Imagine for Margo & Fondatioun Kriibskrank Kanner & Kick Cancer & FIAGOP

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| EUROPEAN SCIENCE FOUNDATION | *FIGHT KIDS CANCER*<br>SUPPORTING A PROGRAMME FOR INNOVATIVE RESEARCH |

# Guidelines for Applicants to the Fight Kids Cancer Competitive Call

Fight Kids Cancer Competitive Call

*Critical Deadlines:*

*Expression of Interest (EoI) submission 30 November 2021*

*Invited Full Proposal submission 1st April 2022*

Information about your application, including the personal information provided on the forms, will be processed and stored electronically by the European Science Foundation (ESF) Secretariat. In accordance with the selection process, the Information contained in your application may be passed on to the funders and external reviewers in confidence. Reviewers will be required to destroy information after the review and selection process is complete.

Your application and personal information will be stored by the ESF electronic system for programme management purposes but will not be shared with other organisations outside the FKC partnership. We will use details provided in the application for correspondence about the call and may also use this information for future analyses of the performance of the programme.

By submitting your application to the FKC Programme you have indicated your acceptance of these data protection terms and conditions.

# Contents

# 1. Background

Despite the advances made, cancer remains a leading cause of death by disease in children and adolescents, and acute and long-term effects of treatment are unacceptable. In recent years, there have been revolutionary advances in research for certain adult cancers, which are not mirrored in children.

Paediatric cancers and their treatments differ from adult cancers. Hence, there is an urgent need for research projects developed specifically for children with cancer. In the field of oncology, childhood cancer research has been lagging behind, with stagnating cure rates over the last 15 years. Some types of paediatric malignancies still have a low cure rate, or no cure and yet affected children hardly benefit from innovative therapeutic approaches. Research on those malignancies remain largely insufficient.

The range of oncology treatments and targeted therapies have been rapidly expanding over the last years. Children should not be left behind innovative and more efficient treatments.

The *Fight Kids Cancer* (hereafter "FKC") call for projects aims to address the lack of research dedicated to paediatric cancers by ensuring a recurring endowment to the best European research projects every year. **The philosophy behind the FKC call is the following:**

a. The FKC call originates from parents' and patients' representatives' non-government organisation (NGO)'s that are keen to steer research towards areas that will effectively benefit the young patients by focusing on:
    - **improving their survival rate**
    - **improving their quality of life during and after the treatments**
    - **improving our knowledge on cancer causes and treatment resistance**

- Each selected project **is expected** to demonstrate **an impact** for childhood cancer patients in the **short term.**

- The FKC call aims at promoting trans-European collaborations and financing projects globally instead of nationally, with the objective to deliver the following benefits:
    - **Accelerating**: research teams can start working faster without waiting for the fragmented funding approval from several national funding organisations;
    - **Streamlining**: the administrative workload for research teams will be simplified due to a single application and follow-up process;

- The annual recurring nature of the FKC programme will foster greater productivity in the paediatric oncology scientific community.

A call for projects, needs to offer sufficient funds in order to be attractive for academic research centres and make a difference. This is why, four philanthropic organisations that actively support research into paediatric cancers, decided to join forces and created the FKC call. This call will offer up to **4 million euros** to support a number of the best research projects in clinical and translational research in order to accelerate therapeutic innovation for children and adolescents with cancer. These founding organisations are:

- KickCancer (Belgium)
- Imagine for Margo (France)
- Fondatioun Kriibskrank Kanner (Luxemburg)
- FIAGOP (Italy)

## 2. Objectives

The Fight Kids Cancer programme aims to deliver innovative and relevant research for paediatric cancer, as well as to strengthen the development of pan-European research initiatives. An ambition is to foster closer working ties between basic translational and clinical researchers. Specifically, this should encourage collaboration among the leading academic laboratories and practitioners, and lead to novel innovative projects. It has **four main objectives**:

1. To realise real impact on young patients: Improve their survival rate and reduce toxicity to restore young patients to full health after treatment

2. To advance cutting-edge science to further the knowledge of paediatric malignancies.

3. To support improved interdisciplinary research, methods and collaborations for tackling the issues of today.

4. To strengthen collaboration and the development of scientific capacity across Europe.

The FKC call for projects aims towards overcoming the structural lack of research dedicated to paediatric cancers by ensuring a recurring endowment that will be granted to the best European research projects every year.

**Philanthropy integration**: FKC aims at being a strongly integrated programme, as funded projects will need to work together with the funding organisations. This includes participating in organisation's activities, supporting their communication's endeavour towards their donors, sharing their expertise in research for example through conferences. Clear pathways and financial budgets for this type of engagement need to be described in the application.

