

## Damon Runyon-Rachleff Innovation Award

### Program Description

The Damon Runyon-Rachleff Innovation Award is designed to provide support for the next generation of exceptionally creative thinkers with “high risk/high reward” ideas that have the potential to significantly impact our understanding of and/or approaches to the prevention, diagnosis or treatment of cancer.

The Innovation Award is specifically designed to provide funding to extraordinary early career researchers who have an innovative new idea but lack sufficient preliminary data to obtain traditional funding. It is not designed to fund incremental advances. The research supported by the award must be novel, exceptionally creative and, if successful, have the strong potential for high impact in the cancer field.

Awards are made to institutions for support of the Damon Runyon-Rachleff Innovation Investigators. All awards are approved by the Board of Directors of the Damon Runyon Cancer Research Foundation acting upon the recommendation of the Innovation Award Committee.

Applications will be evaluated based on the following:

- The applicant’s capacity to conduct bold, exceptionally creative research.
- The novelty and creativity of the proposed research. Incremental research will **not** be funded.
- The potential of the proposed research to lead to advances that will significantly impact the prevention, diagnosis, treatment or basic understanding of cancer.
- The applicant’s lack of resources to pursue the proposed research.

### Program Sponsors

The Damon Runyon-Rachleff Innovation Award is funded by the generous support of Andrew and Debra Rachleff.

### Eligibility

- Institutional nominations are not required and there is no limit to the number of applications that can be received from a particular institution.
- Applicants (including non-U.S. citizens) must be conducting independent research at a U.S. research institution.
- Basic and translational/clinical projects will be considered. Applications will be accepted from all scientific disciplines provided that the proposed research meets the selection criteria.
- Applicants with a background in multiple disciplines are especially encouraged to apply.
- Joint submission from collaborators working in different disciplines will be considered. (The collaborators will share the \$450,000 award.)
- Applicants must belong to one of the following categories:

- Tenure-track Assistant Professors within the first three years of obtaining their initial Assistant Professor position. (Cut-off date: June 1, 2008.)
  - Clinical Instructors and Senior Clinical Fellows (*in the final year of their sub-specialty training*) holding an MD who are pursuing a period of independent research before taking a tenure-track faculty position. Such individuals must have an exceptional record of research accomplishment, dedicated laboratory space and the support of their institution.
  - Distinguished Fellows with an exceptional record of research accomplishment identified by their institution to pursue an independent research program and who have dedicated laboratory space. These candidates are markedly distinct from traditional postdoctoral fellows. Examples: Whitehead Fellows, UCSF Fellows, Cold Spring Harbor Fellows.  
*[Research Assistant Professors, Research Associate Professors, Research Scientists and Postdoctoral Fellows are not eligible. If you are unsure about your eligibility for this award program, please contact the Foundation's Award Programs at 212.455.0520.]*
- Applicants are expected to commit a minimum of 80% of their time to conducting research.
  - Applicants may apply no more than two times.
  - Applicants must demonstrate that they have access to the resources and infrastructure necessary to conduct the proposed research.
  - The department must guarantee the Investigator is conducting the proposed research independently.

## Funding

- The award will be for a period of three years. Each award will provide a total of \$450,000 in direct research costs. **The Award cannot be used for indirect costs or institutional overhead.**
- Awards will be paid in increments of \$150,000 per year for three years. However, the Innovation Award Committee will consider an accelerated payment schedule if an award recipient can demonstrate compelling need.
- The Innovation Award funds are intended to be flexible and can be used for a variety of scientific needs including the Investigator's salary, salaries for professional and technical personnel, special equipment, supplies and other miscellaneous items required to conduct the proposed research.
- The submitted budgets should be realistic estimates of the funds required for the proposed research and be itemized by category according to the instructions on the budget form.
- No part of this award may be used for indirect costs or institutional overhead.

## Concurrent Funding

Since the goal of the Innovation Award is to fund high risk/high reward research that lacks sufficient preliminary data to secure traditional funding, the applicant should not have funding for this proposed project.

During the course of the award, award recipients are encouraged to seek additional funding to expand and further develop their projects.

## Reporting

### SCIENTIFIC

**Award recipients will be required to submit annual progress reports after the first and second years of funding, as well as a final report. Award recipients will also be required to present to the Innovation Award Committee mid-way through the Award so that the Committee can assess progress and provide advice and/or guidance.**

#### Progress Report Instructions

The Investigator must submit signed annual progress reports due on the 15th day of the final month of each year of funding and a signed final progress report at the completion of the award. In addition to written reports, the Investigator will present an oral progress report during the fall of the second year.

