Program Announcement for the Defense Health Agency

Arthritis Research Program
Translational Research Award

Funding Opportunity Number: HT942526ATRPTRA

Pre-Application Due: July 22, 2026

Application Due: October 22, 2026

This program announcement must be read in conjunction with the General Application Instructions, version CD26_01.

Content

Before You Begin

- **Active SAM.gov, eBRAP.org and Grants.gov registrations are required for application submission.** User registration for each of these websites can take several weeks or longer. Each applicant must ensure their registrations are active and up to date prior to application preparation.
- **Read this funding opportunity announcement in the order it is written before beginning to prepare application materials.** It is the responsibility of the applicant to determine whether the proposed research meets the intent of this funding opportunity and that all parties meet eligibility requirements.
- **To support application preparation, additional resources are available** including an application process FAQ, a Guide for Intragovernmental & Intramural Applicants and a CDMRP Video Series detailing the application process.

Who to Contact for Support

eBRAP Help Desk

301-682-5507
help@eBRAP.org

Questions regarding funding opportunity submission requirements, as well as technical assistance related to pre-application or intramural application submission.

Grants.gov Support Center

800-518-4726
International: 1-606-545-5035
support@grants.gov

Questions regarding Grants.gov registration and Workspace.

This document uses internal links; you can go back to where you were by pressing the Alt + left arrow keys (Windows) or command + left arrow keys (Macintosh) on your keyboard.

Click ⓘ to be taken to additional guidance and instructions within the General Application Instructions (GAI).

1. Basic Information About the Funding Opportunity

Summary: The fiscal year 2026 (FY26) Arthritis Research Program (ATRP) Translational Research Award (TRA) supports high-impact translational research that will accelerate critical findings into clinically relevant solutions. Research funded under this award mechanism will be hypothesis-driven, high-impact applied research that is relevant to Service Members, Veterans, their Families and the American public. ***Research addressing any and all types of arthritis is encouraged*.**

Distinctive Features: The FY26 ATRP TRA mechanism is intended to support preclinical or animal research and may not be used for clinical research or clinical trials. Basic research, as defined in Section 3.1.2, is not allowed. A key aspect of this award mechanism is **impact**. The application should explicitly state how outcomes of the proposed research will significantly advance arthritis research, particularly in accelerating critical findings into clinically relevant solutions.

Preliminary and/or published data, originating from research conducted by the applicant(s) or others, is required.

Funding Details: The Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs (CDMRP) expects to allot roughly $1.6M to fund approximately two Translational Research Award applications with total cost caps of $800,000 per award. The maximum period of performance is 3 years. It is anticipated that awards made from this fiscal year 2026 (FY26) funding opportunity will be funded with FY26 funds, which will expire for use on September 30, 2032. Awards supported with FY26 funds will be made no later than September 30, 2027.

Submission and Review Dates and Times

- **Pre-Application (Preproposal) Submission Deadline:** 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time (ET), July 22, 2026
- **Invitation to Submit an Application:** August 27,2026
- **Application Submission Deadline:** 11:59 p.m. ET, October 22, 2026
- **End of Application Verification Period:** 5:00 p.m. ET, October 27, 2026
- **Peer Review:** December 2026
- **Programmatic Review:** February 2027

Announcement Type: Initial

Funding Opportunity Number: HT942526ATRPTRA

Assistance Listing Number: 12.420

2. Eligibility Information

2.1. Eligible Applicants

2.1.1. Organization

Extramural and intramural U.S. Department of War (DOW) organizations are eligible to apply, ***including foreign and domestic organizations, for-profit and nonprofit organizations, and public or private entities***.

2.1.2. Principal Investigator

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

An investigator may be named PI on no more than two FY26 ATRP applications across both award mechanisms, in any combination.

2.2. Cost Sharing

Cost sharing is not an eligibility requirement.

2.3. Other

Awards are made to eligible ***organizations***, not to individuals. Refer to the GAI for additional recipient qualification requirements.

3. Program Description

The Defense Health Agency Contracting Activity (DHACA) is soliciting applications to this funding opportunity using delegated authority provided by United States Code, Title 10, Section 4001 (10 USC 4001). The CDMRP is the program office managing this FY26 funding opportunity as part of the Arthritis Research Program (ATRP). The CDMRP is located within the Defense Health Agency Research and Development (DHA R&D), which is part of the Department of Defense, DOD, herein referred to using the secondary title Department of War, DOW. Congress initiated the ATRP in 2024 to provide support for research of high potential impact and exceptional scientific merit focused on reducing the detrimental impact of arthritis on Service Members and their retention. The appropriation for the ATRP for FY24 was $10 million (M). The FY26 appropriation is $10M.

The vision of the ATRP is to lessen the burden of, and ultimately cure, arthritis. The mission is to fund high-impact research to optimize the health and well-being of all people affected by arthritis, and to improve Service Member readiness and retention. It is expected that research findings from awards funded by the ATRP will also benefit those who receive care through the Military Health System, and those within the general population. As mandated by Congress, the ATRP will support high-impact research on any type of arthritis, including but not limited to osteoarthritis, post-traumatic arthritis, inflammatory arthritis, juvenile arthritis and rheumatoid arthritis. The ATRP encourages applications that provide solutions for and examine the impact of arthritis in understudied populations such as women, minorities, or less prevalent arthritis types.

3.1. Intent of the Translational Research Award

The intent of the FY26 ATRP Translational Research Award (TRA) is to support high-impact translational research that will accelerate critical findings into clinically relevant solutions. Research funded under this award mechanism will be hypothesis-driven, high-impact applied research, that is relevant to Service Members, Veterans, their Families and the American public. Research addressing **any and all types of arthritis** is encouraged including but not limited to osteoarthritis, post-traumatic arthritis, inflammatory arthritis, juvenile arthritis or rheumatoid arthritis. Research addressing post-traumatic osteoarthritis challenges is of particular interest to military care providers. All applicants must address how outcomes of the proposed research may impact patient care and reduce the burden of disease.