## 3. Types of Projects

Projects are expected to propose research on either Early Phase Clinical Trials or Translational Research. Applicants to both categories are encouraged to address innovative interventions or approaches towards novel treatment (such as innovative drugs, artificial intelligence, imaging, radiotherapy, surgical approaches)

The two types of projects are:

1. **Early Phase Clinical Trials** to evaluate innovative therapies for children and adolescents with cancer. The key elements of the proposals are:
    - **Documentation for provision of investigational drug(s) must be provided**
    - **Demonstration that the trial is conducted and financed in at least 2 European countries**
    - Designs of early phase clinical trials that rapidly and efficiently assess the innovative agents
    - Co-funding of clinical trials is possible, however precise details, justification and timeline must be provided
    - **Enrolment of patients must commence not later than 12 months from the start of funding**
    - Immune oncology approaches are welcome

- Study of the impact on the quality of life of the studied treatment regimen is strongly encouraged
- Platform trials are welcome

2. **Translational research** projects addressing childhood and adolescent cancers. Proposals are encouraged on:
    - Projects identifying novel targets or mechanisms of action
    - Projects that may result in innovative new therapies or better models of disease
    - Projects that are ancillary to ongoing/completed clinical trial
    - Pre-clinical projects including high-risk / high return proposals
    - Projects that leverage and advance paediatric tumour models
    - Multi-disciplinary or multi-institution collaborations are strongly encouraged
    - A clear pathway to a clinical trial should be included

It is anticipated that submitted proposal should address more than one of the above criteria.

# 4. Procedures, eligibility and selection criteria

***Submission, deadlines and time schedule***

The call will go through the following stages and applicants must pay attention to the deadlines outlined below:

| | |
|---|---|
| **8th October 2021** | Official launch of the call, opening of the Expression of Interest (EoI) phase |
| **30th November 2021 16:00 (4pm) (CET, UTC+1)** | Deadline submission EoI |
| **15-17th December 2021** | Programme committee selection meeting & invitation to submit full proposal |
| **1th April 2022 16:00 (4pm) (CET, UTC+1)** | Deadline submission Full proposal |
| **23-25th May 2022** | Review panel and final selection |
| **January 2023** | Earliest possible start of funded projects |

Both the Expression of Interest (EoI) and Full Proposals (in English) must be submitted electronically using the ESF on-line submission system. Closure of the online platform is time sensitive, therefore you are advised to submit the EoI and Full Proposals in advance of the deadline to avoid rejection.

Strict confidentiality will be ensured during the entire process regarding to the identities of applicants and the content of the proposals.

*Eligibility of projects and partners*

The lead institution must be an eligible research organisation located in an eligible country (see Annex A), preferably one already undertaking research in the field of paediatric cancer. Other project partners can be from related fields of expertise, providing they operate as not-for-profit. Partners from countries not listed as eligible are permitted, provided they are not delivering a core component of the project upon which major activities are dependent; such partners should plan to leverage complementary funding.

Funding is aimed at supporting **new research projects**. An individual cannot be named as the lead investigator on more than one competing bid; however, it is permissible for an individual to lead one proposal and be named as a partner on a separate proposal.

General eligibility criterions (for both **Early phase clinical trials** and **Translational research**):

- it is submitted through the on-line submission system before the deadline (30st November 2021 for EOI & 1st April 2022 for Full Proposal at 16:00 Brussels time);
- it is written in English; and **must** be in **single-spaced typescript** in **Arial 11**, on A4 sized paper with margins of at least 15mm. References should be no less than **Arial 9**.
- it is submitted by an eligible participant (or a consortium of eligible participants). Eligible participants are listed in Annex A. If one participant is not eligible, the whole proposal will be rejected;
- it is complete i.e. all elements forming the application (on-line form and proposal) have been provided; Page limits are absolute. Any pages exceeding the limits will be cut from the application submitted to reviewers.
- the content of the proposal relates to the call topic it addresses (see section 3 above);
- requested contribution is within the funding limits specified in the call document;
- confirmation that the applicant (if selected) will collaborate with the funding organisations to assist them in the dissemination of the project's ambition, awareness raising on paediatric cancers and fundraising activities of the funders (for example provision of written quotes, videos explaining project goals, and when possible attendance of the annual Race event held during the last week-end of September).

**Specific eligible criteria by Category to be respected:**

| **#1 Early phase clinical trials** | **#2 Translational research** |
|---|---|
| a. Documentation for provision of investigational drug(s) must be provided *(can be named in the Expression of Interest, but a support letter is essential for the full proposal)*<br><br>b. Demonstration that the trial is conducted and financed in at least 2 European countries<br><br>c. The investigating organisations to be clearly stated | a. Multi-disciplinary or multi-institution collaborations are strongly encouraged |

### *Project Duration*

Starting January 2023, the duration will be 2 years for translational projects and 3 years for clinical trial projects.

