

DEUTSCHE KREBSHILFE
Program for the Development of Interdisciplinary
Oncology Centers of Excellence in Germany

ANNOUNCEMENT

Progress in prevention, diagnosis, and therapy has led to a significant increase in survival rates and quality of life of cancer patients. During the past decade, the overall cancer mortality has started to decline in North America and several European countries, including Germany. It is mandatory to accelerate this favorable trend through a better interaction of basic, translational and clinical research, in conjunction with a higher quality of interdisciplinary cancer care.

As the major German cancer charity, the Deutsche Krebshilfe aims to support the further development of cancer centers in Germany that have already achieved a high standard of research and clinical care and which are willing to develop and implement innovative concepts. In order to contribute to the development of a limited number of interdisciplinary oncology centers of excellence, we have launched a new program to set nationwide standards for clinical cancer care and for strengthening translational cancer research.

Centers that wish to participate in this program are subject to a competitive selection process similar to the NCI certification procedure for Comprehensive Cancer Centers in the USA. In order to secure uniform structures and quality standards, applications submitted by oncology/research centers will be judged according to a number of defined criteria.

In an initial phase, up to five centers will be supported with one million Euros per year over a period of three years, followed by a re-evaluation. The financial support shall primarily be used for the strengthening of the cancer center infrastructure, and not for specific research projects or clinical care.

The evaluation will be carried out by an international panel of experts. Applications must, therefore, be written in English. On the basis of applications received, site visits will be carried out in a limited number of centers.

Please notify the Deutsche Krebshilfe of your intent to submit an application. Letter of intent deadline: May 31, 2006. Subsequent full application deadline: September 1, 2006.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Preface

The Deutsche Krebshilfe Executive Board (Vorstand der Deutschen Krebshilfe) decided to launch a Program for the Development of Interdisciplinary Oncology Centers of Excellence in Germany. A Task Force consisting of members of the Deutsche Krebshilfe Scientific Review Board (Beirat der Krebshilfe-Organisationen) and external experts was commissioned by the Executive Board to work out the details of the Program. The recommendations made by the Program Task Force - including the criteria for funding - were approved by the Deutsche Krebshilfe Scientific Review Board as well as the Executive Board.

Criteria for funding

Centers that wish to participate in the program are subject to a competitive selection process similar to that for Comprehensive Cancer Centers (CCC) in the USA. In order to secure uniform structures and quality standards, applications submitted by oncology/research centers must be prepared according to the attached guidelines and will be evaluated on the basis of the following criteria:

- a. Number and quality of ongoing research projects funded by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (German Research Council), Deutsche Krebshilfe or other grant organizations with peer review. Development of internationally competitive research programs, particularly in the area of translational cancer research. Participation in local, national or European collaborative research consortia. Program in tumor epidemiology with outcome research and identification of cancer risks and predictive factors.
- b. Obligatory participation in structures of multidisciplinary clinical oncology that encompass all tumor entities, with a central entry port for tumor patients. Integrated clinical care by a team of physicians of different disciplines.
- c. Establishment of interdisciplinary tumor boards for all organ sites and tumor entities.
- d. For each patient, proposals for diagnosis and treatment and their implementation have to be documented.
- e. Development and implementation of standard operating procedures for diagnosis and treatment that reflect the current state of evidence-based oncology.
- f. Introduction of a quality assessment system for diagnostics, oncologic surgery, medical oncology and radiotherapy. Development of a centralized quality-controlled outpatient unit for chemotherapy.
- g. Documentation of diagnostic and therapeutic procedures and follow-up data in a clinical cancer registry that should be embedded in or associated with a population based cancer registry. Establishment of a validated system for data collection.
- h. Organizational structure of the cancer center with sustainable support from the hospital/faculty. Appointment of a highly qualified scientist with administrative

experience as cancer center director supported by an executive committee and scientific advisory board.

- i. Integrated psychosocial and palliative care. The center should interact with patient advocacy groups.
- j. Availability of a dedicated clinical trial center and participation in innovative clinical studies. The fraction of patients in trials should approach 90% for pediatric neoplasms, 50% for haematolymphoid and 10% for solid tumors.
- k. Tumor- and bio-bank with defined quality and documentation standards.
- l. Concentration of the core activities of the center in one building.
- m. Interaction with extramural physicians and regional hospitals (outreach program).
- n. Multidisciplinary training programs for physicians, physician scientists, nurses and related professions.
- o. Willingness to participate in an auditing process conducted for the Deutsche Krebshilfe by an international panel of experts.

Eligibility Requirements

Public or private cancer centers in Germany that approve the above listed criteria and that have already met or at least broadly met these criteria.

Funding volume and funding period

In an initial phase, up to five centers will be supported, each funded with one million Euros per year over a period of three years, followed by re-evaluation. The financial support shall primarily be used for the strengthening of the cancer center infrastructure, and not for specific research projects or patient care. As an example, funding may be used for the establishment of core facilities (centralized shared resources and services) or for outreach activities.

Application and Review Process

The application process will proceed in two stages:

1. Evaluation of full grant proposals by an international panel of experts (review group). Based on the criteria listed above 'finalists' are selected.
2. Each finalist oncology center will be further evaluated by the review group during a site visit in the last quarter of 2006.

Based on the applications and the results of the on-site evaluations the review group will make recommendations to the Deutsche Krebshilfe Executive Board which will take the final decision.

LETTER OF INTENT TO SUBMIT AN APPLICATION

You are requested to notify the Deutsche Krebshilfe of your intent to submit an application. This notification has to be provided by letter no later than May 31, 2006 (Emails and Faxes are NOT accepted).