All reports are kept strictly confidential. The goal of the reports is three-fold. First, the reports serve as an auditing tool to monitor research progress and assure that the research is on target with the funded project. Second, the reports allow the Foundation to perform regular program evaluations including issues related to areas of study, concurrent funding, networking opportunities, career development and award impact. Third, the reports provide an opportunity to identify specific part(s) of the Investigator's research (e.g., fundamental advance, clinical trial development, patient-related anecdote, publications) that the Foundation may highlight in various media outlets. In fact, we would appreciate Investigators contacting the Award Programs at any time to share such information.

*The Investigator's annual progress report includes:*

1. A summary of research performed during the award year and evaluation of the results. The summary should be technical, but targeted to a general scientific audience. The summary should be sufficiently detailed such that the Investigator's research activities over the award year are clearly described. Figures and references can be included if appropriate. If the research differs from the originally funded proposal, please provide an explanation. The report must be signed by the Investigator and should not exceed four pages.
2. A one-paragraph lay summary, for the public, detailing the research performed over the award year.
3. An up-to-date *curriculum vitae* including:
  - a. A bibliography of publications from the award year (please submit pdf copies of reprints).
  - b. An updated list of current and pending funding.
  - c. A list of conferences and seminars attended and presentations given during the award year.
  - d. Changes in the Investigator's responsibilities or title (tenure/promotion, leadership positions, consultant work, etc.).
4. Brief comments on the most important accomplishment over the past year. Also, please address any issues or concerns regarding obstacles to your success to which the Foundation might respond.
5. A brief description of the Investigator's current research and office space allocation.
6. A completed intellectual property disclosure form.

*The Investigator's final progress report includes:*

1. A summary of research performed during the award and evaluation of the results. The summary should be technical, but targeted to a general scientific audience. The summary should be sufficiently detailed such that the Investigator's research activities are clearly

described. Figures and references can be included if appropriate. If the research differs from the originally funded proposal, please provide an explanation. The report must be signed by the Investigator and should not exceed four pages.

2. A one-paragraph lay summary, for the public, detailing the accomplishments over the term of the award, including how the research has impacted the cancer field.
3. An up-to-date *curriculum vitae* including:
  - a. A bibliography of all publications resulting from the Investigator's research (please submit pdf copies of reprints).
  - b. An updated list of current and pending funding.
  - c. A list of conferences and seminars attended and presentations given during the award year.
  - d. Changes in the Investigator's responsibilities or title (tenure/promotion, leadership positions, consultant work, etc.).
4. A statement indicating how the award made a difference in the Investigator's career.
5. Brief comments on the most important accomplishment over the award term. Please address any issues or concerns regarding obstacles to success to which the Foundation might respond.
6. A completed intellectual property disclosure form.

## FINANCIAL

- A projected budget using the Foundation's form is part of the full application.
- Monies may be used to cover salary (Investigator, technical staff, students, and post doctoral fellows) and/or research costs (supplies, equipment, etc.).
- Monies will be paid in increments of \$150,000 per year for three years. However, the Committee will consider an accelerated payment schedule if the Awardee can demonstrate compelling need.
- All Awardees will be required to submit projected annual budgets and yearly financial reports.

## Award Policies and Procedures

- **Terms of the Award:** All awards are made to the sponsoring institution for the support of the designated Damon Runyon-Rachleff Innovator. An award does not constitute an employer-employee relationship between the Damon Runyon Cancer Research Foundation and the awardee.
- **Percent Effort:** The Investigator is expected to commit at least 80% of his/her full-time professional effort to research activities.
- **Usage of Funds:** At the beginning of each award year a budget is required from the Investigator. Awards are in the amount of \$450,000 of direct research costs over three years. No indirect costs or institutional overhead are covered. Budget requests in excess of \$150,000 in any one year must include a special justification and are subject to approval by the Foundation. The Innovation Award funds are intended to be flexible and can be used for a variety of scientific needs, including the Investigator's salary, salaries for professional and technical personnel, special equipment, supplies and other miscellaneous items required to conduct the proposed research. The submitted budgets should be realistic estimates of the funds required for the proposed research and should be itemized by category according to the instructions on the budget form.
- **Publications/Presentations:** Publications (including abstracts of presentations at scientific or clinical meetings) resulting from projects supported by the Foundation must carry the following acknowledgment: "[Name of Awardee] is a Damon Runyon-Rachleff Innovation Awardee supported (in part) by the Damon Runyon Cancer Research Foundation (DRR-

[\_\_\_\_]).” Awardees are also strongly encouraged to identify themselves as a Damon Runyon-Rachleff Innovation Awardee when presenting their work at scientific conferences or accepting professional honors or awards. Download a copy of the Damon Runyon Cancer Research Foundation logo for inclusion in Power Point presentations or posters.

