



# 2024 Pediatric Oncology Student Training (POST) Program Guidelines for Applications

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*Application Due: February 20, 2024, 8:00 pm (ET)*



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## About Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation

Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation (ALSF) emerged from the front yard lemonade stand of 4-year-old Alexandra "Alex" Scott, who was fighting cancer and wanted to raise money to find cures for all children with cancer. Her spirit and determination inspired others to support her cause, and when she passed away at the age of 8, she had raised \$1 million. Since then, the Foundation bearing her name has evolved into a national fundraising movement. Today, ALSF is one of the leading funders of pediatric cancer research in the U.S. and Canada, funding more than 1,000 research projects and providing programs to families affected by childhood cancer. ALSF is also the only childhood cancer research organization that has been given the NCI peer-reviewed funder designation for rigorous selection of research grants. The mission of ALSF is to change the lives of children with cancer through funding impactful research, raising awareness, supporting families, and empowering everyone to help cure childhood cancer.

## POST Program Description

The POST Program is a summer research internship designed for undergraduate, graduate (only students pursuing a master's degree are eligible, PhD students are not eligible) and medical students interested in pursuing a career in pediatric oncology research. The goal of the ALSF POST program is to expose students to the field of pediatric oncology research while experiencing a real-time research project. It is expected that students will develop practical research skills and engage in a mentoring relationship with a pediatric oncology researcher.

POST provides an opportunity for students to train with a mentor who is conducting research in the field of pediatric oncology. A mentor/mentee pair is a prerequisite for applying. Students may join a research project underway in a mentor's lab or begin an original investigation with the mentor. Although the mentor and the student should work together on the application, it should be submitted online by the mentor. Students may train at an institution other than their own college, graduate or medical school, and the internship should last 8-10 weeks during late spring/summer over a time period mutually acceptable to both the mentor and the student.

ALSF seeks to increase diversity in the pediatric oncology research community by supporting the next generation of biomedical researchers from underrepresented communities. Approximately 1/3 of the 2024 ALSF POST Program awards will be reserved for students who identify as being from a racial and/or ethnic group that is underrepresented in the scientific workforce as defined by the NSF and NIH. The following groups have been shown nationally to be underrepresented in biomedical research: Blacks or African Americans, Hispanics or Latinos, American Indians or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders. Please refer to Section A of the following NIH guideline to confirm eligibility: Notice of NIH's Interest in Diversity - <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-20-031.html>.

As of 2022, we have added three required virtual events to the POST Program to ensure that the students and mentors are introduced to one another, network, and share their experiences. There will be an Orientation/Welcome, webinar with guest speakers, and Speed Presentations by the students.

## Application Timeline and Review

- A full application must be submitted by the deadline that meets all guideline criteria as well as all eligibility criteria; otherwise, it will be administratively rejected.



- Applications are not processed on a rolling basis. All applications will be reviewed by ALSF after the deadline.

#### APPLICATION TIMELINE

APPLICATIONS DUE	February 20, 2024, 8:00PM (ET)
AWARD NOTIFICATION	Late March, 2024
PROJECTED START DATE	Late spring/summer 2024
GRANT DURATION	8 to 10 weeks
FINAL REPORT	September 19, 2024

### Mentor and Mentee Eligibility

The following eligibility criteria apply:

- Mentors must be ALSF grantees (past or present, including those who have previously mentored POST students), Advisory Board, or Review Board members.
- Mentors must be active in the field of pediatric oncology research.
- The Mentor's Institution must be in the U.S. or Canada. The Mentor/Mentee do not need to be U.S. citizens.
- Mentor/Student pairs must be identified prior to submitting an application.
- Mentor must commit to training the student by submitting a commitment letter with the application, and during the Program period plan training activities and provide guidance.
- Student must currently be enrolled in an undergraduate, graduate (only students pursuing a master's degree are eligible, PhD students are not eligible), or medical degree-granting program.
- Student must be able to dedicate **at least eight full consecutive weeks** to the program, typically between May 1 and August 31. The dates may vary depending on the student's scheduled break.

Students seeking potential mentors may search the following lists but should know that mentors may have limited capacity to support summer students:

- ALSF Advisory Board Members: [www.AlexsLemonade.org/grants/review-boards](http://www.AlexsLemonade.org/grants/review-boards).
- ALSF Grantees: [www.AlexsLemonade.org/grants/search](http://www.AlexsLemonade.org/grants/search).

### Scope of Project

- Proposals must fall within the scope of Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation's mission, focused on childhood cancers. Proposals with a sole/primary focus on patients >19 years of age will not be considered.

