

## Priority Program: 'Translational Oncology'

### Applicants' Guidelines for Letter of Intent

#### Introduction

The major goal of German Cancer Aid's funding program for the development of 'Interdisciplinary Oncology Centers of Excellence' ('Onkologische Spitzenzentren') in Germany is to continuously improve the treatment and care of cancer patients. Conducting interdisciplinary research programs that encompass both basic science as well as the essential translation of scientific findings into clinical practice is therefore an essential task of 'Interdisciplinary Oncology Centers of Excellence'. Patients can then rapidly benefit from new scientific progress. The following program for 'Translational Oncology' is another step in reaching this goal.

**With the goal of further supporting collaborative translational cancer research projects at 'Interdisciplinary Oncology Centers of Excellence' and Comprehensive Cancer Centers, the German Cancer Aid has decided to launch a 12<sup>th</sup> call for applications within the funding program 'Translational Oncology'. Applications may be submitted for a collaborative scientific project ('Verbundprojekt'; CP), a combination of a collaborative scientific project and a clinical trial (Phase I/II; CPT) or an innovative clinical trial (Phase I/II; T). The projects/clinical trial (CP, CPT and T) must be performed at at least at 3 sites (separate cities) and necessitate close collaboration between several research groups. At least one research group must be located at an 'Interdisciplinary Oncology Center of Excellence' (CCC) funded by the German Cancer Aid. The maximal budget for this call for all funded projects is in total 7 million Euros.**

#### What to consider before applying

##### Translational research:

This program supports projects, which plan to transfer current results from biomedical basic research into effective medical applications and treatments. Results from basic research are in this sense a prerequisite for successful applications in this program. Thus, work programs should be hypothesis-driven and not designed to prove a hypothesis. Therefore, a 'proof-of-principle' and a 'proof of concept' must be shown previously.

Translational research includes e.g.:

- research on underlying mechanisms of human oncological diseases (rather functional than descriptive investigations)
- therapeutic interventions
- clinical trials (phase I/II)

Scientific research projects dealing with human material from clinical trials can also be subject of an application.

Applications for funding a German part of a larger European or worldwide clinical trial are possible.

Basic research or the development of new technologies, methods, assays or equipment are not subject within this priority program.

### **Applicant composition:**

The projects/clinical trial (CP, CPT and T) must be performed at least at 3 sites (separate cities) and necessitate close collaboration between several research groups.

At least one research group must be located at an 'Interdisciplinary Oncology Center of Excellence' (CCC) funded by the German Cancer Aid.

### **I. Overall Project design:**

1. A clear added value/benefit must be seen by the consortium-application and the cooperation of the participating working groups in contrast to single project applications.
2. All subprojects must be interconnected to each other and contribute to the common aim of the overall project. Only those projects are fundable where the scientific quality of the whole project itself and the quality of all subprojects are visible.
3. There must be an unmet clinical need of the item of the proposal and a clear-cut concept of the study.
4. Cooperation of the members of a consortium must be proven by existing joint publications on the item of the proposal. Each applicant should be an expert for the subproject he/she is involved in, again proven by publications.
5. A special coordinating subproject can be included in the application e.g. to finance a common used platform, techniques or resources.

### **II: Work program**

1. The work program must be feasible within the applied period.
2. Hypothesis-driven work program (please state a clear hypothesis for which a 'proof of principle' should already exist).
3. Statistics: please give statistic calculations for your proposed results.
4. As a general prerequisite, model systems must be already established in the consortium and proven to mimic the human situation. If you use cell lines as model system, preliminary results must be verified in more than one cell line.
5. If you plan to apply funding for a clinical trial, you have to involve an expert in bioinformatics or statistics to verify the case numbers (if this person will not be an applicant the verification must be proven by a signed document).

## Guideline for a Letter of Intent

The letter of intent (LOI) must be sent as a pdf per email to the following address: foerderung@krebshilfe.de. Please use 'Translational Oncology 12. Call' in the reference line.

### 1. Applicants

The following information is needed for the **lead and all co-applicants**. Please give the name of the lead applicant (only one person), who is the speaker of the consortium and the contact person for correspondence with the Deutsche Krebshilfe first:

- First name, surname, academic degree
- Full name and address of the institution at which the lead applicant works
- List of all co-applicants and the full name of their participating centers/institutions
- Email addresses

### 2. Project title (not more than 160 characters, including commas and spaces)

3. **Type of application.** Please state whether this is a collaborative scientific project (CP), a combination of a collaborative scientific project and a clinical trial (Phase I/II; CPT) or a Phase I/II clinical trial (T).

4. With your signature, you are confirming that all applicants have read the chapter '**What to consider before applying**'.

The letter of intent must be signed at least by the lead applicant.

## General Comments/Procedure:

### Eligibility

Researchers in Germany who have completed their academic training (a doctorate as a rule) are eligible to apply within the Translational Oncology program.

As a general rule the following persons cannot be lead- or co-applicants of a proposal:

- persons working at a profit-making organization\*; particularly, if the profit-making organization is a subcontractor in the application,
- persons not permitted to publish results in a generally accessible form,
- persons or organizations situated in a foreign country.

\* As a rule, persons working at an institution/a hospital/a clinic which is organized as 'GmbH' are not eligible as applicants. If you are not sure, if a person is eligible as applicant, please contact the office of German Cancer Aid before sending a LOI or project outline.

The application and evaluation procedure takes place in three steps:

1. Applicants must inform the German Cancer Aid by **December 19, 2024, 17:00 (per email)** that they plan to submit an application (Letter of Intent).
2. Project outlines must be submitted no later than **February 04, 2025, 13:00 (per email)**.

3. If the preliminary evaluation is favorable, full applications must be submitted by **July 26, 2025, 13:00.**

**The guidelines for project outlines will be put online in a short time after this guideline.**

Within two weeks of receipt of the letters of intent, project outlines and full applications by the German Cancer Aid, the lead applicant will receive a written confirmation of receipt. If you fail to receive confirmation of receipt, please send an email to the Funding Department of the German Cancer Aid (foerderung@krebshilfe.de), giving the full project title and your telephone number.

If you have any questions, please contact:

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