The ATRP encourages applications that address sex as a biological variable and understudied arthritis types. The ATRP also encourages applicants to consider whether large datasets or existing studies/consortia can be leveraged to maximize the potential impact of the proposed research.

3.1.1. Focus Areas for the TRA

To meet the intent of the funding opportunity, applications submitted to this program announcement must address one of the following FY26 ATRP TRA Focus Areas:

- **Prevention and Early Diagnosis:** Identify factors capable of predicting the onset or progression of disease, and/or identify technologies, solutions, or knowledge products for the prevention of arthritis.

- **Treatment and Mitigation of Disease Progression/Burden:** Develop solutions that address the multifactorial burden of arthritis. This may include solutions which address one or more of the following factors: pain or other symptoms, function, psychosocial factors, comorbidities, or the pathologic burden of disease.

Disease Subtype: Applicants must select the primary arthritis type that the study seeks to address.

- Osteoarthritis
- Post-traumatic arthritis
- Rheumatoid arthritis
- Juvenile arthritis
- Inflammatory arthritis
- Other arthritis type not listed
- Non-specific/general arthritis

Selection of the appropriate focus area and disease subtype are the responsibility of the applicant.

3.1.2. Key Elements for the TRA

Basic research will not be supported by this funding opportunity: Basic research is defined as research directed toward greater knowledge or understanding of the fundamental aspects of phenomena and of observable facts without specific applications toward process or products in mind.

The FY26 ATRP TRA ***encourages applications proposing translational, applied, and preclinical research*** that will translate findings from prior research to develop interventions and solutions that improve human health and well-being.

Preliminary data are required: Applications must include preliminary and/or published data, originating from research conducted by the applicant or by other researchers, to support the proposed research project. Applicants must demonstrate logical reasoning for the proposed work. To be competitive, the application must include a sound scientific rationale and a well-formulated, testable hypothesis.

***Impact*:** A key aspect of this award mechanism is impact. The application should explicitly state how outcomes of the proposed research will have a significant impact on the advancement of arthritis research and/or patient care practices. The application should include how the research addresses the impact of arthritis in the military, which may include its effect on Service Member recruitment, retention, and recovery. Applicants may also choose to include impacts to the Military Health System, which provides health care support to Service Members and their Families (Eligibility | TRICARE). Military-civilian collaborations and partnerships are encouraged.

3.1.3. Other Important Considerations for the TRA

In accordance with the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2026, Section 732, CDMRP does not support the conduct of painful research (U.S. Department of Agriculture pain

category D or E) involving domestic cats or dogs, except for studies relating to military or service animals.

Clinical trials are not allowed within this funding opportunity. Applicants seeking funding for a clinical trial or clinical research should consider the FY26 ATRP Clinical Research Award mechanism (Funding Opportunity Number: HT942526ATRPCRA).

All projects should adhere to a core set of standards for rigorous study design and reporting to maximize the reproducibility and translational potential of clinical and preclinical research, such as those described in the STROBE, CONSORT, SPIRIT and ARRIVE 2.0 guidelines.

Applications from investigators within the DOW and applications involving multidisciplinary collaborations among academia, industry, the DOW, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and other federal government agencies are highly encouraged. These relationships can leverage knowledge, infrastructure and access to unique clinical populations that the collaborators bring to the research effort, ultimately advancing research that is of significance to Service Members, Veterans, their Families and the American Public. If the proposed research relies on access to unique resources or databases, the application must describe the access at the time of submission and include a plan for maintaining access as needed throughout the proposed research.

3.2. Funding Instrument

The funding instrument for awards made under the program announcement will be grants (31 USC 6304).

3.3. Funding Details

Period of Performance: The maximum period of performance is **3** years.

Cost Cap: The application's total costs budgeted for the entire period of performance should not exceed **$800,000**. If indirect cost rates have been negotiated, indirect costs are to be budgeted in accordance with the organization's negotiated rate. Collaborating organizations should budget associated indirect costs in accordance with each organization's negotiated rate.

All direct and indirect costs of any subaward or contract must be included in the direct costs of the primary award.

The applicant may request the entire maximum funding amount for a project that may have a period of performance less than the maximum **3** years.

The appropriateness of the budget for the proposed research will be assessed during peer review.

Direct Cost Restrictions: For this award mechanism, direct costs:

May be requested for (not all-inclusive):

- Travel in support of multi-institutional collaborations.
- Costs for one investigator to travel to one scientific/technical meeting per year. The intent of travel to scientific/technical meetings should be to present project information or disseminate project results from the ATRP TRA.

Must not be requested for:

- Costs for travel to scientific/technical meeting(s) beyond the limits stated above.

4. Application Contents and Format

4.1. Application Overview

Application submission is a two-step process requiring both a ***pre-application*** submitted via the Electronic Biomedical Research Application Portal (eBRAP) and a ***full application*** submitted through eBRAP or Grants.gov. Depending on the submission portal, certain aspects of the application will differ.

Intramural DOW organizations submitting a full application should follow instructions for submission through eBRAP.

Extramural organizations submitting a full application must follow instructions for submission through Grants.gov.

4.2. Pre-Application Components

Pre-application submissions must include the following components.

- When starting the pre-application, applicants will be asked to select the primary arthritis type addressed by the proposed research: osteoarthritis, post-traumatic arthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, juvenile arthritis, inflammatory arthritis, other arthritis type not listed, or non-specific/ general arthritis.

Upload documents as individual PDF files unless otherwise noted. Files must comply with the formatting guidelines listed in the GAI.

- **Preproposal Narrative (one-page limit):** The Preproposal Narrative page limit applies to text and non-text elements (e.g., figures, tables, graphs, photographs, diagrams, chemical structures, drawings) used to describe the project. Inclusion of URLs that provide additional information to expand the Preproposal Narrative and could confer an unfair competitive advantage is prohibited and may result in administrative withdrawal of the pre-application.