### *Evaluation and selection*

The evaluation process will maintain the separation of the two project types, whereby clinical trial proposals are grouped together and similarly Translational proposals. The most notable distinction occurs at the second stage evaluation where there will be two evaluation panels, one to handle Clinical Trial proposals and the second one for Translational proposals.

The following evaluation procedure will apply:

1) Stage 1: Evaluation of the EoI

The ESF will perform an eligibility check of the submitted EoIs to ensure compliance with the word count, and that named project partners and their countries are eligible. All submitted EoIs will be assessed by at least two independent reviewers. The reviewers will be individuals from the relevant field of science and hold the highest level of expertise in the field. The evaluations will be carried out to ensure excellent science and relevance to the philosophy and core values of the FKC programme outlined in section 1. Each reviewer will work independently to provide a simple assessment.

The FKC Programme Committee will assess the reviewers' assessments before selecting which EoIs to invite to proceed to full proposal preparation. All other applicants will be informed of the outcome at this stage.

2) Stage 2: evaluation of Full proposals

The ESF will perform a check that all submissions are complete and comply with the structure and page limits for a full proposal. Any application that is not compliant will be informed immediately.

Each proposal will be evaluated by at least two independent experts. The experts will be the same individuals from the EoI stage as far as reasonably possible. They will hold the highest level of knowledge and be internationally recognised authorities in their area. The evaluation of full proposals will be carried out according to the evaluation criteria (detailed in section 7):

- Scientific excellence
- Quality and efficiency of the implementation and the management
- Potential Impact

The evaluation process is based on each expert providing an independent assessment of the proposals assigned to him/her by completing an independent evaluation report that scores each criterion. These collated reports are shared with applicants who have a brief period (5 working days) for rebuttal prior to the review panel meeting.

Experts involved in the evaluation will sit on the Review Panel. All experts evaluating a given proposal will meet to agree on a consensus assessment for each proposal. The panel of experts will make a ranking based on this input, a narrative report and provide a priority level for each project (low, medium, high). These reports will be used by the FKC Programme Committee, to take the final decisions regarding selected projects for funding. During the whole evaluation meeting the Programme Committee may be present as observers.

Following the meeting of evaluators, all applicants will receive a report. The selected successful applicant(s) will be invited to accede to the project's grant agreement by ESF who manage the programme.

**It is a very important expectation that the investigators of any funded project will respond to requests from FKC for information and reports in a very timely manner. Collaboration with the funding organisations is very important to assist them to disseminate the awareness of paediatric cancers and fundraising activities of the funders**

# 5. Funding

For this call, up to **4 million euros** will be awarded for clinical trials (with a maximum of 1,5 million per project) and translational projects (with a maximum of 500 000 euros per project). The level of available funding may be revised at the discretion of the Programme Committee. All applicants should refer to the Project Finances document for detailed description of eligible costs (see Annex B). The financial cost of each project will need to be identified through the provision of a detailed justification of resources.

All applicants should enter the 100% full economic costs of the proposed research into the budget sections of the budget template. **All costs should be in EURO (€).**

Research funding is provided exclusively to meet the costs incurred by the specific research project. All costs associated with the project must be itemised and fully justified. Therefore, if costs are complementing an ongoing activity or project, this should be clearly stated in the justification of resources. What is funded by FKC and what is complementary should be clearly described.

Requested funding will be scrutinised during the assessment process and, if recommended for funding, the ESF, on behalf of the Programme Committee, will request adequate evidence of the costing basis for all direct costs. Note that budgets may be reduced if considered excessive.

Successful projects, along with proposing excellent science research that fits the objectives and scope of this call, are expected to also provide excellent value for money. This includes fully justified and reasonable financial requests, appropriate time commitments of all research participants, and clear plans with aim to provide the maximum output in terms of science and impact.

# 6. Project Selection Criteria

The submitted proposals should include the following sections, these criteria are the basis of the evaluation procedure. All submitted proposals should clearly address the following three evaluation criteria.

### *Criterion 1: Scientific excellence*

The Description of Proposed Research should address the following points:

- Specific objectives and hypotheses;
- Background information including rationale and scientific issues relating to the research question;
- Methodology and approach;
- Describe project innovation;
- Relevance to the FKC aims, potential relation to international research work in the field and anticipated achievements and outputs.

