MAYO CLINIC Comprehensive Cancer Center

Karolinska Comprehensive Cancer Center

Mayo Clinic Comprehensive Cancer Center (MCCCC) and Cancer Research Karolinska Institutet (CRKI)

Synergy Grants

Collaborative Call for Applications to Support Cancer Research

OVERVIEW

The Mayo Clinic Comprehensive Cancer Center (MCCCC) and Cancer Research Karolinska Institutet (CRKI) are pleased to announce a new "Synergy Grant" funding mechanism with a Request for Applications (RFA) focusing on **Risk assessment, Early Detection and Interception (REDI)**. This REDI theme aims at accelerating the development of targeted early detection and data-driven prevention strategies for clinically significant cancer precursors and early-stage cancers, also being a special research focus at MCCCC (for further details, see Cancer Risk Assessment, Early Detection and Interception Research Program - Mayo Clinic Research. We have identified **existing synergistic strengths in REDI at both institutions** in the following research areas:

Solid Tumors,
Hematological Malignancies, and
Advanced Emerging Tools and Technologies

These three research areas are uniquely strong at both institutions and additional synergies are likely to arise in collaborative research projects in these areas, having a REDI focus. Additionally, given the synergistic efforts at both institutions focusing on Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Data Driven Life Science (DDLS), projects utilizing and/or developing novel algorithms and methodologies in Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Data Driven Life Science (DDLS) are especially encouraged.

The Mayo Clinic Comprehensive Cancer Center (MCCCC) and Cancer Research Karolinska Institutet (CRKI) have created a unique track record of collaborative international network focused on innovative science and translation, and since 2020, have funded 18 pilot cancer research grant totaling $1.800.000 and 22.500.000 SEK.

Based on the success of the MCCCC/CRKI collaboration, the two institutions met for a retreat in 2024 and outlined a new collaborative focus in the area of REDI. Since that retreat, 3 Task Forces were formed to identify areas of synergy that could be leveraged for REDI collaborations in breast, hematologic malignancies and emerging tools and technologies. These Task Forces met on a regular basis to identify synergistic areas of expertise in the area of REDI as well as the critical technologies that could be implemented to facilitate such collaborations. The recommendations of the Task Forces form the basis for the current RFA.

In follow-up, we have now developed a new "Synergy Grant" funding mechanism. The focus of this RFA is to bring together teams of physicians and scientists at both institutions to focus on the areas of **Risk assessment, Early Detection and Interception (REDI)**, in areas of cancer research where profiles of expertise, infrastructure and methodologies are expected to gain synergistic results, resulting in major advancements of cancer research and cancer care.

For further background information on these new Synergy Grant and examples of potential research topics identified to have synergistic potential in collaborations between MCCCC and CRKI, enabled by Task Forces with experts from each institution, see the following website.

OBJECTIVE

The objective of this funding is to fund innovative and significant research involving teams of investigators at both the Mayo Clinic Comprehensive Cancer Center (MCCCC) and Cancer Research Karolinska Institutet (CRKI) that will lead to breakthroughs in Risk assessment, Early Detection and Interception.

We seek highly innovative approaches that may involve considerable scientific risk, but which may potentially lead to a breakthrough in a particular area, or to the development of new techniques, agents, methodologies, models, and applications that could have a major impact on **Risk assessment, Early Detection and Interception**. It is expected that support via this program will lead to impactful publications, discoveries and targeted submission of subsequent extramural peer-reviewed grants seeking support from other sources. These will be the metrics of success for this grant award program, and regular follow-up with the investigators will be done to ensure progress.

Projects utilizing and/or developing novel algorithms and methodologies in **Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Data Driven Life Science (DDLS)** are especially encouraged, provided that adherence to current legislation in Sweden and USA as well as protection of patient integrity is fully guaranteed and explained in the RFA.

FUNDING

A minimum of one Synergy Grant project(s) may be awarded for a total of four (2 + 2) years, with the second half of funding contingent on satisfactory progress in the first half of the project period. Project investigators may request up to $2,000,000 (total cost for four years) composed of a Mayo Clinic Comprehensive Cancer Center (MCCCC) component ($250,000/year for up to 4 years) and a Cancer Research Karolinska Institutet (CRKI) component (2,500,000 SEK/year for up to 4 years) per funded project. Indirect costs are included in the total award. Funding for this RFA is through established philanthropic support at the Mayo Clinic Comprehensive Cancer Center and Cancer Research Karolinska Institutet (CRKI).