  The Preproposal Narrative should include the following:

  - **Rationale:** Briefly describe the scientific rationale for the study. State the FY26 ATRP TRA Focus Area addressed by the proposed research and describe how the research addresses the intent of the award mechanism.
  - **Objective/Hypothesis:** State the objective to be reached/hypothesis to be tested. Provide evidence or rationale that supports the objective/hypothesis.
  - **Specific Aims:** State the specific aims of the study.
  - **Study Design:** Briefly describe the study design, including appropriate controls.
  - **Impact:** State explicitly how the proposed work may have an impact on the health and well-being of persons impacted by arthritis, and its relevance to military health.
- **Pre-Application Supporting Documentation:** The items to be included as supporting documentation for the pre-application ***must be uploaded as individual files*** and are limited to the following:
  - **References Cited (one-page limit):** List the references cited (including URLs if available) in the Preproposal Narrative using a standard reference format that includes

the full citation (i.e., author[s], year published, reference title, and reference source, including volume, chapter, page numbers, and publisher, as appropriate).

- **List of Abbreviations, Acronyms and Symbols:** Provide a list of abbreviations, acronyms and symbols used in the Preproposal Narrative.

4.3. Full Application Components

Applicants must receive an invitation to submit a full application. Uninvited full application submissions will be rejected.

Each application submission must include the completed full application package for this program announcement. See Appendix 1 for a checklist of the full application components.

(a) SF424 Research & Related Application for Federal Assistance Form *(Grants.gov submissions only)*:

IMPORTANT: *When completing the SF424 R&R, enter the* ***eBRAP log number*** *assigned during pre-application submission into* ***Block 4a – Federal Identifier****.*

(b) Attachments:

Each attachment of the full application components must be uploaded as an individual file in the format specified and in accordance with the formatting guidelines in the GAI.

- **Attachment 1: Project Narrative (12-page limit): Upload as "ProjectNarrative.pdf".**

  Describe the proposed project in detail using the outline below.

  - **Background/Rationale:** Describe the relevance of the proposed study and provide the scientific rationale for the goals of the study. Clearly state how the proposed research will accelerate critical findings into clinically relevant solutions. Present sufficient preliminary data to support the readiness of the objective(s), the soundness of the hypothesis and the feasibility of the approach.
  - **Hypothesis or Objective:** State the hypothesis to be tested and/or the objective to be reached.
  - **Specific Aims:** Concisely describe the study aims. Describe how the study design supports the accomplishment of the aims.
  - **Research Strategy:** Describe the experimental design, methods, and analyses, including controls, in sufficient detail so that the appropriateness and feasibility of the research strategy, including whether the proposed work can be completed within the proposed period of performance, can be fully evaluated.
    - Consult appropriate guidelines to ensure relevant aspects of rigorous and reproducible research are adequately planned for and, ultimately, reported.
    - Address potential problems that may arise and present alternative methods and approaches to mitigate or resolve the problems.
    - **Research involving in vivo or in vitro models, including but not limited to cell lines, animals, organoids and other New Approach Methodologies (NAMs)**: Justify the selection of the proposed model(s). Explain why it was chosen over other models and how it is appropriate for addressing the study aims. As appropriate, consider including in vitro human models or other NAMs to

accelerate clinical translation. If animal studies are proposed, detailed information is required in Attachment 8, Animal Research Plan.

- **Statistical and Data Analysis Plan:** Describe the statistical model and data analysis plan with respect to the study objectives as appropriate to the study type. Include a complete power analysis to demonstrate that the sample size is appropriate to meet the objectives of the study. Clearly describe the statistical plan and rationale for the statistical methodology to demonstrate that the proposed research is designed to achieve reproducible and rigorous results. Provide a sample size estimate and the method by which it was derived, including power analysis calculation, if applicable. Describe how data will be reported and how it will be assured that the documentation will support a regulatory filing with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), or international regulatory agency, if applicable.
  - If any biological material will be used in the proposed studies, the name, definition, pathological classification, and source of the material must be provided.
  - If human anatomical samples will be used, include a detailed plan for the acquisition of samples.
- If the proposed research involves access to military and/or VA patient populations and/or DOW or VA resources or databases, describe the access at the time of submission and include a plan for maintaining access as needed throughout the proposed research. Also include a plan for obtaining any required data sharing, memorandum of understanding or other agreements required to access and publish data. Refer to the General Application Instructions, Appendix 4, for additional considerations.

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

  There are no page limits for these components unless otherwise noted. Include only components described below; inclusion of items not requested or viewed as an extension of the Project Narrative will result in the removal of those items or may result in administrative withdrawal of the application.

  - **References Cited:** List the references cited in the Project Narrative using a standard reference format (include URLs, if available).
  - **List of Abbreviations, Acronyms and Symbols:** Provide a list of abbreviations, acronyms and symbols.
  - **Facilities, Existing Equipment and Other Resources:** Describe the facilities and equipment available for performance of the proposed project; include any additional facilities or equipment proposed for acquisition at no cost to the award. Indicate whether government-furnished facilities or equipment are proposed for use. If so, reference the original or present government award under which the facilities or equipment items are now accountable. There is not a standardized form for this information.
  - **Publications and/or Patents:** Include a list of relevant publication URLs and/or patent abstracts. If articles are not publicly available, then copies of up to five published manuscripts may be included in Attachment 2. Extra items will not be reviewed.