### *Criterion 2: Quality and efficiency of the implementation and the management*

This section covers the details of the planning and management of the project's activities including timing, personnel, budget, deliverables and feasibility; it should also include a brief outline of the organisations involved in the consortium, as named on the applications. In particular, it should include:

- Feasibility, including documentation for availability of any investigational agent(s) and Gantt chart.
- Details on the nature of the organisations named (i.e. university, research institute, NGO). Outline the specific expertise available for the research at the host organisation and that of any associated organisations and beneficiaries.
- Track record on the key named individuals/researchers, their role in the project and details of relevant experience and how they are best suited to conduct the research proposed.
- Any associated collaborations, partnerships or co-funding (either proposed or secured) that may be used in the project.
- Management of both project and resources, identifying the training and career development opportunities for personnel working on the project and the management structure within the project team.
- Identification of potential risks and risk mitigation plan.
- Data management plan: a detailed description of the proposed data management structures, plans, responsibilities and data sharing.

### *Criterion 3: Potential impact*

**The potential impact of the project is especially important.**

In particular, the potential to Impact section should address the following:

- How result from this research would both advance knowledge and improve outcome for children and adolescents with cancer, commenting on how the project **is expected** to demonstrate **an impact** for childhood cancer patients in the **short term.**
- Based on these results, outline how further development should proceed.
    - quality of the proposed measures to exploit and disseminate the project results to targeted peers (e.g. scientific, industry)
    - quality of the proposed measures to communicate the project activities and results to the public
- Collaboration with the funding organisations is identified and confirmed to assist in the dissemination of the projects, awareness on paediatric cancers and fundraising activities of the funders

**N.B.** The Justification of Resources is an essential but not scored criteria; it should state the full cost of the project and explain why the requested resources are needed, including identifying why the proposal presents value for money. It should include justification for all Directly Incurred Costs, Investigator effort, and necessary equipment. See Annex B for details on the eligible costs.

## 7. Summary of required documents and sections

The impact from FKC projects will be measured by the way the research is directly relevant to, and able to demonstrate likely contributions to, the specific outcomes and impact, with the ultimate goal of increasing

benefits to children and young people diagnosed with cancer. Successful projects are expected to deliver both academic impact (for example research papers, significant new data and new knowledge) and benefits of significant impact in order to address a central goal of FKC (see section 2: Objectives). The application has several elements, some of these must be completed online (for example the project lay summary), while others can be completed offline and uploaded. The elements described below should be included in the application form:

The submission of proposals for funding is a 2-Stage process, whereby an initial Expression of Interest (EoI) is submitted for review, a select number of EoIs will be invited to proceed to Full Proposal preparation.

### *Expression of Interest Format (EOI)*

The EoI has two parts, one must be completed online (i.e. pro-forma) and the other (i.e. the EoI proper) need to be completed offline before being uploaded as an attachment. The pro-forma is an online form comprising a number of structured boxes for key information. It is common to all applications, and includes (but not limited to) project name, acronym, summary, etc.

Expression of Interest layout

see Annex C for the full template to be followed.

### *Full proposal Format*

Only the EoIs selected will be invited to proceed to the preparation of a full proposal. A full proposal has three (3) elements, some of these must be completed online (for example a pro-forma), while others can be completed offline before being uploaded as an attachment. This means the full proposal submission process includes (i) online proforma (ii) pdf composed of Part A &B plus (ii) ethics questionnaire. All applicants will need to complete an ethics questionnaire before the submission can be validated (see webpage of the call for a copy of this questionnaire). At the point of submission, applicants will be asked to confirm they are willing to support the dissemination activities of funders in order to promote the Fight Kids Cancer programme.

Full Proposal layout

Below is a summary of the elements needed to complete a Full Proposal- see Annex D for the complete template to be followed. Presented here is an outline of the elements to be completed:

**Part A**:

| Section | Pages limit | Description |
|---|---|---|
| A1. Scientific excellence and implementation<br>*(evaluated according to Criteria 1&2)* | 7 pages maximum | The Description of Proposed Research included in the proposal should contains the substance of the research application. It is essential that a coherent exposition of the proposed project is presented, addressing the hypothesis, objectives, intellectual and academic case and potential for impact on the FKC research agenda as well as meeting the core criteria of the call. This includes an outline of the management |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | | processes for the project (for example possible decision boards and coordination meetings) It is recommended that milestones be presented in a detailed diagram (as an Annex in the Gannt chart) providing the time schedule of the tasks and marking their interrelationships; and indicate a critical path marking those events which directly influence the overall time schedule in case of delays. |
| A2. Impact<br>*(evaluated according to Criteria 3)* | 1 page maximum | All applicants are required to describe 'Pathways to Impact' approach as part of their research proposal that outlines how the proposed work will achieve impact, build capacity and benefit the wider scientific community. This should essentially outline what will be done during and after the project to increase the likelihood of the research benefitting children and adolescents with cancer. |

**Part B**:

| Section | Pages limit | Description |
|---|---|---|
| B1. Budget & justification<br>*(essential but non-scored element)* | 2 | This should state the full cost of the project and explain why the requested resources are needed, including identifying why the proposal presents value for money.<br>Sufficient justification for resources is needed for all expenses being requested. In short, the applicants must demonstrate why any given funding is requested, and how it will be used to deliver the cutting-edge research with impact that you are proposing. |
| B2. Annexes | | ○ Gantt chart (1-page maximum)<br>○ Risk management (1-2 page max)<br>○ Lay language summary of the project (1 page)<br>○ CV (maximum 2 pages per person, list of up to 10 most relevant publications)<br>○ References (maximum 2 pages)<br>○ Letters of support (no limitation) |

# 8. Programme structure and management

Programme activities

Programme support and management is provided by ESF, which is the secretariat office for the funding organisations.

