

Robert J. Kleberg Jr. and Helen C. Kleberg Foundation Fall 2025 Medical Research Award

The Robert J. Kleberg Jr. and Helen C. Kleberg Foundation is a family foundation based in Kingsville, Texas. The Foundation has a 50-year relationship with the Vanderbilt University Medical Center and Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center. It has awarded novel/competitive grants for cancer research to our organization totaling over \$25 million. These grants have supported cancer research across the continuum at both Vanderbilt University Medical Center and Vanderbilt University.

The Robert J. Kleberg Jr. and Helen C. Kleberg Foundation announces a funding opportunity to support a full-scale research project focused on a distinctive and novel approach(es), questioning prevailing paradigms and leading to the advancement of knowledge in the field of cancer research and clinical care. The Foundation seeks highly innovative and groundbreaking medical research proposals from Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center in basic biological and applied research that will have the greatest impact on scientific knowledge and human health in cancer. **The Foundation seeks to fund one full-scale proposal from Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center in the amount of \$1.5M over three years with a proposed project timeline of January 2026 to December 2028.**

The application and evaluation process will occur in three stages. First, applicants should submit a title and project summary (limited to one page) for the proposed research project. Emphasis should be placed on the novelty of the proposed research and the potential for future discovery and impact. Pilot projects will not be considered. Two selected applicants will then be invited to submit a lay-friendly executive summary to the Foundation. Based on guidance from the Foundation, one selected Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center applicant will then submit a formal proposal to the Robert J. Kleberg Jr. and Helen C. Kleberg Foundation in March of 2025.

Eligibility Criteria

- Tenured, tenure-track, or non-tenure-track faculty from Vanderbilt University or Vanderbilt University Medical Center are eligible to apply.
- Proposals from research teams of two or more investigators will be considered.

Selection Process Timeline and Required Documents:

1. Project summary submission, due by July 15, 2025
 - Title and summary (limited to one page)
 - NIH biosketch for the principal investigator(s)
2. Selected Applicants Only: Executive summary submission, due by July 31, 2025
 - Executive summary to include lay abstract, specific aims, and budget overview (limited to two pages)
3. Finalist: The selected proposal will be invited to complete a full application, due to Robert J. Kleberg Jr. and Helen C. Kleberg Foundation on September 30, 2025.

Initial project summaries due July 15, 2025. To submit your application electronically, please submit a single PDF containing all documentation through the [VICC Pilot Project Application Portal](#). A link to the VICC Pilot Project Application Portal can also be found at the top right-hand corner of the [VICC Funding Opportunities web page](#). In the VICC Pilot Project Application Portal, please select "Other" from the dropdown options and specify the program title as "Kleberg Award."

Please direct all questions about this opportunity to Jenn Beiner (jenn.beiner@vumc.org).