Florida Cancer Innovation Fund Program
FY 2026-27 Questions & Answers

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The question and answer (Q&A) period for the fiscal year 2026-27 Florida Cancer Innovation Fund program was from August 14, 2026, through August 28, 2026. Following are the questions received during this time frame and their corresponding answers.

1. **If an applicant received an FCIF grant in FY 2025-26, may the applicant submit an application for an FCIF grant in FY 2026-27?**

   The FY 2026-27 Funding Opportunity Announcement does not prohibit an applicant from applying solely because the applicant received an FCIF award in a prior fiscal year.

   However, the FOA provides that the Principal Investigator shall not: "Apply for the same research project for which he or she was a previously funded grant recipient." The PI also shall not "Submit duplicate projects or projects with significant scientific or financial overlap during the same competition year," and applicants must ensure that proposed projects do not "duplicate or significantly overlap, scientifically or financially, with other projects in which they or any key personnel are involved." See FCIF FY 2026-27 FOA, page 10.

   The FOA further provides that priority will be given to "new applicants who have not previously received funding from either the Florida Cancer Innovation Fund or from other state-funded cancer research programs administered by the Department." See FCIF FY 2026-27 FOA, page 13.

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2. **May a subrecipient include rent or facility/space-occupancy costs as a direct cost in its subaward budget when the space is necessary to carry out the proposed project activities? If allowable, what requirements apply?**

   Facility/space-occupancy costs are indirect costs, not direct costs, and should not be included as direct costs in a subaward budget.

   For FCIF, administrative/indirect expenses are subject to a 15% cap. Accordingly, facility/space-occupancy costs must be treated within that administrative/indirect-cost limitation rather than as direct project costs.

   For subcontracts, the FOA provides: "Subcontracts must be pre-approved in the Public Health Research Program Budget Template. The budget narrative must justify the purpose of the subcontract and whether this is the only vendor that can perform the services, regardless of whether they are in-state or out-of-state." See FCIF FY 2026-27 FOA, page 9.

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3. Is a Letter of Intent (LOI) required to submit a formal application to the Florida Cancer Innovation Fund?

A Letter of Intent is not identified as a required application component in the FY 2026-27 Funding Opportunity Announcement.

The FOA provides that "A complete grant application must respond to all required fields" and identifies the required application components, including the General Audience Abstract, Scientific Abstract, Specific Aims, Research Strategy, Long-term Goals, Budget, Key Personnel, Collaborators and Consultants, Letters of Support, Work Plan, and Regulatory Approvals, if applicable. See FCIF FY 2026-27 FOA, pages 11-12.

The FOA further directs applicants to "Complete all required fields and attach required documentation" and submit the completed application by the applicable deadline. See FCIF FY 2026-27 FOA, page 12.

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4. Can FCIF funds be budgeted to a non-Florida collaborating institution through a subaward when the applicant institution is located in Florida and the collaborating investigator will serve as a Co-PI?

The FOA provides that "Collaborations are acceptable and encouraged." However: "All grant-funded activities must take place in Florida. All work (effort) must occur and funds must be spent in Florida by the applicant organization or its collaborating entities. The Department may make exceptions if the service is essential and only provided outside Florida, and if the amount is less than 10% of the requested amount." See FCIF FY 2026-27 FOA, page 9.

The FOA also provides: "Subcontracts must be pre-approved in the Public Health Research Program Budget Template. The budget narrative must justify the purpose of the subcontract and whether this is the only vendor that can perform the services, regardless of whether they are in-state or out-of-state." See FCIF FY 2026-27 FOA, page 9.

Co-Principal Investigators are permitted under the FOA; however, there must be only one designated Principal Investigator for each grant project. See FCIF FY 2026-27 FOA, page 3.

The FOA does not specify a particular form or type of subaward agreement. Any proposed out-of-state subcontract or expenditure must comply with the requirements and limitations stated in the FOA.

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5. Do applications submitted in FY 2025-26 automatically carry forward into the FY 2026-27 FCIF competition, or must an applicant submit a new FY 2026-27 application?

The FY 2026-27 FOA does not provide for applications submitted in a prior fiscal year to automatically carry forward into the FY 2026-27 cycle. To be considered in FY 2026-27, an application from a previous cycle must be resubmitted.

However, an application for the FY 2026-27 cycle only needs to be submitted once. For the FY 2026-27 cycle, the FOA states that "Applications not funded in earlier periods will automatically be considered in subsequent periods," and the detailed timeline provides that eligible applications not funded in the period in which they were received during the FY 2026-27 cycle will be reconsidered in the subsequent period(s). See FCIF FY 2026-27 FOA, pages 3 and 11.

Accordingly, the automatic reconsideration provision applies to rolling periods within FY 2026-27. An applicant seeking consideration in FY 2026-27 must submit an application under the FY 2026-27 FOA by an applicable deadline.

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6. Does the FY 2026-27 FCIF FOA establish a salary cap for key personnel?

The FY 2026-27 FOA does not establish a salary cap for key personnel.