For questions regarding any element of the proposal preparation and submission, please contact the Fight Kids Cancer Secretariat[1]: fightkidscancer@esf.org

Programme management and project reporting

Funded projects will be required to submit an annual report that serves to review: the progress of the work plan, use of resources and identifying any challenges. In addition, and in accordance with each project's workplan, deliverables and milestones are to be submitted upon completion to the ESF acting as the Programme Secretariat for FKC. These reports will be shared with the FKC funders.

[1] The European Science Foundation is the Secretariat Office for the Fight Kids Cancer programme

# Annex A: List of countries and entities eligible for funding

## Countries:

Legal entities established in the following countries will be eligible to receive funding through the FKC call:

Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom.

## Legal entities:

For the purposes of this call a legal entity must be established in a country named as eligible in the list above. A legal entity will be eligible to receive funding if they are defined as an in individual, company or organisation that has legal rights and obligations. This includes institutions of higher learning, research centres, and non- profit organisations. It is anticipated that any legal entity taking part is under the direct or indirect control of a participant or under the same direct or indirect control of the participant.

Though described as a legal entity, an exclusion is extended to private for-profit organisations seeking to benefit financially from this funding source. Such organisations are not eligible to receive funding, however participation is not precluded if contributions are provided in kind.

'non-profit legal entity' means a legal entity which by its legal form is non-profit-making or which has a legal or statutory obligation not to distribute profits to its shareholders or individual member.

# Annex B: Financial Conditions

Research grant funds are provided for a specific research project and may not be used to meet costs on any other project or activity. Any commitment incurred before a research grant starting date or any commitment in excess of the amount awarded, is the responsibility of the Research Organisation. **The maximum grant amount set out in the agreed final budget can NOT be exceeded**.

ESF, on behalf of the funders, reserves the right to examine, in detail, all items of expenditure charged to an award. Additionally, the funders and other representatives from the FKC Programme Committee may request justification on the use of resources by selected Research Organisations.

The 'maximum grant amount' of the application is calculated on the basis of the estimated eligible costs submitted by the applicants to implement the action. Applications should be at current price levels with no allowance for inflation.

Only duly justified eligible costs may be taken into account to determine the final grant. Payment will be limited to the actual costs within the fixed amount of the grant. All costs associated with the research project must be itemised and fully justified in Section 3: Budget & Justification.

The main categories of costs which can be funded from a research grant are indicated in the section below.

In line with policies on open access publication, each beneficiary must ensure open access (free of charge, online access for any user) to all peer-reviewed scientific publications relating to its results. It is expected that publication of the results of a trial are made regardless of their outcome (i.e. negative or positive result). Any delays to open access, require the early agreement of the FKC Programme Committee.

Costs associated with open access should be considered a legitimate research expense and included in the overall research budget as long as:

- The costs are proportionate, reasonable and represent value for money.

- Existing arrangements and resources at the host institution are used first when available and appropriate. Where open access is sought for publications from multiple organisations, it is the responsibility of the corresponding author to lead on any costs.

## Funded costs categories

### *1) Directly Incurred Costs*

Directly Incurred Costs are costs that are explicitly identifiable as arising from the execution of a project, are charged as the cash value actually paid and are supported by the normal accounting practices of the organisation. The grant can only reimburse eligible costs (i.e. costs that comply with the general and specific conditions set out in this Annex). In order to be eligible, actual costs must be:

- actually incurred by the beneficiary

    - real and not estimated, budgeted or imputed and

- definitively and genuinely borne by the beneficiary (not by any other entity)

- Documented and genuinely recorded in the participant's records according to participant's usual accounting practices
- incurred during the project's lifetime (i.e. the generating event that triggers the costs must take place during the project duration)

The 'project duration' is the period running from the project starting date to the end date of the project. If costs are invoiced or paid later than the end date, they are eligible only if the debt existed already during the project duration (supported by documentary evidence) and the final cost was known at the moment of the financial report.

