types of ratings are used. First, each of the evaluation criteria, except for the budget, is rated on a scale of 1 (lowest merit) to 10 (highest merit). This criteria scoring ensures that each component is considered in peer review. Second, the overall proposal is given a global priority score using a scale of 1 (highest merit) to 5 (lowest merit). Criteria scores are neither averaged nor mathematically manipulated to determine the global priority score. Instead, reviewers are asked to use the criteria scores as a guide in determining the global priority score. In rare instances, a proposal may be disapproved at peer review if gravely hazardous or unethical procedures are involved, or if the proposal is so seriously flawed that its completion is implausible.

The peer review summary statement is a product of scientific peer review. Each summary statement includes the peer review scores, and an evaluation of the project as assessed by the peer reviewers according to the evaluation criteria published in this program announcement.

3. Programmatic Review: The second tier is programmatic review. Programmatic review is accomplished by the IP, which is composed of scientists, clinicians, and consumer advocates. The scientific members of the IP represent diverse disciplines and specialty areas, and the consumer members represent national advocacy constituencies. One of the functions of programmatic review is to select a broad portfolio of grants across all disciplines. Programmatic review is a comparison-based process in which proposals from multiple research areas compete in a common pool. IP members primarily use the peer review summary statements, and the proposal abstracts. SOWs may also be reviewed. Full proposals are not forwarded to programmatic review.

HBCU/MI proposals will be reviewed concurrently with all others in the same research area during scientific peer review, but may be evaluated separately during programmatic review. Consistent with the CDMRP's goal, recommendations for funding HBCU/MI submissions will be based upon scientific excellence and program relevance.

B. Review Criteria

1. Peer Review: Investigator-Initiated Research Award proposals will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- **Research Strategy:** Are the conceptual framework, hypotheses, design, methods, and analyses adequately developed and well integrated to the aims of the project? Is there a clear-cut rationale supporting the research provided? Does the applicant acknowledge potential problem areas and consider alternative methods/tactics? Do the required preliminary data in NF research support the proposed project? Is the experimental design sound and sufficiently well developed with the required statistical power to lead to significant results?
- **Relevance:** To what extent will the project, if successful, make an original and important contribution to the goal of advancing research in the field? Does this study address a critical problem in NF research? Does the proposal make a convincing case for the relevance of the research to NF?
- **Principal Investigator and Personnel:** Is the PI appropriately trained and well suited to carry out this work? Does the PI show potential for contribution to the NF field? Is the proposed work appropriate to the experience level of the PI and other researchers (if any)? Is appropriate expertise available to conduct the study successfully? **For Investigator-Initiated Research Awards with Nested Postdoctoral Traineeship(s)**, are the PI and other scientific personnel well qualified to conduct training for the trainee(s)? Is there a senior staff member who is identified and responsible for the trainee(s)?
- **Environment:** Is there evidence that the scientific environment is an appropriate setting for the proposed research? Is there evidence that the research requirements are adequately supported by the scientific environment, necessary resources, and any collaborative arrangements proposed? Is there evidence of institutional support provided with the proposal? **For Investigator-Initiated Research Awards with Nested Postdoctoral Traineeship(s)**, is the research training properly structured and balanced to ensure that the trainee(s) will acquire the knowledge and necessary skills relevant to the area of NF being studied?

- **Budget:** Is the budget appropriate for the research proposed? Is there evidence that, where appropriate, arrangements have been made to compensate human subjects/participants for expenses they incur from participating in the project?

2. Programmatic Review: The ratings and evaluations of scientific peer review panels are primary factors in programmatic review. The IP also considers other criteria to establish the NFRP's broad portfolio. The criteria the IP uses to make funding recommendations are:

- Ratings and evaluations of the scientific peer review panels;
- Programmatic relevance;
- Relative innovation; and
- Program portfolio balance with respect to research disciplines or specialty areas.

Scientifically sound proposals that best fulfill the above criteria and most effectively address the unique focus and goals of the program are selected by the IP and recommended to the Commanding General, USAMRMC, for funding.

VII. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

A. Award Notices: After the two-tiered evaluation process is completed, every applicant will receive notification of the award status of his or her proposal and a copy of the peer review summary statement. Applicants can expect to be notified of the agency's decision in January 2004.

B. Administrative Requirements: All awards are made to organizations, not individuals. A PI should submit a proposal through, and be employed by or affiliated with, a university, college, non-profit research institute, commercial firm, or government agency (including military laboratories) in order to receive support. To be eligible for award, a prospective recipient should meet certain minimum standards pertaining to institutional support, financial resources, prior record of performance, integrity, organization, experience, operational controls, facilities, and conformance with safety and environmental statutes and regulations (Office of Management and Budget Circular A-110).

Any change in the institution, the PI, and/or the SOW will require that the PI resubmit contact information. Any delay in the submission of updated information could result in a delay in the contracting and regulatory review and a subsequent delay in payment.

C. Award Negotiation: Award negotiation consists of discussions, reviews, and justifications of critical issues involving USAMRAA. A Contract Specialist from USAMRAA will contact the Contract Representative from the Sponsored Programs Office (or equivalent) who is authorized to negotiate contracts and grants at the applicant's institution. As part of the negotiation process, additional documentation and justifications related to the proposed SOW and associated budgets may be required.

Note that the award start date will be determined during the negotiation process.

D. Regulatory Compliance and Quality Review

1. Overview: Concurrent with the USAMRAA negotiations, RCQ will review the Certificate of Environmental Compliance, and PI Safety Program Assurance form submitted with the proposal, as well as RCQ documents related to Research Involving Animal Use and Research Involving Human Subjects/Anatomical Substance Use submitted upon request to ensure that Army regulations are met.

2. Certificate of Environmental Compliance: The [Certificate of Environmental Compliance](#) should be submitted with the proposal. If multiple research sites/institutions are funded in your proposal, then a Certificate of Environmental Compliance for each site will be requested at a later date.

3. Safety Program Documents: The [Principal Investigator Safety Assurance Form](#) should be submitted with the proposal.

A Facility Safety Plan is also required and will be requested at a later date. However, your institution may already have an approved Facility Safety Plan. To determine the status of approval, check the USAMRMC website at <http://mrmc-www.army.mil/crprcqsohdfsplan.asp>. If your institution is not listed on the aforementioned website, contact your Facility Safety Director/Manager to initiate completion of the institution-based Facility Safety Plan. Specific requirements for the Safety Program Plan can be found at <http://mrmc-www.army.mil/docs/rcq/FY02FSPAppendix.doc>.

If multiple research sites/institutions are funded in your proposal, then a Facility Safety Plan for each site/institution not listed in the aforementioned website will be requested at a later date.

4. Research Involving Animal Use: Animal use documents should not be submitted with the proposal and will be requested at a later date. Specific requirements for research involving animals can be found at <http://mrmc-www.army.mil/docs/rcq/FY02AnimalAppendix.doc>.

5. Research Involving Human Subjects/Anatomical Substances: Human Subjects and/or Anatomical Substances use documents should not be submitted with the proposal and will be requested at a later date. In addition to local Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval to conduct research involving human subjects and/or anatomical substances, a second tier of review and approval is also required by the DOD. This second review is conducted by the Human Subjects Research Review Board (HSRRB), which is administered by the USAMRMC Office of Regulatory Compliance and Quality. The HSRRB is mandated to comply with specific laws and directives governing all research involving human subjects that is conducted or supported by the DOD. These laws and directives are rigorous and detailed and will require information in addition to that supplied to the local review board. For example:

- Intent to Benefit. In the development of a research protocol for submission to the DOD, the applicant must specifically address, if applicable, the Intent to Benefit. An individual not legally competent to consent (e.g., minors) may not be enrolled in DOD-sponsored research unless the research is intended to benefit each and every subject enrolled in the study. Applicants should be aware that this law makes placebo-controlled clinical trials problematic because of the 'intent to benefit' requirement whenever participation is sought of subjects from whom consent must be obtained by the legally authorized representative.
- The DOD considers cell lines of human origin to be human anatomical substances. Use of these cell lines is subject to HSRRB review and approval.

Specific requirements for research involving human subjects and/or anatomical substances can be found at <http://mrmc-www.army.mil/docs/rcq/HSAppendix19Feb02.pdf>. An informed consent form template can be located at http://mrmc-www.army.mil/docs/rcq/consentform_template.pdf.

E. Reporting: All research awards will require the timely delivery of several reports during the research effort. Reporting requirements consist of an annual report (for each year of research except the final year) that presents a detailed summary of scientific issues and accomplishments and a final report (submitted in the last year of the award period) that details the findings and issues for the entire project.

VIII. OTHER INFORMATION

A. Disclosure of Proprietary Information outside the Government: By submission of a proposal, the applicant understands that proprietary information may be disclosed outside the Government for the sole purpose of technical evaluation. The USAMRMC will obtain a written agreement from the evaluator that proprietary information in the proposal will only be used for evaluation purposes and will not be further disclosed or utilized. Funded proposals may be subject to public release under the Freedom of Information Act; proposals that are not selected for funding will not be subject to public release.

B. Government Obligation: Applicants are cautioned that only an appointed Contracting/Grants Officer may obligate the Government to the expenditure of funds. No commitment on the part of the Government to fund preparation of a proposal or to support research should be inferred from discussions with a technical project officer. Applicants who, or organizations that, make financial or other commitments for a research effort in the absence of an actual legal obligation signed by the USAMRAA Contracting/Grants Officer do so at their own risk.

C. Information Service: Offerors may use the technical reference facilities of the National Technical Information Service, 5285 Port Royal Road, Springfield, Virginia, 22161, for the purpose of surveying existing knowledge and avoiding needless duplication of scientific and engineering effort and the expenditure thereby represented. To the extent practical, all other sources should also be consulted for the same purpose.

D. Inquiry Review Panel: Applicants can submit a letter of inquiry to the USAMRMC in response to funding decisions made for a given proposal. Members of the CDMRP staff, USAMRMC Judge Advocate General staff, and USAMRAA Grants Officers constitute an Inquiry Review Panel and review each inquiry to determine whether factual or procedural errors in either peer or programmatic review have occurred, and if so, what action should be taken.

E. Title to Inventions and Patents: In accordance with the Bayh-Dole Act (35 USC 200 et seq.²), title to inventions and patents resulting from such federally funded research may be held by the grantee or its collaborator, but the U.S. Government shall, at a minimum, retain nonexclusive rights for the use of such inventions. An investigator must follow the instructions in the assistance agreement concerning license agreements and patents.

² Title 35, United States Code, Section 200 et seq.

IX. ACRONYM LIST

AVI	Audio Video Interleave
CDMRP	Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs
CFDA	Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance
CTA	Clinical Trial Award
CTDA	Clinical Trial Development Award
DOD	Department of Defense
FY	Fiscal Year
HBCU/MI	Historically Black Colleges and Universities/Minority Institutions
HSRRB	Human Subjects Research Review Board
IDEA	Idea Award
IIRA	Investigator-Initiated Research Award
IP	Integration Panel
IRB	Institutional Review Board
M	Million
MPEG	Moving Picture Experts Group
NF	Neurofibromatosis
NFRP	Neurofibromatosis Research Program
NIA	New Investigator Award
PDF	Portable Document Format
PI	Principal Investigator
RCQ	Regulatory Compliance and Quality
SOW	Statement of Work
TDA	Therapeutic Development Award
USAMRAA	US Army Medical Research Acquisition Activity
USAMRMC	US Army Medical Research and Materiel Command
USC	United States Code
WAV	Wave