- **Letters of Support (two-page limit per letter is recommended):** Provide individual letters signed by collaborating individuals and/or organizational officials demonstrating that the PI has the support and resources necessary for the proposed work. Letters from the PI's Department Chair, or appropriate organization official, should also confirm that the PI(s) meet eligibility criteria. If applicable, provide a letter of support, signed by the lowest-ranking person with approval authority, confirming participation of intramural DOW collaborator(s) and/or access to military populations, databases or DOW resources. If applicable, provide a letter of support signed by the VA Facility Director(s), or an individual designated by the VA Facility Director(s), confirming access to VA patients, resources and/or VA research space.
- **Sex as a Biological Variable (SABV) Strategy (two-page limit is recommended):** Describe the strategy for how sex will be considered as a biological variable. This strategy should include a brief discussion of what is currently known regarding sex differences in the applicable research area. Clearly articulate how sex as a biological variable will be factored into the data analysis plan and how data will be collected and disaggregated by sex. If needed, provide a strong rationale for proposing a single-sex study, based on justification from scientific literature, preliminary data or other relevant considerations. Refer to the CDMRP Directive on Sex as a Biological Variable in Research for additional information.
- **Research Sharing Plan:** Describe the type of data or research resources (e.g., bio-specimen, analysis tool/software, training material) to be made publicly available as a result of the proposed work. Describe the mechanism (e.g., direct sharing, repository, mixed mode) by which data and resources generated during the period of performance will be shared with the research community and other affected communities, including clinical research participants. Include the name of the repository(ies) where scientific data and resources arising from the proposed study will be archived, if applicable. Identify and provide the rationale for any data or resources that will not be shared (e.g. for intellectual property, feasibility, cost, or other considerations). The plan should also protect participant privacy, confidential and proprietary data, and performer/third-party intellectual property. Provide a milestone plan for disseminating data/results including when data and resources will be made available to other users. In cases where the study participant could potentially derive medical or other benefit from the information, explain whether the results of screening and/or study participation will be shared with the participant or their primary care provider, including results from any screening or diagnostic tests performed as part of the study.

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

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

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

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

- **Background:** Present the scientific rationale behind the proposed research project. Clearly define the goals of the effort/study.
- **Hypothesis/Objective(s):** State the hypothesis to be tested and/or objective(s) to be reached.
- **Specific Aims:** State the specific aims of the study.
- **Study Design:** Describe the study design, including appropriate controls.
- **Impact:** Briefly describe the potential impact of the proposed research on the health and well-being of persons impacted by arthritis and its relevance to military health.

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

  The lay abstract should address the points outlined below ***in a manner that is readily understood by readers without a background in science or medicine.*** Avoid overuse of scientific jargon, acronyms and abbreviations. ***Do not duplicate the technical abstract.***

  - Summarize the goals, objectives, and rationale for the proposed research.
  - What population will the research help, and how will it help them?
  - What are the potential applications, benefits and risks of the anticipated outcomes?
  - What are the likely contributions of the proposed research project to advancing research, patient care and/or quality of life?
  - What is the potential benefit of the proposed study and the anticipated outcomes to Service Members, Veterans and/or their Families.

- **Attachment 5: Statement of Work (three-page limit): Upload as "SOW.pdf".** Refer to eBRAP for the Suggested SOW Format.

  For guidance on preparing the SOW, refer to Example: Assembling a Generic Statement of Work. Include milestones for data or research resource(s) sharing.

- **Attachment 6: Impact Statement (two-page limit): Upload as "Impact.pdf".** The Impact Statement should be written with a broad audience in mind, including readers without a background in science or medicine. Overly technical jargon should be avoided and technical terms, if any, should be defined.

  - Describe how the proposed work addresses the selected FY26 ATRP TRA Focus Area and its potential impact on the health and well-being of persons with arthritis.
  - Describe the anticipated short-term (immediate to 5 years) and long-term (greater than 5 years) impact of the proposed work on the advancement of arthritis research, particularly in accelerating critical findings into clinically relevant solutions.
  - Describe any potential problems or challenges that might limit the impact of the proposed research and provide approaches and possible alternative methods to overcome those challenges.
  - Demonstrate how the proposed research project is relevant to military health and/or the health care needs and quality of life of Service Members, Veterans, or military Family member population(s) impacted by arthritis.
  - Explicitly state how outcomes of the proposed research may ultimately be applied to lessen the impact of arthritis in the military, which may include its effect on Service Member recruitment, retention and recovery.

- If applicable, describe how the anticipated outcomes of the proposed study will make an impact in understanding health differences between sexes.

- **Attachment 7: Transition Plan (three-page limit): Upload as "Transition.pdf".** Research funded by the FY26 ATRP should accelerate the development of tangible or knowledge products that optimize the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of arthritis. Provide information on potential methods and strategies to feasibly move the project's findings to the next phase of development, clinical research or trials, and/or delivery to the patient/clinical care community or commercial market after successful completion of the award. The transition plan should include the components listed below. Applicants are encouraged to work with their organization's Technology Transfer Office (or equivalent) to develop the transition plan. The transition plan should include the components listed below, as appropriate.
  - A description of the scientific or technical requirements needed to advance the research findings. Details of the overall strategy to transition to the next level of development or clinical use/commercialization.
  - An assessment of the opportunities available and potential barriers that would impact the progress of commercializing and/or translating the study results into clinical practice.
  - A timeline with defined milestones and deliverables describing the expected post-award progress of the results toward the next phase of development and eventual clinical impact. This can include clinical research or trials, commercialization, delivery to the military or civilian market, incorporation into clinical practice, and/or approval by a Regulatory Agency.
  - Details of the funding strategy that will be used to bring the outcomes to the next phase of development. Provide sufficient evidence that the PI has, or can secure, additional funding, and describe potential options to secure the additional funding needed to bring the outcomes to the next phase of development (e.g., specific potential industry partners; specific funding opportunities to apply for).
  - A description of collaborations and other resources that will be used to provide continuity of development.
  - A plan to distribute the findings or intervention to the arthritis community.

