Department of Biotechnology  
Ministry of Science and Technology  
Government of India

Request for Letters of Intent (LoI) for Setting up Virtual Network Centers in the Area of Cancer Immunology & Immunotherapy

DBT invites Letters of Intent (LoI) in the area of Cancer Immunology & Immunotherapy from eligible scientists and clinicians for setting-up of Virtual Network Centers (VNCs) for a period of five years to create a centralized platform for sharing concepts and resources bringing in the complimentary expertise of the individual PIs from different organizational settings and partnering scientific institutions to work together to develop and actualize a cancer research agenda. The purpose is to connect competence in Basic Biology/Clinical Research/Technology Development around "Thematic Research" such as:

- Unraveling the immunosuppressive microenvironment in cancer and development of strategies to overcome them.
- Identification and characterization of newer regulatory pathways for an effective immune response.
- Top down approach for identifying the value of repurposed drugs to act as checkpoint inhibitors, including phase 2 clinical trial.
- Development of novel vectors for CAR-T cell therapies.
- Development of bispecific monoclonal antibodies and Bispecific T cell engagers (BiTEs) for cancer immunotherapy.
- In vivo priming and maturation of dendritic cells for boosting immune response.
- NK cell based immunotherapy including amplification of NK cell numbers for therapeutic use.
- Metronomic chemotherapy to boost immunotherapeutic effects.
- Model pre-clinical systems for rapid translation of cellular therapies into clinical trials.
- Overcoming constraints in cellular immunotherapy in solid tumors.
- Deeper understanding of the T and B cell physiology, subsets and use for cancer therapy.

Who Can Apply?

LoIs in response to this grant call will require multidisciplinary, multi-institutional and inter-ministerial efforts and collaborations to succeed. Therefore a team of clinical researchers/basic scientists/pharmacologists/health care experts, with necessary skills and expertise required to carry out the proposed research are invited to submit the LoI with a maximum limit of 1000 words through their institution/organization/university.
The LoI should leverage on the following:

1. Current strength of the lab/individual as indicated by the published work in the proposed area of investigation
2. Broad outline of the VNCs/Theme for furtherance of the proposed research (500 words)
3. Partnerships and Collaborations
4. Objectives/Activities to be undertaken under VNCs
5. National Status
6. International Status
7. Key support required (lab modulation/ equipment/ personnel/ facility)
8. Approximate Budget: (Separate budget for each collaborator, if applicable)
9. Background of Investigator/Each partner as relevant to the proposed research (250 words)

**How to Apply:**

The LoIs, one soft copy in the pdf format (sandhya.shenoy@dbt.nic.in) and two hard copies as per the proforma given may be sent to Dr. Sandhya R. Shenoy, Director, Medical Biotechnology Division, Room # 604, 6th Floor, Block II, C. G. O. Complex, Lodi Road, New Delhi 110003 by 10th June, 2020.