The FOA states that budgets should include "personnel, equipment, supplies, and technical support" and must include "justification for each item, personnel (names and positions), and percentage of effort devoted to the project." See FCIF FY 2026-27 FOA, page 13.

The FOA's disallowed-cost list identifies "Florida Department of Health personnel salary" as disallowed but does not specify a maximum salary rate or salary cap for other project personnel. See FCIF FY 2026-27 FOA, page 13.

Separately, recipients and subrecipients whose operating budget is comprised of at least 50% state or federal funds must report executive compensation annually, including attesting that no executive compensation exceeded Federal Executive Pay Scale Level II.

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7. Are indirect costs allowable under the FY 2026-27 FCIF FOA? If so, does the FOA establish an indirect cost rate or an MTDC/TDC base?

Yes. For FCIF, administrative/indirect expenses are allowable subject to a 15% cap.

The FY 2026-27 FOA does not identify an MTDC or TDC base. Applicants should follow the Public Health Research Program Budget Template and Department instructions when presenting administrative/indirect costs.

The FOA separately provides that all direct costs must be specifically and directly related and allocated to the project, necessary for the project's completion, adequately justified, and made during the active grant period. See FCIF FY 2026-27 FOA, pages 10 and 13.

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8. May an FCIF application identify more than one Co-Principal Investigator?

The FOA permits Co-Principal Investigators and does not specify a maximum number of Co-Principal Investigators. It requires only one designated Corresponding Principal Investigator.

The FOA states: "Co-Principal Investigators (Co-PIs) are allowed under this FOA, though there must be only one PI listed for each grant project. Co-PIs are optional and serve as secondary PIs on the project." See FCIF FY 2026-27 FOA, page 3. The Eligibility section similarly states that "[t]here may be additional co-investigators (called Co-PIs) on a project, but there must be only one designated PI." See FCIF FY 2026-27 FOA, page 9.

9. What is the Period 1 application deadline when the online portal and the FY 2026-27 FOA show different dates?

The Period 1 deadline stated in the FY 2026-27 FOA is September 25, 2026.

The FOA provides: "Period 1: Applications accepted from August 14, 2026, through September 25, 2026. Applications received by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time (ET) on September 25, 2026 will be eligible for review in Period 1." See FCIF FY 2026-27 FOA, page 11.

The Key Points section likewise identifies the FY 2026-27 application deadlines as September 25, 2026, November 6, 2026, and December 18, 2026. See FCIF FY 2026-27 FOA, page 3.

10. Does the FY 2026-27 FOA prescribe specific content for a Letter of Support from a Sponsored Research Official?

The FY 2026-27 FOA does not prescribe a separate format or additional content specifically for a Letter of Support from a Sponsored Research Official.

The FOA's general Letters of Support requirement states: "Upload letters of support to corroborate the proposed research through a third party. The letters should provide testimony that supports the anticipated study and methods." See FCIF FY 2026-27 FOA, page 12.

The third party providing this support is typically the Sponsored Research Official. Accordingly, the letter should corroborate the proposed research and provide testimony supporting the anticipated study and methods.

11. Is there a required or preferred format for CVs, resumes, or biosketches for key personnel?

The FOA does not identify a preferred or required format for a biosketch.

For key personnel, collaborators, and consultants, the FOA requires applicants to "upload a curriculum vitae, resume, or bio sketch for each." See FCIF FY 2026-27 FOA, page 12. The FOA does not prescribe a specific biosketch template or format among those options.

12. Does a collaboration among multiple Florida cancer centers qualify as a Consortium Grant, and must a consortium include a facility focused on underserved populations?

The FOA does not state that a Consortium Grant must include a facility focused on underserved populations, and it does not state that any collaboration of multiple cancer centers automatically qualifies as a consortium.

The FOA describes the Consortium Grant category as supporting "a consortium of clinical, basic, translational, and underrepresented research institutions across Florida" and requires the lead organization and collaborating institutions to have clearly defined responsibilities that advance shared research goals. See FCIF FY 2026-27 FOA, page 7.

Separately, the evaluation criteria provide additional merit and priority for projects concentrating on research or treatment within rural areas or underserved populations. See FCIF FY 2026-27 FOA, pages 13-14.

13. How should an applicant describe integration of previously funded Florida cancer-research innovations while demonstrating that the proposed project is innovative and does not duplicate or significantly overlap prior projects?

Whether a particular proposed approach will be viewed as sufficiently innovative is determined through the application evaluation process. The FOA states that projects must represent "significant innovation beyond incremental advances" and that evaluation will consider innovation and significance to cancer research and care. See FCIF FY 2026-27 FOA, pages 3 and 13.

At the same time, applicants must ensure that proposed projects do not "duplicate or significantly overlap, scientifically or financially, with other projects in which they or any key personnel are involved." See FCIF FY 2026-27 FOA, page 10.

