

**DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**  
**Veterans Health Administration**  
**VISN 1 VA New England Healthcare System**  
**Request for Applications**  
**CAREER DEVELOPMENT AWARD**  
**(Due Date: April 2, 2021)**

## **1. Purpose**

VISN 1 Career Development Award (VICDA) is intended to assist junior investigators in their research careers and to enable them to successfully compete for further peer-reviewed research funding such as VA Career Development Award, Merit Review, or other federal or non-federal grants. This award provides two years of salary support for mentored research to highly qualified scientists with demonstrated abilities. Nominees must express a clear commitment to a VA career and enlist the support of at least one appropriately qualified VA mentor.

## **2. Eligibility**

Physicians and PhD (or equivalent) researchers are eligible to apply. Non-clinician nominees need to be no more than five years beyond completion of their PhD or doctoral equivalent. Clinician nominees need to be no more than five years beyond clinical training (i.e., residency, internship, clinical fellowship, etc.). The suggested academic rank upon award of CDA is Instructor or Assistant Professor. Applicant must demonstrate substantial research training and accomplishment. The sponsoring VA facility must demonstrate institutional commitment to the individual during the award period, including plans for the candidate after the award ends. Applicants are expected to submit a VA CDA-2 application or IIR before the end of the award.

Applicants need not be VA employees at the time of application, but must be eligible to be paid VA employees at the time of award (including being a US citizen), and have a commitment letter from the Medical Center Director indicating that they will be hired full time at the VA should the VICDA be awarded. Since the career award can provide a maximum of 75% of the investigator's salary, the commitment letter must demonstrate that the remaining salary will be paid from another specified source.

## **3. Funding**

Appointment level and salary will be determined locally according to current standards. Applicants may request two years of funding full- or part-time. Awardees are expected to devote at least 75% time (30 hours per week) to research. Awardees may spend up to 25% time in non-research activities, such as clinical activities, teaching or service activities. Reimbursement of 75% of the awardee's salary will be provided to the local facility from the VISN. Awardees will be encouraged to apply for and receive additional research funds. If salary awards, such as the VA Career Development Award, commence before the end of the two-year funding period, the awardee and his or her medical center will surrender the unused VICDA funds. Applicants should be prepared to start their appointment on October 1, 2021. Deferred start dates will not be available except in cases of extended leave.

## **4. Review and Selection Process**

Prospective applicants are required to submit a Letter of Intent that will be used to determine eligibility. The LOI is limited to 2 pages and should include:

- Stage of career
- Impact of award on research career and current research effort
- Anticipated clinical, teaching, or administrative responsibilities during award period
- Anticipated VA and Academic Affiliate career pathway (department, relationship of activity to established activity in department)

- Medical Centers involved
- Planned research
- Proposed mentor(s)
- Brief statement of eligibility for paid employment at VA (US citizenship)

Append biosketch (*5 pages maximum*) for applicant.

In addition, include the LOI Applicant Information Form available under Application Materials on the VISN 1 website.

The letter should be submitted by the Medical Center's Research Office to the VISN 1 Chief Medical Office no later than **April 2, 2021**. Medical Centers' deadline may be earlier – applicants are encouraged to check with their Research Office.

The VISN Review Committee will notify applicants of the outcome of the review of the Letter of Intent by **April 16, 2021**.

Full applications are due **June 4, 2021**. Refer to separate detailed instructions for preparing the application available on the VISN 1 website. Arial 11-point font and 0.5-inch page margins are to be used in the application. The Career plan and Research plan are together limited to 10 pages.

The full application should include the following:

1. Applicant and mentor biosketch
2. Budget
3. Career plan
4. Research plan
5. Human/Animal Studies information
6. Interview guides and/or surveys for CDA
7. Resources
8. Letters of commitment from
9. Endorsement letters

Appendices, other than those specified in the submission instructions, will not be considered. Do not attach a full CV.

Applications will be reviewed by a committee of VISN 1 senior investigators. Applicants will be notified of the review outcomes by **July 12, 2021**. Funding will begin on **October 1, 2021**. Deferrals will be considered only in cases of extended leave.

Information on the program and the application process can be found on the VISN 1 websites:

<https://vaww.visn1.portal.va.gov/intranet/visn/programs/research/Pages/VICDA.aspx> (internal VA site)

<http://www.newengland.va.gov/research/v1cda> (external VA site)

Please contact [Kristin.Mattocks@va.gov](mailto:Kristin.Mattocks@va.gov) with any additional questions.