- **Attachment 8: Animal Research Plan (five-page limit): Upload as "AnimalResPlan.pdf".** ***Attachment 8 is only applicable and required for applications proposing animal studies.***

  If the proposed study involves animals, a summary describing the animal research that will be conducted must be included in the application. Consult the ARRIVE guidelines 2.0 (Animal Research: Reporting *In Vivo* Experiments) to ensure relevant aspects of rigorous animal research are adequately planned for and, ultimately, reported. The Animal Research Plan may not be an exact replica of the protocol(s) submitted to the IACUC. The Animal Research Plan should address the following points to achieve reproducible and rigorous results for each proposed animal study:
  - Briefly describe the research objective(s) of the animal study. Explain how and why the animal species, strain, and model(s) being used can address the scientific objectives and, where appropriate, the study's relevance to human biology.
  - Summarize the procedures to be conducted. Describe how the study will be controlled.

- Describe the randomization and blinding procedures for the study, and any other measures to be taken to minimize the effects of subjective bias during animal treatment and assessment of results. If randomization and/or blinding will not be utilized, provide justification.
- Provide a sample size estimate for each study arm and the method by which it was derived, including power analysis calculations.
- Describe how data will be handled, including rules for stopping data collection, criteria for inclusion and exclusion of data, how outliers will be defined and handled, statistical methods for data analysis, and identification of the primary endpoint(s).

- **Attachment 9: Representations *(Grants.gov submissions only)*: Upload as "RequiredReps.pdf".** All extramural applicants must complete and submit the Required Representations document available on eBRAP.
- **Attachment 10: Suggested Intragovernmental/Intramural Budget Form *(if applicable)*: Upload as "IGBudget.pdf".** If an intramural DOW organization will be a collaborator in the performance of the project, complete a separate budget for that organization using the Suggested Intragovernmental/Intramural Budget form available on eBRAP.

(c) Additional Application Materials:

The following are additional forms for application submission. Follow the instructions specific to the submission portal, as found within the GAI.

	Grants.gov	eBRAP.org
i. Research & Related Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded)		
○ **Biographical Sketch**		
○ **Current/Pending Support** *Intragovernmental applicants must include their internally supported research and development programs.*		
ii. Research & Related Budget		
iii. Project/Performance Site Location(s)		
iv. Research & Related Subaward Budget Attachment(s) *(if applicable, Grants.gov submissions only)*		

4.4. Other Application Elements

If recommended for funding, a data management plan compliant with Section 3.c, Enclosure 3, DoD Instructions 3200.12 will be requested.

The government reserves the right to request a revised budget, budget justification and/or additional information for applications recommended for funding.

5. Submission Requirements

5.1. Location of Application Package

Download the application package components for HT942526ATRPTRA from Grants.gov or eBRAP, depending on which submission portal will be used.

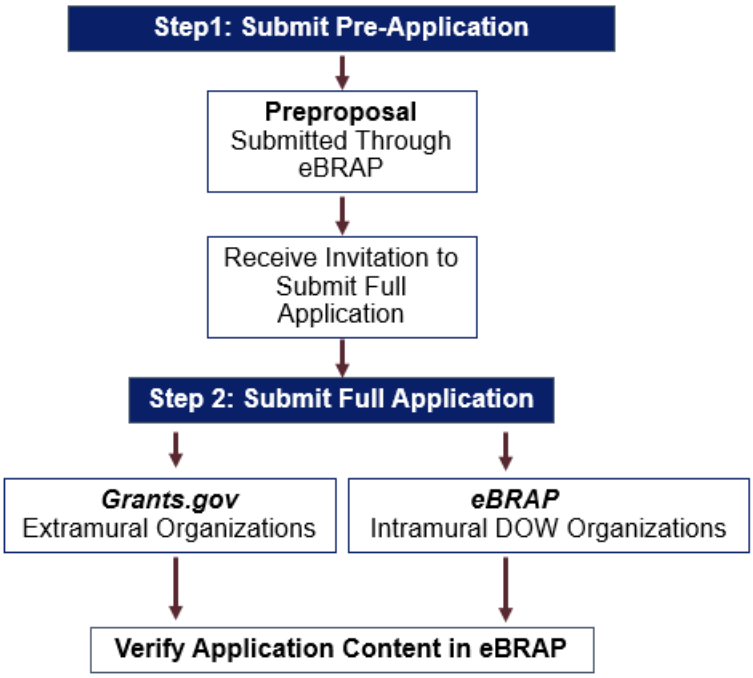
5.2. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management

The applicant organization must be registered as an entity in the System for Award Management (SAM), SAM.gov, and receive confirmation of an "Active" status before submitting an application through Grants.gov. Organizations must include the unique entity identifier (UEI) generated by the SAM in applications to this funding opportunity and maintain an active registration in the SAM at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application under consideration.

5.3. Submission Instructions

The CDMRP uses two portal systems to accept pre- and full application submissions. The workflow below shows which portal system to use for pre- and full application submissions, respectively.

Application Submission Workflow



5.3.1. Pre-Application Submission

All pre-application components must be submitted by the PI through eBRAP.

During the pre-application process, eBRAP assigns each submission a unique log number. This unique log number is required during the full application submission process. The eBRAP log number, application title and all information for the PI, Business Official(s), performing organization, and contracting organization must be consistent throughout the entire pre-application and full application submission process. Inconsistencies may delay application processing and limit or negate the ability to view, modify and verify the application in eBRAP. Contact the eBRAP Help Desk if any changes need to be made.

5.3.2. Full Application Submission

Grants.gov Submissions: Full applications from extramural organizations *must* be submitted through the Grants.gov Workspace.

eBRAP Submissions: Only intramural DOW organizations may submit full applications through eBRAP.

5.3.3. Applicant Verification of Full Application Submission in eBRAP

Independent of the submission portal, once the full application is submitted, it is transmitted to and processed in eBRAP; the transmission to eBRAP may take up to 48 hours. At this stage, the PI and organizational representatives will receive an email from eBRAP instructing them to log in to eBRAP to review, modify and verify the full application submission. ***The Project Narrative and Research & Related Budget Form cannot be changed after the application submission deadline.*** Other application components, including subaward budget(s) and subaward budget justification(s), may be changed until the application verification period ends. The full application cannot be modified once the application verification period ends.

