



THE 2021 MPN CHALLENGE

A GRANT PROGRAM SUPPORTED BY THE MPN RESEARCH FOUNDATION Call for Proposals: February 1, 2021

The MPN Research Foundation (MPNRF) is proud to announce **The 2021 MPN Challenge**, a grant program whose objective is to fund research that will help lead the way to better therapies and eventually a cure for patients with myeloproliferative neoplasms (MPNs), including MF, PV and ET.

The primary goal of the MPN Research Foundation's research strategy is 1) accelerate access to high quality, effective and even curative therapies for people living with MPNs and 2) to understand and control the progression of the MPNs from chronic to life-threatening stages.

With the **2021 MPN Challenge Grant Program** we aim to stimulate innovative and clinically relevant research that has the highest potential for near-term patient impact. We seek to expand upon current understanding of the basic biology of the MPNs, develop a deeper understanding of what is driving the development and progression of disease and address critical gaps slowing the development of new therapeutic approaches. A few topic areas of particular interest in this cycle are:

1. **Early detection of MPNs** – Proposals that focus on early detection and understanding of disease trajectory including hematopoietic stem cell studies and clonal evolution and studies that describe the selective pressure that may drive CHIP to overt MPNs.
2. **Understanding thrombotic/cardiovascular risk in MPN patients** – Proposals that address risk factors and new treatment strategies.
3. **Role of epigenomic factors in MPNs** – Proposals focusing on epigenomic factors and their role in the natural history of MPNs.
4. **Role of environmental factors in MPNs** – Proposals focusing on environmental factors and their role in the natural history of MPNs.
5. **New mechanisms of action** - Proposals for basic research and preclinical testing of new and innovative mechanisms of action (e.g., new targets or pathways) other than the common driver mutations associated with MPNs.
6. **Quality of life research** – Proposals focusing on research to further understand disease symptom burden and its impact on the quality of life for patients with MPNs.

Most of these lines of investigation would be enhanced by multi-disciplinary collaborations. In addition to these topic areas, MPNRF will accept any proposal aimed at more clearly understanding the pathogenesis, progression and treatment of the MPNs. Although proposals for potentially paradigm-shifting basic research will be considered, the MPNRF's research grant funding priority is to support meritorious projects that are most likely to favorably impact the course of disease and quality of life of MPN patients in the relatively near term.

Grant applications are encouraged from Principal Investigators that are optimally junior or more senior investigators with a track record of independent, innovative research in the MPNs or notable, established investigators in related fields who are willing and able to substantively redirect their research effort to work on MPNs. Grants received from this request for proposals will be evaluated by a review panel of MPN researchers led by members of the MPNRF's Scientific Advisory Board based on relevance to our goals and adherence to our principles as defined below under "Criteria for Evaluation".

Criteria for Evaluation for all applications

Proposals will be evaluated against the following criteria:

- **Relevance to mission** - Our goal of accelerating access to high quality, effective and even curative therapies for people living with Polycythemia Vera, Essential Thrombocythemia and Myelofibrosis.
- **Innovation** - We favor proposals designed to allow initial exploration of new ideas with the potential to open new avenues of investigation. MPN Challenge grants are generally NOT intended to support the logical progression of an already established research project.
- **Research Strategy and Feasibility** - Does the scientific rationale logically support the project and its feasibility for the 2-year grant period?
- **Collaboration** - Proposals that leverage interdisciplinary approaches may receive favorable attention, as will proposals by collaborative teams.
- **Access to Patient Samples and Relevant Patient Data** - Proposals should clearly demonstrate access to any necessary reagents, including the appropriate number of patient samples and relevant patient data needed, to carry out the proposed experiments. Be sure to specify the dataset and describe the analytical plan to be used.
- **Commitment to Information Sharing** - MPNRF believes that sharing data is critical for advancing the science as rapidly as possible. While understanding the confidential



nature of the research process, it is our desire that all data will be made public within a year of being generated.

Term of Grant

Grants will be awarded for a maximum two years, with the second year of funding contingent on sufficient progress, which will be assessed by interim and annual progress reports and teleconferences with MPNRF’s scientific advisory team. The award size will be **up to \$100,000 per year with a potential total of up to \$200,000 over 2 years.**

MPNRF has a preliminary evaluation process in which all grants are internally assessed by expert reviewers for mission relevance or major flaws before passing to a larger review committee of researchers with expertise relevant to the proposals. Our review panel changes from year to year, and we abide by best practices with regards to mitigating conflicts of interest and protecting proprietary information. The review panel scores the grants based on the NIH scoresheet and final recommendations are made to the MPNRF’s Board of Directors who make the final determination of who is funded and at what level.

All MPNRF awardees are invited to an annual scientific summit called the MPN Roundtable at which they will meet other experts and stakeholders in the MPN space working in both academia and industry. At the Roundtable awardees give a presentation on their projects, hear feedback, and are invited to participate in a wider discussion of the MPN science world.

The application for the 2021 MPN Challenge Grant can be accessed [here](#).

Key Dates

Call for proposals	February 1, 2021
Proposal due date	April 9, 2021
Scientific Peer Review Committee	June 2021
Notification of Awards	July, 2021
Anticipated funding start date	October 1, 2021

Provisions Related to Intellectual Property

The MPN Research Foundation is committed to translating the results of basic and translational research to MPN patients. To that end, we include in our contracts with the institutions of our awardees Intellectual Property language meant to ensure that no critical results are left without productive follow-up. Should your proposal be selected for an award, we will provide you with this language and ask you to work with your grant office to achieve a timely agreement on these provisions.



Limitation on Contract Negotiation Period

Following award notification, the MPN Research Foundation will interact with each grantee's institutional grant office to establish a contract for each award. It is our experience that this process can be completed in a 3-month period, especially if the terms of the grant (including Intellectual Property as described above) are reviewed by the grant office prior to submission of the grant proposal. MPN Research Foundation reserves the right to cancel a grant if it is not possible to complete contract negotiations by October 1, 2021.

As always, we are grateful to the MPN community and our funders who make these programs possible to advance the collective pursuit of new therapies and better outcomes for patients. The generous bequest of the Estate of Susan Ann Protter has provided an anchor for our research along with the long-standing commitments of the Robert Rosen Fund in honor of our founder, the Mason and Gould family funds.