### Budget

A maximum of \$5,000 will be awarded, and indirect costs are not allowed. *Funds must be sent to and administered by the mentor's institution.* A specific lab may be designated. The budget may be allocated as follows:

- **Student Stipend:** At least \$4,000 must be used for the student stipend over the program period.



- **Supplies:** A maximum of \$1,000 may be designated for supplies associated with the student's work. Supplies should be for consumables during the program time period. The remaining balance must be used for the stipend.
  - Excludes equipment/computers, service contracts, or long-term supplies.

### Restrictions

- ALSF funds cannot be used for research utilizing human embryonic stem cells or non-human primates. Research with human induced pluripotent stem cells is permissible.
- Overlap with other funding sources for research or stipend is prohibited.
- Each mentor is allowed to submit only one POST application.
- Students may not work on a research elective, or curriculum-related activity during the POST Program time.
- The program will support qualified graduate candidates pursuing Master's degree only. Doctoral students and candidates may not apply.
- If the student withdraws or does not complete the 8-week minimum, the remaining funds must be returned to ALSF.

### Grant Requirements

- The student is expected to reach program goals and complete the submitted training plan. ALSF expects the student to become productive in their role on a project; however, completion of a full research project is *not* required.
- Attendance at seminars and other educational events related to the field, occurring at the mentor's institution, is encouraged.
- Students are required to attend three ALSF POST Webinars and are encouraged to attend the additional networking events. Dates to be determined.
- Students are expected to respond to occasional follow-up surveys in subsequent years.
- A **Final Report** is due on September 19, 2024. The Final Report consists of a student narrative, student survey, and mentor survey. ALSF will not accept an NCE request. Please provide any remaining funds at the end of the program to the student

### Application Package Instructions

- All sections described below should be combined into one PDF (max 20 MB) and uploaded to the ALSF online application form ([see Application Submission Instructions](#)).

### Format Instructions

- **PAGE HEADER:** All pages of the application should be numbered; the name of the student should appear in the upper right-hand corner of each page.
- **FORMAT:** Follow NIH format guidelines: Arial, Helvetica, Palatino Linotype, or Georgia fonts with a font size of 11 points or larger with a minimum of ½ inch margins.
- **ORDER & LENGTH:** The order of the application should be followed, adhering to the maximum number of pages allowed for each subsection indicated in parentheses.



## Section Descriptions

### 1. Project Information

- a. **Cover Page (1 page):** Download and complete the [ALSF Cover Page](#). Cover page must be signed by the POST mentor and mentor's institution.
- b. **Student Personal Statement (0.5 page):** Describe what you hope to get out of the POST Program and how it will impact you as a future researcher. Describe your research interests in pediatric oncology and any additional pertinent information.

The following sections are to be filled by the mentor:

- c. **Project Summary (0.5 page):** Describe the project the student will be working on, in layman terms.
  - d. **Role and Training Plan (1 page):** Describe the student's goals for the POST Program and their role on the research project. Outline how the student and mentor will work together to reach the goals. Include the start and end dates for the student's involvement in the project.
  - e. **Letter of Commitment from POST Program Mentor (1-2 pages):** Letter should confirm mentorship role with the student and describe activities. Briefly address the research project and expectations for the student.
  - f. **Student CV/Resume (2 pages):** Include other research and/or stipend support.
  - g. **Mentor Biosketch:** Use the NIH five-page biographical sketch (SF424) format.
  - h. **Human Subjects (1 page):** If approved, include the IRB approval letter or equivalent. If approval is pending, indicate the expected approval date. If IRB approval is not applicable, include a note in this section.
  - i. **Vertebrate Animals (1 page):** If approved, include the IACUC approval letter or equivalent. If approval is pending indicate the expected approval date. If IACUC approval is not applicable, include a note in this section.
2. **Budget and Justification (1 page):** Complete the [POST Program Budget Form](#). The signature from an institutional representative on the cover page of this grant application specifically acknowledges and accepts this budget and acknowledges that no indirect costs will be paid.
- a. The award amount is a maximum of \$5,000.
  - b. The minimum student stipend is \$4,000.
  - c. Up to \$1,000 may be designated for supplies (see above restrictions).

## Application Submission Instructions

**ALSF has migrated to Proposal Central for submitting grant applications! Please read carefully as our submission instructions have changed.**

1. To start an application, navigate to [Proposal Central](#) and select "I am an Applicant."
  - a. **Returning applicants (with an existing Proposal Central):** log in with your Proposal Central ID.
    - i. *A password reset request can be sent using the following link:*  
<https://proposalcentral.com/ForgotPassword.asp>