They can include:

## *Direct Personnel costs*

Payroll costs for staff, full or part-time, who will work on the project and whose time can be supported by a full audit trail during the life of the project e.g. research assistants or dedicated technicians. In particular this includes:

- costs for employees (or equivalent)
- costs for individuals working under a direct contract
- costs for beneficiaries that are individuals without salary

Personnel costs are eligible, if they are related to personnel working for the beneficiary under an employment contract (or equivalent appointing act) and assigned to the action. Their cost is limited to the share of their time spent on the project, reported on timesheets.

Exceptional payroll items such bonus, gift vouchers etc. are not eligible.

## *Travel and subsistence*

Funds for travel and subsistence can be use by staff where travel is required by the nature of the work and dedicated to the project.

Funding will be provided for journeys, visits and trials where these costs are approved at the outset of the grant. Each journey must be itemised, justified and fully costed in the application. Travel should be in economy class or equivalent. Where an overnight stay is required, then the accommodation cost for one night before the meeting and one night after the meeting is possible if the travel/agenda does not allow travel on the first or last day of the meeting.

FKC will consider funding the cost of low-carbon approaches to collaboration (including, where appropriate, the costs of technology or of less economic, but more environmentally friendly means of transport). Please note that FKC will not pay for the cost of proposed carbon offsetting arising from travel associated with research grants.

Requests for funding to attend conferences will be expected. These must be named, justified and costed in the application. The justification should show how the conference will either directly benefit the research or facilitate future impacts of research. There will also be engagement opportunities (e.g. Cancer races) organised by the funding organisations which the successful applicants are encouraged to participate in, and it is anticipated that budget should be set aside for travel to (up to 2) such events over the course of the project duration.

### *Equipment*

The priority for FKC grants is on research. Equipment procurement are eligible in certain circumstances where a clear benefit for the delivery of the project is demonstrated. For all items of equipment costing over €10,000 (including VAT), applicants will need to:

- confirm that the piece of equipment is not readily available for use within the host institution, or any other accessible location (for instance by making reference to any asset registers consulted)
- provide evidence that all other reasonable options have been considered
- if the equipment requested will replace existing equipment, explain what will happen to the existing equipment and why the existing equipment needs to be changed.
- state the contribution that the applicant's organisation will make towards the cost of the equipment
- explain the dependence of the project on this capital as well as any contingency plans that would be invoked should it not be possible to fund the capital elements of the proposal

In any case, the eligible cost is limited to the share of the usage related to the project. This must be apportioned with the global length of depreciation and the projects usage rate.

Example: if an equipment is bought for 25.000 € and will be used & depreciated for 5 years, but the project will only use it for 2 years for 50% of its usage time, the eligible cost will be:

25.000 € / 5 years depreciation * 2 years for the project * 50% of project's share = 5.000€

Purchase of IT equipment such as computer, laptop, printer is not deemed eligible cost.

### *Identifiable and Verifiable*

The applicant must be able to show (with records and supporting documents) the actual costs of the work, i.e. what was actually paid for the work. Costs must be calculated according to the applicable accounting rules of the country in which the applicant is established and according to the beneficiary's usual cost accounting practices.

In addition, for personnel costs (declared as actual costs), the beneficiaries must keep time records for the number of hours declared. The time records must be in writing and approved by the persons working on the action and their supervisors, at least monthly. In the absence of reliable time records

of the hours worked on the action, the FKC Programme Committee may accept alternative evidence supporting the number of hours declared, if it considers that it offers an adequate level of assurance.

Moreover, a beneficiary can NOT transfer budget to a form of costs that it did not set out in its estimated budget. When the final amount of the grant is calculated, the eligible costs cannot include costs under budget categories that did not appear in the estimated budget, unless the initial estimated budget was amended or if these additional costs were approved in writing.

### *2) Indirect Costs*

Indirect costs are not allowable costs in the FKC programme.

Indirect costs are described as non-specific costs such as overheads. They include the costs of the Research Organisation's administration such as personnel, finance, banking fees, library and some departmental services.

### *3) Other costs*

**In-kind contributions** free of charge and costs of linked third parties — For in-kind contributions provided by third parties free of charge and costs of linked third parties, the eligibility rules apply *mutatis mutandis*.

**Direct costs of subcontracting** (including related duties, taxes and charges such as non-deductible value added tax (VAT) paid by the beneficiary) are deemed to be eligible;

**Costs related to preparing, submitting and negotiating the proposals** — Cannot be declared as eligible for the action (they are incurred before the action starts);

**Costs related to drafting the consortium agreement** — Are not eligible because the consortium agreement should be signed before the project starts. However, costs related to updating the consortium agreement are eligible if incurred during the action duration.

**Travel costs for the kick-off meeting** — Even if the first leg of the journey takes place before the action starting date (e.g. the day before the kick-off meeting), the costs may be eligible, if the meeting is held during the action duration.