The Letter of Intent is to be sent to:

Deutsche Krebshilfe e. V.
Abteilung Förderung
Buschstrasse 32
53113 Bonn.

The Letter of Intent must (1) include the full name, address, phone, and email contact information of the principal applicant, and (2) briefly describe (one page maximum) the proposed approach to establish an 'Interdisciplinary Oncology Center of Excellence'.

Please note that this Letter of Intent is a prerequisite for submission of a final application, i. e. full proposals will only be accepted from applicants who submitted a Letter of Intent earlier.

PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

Preliminary notes

Please note that proposals

- must be written in English,
- will not be screened for completeness upon receipt,
- will NOT be accepted if received by Fax or Email,
- must be received by 2 p.m., September 1, 2006.

The Deutsche Krebshilfe office acknowledges receipt of every proposal by letter within two weeks.

To simplify the review process it is requested that you

- start the proposal with a table of contents including page numbers,
- address in the proposal all points mentioned in the guidelines, repeating all section numbers from the guidelines as well as the complete section titles,
- provide one complete original application package with original signatures (do not bind with staples, paper clips or binder clips, etc.) and 25 bound copies of the proposal (including copies of the cover letter) in A4 format.

In addition to the paper copy, the proposal is also required in electronic format. Please send the electronic version with the hard copy application in PDF format on CD-ROM to:

Deutsche Krebshilfe e. V.
Abteilung Förderung
Buschstrasse 32
53113 Bonn

Please note that the hard copy application must match the application you submit electronically word-for-word.

Cover letter

Briefly introduces the application, states the willingness to accept the terms of evaluation and funding and the commitment of the institution. Has to be signed by the Cancer Center Director, the Chief Physician of the Hospital, the Dean of the Medical Faculty (if applicable) and the fiscally responsible Administrative Director.

1. Title

2. Table of contents

(with page numbers)

3. Cancer Center Director and Deputy Director

- *Name and full work address of the Cancer Center Director and Deputy Director.*
- *Biographical sketch, portrait photo, research focus, and the ten most important publications of the Cancer Center Director and the Deputy Director.*

4. Plan of the hospital / university campus

Plan of the hospital / university campus indicating the building in which core activities of the center are conducted.

5. Statements of support

Statements of support by institute and department directors participating in the Cancer Center, with name, function, address, date and signature.

6. Organizational structure and responsibilities of the Cancer Center

(max. 2 pages)

7. Summary of current laboratory and clinical research activities

(max. 2 pages)

8. Research projects / groups / laboratories

For each research group, a separate document (max. 2 pages) should be provided, containing the following information:

- *Research topic(s)*
- *Name, academic status and complete address of the group leader, with biographical sketch and portrait photo*
- *Internal collaborators with academic status and function*
- *External collaborators with affiliation*
- *Participation in collaborative research projects (local, national, European)*
- *Sources and total amount of extrabudgetary funding for the past 3 years*
- *List of most important publications 2000 – 2006 (max. 10)*

9. Summary of future laboratory and clinical research topics
(max. 2 pages)

10. Clinical care

This section should contain the following information (max. 5 pages):

- *Size of the hospital (total number of beds and patients/year)*
- *Table with (DRG)-validated numbers of newly diagnosed cancer patients in 2005 for the following organ sites:*

Nervous system

Head & neck

Oesophagus

Stomach

Colon/rectum

Lung

Breast

Female genital organs

Colon/rectum

Liver

Pancreas

Kidney

Bladder/urinary system

Prostate

Leukemia

Lymphomas

- *Integrated patient care, tumor boards (with weekly time table)*
- *Quality assessment for surgery, oncology, radiotherapy*
- *Psychosocial and palliative care*
- *Documentation, clinical cancer registry, long term follow-up*
- *Clinical trial center*
- *Table of ongoing clinical trials, with participating institutions, names of principal investigators and sponsors*
- *Table with fraction of patients currently enrolled in clinical trials, for different organ sites*
- *Documentation of attempts to establish a stable interaction with local oncologists and hospitals.*

11. Local Funding for the Cancer Center
(max. 3 pages)

This section should list the local support available for core-structures, research programs, and additional activities of the cancer center. Funds for standard clinical care should not be included.

12. Requested funding

Provide an itemized budget/cost proposal as well as a budget narrative which explains the reason for each requested budget item and which provides the basis for its cost. All

requested items must be thoroughly justified and clearly related to the goals/objectives of the application.

The principal cost categories are 'Staff/Personnel', 'Equipment/Instrumentation', 'Consumables', and 'Other Expenses'.

For Equipment/Instrumentation, Consumables and Other Expenses please state the requested funds separately for each year in Euros.

For Staff/Personnel do not quote amounts in Euros. Please quote at which wage level (based on the German Civil Service remuneration system) he/she will be employed (max. 3 years). The necessary totals will be calculated by the Deutsche Krebshilfe. For each person to be funded by the Deutsche Krebshilfe, please describe their task(s).

13. Summary

(1 page)

Please provide a concise, comprehensive summary describing the current state/activities of the cancer center and what impact funding by the Deutsche Krebshilfe would have for the cancer center.

14. Declaration

Please state if you have already submitted the same or a similar request for funding to other institutions, providing an explanation. If this is not the case then the following statement must be made:

'The same or a similar request for funding has not been submitted to any other addressee. If any such proposal should be submitted the Deutsche Krebshilfe will be informed immediately'.

For further information, please contact Dr. Franz Kohlhuber (0228/729 90 222; kohlhuber@krebshilfe.de) or Dr. Bernhard Sperker (0228/729 90 227; sperker@krebshilfe.de).