5.4. Submission Dates and Times

The pre-application and full application submission process should be started early to avoid missing deadlines. Regardless of submission portal used, all pre- and full application components must be submitted by the deadlines stipulated in this program announcement. There are no grace periods for deadlines; failure to meet submission deadlines will result in application rejection. ***The DHACA cannot make allowances/exceptions for submission problems encountered by the applicant.***

Submission dates and times are specified in Section 1, Basic Information.

5.5. Intergovernmental Review

Not applicable for this funding opportunity.

6. Application Review Information

6.1. Application Compliance Review

Submitting applications that propose essentially the same research project to different funding opportunities within the same program and fiscal year is prohibited and will result in administrative withdrawal of the duplicative application(s).

While it is allowable to propose similar research projects to different programs within the CDMRP or to other organizations, duplication of funding or accepting funding from more than one source for the same research is prohibited. See the CDMRP's Directive on Research Duplication.

Including classified research data within the application and/or proposing research that may produce classified outcomes or outcomes deemed sensitive to national security concerns, may result in application withdrawal.

Members of the FY26 ATRP Programmatic Panel must not be involved in any pre-application or full application including, but not limited to, concept design, application development, budget preparation and the development of any supporting documentation, including personal letters of support/recommendation for the research and/or PI. Programmatic panel members ***may*** provide letters to confirm PI eligibility and access to laboratory space, equipment and other resources necessary for the project if that is part of their regular roles and responsibilities (e.g., as Department Chair). ***A list of the FY26 ATRP Programmatic Panel members can be found on the CDMRP website.***

Additional restrictions and associated administrative responses are outlined in Section 9.2, Administrative Actions.

6.2. Review Criteria

6.2.1. Pre-Application Screening Criteria

To determine the merits of the pre-application and the relevance to the mission of the DHP and the ATRP, pre-applications will be screened based on the following criteria:

- **Alignment with a Focus Area:** How well the project addresses the selected FY26 ATRP TRA Focus Area and the intent of the award mechanism.
- **Research Idea and Strategy:** How well the rationale, objectives, and specific aims support the research idea. Whether the proposed study design is appropriate to the specific aims.
- **Impact:** To what extent the potential outcome(s) of the proposed study, if successful, will produce results that are likely to improve the health and well-being of persons impacted by arthritis. Whether the proposed work is relevant to military health.

6.2.2. Peer Review Criteria

To determine technical merit, all applications will be evaluated individually according to the following **scored criteria**, which are listed in decreasing order of importance:

- **Research Strategy and Feasibility**
    - How well the scientific rationale supports the project, as demonstrated by logical reasoning and the presentation of preliminary data and/or published data.

- Whether the hypotheses/objectives, aims, experimental design, methods, and analyses are well-developed and feasible, and support successful completion of the project aims.
- Whether the statistical and data analysis plan is appropriate for the proposed project and future transition to the next level of development.
- To what degree potential problems are addressed and alternative methods and approaches are presented.
- To what degree the data and research resources sharing plan is appropriate for the proposed study.
- How well the study is designed to achieve reproducible and rigorous results, including the choice of model and the endpoints to be measured.
- Whether the research can be reasonably completed within the proposed period of performance.
- Whether the strategy for considering sex as a biological variable is appropriate to the objectives of the study or whether the justification for a single-sex study is sufficiently strong.
- How well the study (or studies) is designed to achieve reproducible and rigorous results, including controls, sample size estimation, blinding, randomization and data handling.
- If applicable, how well initial and continuous access to military and/or VA patient populations and/or DOW or VA resources or databases are described.

- **Impact**
  - How well the proposed study addresses the selected FY26 ATRP TRA Focus Area.
  - To what extent the proposed research will accelerate critical findings into clinically relevant solutions in arthritis care.
  - If successful, to what extent the proposed research will lead to significant advancement toward clinical translation that will impact the health and well-being of persons with arthritis.
  - To what extent the proposed research and its outcomes are relevant to military health, and may ultimately lessen the impact of arthritis in the military.
  - If applicable, to what extent the anticipated outcomes of the proposed study will make an impact in understanding health differences between sexes.
- **Transition Plan**
  - Whether the identified next level of development is well-described and realistic.
  - Whether the funding strategy described (e.g., partners, funding opportunities to be applied for) to bring the anticipated research outcomes to the next level of development is reasonable and realistic.
  - Whether the planned collaborations, schedule, and milestones for bringing the study results to the next level of development (e.g., clinical research or trial, delivery to the patient/clinical care communities or commercial market) are achievable.
  - Whether the plan to distribute the findings or intervention to the arthritis community is appropriate.

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

- **Research Sharing Plan**
  - To what extent the plan for sharing of project data and research resources is appropriate and reasonable and includes dissemination to affected communities, study participants and/or the scientific community. If applicable, whether specific repository(ies) are named where data and research resources arising from the project will be stored.
- **Personnel**
  - How appropriate the expertise and levels of effort are for successful conduct of the proposed work.
- **Budget**
  - Whether the budget is appropriate for the proposed research.
- **Environment**
  - To what extent the scientific environment and level of institutional support is appropriate for the proposed research project.
  - How well the research requirements are supported by the availability of and accessibility to facilities and resources.
- **Application Presentation**
  - To what extent the writing, clarity and presentation of the application components influence the review.

6.2.3. Programmatic Review

To make funding recommendations and select the application(s) that, individually or collectively, will best achieve the program objectives, the following criteria are used by programmatic reviewers:

- Ratings and evaluations of peer reviewers
- Relevance to the priorities of the FY26 ATRP, as evidenced by the following:
  - Adherence to the intent of the funding opportunity
  - Program portfolio balance
  - Relative impact, including relevance to military health

6.3. Application Review and Selection Process

6.3.1. Pre-Application

Following the pre-application screening, PIs will be notified as to whether they are invited to submit full applications. The estimated date when PIs can expect to receive notification of an invitation to submit a full application is indicated in Section 1, Basic Information about the Funding Opportunity. No feedback (e.g., a critique of the pre-application's strengths and weaknesses) is provided at this stage. Because the invitation to submit a full application is based on the contents of the pre-application, investigators should not change the title or research objectives after the pre-application is submitted.