**If you are in any doubt about whether a specific cost should, or should not, be covered within direct costs, please contact the FKC Secretariat at** fightkidscancer@esf.org

## ANNEX C: Template for the Fights Kids Cancer Competitive Call expression of interest

**FKC 2022 Project Proposals**

**Expression of Interest**

**Closing date 30th November 2021**

| **Part 1: Proposal Summary** | |
|---|---|
| **Information** | **Detail** |
| Proposed Project Title | |
| Proposed Project length (months) | |

| **Part 2: Lead PI details and collaborators** | |
|---|---|
| **PI Information** | **PI Details** |
| Last (family) name | |
| First (given) name | |
| Title (Ms, Mr, Dr, etc.) | |
| Institution name | |
| Department | |
| Country | |
| Email address | |
| **Details of each Co-s collaborating on the project** | |
| Name (s), Institution(s) and country | |

| **Part 3: Project summary** | |
|---|---|
| **Information** | **Detail** |
| Briefly describe your proposed research using clear & concise language (**max 250 words**) | |
| Keywords (**max 5**) | |

| **Part 4: Case for Support** |
|---|
| This should describe the proposed research (including 1 research objectives, 2 implementation of the science and 3.the way that the research will deliver impact).<br>**Maximum 1200 words.** |
| |

| **Part 5: Expertise of the Consortium** | |
|---|---|
| **Biosketch* of the lead PI**<br>This section should summarise the expertise of the PI. and include the top 3-5 publications to demonstrate track record in both academic excellence and delivering impact. | |
| Max 200 words (publications not included in this limit) | |
| **Biosketch* of each Co-I collaborating partner**<br>This section should summarise expertise of each of the Co-Is and include the top 3-5 publications to demonstrate track record in both academic excellence and delivering impact. | |
| Max 200 words per person (publications not included in this limit) | |

* A biosketch is a streamlined version of your CV

This form should be return through the submission platform no later than 16:00 local time (CET/GMT+1/UTC +1) on 30th November 2021.

# ANNEX D: Template for the Fights Kids Cancer Competitive Call full proposal

This box is only for information and should not appeared in the proposal

Proposals must respect the following standards:

- A minimum font size of 11 points, except for references, the Gantt chart and tables where the minimum font size is 9 points
- Arial font
- Single line spacing
- A4 page size
- All margins (top, bottom, left, right) should be at least 15 mm (not including any footers or headers).)
- Must be completed in English

If tables are used, they should illustrate the core text of the proposal and should not contain the core text itself. The text should not contain any hyperlinks in the core text. Each page should contain a header with the proposal acronym. All pages should be numbered in a single series on the footer of the page using the following numbering format "Page X of Y".

The description of the proposed research project must be uploaded as a pdf and is completed off-line consisting of Part A and Part B. **Page limits are absolute and any applications which exceed limits will be rejected.**

**Part A:**
The maximum total length for this part is **8 pages**. Excess pages (per section and overall) will not be considered. It is the responsibility of the applicant to verify that the submitted PDF documents are readable and are within the page limit. It should be composed as follows:

- Section 1: Scientific excellence & implementation (7 pages maximum)
- Section 2: Impact (1-page maximum)

The elements to be included in Part A are described are summarised below:

**Part A: Section 1: Scientific excellence & implementation**

- **Quality and reliability of the research project;**

In this part, you should provide an introduction, a state-of-the-art, specific hypotheses and objectives plus a general overview of the project. The research methodology and the approach should be also described. The originality and the innovative aspects of the research project should be explained, especially regarding how the project is expected to make advancements in the field of paediatric oncology. Any novel concepts, approaches and methods that will be implemented should be described.

- **Quality of the team/institution;**

You should describe the qualifications and experience of the principal investigator(s), as well as the team in general. You must provide information regarding the level of experience on the research topic proposed and a narrative track record of work (main international collaborations, level of experience in supervision of PhD and postdoctoral researchers, publications, past and on-going project and any other relevant results). Finally, the research project should also show that it will be well-integrated within the team/institution. Short and concise CVs will have to be joined in the Annexe (see below Part B section 4 for details).

- **Implementation**

In this part, you should describe the work planning (including any deliverables and milestones) and the described resources that will ensure that the project objectives will be reached. You should detail the planned number of person-months and how they are appropriate in relation to the proposed project. The proposed schedule (in months) must be detailed from the start of the project. The associated Gantt chart, which include Work Packages titles, indication of major deliverables and milestones, should be joined as an Annexe (see below Part B section 4 for details).

**Part A: Section 2: Potential Impact**

- **Potential impact for children and adolescents with cancer**

This should describe what will be done during and **after** the project to increase the likelihood of the research benefitting children and adolescents with cancer.

