

Novartis STEP Program™ now accepting submissions for proposals that address unmet patient needs in cancer biomarker testing

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- - STEP Program is available to US-based nonprofit patient advocacy organizations
- - Recipients will receive funding to support proposals that demonstrate innovation in awareness and education, self-advocacy and/or policy improvement
- - Submissions will close on November 4, 2019

EAST HANOVER, N.J., Oct. 8, 2019 /PRNewswire/ -- Novartis is inviting patient advocacy organizations to submit proposals for programs that offer to expand and improve understanding of biomarker testing among the cancer community through one of its signature patient advocacy initiatives, the Solutions to Empower Patients (STEP) Program™. The STEP Program will provide funding to as many as four patient advocacy organizations of up to \$75,000 each.

Through the advancement of personalized medicine, cancer treatment has greatly evolved to include more customized treatment options based on a patient's type of cancer determined through biomarker and other forms of testing. The hope is that treatments will one day be tailored to each person's cancer.¹ Though biomarker testing has become one of the cornerstones of personalized medicine within oncology, there remain significant challenges when it comes to education, access and reimbursement.^{2,3,4}

"Biomarker testing has the potential to transform the treatment strategy for people living with certain types of cancer, but it is not yet part of routine care for all tumor types," said Ameet Mallik, Executive Vice President and Head, US, Novartis Oncology. "By supporting patient advocacy organizations that empower patients and their care teams to make informed decisions about their health, the STEP Program can help create a path to better care."

Novartis created the annual STEP Program to inspire solutions from US-based nonprofit organizations that help to address some of the most significant gaps in health care. Since 2017, the STEP Program has provided support to eight organizations across the country for their impactful patient-focused initiatives.

Application Details for Interested Patient Advocacy Organizations

Any national, US-based, 501(c)(3) patient advocacy organization is welcome to submit a STEP Program proposal for consideration. Suggested proposals should focus on at least one of the following criteria in cancer biomarker testing:

- Awareness and Education
- Self-Advocacy
- Policy Improvement

Proposals will be evaluated by an external review committee consisting of experts in a variety of fields. The committee will review the applications and identify as many as four proposals that have the potential to make the greatest positive impact on the cancer community.^{1/4}

Organizations that wish to apply for funding from the program should complete the required submission form available on <https://www.pharma.us.novartis.com/stories/education-awareness/step-program-supporting-solutions-patient-advocacy-organizations>. All submissions must be received by 11:59pm ET on November 4, 2019.

For more information about STEP Program, including submission details, please visit the Novartis US website, [STEP Program page](#).

About Novartis

Novartis is reimagining medicine to improve and extend people's lives. As a leading global medicines company, we use innovative science and digital technologies to create transformative treatments in areas of great medical need. In our quest to find new medicines, we consistently rank among the world's top companies investing in research and development. Novartis products reach more than 750 million people globally and we are finding innovative ways to expand access to our latest treatments. About 108,000 people of nearly 140 nationalities work at Novartis around the world. Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corporation, a US affiliate of Novartis, is located in East Hanover, NJ. Find out more at www.novartis.com.

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References

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