An application that builds on or integrates previously funded work should therefore clearly distinguish the proposed project's new scope, activities, deliverables, and measurable outcomes, and explain the project's return on Florida's investment. The FOA requires quantifiable success metrics and identifies return on investment as a key expectation. See FCIF FY 2026-27 FOA, pages 3 and 8.

14. May an early-stage computational-to-bench drug-discovery project that generates preliminary data for future preclinical development be considered under FCIF priorities?

The FOA does not categorically exclude early-stage computational-to-bench discovery projects. It states that the FY 2026-27 FCIF will focus on "foundational discoveries, early-stage diagnostics, or scalable technologies that can rapidly influence clinical practice" and that funded projects will prioritize translational potential. See FCIF FY 2026-27 FOA, page 5.

The High-Impact Pilot Grant category also supports "early-stage funding for bold, innovative projects" that enables researchers to "generate preliminary data, test feasibility, and refine hypotheses." See FCIF FY 2026-27 FOA, page 7.

However, all proposed projects must satisfy the FOA's one-year, high-impact requirements, including clear pathways to immediate clinical, research, or policy impact, measurable outcomes achievable within 12 months, and alignment with the applicable research priorities. Whether a specific proposed project meets those requirements will be determined through the application review process. See FCIF FY 2026-27 FOA, pages 3, 5-7, and 13-14.

15. Does FCIF identify a program officer for individual pre-application scope-alignment discussions?

The FY 2026-27 FOA does not identify a designated individual program officer for one-on-one pre-application scope review.

For questions about the funding opportunity, the FOA directs applicants to email FloridaCancerInnovationFund@flhealth.gov. It also establishes the formal Q&A period from August 14 through August 28, 2026, after which the Department is unable to answer questions pertaining to the FOA. See FCIF FY 2026-27 FOA, pages 10 and 13.

16. Does the FY 2026-27 FOA establish fixed project start dates for awards made in each of the three application periods?

The FY 2026-27 FOA does not establish a fixed grant start date for awards associated with any of the three application periods.

The FOA states that applicants will be notified following Collaborative review and that "[r]eview and notification dates are subject to change." See FCIF FY 2026-27 FOA, page 11. It also provides that evaluation includes the applicant's "ability to start the project on day one of contract execution," and that successful grantees must sign Terms and Conditions after awards are made. See FCIF FY 2026-27 FOA, pages 13 and 15.

Accordingly, the FOA ties project commencement to contract execution rather than providing a fixed start date for each application period.

17. Must all project leads or collaborators be based in Florida?

The FOA does not state that every project lead or collaborator must reside in or be institutionally based in Florida. It does, however, establish a Florida-location requirement for grant-funded activity.

The FOA states: "All grant-funded activities must take place in Florida. All work (effort) must occur and funds must be spent in Florida by the applicant organization or its collaborating entities." The Department may make an exception when a service is essential, is only provided outside Florida, and the amount is less than 10% of the requested amount. See FCIF FY 2026-27 FOA, page 9.

18. How does the FOA define an employee for PI eligibility, and must the designated PI be a full-time employee?

The FOA requires the designated PI to be an employee of the applicant organization/entity and does not state that the PI must be a full-time employee.

The FOA provides: "The PI must be an employee of the applicant organization/entity and meet that institution's criteria for serving as a PI in addition to meeting the eligibility requirements listed in this FOA." See FCIF FY 2026-27 FOA, page 9.

For purposes of PI employment, an employee is an individual employed by an employer. PI employment must be in accordance with applicable state and federal laws, rules, and regulations, including but not limited to the Fair Labor Standards Act.

Accordingly, a part-time employment arrangement is not categorically excluded by the FOA, provided the individual is an employee under applicable law and meets the applicant institution's criteria for serving as PI.

19. May an employee of the applicant organization serve as the designated PI while a clinical investigator at a collaborating Florida site serves as a Co-PI or collaborator?

The FOA permits a project to have Co-PIs and collaborators in addition to the one designated PI. The designated PI must be an employee of the applicant organization/entity and is the person legally responsible for directing the project and accountable for its scientific and technical direction and proper conduct. See FCIF FY 2026-27 FOA, page 9.

The FOA does not state that Co-PIs or collaborators must be employees of the applicant organization. Therefore, a structure in which an eligible employee of the applicant organization serves as the designated PI and an investigator at a collaborating Florida site serves as a Co-PI or collaborator is not prohibited by the FOA, provided all other eligibility and project requirements are met.

20. Can an organization submit more than one application, each with a different Principal Investigator?

Yes. An applicant organization may submit more than one application, provided each application identifies a different Principal Investigator (PI). Each PI is limited to submitting one application during FY 2026-27.

21. May a single FCIF application include multiple distinct research projects as separate Specific Aims?

An application should propose one coherent research project. A project may include multiple Specific Aims, but separate and distinct research projects should not be combined within a single application.

The FOA requires the Specific Aims to state the goals of the proposed research and summarize the expected outcomes. It also requires each project proposal to identify one designated Corresponding Principal Investigator responsible for directing the project. See FCIF FY 2026-27 FOA, pages 9 and 11.