- **Quality of the proposed measures to exploit and disseminate the project results to targeted peers (e.g. scientific, industry)**

In this part, you should describe the dissemination and exploitation of the knowledge that will be generated by the project. Potential impact should also be described. The planning of the dissemination and exploitation activities should appear in the Gantt chart (see Part B section 4).

- **Quality of the proposed measures to communicate the project activities and results to the public**

In this part, you should demonstrate how the public engagement activities will contribute to create awareness around the research and the results, especially in a way that can be understood by the public. The activities planned should be included in the Gantt chart.

**Part B:**

It is the responsibility of the applicant to verify that the submitted PDF documents are readable and are within the page limit. It should be composed as follows:

- Section 3: Budget & justification
- Section 4: Annexes (Gantt chart, Risk management, CV, References)

**Part B: Section 3: Budget and Justification**

The Justification of Resources should not exceed **2 sides of A4.** This should state the full cost of the project and explain why the requested resources are needed, including identifying why the proposal presents value for money. Research grant funds are provided to meet the costs incurred by the specific research project.
All costs associated with the project must be itemised and fully justified. It is not sufficient merely to list what is being requested. Where you do not provide sufficient justification for any item, it may be cut from any award made. In short, **you must demonstrate why you are requesting the funds**, and how they will be used to deliver the transformational research that you are proposing.

The estimated budget of the action should provide a table using the format below,

| **Partner** | **Direct Personnel Costs** | **Travel & Subsistence** | **Equipment** | **Other Costs** (specify if in-kind or subcontracting) | **Total requested budget** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Partner 1** | | | | | |
| **Partner 2** | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |

**Part B: Section 4: Supporting Annexes**

1) **Gantt chart: provide one (1) page of A4 to illustrate the work schedule of the project, it should include:**
   - **Deliverable:** Distinct output of the research project, important for the research project's overall objectives. It may consist of a report, a document, a publication, etc. The numbering of deliverable should be ordered according to delivery dates. Please use the following numbering convention: "WP *number*. *Number* of the deliverable within that WP". For example, deliverable 1.2 is the second deliverable of the work package 1.
   - **Milestones:** Defined control points in the research project that help to structure the progress of the project. They may correspond to the completion of key deliverable, necessary for the next step of the project, or intermediary points that may operate as a checkpoint to apply corrective measure if necessary.

2) **Risk management max of two (2) page of A4 it should include:**

In this part, you should discuss the research/administrative risks that might occur during the implementation of the proposed project. In addition to identifying project risk, you should describe approaches for addressing problems and identification and mitigation of these risks.

3) **Lay language summary of the project:**

In this part, you should describe your project in lay terms, and include the following information (**1 page maximum**):

- Indication targeted by the project and general information on the indication:
  - # patients per year in Europe generally
  - # patients in relapse/high risk per year in Europe if relevant
  - Overall chances of survival of target group of patients and / or information about toxicity and LT side effects
- Purpose of the project's intervention
- Nature of the project's intervention
- Next steps for patients following your project (clinical trial, phase II or III trial, amendment of standard of care…)

**4) CV**

CVs of the principal investigator(s) and co-investigator(s) should be attached in annexes, with a maximum of 2 sides of A4 per CV and should include current and previous positions, a maximum of 10 most relevant publications and research funding obtained. It is recommended that CVs use a consistent template within projects.

**5) References**

In general, the citations and the bibliography should follow **The Lancet citation style**. References need to be cited in the text sequentially in the Vancouver numbering style, as a superscripted number (Arabic numerals: 1, 2, 3, 4…) after any punctuation mark. Two references are cited separated by a coma without space, three or more consecutive references are given as a range using an en rule (i.e. 1–4). References should be listed on a new page, titled 'References', in the Annexes. **It should not exceed 2 pages**. It needs to include all the references you have cited in the text. The journal titles should be abbreviate using the style from the NLM.

**6) Letters of Support**

Letters of support should be included to provide evidence of existing engagement with relevant users, partners, researchers, drug availability etc. For example, the types of letters an applicant should include are:

a. Letter of support that drugs are identified and will be provided for the opening of the trial
b. Letter of support from complementing project/funding
c. Letter of support from the applicant's organisation

Letters of support from any named Project contribution – up to 2 sides A4 each

- For research involving investigational drug(s), applicants should include a letter of support that the drug will be provided (for both pre-clinical and clinical research)
- The letter of support should confirm the organisation's commitment to the proposed project, identify the value, relevance and possible benefits of the proposed work to the partner, the

period of support, the full nature of the collaboration and how the partner will be involved in the project and provide added value

- Applicants should include any in kind and or leveraged support that has been secured for the proposal through the attachment of a letter from the Project Partner or Collaborating Project.

Any letter of support should be written when the proposal is being prepared and targeted specifically to the project. **It is important to include any letter guaranteeing that investigational drugs will be available for clinical trials**.