- **Should the Investigator wish to discontinue the project, leave the designated institution, or modify any agreement of the award letter, he/she must seek approval from the Damon Runyon Cancer Research Foundation in advance. Failure to comply with this requirement may result in immediate termination of the Award and may jeopardize any future awards to the grantee institution by the Foundation.**
- All award recipients must adhere to the terms of the Foundation’s award statement and invention policy.

## Application Guidelines

### 2011 Important Dates

- > **June 1, 2011** Pre-Proposals Due
- > **July 22, 2011** Notification of Semi-Finalists
- > **September 1, 2011** Full Proposals Due
- > **Fall 2011** Finalist Interviews
- > **December 2011** Notification of Awardees
- > **January 1, 2012** Funding Begins

### Pre-Proposal Application Materials

**DEADLINE: June 1, 2011**

**Pre-proposal application materials should be submitted to the Damon Runyon Cancer Research Foundation for arrival at our offices by 4:00 pm (ET) on June 1, 2011. Along with the original pre-proposal (one hard copy), applicants must submit a CD or DVD of all the required materials. Please see application submission instructions for detailed directives.**

A. Applicants must first submit a pre-proposal, including:

1. A completed cover sheet, including a signed statement from the applicant’s department guaranteeing the applicant will be conducting the proposed research independently and that at least 80% of the applicant’s time will be dedicated to research activities. **[FORM 1]**
2. A one-page description of the proposed research, demonstrating its potential to impact the prevention, diagnosis, treatment or basic understanding of cancer. Applicants must explain how the proposed idea and/or approach is innovative and bold yet achievable. No preliminary data are expected; any description of such data (including figures) should be included in the one-page description of the proposed research. *References are not necessary at this point in the application process.* **[FORM 2]**  
(If you would like a copy of this form into which figures can be inserted, please email [cait.ahearn@damonrunyon.org](mailto:cait.ahearn@damonrunyon.org).)
3. A one-paragraph description of resources and core facilities available to the applicant for the proposed research. **[FORM 3]**
4. The applicant’s NIH biosketch. Within the applicant’s full bibliography, please bold three peer-reviewed publications (published or in press) that demonstrate the applicant’s capacity for innovation and ability to achieve the goals set forth in the proposed research.

B. Reference Letters

1. **Tenure-track Assistant Professor Applicants must have one reference letter emailed or faxed directly to the Foundation using our reference letter form.**

- The letter should be from a senior scientist capable of addressing the applicant's extraordinary research and academic accomplishments, as well as his or her ability to achieve the goals of the proposed research and potential to be a true innovator.

**[PLEASE USE REFERENCE LETTER FORM]**

**2. Clinical Instructors and Senior Clinical Fellows (*in their final year of their sub-specialty training*) holding an MD and Distinguished Fellows are required to have TWO reference letters emailed or faxed directly to the Foundation using our reference letter forms.**

- The first letter should be from a senior scientist capable of addressing the applicant's extraordinary research and academic accomplishments, as well as his or her ability to achieve the goals of the proposed research and potential to be a true innovator.

- The second letter should be from the applicant's mentor or institutional equivalent, guaranteeing the applicant is conducting the proposed research independently and addressing his/her exceptional level of research accomplishment and potential to manage a successful, independent research program.

- *Only those candidates who are Clinical Instructors, Senior Clinical Fellows or Distinguished Fellows should send 2 letters.*

**[PLEASE USE ADDITIONAL REFERENCE LETTER FORM]**

## Pre-Proposal Application Submission Instructions

**ALL FILES MUST BE IN PDF FORMAT.**

Please number your pdf files to correspond to the listing below. To ensure proper organization of the files, please name all your files as:

"Applicant's last name, #"

Example: If the applicant's name is John Smith, this is how the files should be named:

Smith, 1.pdf

Smith, 2.pdf

Smith, 3.pdf

Smith, 4.pdf

### **REQUIRED MATERIALS FOR PRE-PROPOSALS**

Form 1. Pre-Proposal cover sheet

Form 2. Description of proposed research form

Form 3. Description of resources and core facilities form

**4. Applicant's NIH biosketch with full bibliography (which may bring it over 4-page limit)**

AND

**Reference letter(s)** emailed (*innovation@damonrunyon.org*) or faxed (917.591.4780) directly to the Foundation by referee(s)

**ON THE CD or DVD (NOT THE CASE), PLEASE CLEARLY LABEL THE APPLICANT'S NAME.**

*Send Complete Application and CD or DVD to:*

**Award Programs**

**Damon Runyon Cancer Research Foundation**

**One Exchange Plaza**

**55 Broadway, Suite 302**

**New York, NY 10006**

**FAXED OR E-MAILED APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED**

**SEMI-FINALISTS WILL BE SELECTED BY THE INNOVATION AWARD COMMITTEE AND NOTIFIED JULY 22, 2011.**

**Semi-Finalist Application Materials**

**DEADLINE: September 1, 2011**

Semi-finalist application materials should be submitted to the Damon Runyon Cancer Research Foundation for arrival at our offices by 4:00 pm (ET) on September 1, 2011. Along with the original full proposal (one hard copy), applicants must submit a CD or DVD of all the required materials. Please see application submission instructions for detailed directives.

- A. Semi-finalists will be asked to submit full proposals, including:
1. An expanded description of the research proposal (maximum of 3 pages). Preliminary data are not expected and any description of such data (including figures) should be included in the three-page description. A list of references is not included in the 3-page limit. **[FORM 1]**  
(If you would like a copy of this form into which figures can be inserted, please email [cait.ahearn@damonrunyon.org](mailto:cait.ahearn@damonrunyon.org).)
  2. Full *curriculum vitae*.
  3. A proposed budget for the term of the Award. **[FORM 3]**
  4. A complete list of other sources of research support (including start-up package, if applicable) and confirmation that there is no scientific overlap with the proposed research.
  5. A written statement guaranteeing that adequate safety precautions will apply for projects that involve any biohazards (e.g., recombinant DNA, chemical carcinogens, etc.) and that the research project has been (or will be) approved by the appropriate Institutional Review Board, Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee, and/or Biohazards Committee.
- B. Applicants must have two additional reference letters emailed or faxed directly to the Foundation using our reference letter form. **[PLEASE USE REFERENCE LETTER FORM]**
- The letters should address:
1. the applicant's research and academic accomplishments
  2. the level of innovation and importance of the proposed research
  3. the characteristics of the applicant that make him/her uniquely suited to carry out the proposed research.

**Semi-Finalist Application Submission Instructions**

**ALL FILES MUST BE IN PDF FORMAT.**

Please number your pdf files to correspond to the listing below. To ensure proper organization of the files, please name all your files as:

"Applicant's last name, #"

*Example: If the applicant's name is John Smith, this is how the files should be named:*

- Smith, 1.pdf
- Smith, 2.pdf
- Smith, 3.pdf
- Smith, 4.pdf
- Smith, 5.pdf

**REQUIRED MATERIALS FOR SEMI-FINALISTS**

Form 1. Expanded description of the research proposal form

**2. Curriculum vitae**

Form **3. Proposed budget form**

**4. Other sources of research support**

**5. Safety statement**

AND

\*Two (2) **additional** reference letters emailed (innovation@damonrunyon.org) or faxed (917.591.4780) directly to the Foundation by referees\*

**ON THE CD or DVD (NOT THE CASE), PLEASE CLEARLY LABEL THE APPLICANT'S NAME.**

*Send Complete Application and CD or DVD to:*

**Award Programs**

**Damon Runyon Cancer Research Foundation**

**One Exchange Plaza**

**55 Broadway, Suite 302**

**New York, NY 10006**

***FAXED OR E-MAILED APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED***

**FINALISTS WILL BE SELECTED BY THE INNOVATION AWARD COMMITTEE AND INVITED TO INTERVIEW IN FALL 2011.**

## **Finalist Interviews**

### **Fall 2011**

A small number of finalists will be interviewed by at least one member of the Innovation Award Committee and the sponsors of the Innovation Award, Andrew and Debra Rachleff. Interviews will be conducted at a location as convenient as possible to all participants. Interview travel expenses will be paid by the Foundation.

### **Contact Information**

awards@damonrunyon.org | 212.455.0520 | www.damonrunyon.org