KEY DATES

- Application submission deadline Sweden: 23:59 on **November 6, 2026**
- Application submission deadline Rochester, MN, USA: 5:00 pm (CT) on **November 6, 2026**
- Award announcements: **February 1, 2027**
- Award period: **March 1, 2027 – February 28, 2031**

ELIGIBILITY

Mayo applicants must hold a faculty* position at any of the three Mayo Clinic sites. At CRKI, all faculty with a PhD and working at any Karolinska Institutet Department having at least 50% time for research are eligible to apply for funding. Each collaborative application must include one lead investigator from Mayo Clinic Comprehensive Cancer Center, and one lead investigator from Cancer Research Karolinska Institutet (CRKI), with the possibility of including up three (3) additional co-PIs from each institution.

**AC, SAC or Consultant; Research Scientists may be included on an application as Co-Investigator with faculty level applicant*

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

The application should be written in English and contain:

- **Research program** (four pages maximum, excluding references)
- **Applications need to clearly identify how the research strengths of each investigator will synergize such that the research could not move forward without the collaboration. Applications from Mayo/KI investigators forging new collaborations as well as from investigators with a prior track record of collaboration are welcome.**
- **For Mayo investigators**, a current NIH biosketch is required for each PI.
- **For Karolinska investigators, a short CV** including current funding and a **Publication list** for the last eight years (2018–2026), also including contact information (email address) is required for each co-PI.
- **Project budget** for Years 1, 2,3 and 4 as well as simple budget justifications for MCCCC partner in dollars and CRKI partner in SEK.
- **Formatting:** Arial font, size 11, margins 1” inch, single spaced with page numbering.

SUBMISSION

Please send your application as a single pdf file named "Mayo-CRKI collaboration call last names" to mcccccrkicollab@mayo.edu and cancerresearchki@ki.se by the deadlines stated above.
Late submissions will not be accepted. There will be no exceptions.

EVALUATION

The applications will be subjected to a scientific review that will include both internal (Mayo) and external (CRKI) scientific reviewers. The evaluations will be combined and an executive committee (co-chaired by the MCCCC Enterprise Deputy Director for Translational Research and the Director of Cancer Research Karolinska Institute (CRKI) (pending no existing conflict of interest) will make the final funding decision based on the ranking from the combined evaluations.

Reviewers will consider each of the criteria below:

- Scientific focus on the area of Risk assessment, Early Detection and Interception of breast and hematologic cancers
- Synergistic potential of the project based upon productive use of combined expertise, infrastructure and methodologies from both institutions.
- Scientific merit, including adequacy of design and proposed statistical analysis.
- Originality and innovativeness of the proposal and relevance to the overall goals of the Mayo Clinic Comprehensive Cancer Center (MCCCC) and Cancer Research Karolinska Institutet (CRKI) Collaboration.
- Qualifications of the key personnel and their ability to conduct the proposed research.
- Degree to which the project addresses an issue of significant importance for reducing cancer incidence and mortality rates and increasing survival and quality of life.
- Potential for the project to obtain subsequent extramural/external peer-reviewed external research funding and the potential source (programmatic grant, collaborative grant, individual investigator grant).

ENABLING COLLABORATION

To facilitate new collaborations, we are offering assistance in identifying research partners at both institutions. Please write a short description of the proposed project and send to both Angie Emanuel at emanuel.angela@mayo.edu and Liselotte Bäckdahl at liselotte.backdahl@ki.se at CRKI (CRKI investigators). We will identify contact details for potential research collaborators in the appropriate area of research.

For additional information on the collaborations and resources available between the Mayo Clinic Comprehensive Cancer Center and Cancer Research Karolinska Institute:

Cancer Research KI collaboration with Mayo Clinic Comprehensive Cancer Center | Karolinska Institutet
Cancer Research KI - International Collaboration | Karolinska Institutet

INQUIRIES

Additional inquiries may be emailed to mcccccrkicollab@mayo.edu or cancerresearchki@ki.se.