6.3.2. Full Application

All applications are evaluated by scientists, clinicians and consumers in a two-tier review process. The first tier is **peer review**, the evaluation of applications against established criteria to determine technical merit, where each application is assessed for its own merit, independent of other applications. The second tier is **programmatic review**, a comparison-based process in which applications with high scientific and technical merit are further evaluated for programmatic relevance. Final recommendations for funding are subject to review and approval by a designated official. ***The highest-scoring applications from the first tier of review are not automatically recommended for funding. Funding recommendations depend on various factors as described in Section 6.2.3, Programmatic Review.*** Additional information about the two-tier process used by the CDMRP can be found on the CDMRP website.

Funding of applications received is contingent upon the availability of federal funds for this program, the number of applications received, the quality and merit of the applications as evaluated by peer and programmatic review, and the requirements of the government. Funds to be obligated on any award resulting from this funding opportunity will be available for use for a limited time period based on the fiscal year of the funds.

6.4. Risk, Integrity and Performance Information

Prior to making an assistance agreement award where the federal share is expected to exceed the simplified acquisition threshold, as defined in the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 2, Part 200.1 (2 CFR 200.1), over the period of performance, the federal awarding agency is required to review and consider any information about the applicant that is available in the SAM.

An applicant organization may review the SAM and submit comments on any information currently available about the organization that a federal awarding agency previously entered. The federal awarding agency will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to other information in the designated integrity and performance system, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics and record of performance under federal awards when determining a recipient's qualification prior to award, according to the qualification standards of the Department of Defense Grant and Agreement Regulations (DoDGARs), Section 22.415.

In accordance with National Security Presidential Memorandum-33 and all associated laws, all fundamental research funded by the DOW must be evaluated for affiliations with foreign entities. All applicant organizations must disclose foreign affiliations of all key personnel named on applications. Failure to disclose foreign affiliations of key personnel shall lead to withdrawal of recommendations to fund applications. Applicant organizations may be presented with an opportunity to mitigate identified risks, particularly those pertaining to influence from foreign entities specified in law. Implementation of mitigation discussions and utilization of the DOD Component Decision Matrix must decrease risk of foreign influence in accordance with the above-mentioned laws and guidance prior to award.

7. Federal Award Notices

For each compliant full application received, the organizational representative(s) and PI will receive email notification when the funding recommendations are posted to eBRAP, typically within 6 weeks after programmatic review. At this time, each PI will receive a peer review summary statement on the strengths and weaknesses of the application and an information paper describing the application receipt and review process for the ATRP award mechanisms. The information papers and a list of organizations and PIs recommended for funding are also posted on the program's page within the CDMRP website. After all awards are made, the CDMRP includes individual award information in a searchable database.

If an application is recommended for funding, after the email notification is posted to eBRAP, a government representative will contact the person authorized to negotiate on behalf of the recipient organization.

Only an appointed DHACA Grants Officer may obligate the government to the expenditure of funds to an extramural organization. No commitment on the part of the government should be inferred from discussions with any other individual. ***The award document signed by the Grants Officer is the official authorizing document (i.e., assistance agreement).***

Intragovernmental obligations of funding will be made according to the terms of a negotiated Inter-Agency Agreement and managed by a CDMRP Science Officer.

Funding obligated to ***intragovernmental and intramural DOW organizations*** will be sent through the Military Interdepartmental Purchase Request (MIPR), Funding Authorization Document (FAD) or Direct Charge Work Breakdown Structure processes. Transfer of funds is contingent upon appropriate safety and administrative approvals. Intragovernmental and intramural DOW investigators and collaborators must coordinate receipt and commitment of funds through their respective Resource Manager/Task Area Manager/Comptroller or equivalent Business Official.

An organization may, at its own risk and without the government's prior approval, incur obligations and expenditures to cover costs up to 90 days before the beginning date of the initial budget period of a new award.

8. Post-Award Requirements

8.1. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Applicable requirements in the DoDGARs found in 32 CFR, Chapter I, Subchapter C, and 2 CFR, Chapter XI, apply to grants and cooperative agreements resulting from this program announcement.

The GAI contain information regarding administrative requirements and national policy requirements.

Refer to full text of the latest DoD R&D Terms and Conditions and the DHACA Terms and Conditions for further information.

If there are delinquencies in technical reporting requirements for any existing DHA or U.S. Army Medical Research and Development Command awards at the applicant organization, DHACA will not issue any new awards to the applicant organization until all delinquent reports have been submitted.

Applications recommended for funding that involve animals, human data, human specimens, human subjects or human cadavers must be reviewed for compliance with federal animal and/or human subjects protection requirements and must be approved by the DHA R&D Office of Research and Regulatory Compliance (ORRC), prior to implementation. This administrative review requirement is in addition to the local Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC), Institutional Review Board (IRB) or Ethics Committee (EC) review.

8.2. Reporting

Annual technical progress reports as well as a final technical progress report will be required. Annual and final technical progress reports must be prepared in accordance with the Research Performance Progress Report (RPPR).

The Award Terms and Conditions will specify whether additional and/or more frequent reporting is required.

Award Expiration Transition Plan: An Award Expiration Transition Plan, using the template available on eBRAP, must be submitted with the final progress report.

Awards resulting from this program announcement may entail additional reporting requirements related to recipient integrity and performance matters. Recipient organizations that have federal contract, grant and cooperative agreement awards with a cumulative total value greater than $10M are required to provide information to the SAM about certain civil, criminal and administrative proceedings that reached final disposition within the most recent 5-year period and that were connected with their performance of a federal award. These recipients are required to disclose, semiannually, information about criminal, civil and administrative proceedings as specified in the applicable Representations.

8.3. Additional Requirements

Unless otherwise restricted, changes in the PI or organization will be allowed on a case-by-case basis, provided the intent of the award mechanism is met.

An organizational transfer of an award will not be allowed in the last year of the original period of performance or any extension thereof.

9. Other Information

9.1. Program Announcement Version

Questions related to this program announcement should refer to the program name, the program announcement name and the program announcement version code CD26_01d.

9.2. Administrative Actions

After receipt of pre-applications or full applications, the following administrative actions may occur.

9.2.1. Rejection

The following will result in administrative rejection of the pre-application:

- The Preproposal Narrative is missing.

The following will result in administrative rejection of the full application:

- The Project Narrative is missing.
- The Budget is missing.
- Submission of an application for which a letter of invitation was not issued

9.2.2. Modification

- Pages exceeding the specified limits will be removed prior to reviewing all documents.
- Documents not requested will be removed.

9.2.3. Withdrawal

The following may result in administrative withdrawal of the full application:

- A member of the FY26 ATRP Programmatic Panel is named as being involved in the development or execution of the research proposed or is found to have assisted in the pre-application or application processes.
- The application includes the name(s) of personnel from either of the CDMRP peer or programmatic review companies for which conflicts cannot be adequately mitigated. For FY26, the identities of the peer review contractor and the programmatic review contractor may be found on the CDMRP website.
- Personnel from applicant or collaborating organizations are found to have contacted persons involved in the review or approval process to gain protected evaluation information or to influence the evaluation process.
- The application from an extramural organization, including non-DOW federal agencies, is received through eBRAP.
- The federal government recipient organization (including an intramural DOW organization): (a) cannot accept and execute the entirety of the requested budget in FY26 funds; and/or (b)

cannot coordinate the use of contractual, assistance or other appropriate agreements to provide funds to collaborators.

- The application fails to conform to this program announcement description.
- The application includes URLs, with the exception of links in the References Cited and Publication and/or Patent sections.
- The application includes research data that are classified and/or proposes research that may produce classified outcomes, or outcomes deemed sensitive to national security concerns.
- The invited application proposes a different research project than that described in the pre-application.
- The same research project is submitted to different funding opportunities within the same program and fiscal year.
- The PI does not meet the eligibility criteria.
- The proposed research project includes clinical research or a clinical trial.
- The Animal Research Plan (Attachment 8) is missing, *for applications proposing animal studies.*

9.2.4. Withhold

Applications that appear to involve research misconduct will be administratively withheld from further consideration pending organizational investigation. The organization will be required to provide the findings of the investigation to the DHACA Grants Officer for a determination of the final disposition of the application.

Appendix 1. Full Application Submission Checklist

Full Application Components	Uploaded
SF424 Research & Related Application for Federal Assistance ***(Grants.gov submissions only)***	☐
Summary (Tab 1) and Application Contacts (Tab 2) ***(eBRAP submissions only)***	☐
Attachments	
Project Narrative – Attachment 1, upload as "ProjectNarrative.pdf"	☐
Supporting Documentation – Attachment 2, upload as "Support.pdf"	☐
Technical Abstract – Attachment 3, upload as "TechAbs.pdf"	☐
Lay Abstract – Attachment 4, upload as "LayAbs.pdf"	☐
Statement of Work – Attachment 5, upload as "SOW.pdf"	☐
Impact Statement – Attachment 6, upload as "Impact.pdf"	☐
Transition Plan – Attachment 7, upload as "Transition.pdf"	☐
Animal Research Plan – Attachment 8, upload as "AnimalResPlan.pdf"	☐
Representations ***(Grants.gov submissions only)*** **– Attachment 9, upload as "RequiredReps.pdf"**	☐
Suggested Intragovernmental/Intramural Budget Form ***(if applicable)*** **– Attachment 10, upload as "IGBudget.pdf"**	☐
Additional Application Materials	
Research & Related Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded)	☐
Attach Biographical Sketch for Senior/Key Persons (Biosketch_LastName.pdf)	☐
Attach Current/Pending Support for Senior/Key Persons (Support_LastName.pdf)	☐
Research & Related Budget	☐
Project/Performance Site Location(s)	☐
Research & Related Subaward Budget Attachment(s) ***(if applicable)***	☐

Appendix 2. Acronym List

ARRIVE	Animal Research: Reporting of In Vivo Experiments
ATRP	Arthritis Research Program
CDMRP	Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CONSORT	Consolidated Standards of Reporting Trials
DHA	Defense Health Agency
DHA R&D	Defense Health Agency Research and Development
DHACA	Defense Health Agency Contracting Activity
DOD	U.S. Department of Defense
DoDGARs	Department of Defense Grant and Agreement Regulations
DOW	U.S. Department of War
eBRAP	Electronic Biomedical Research Application Portal
EC	Ethics Committee
ET	Eastern Time
FAD	Funding Authorization Document
FY	Fiscal Year
GAI	General Application Instructions
IACUC	Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee
IRB	Institutional Review Board
M	Million
MIPR	Military Interdepartmental Purchase Request
NIH	National Institutes of Health
ORRC	Office of Research and Regulatory Compliance
PDF	Portable Document Format
PI	Principal Investigator
R&D	Research and Development
RPPR	Research Performance Progress Report
SABV	Sex as a Biological Variable
SAM	System for Award Management
SF424 R&R	Standard Form 424 (Application for Federal Assistance, Research & Related)
SOW	Statement of Work
SPIRIT	Standard Protocol Items: Recommendations for Interventional Trials
STROBE	STrengthening the Reporting of OBservational studies in Epidemiology

UEI	Unique Entity Identifier
URL	Uniform Resource Locator
USC	United States Code
VA	U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs