



2021 FARF Joel Walker Cancer Ideas Lab: Call to Action

OVERVIEW | The Fanconi Anemia Research Fund (FARF) is hosting an Ideas Lab this Fall on the unaddressed challenge of cancer in individuals with Fanconi anemia (FA).

MOTIVATION - OUR WHY? | You may be already familiar with this challenge: individuals with FA have an *extraordinarily* high lifetime risk of developing squamous cell cancers of oral mucosa, and the same type of epithelia lining of the proximal esophagus, vulva and anus.

The origin(s) and natural history of FA cancers are not well-understood. There are no effective ways to prevent these cancers, and many patients have cancers that have already spread at first diagnosis and are no longer good candidates for curative surgery. Moreover, conventional chemotherapies and radiation are too toxic for many patients due to their FA deficiency state.

OUR GOAL | The focus and goal of the Ideas Lab is on new ideas: Where do FA cancers come from? Can we prevent them? Or find better treatments? What we learn will likely reach far beyond FA to the many individuals with similar cancers in the general population.

WHO WE NEED | Are you a risk taker? Creative? A lateral or non-conventional thinker who's willing to think big? Excited about working as part of a collaborative team across disciplinary boundaries? You *don't* need to be an expert in FA or in cancer to participate, just a willingness to bring an open mind and your knowledge to an unsolved problem. We will need many types of expertise to tackle this challenge, in cancer biology, AI/machine learning, bioinformatics, molecular biology, evolutionary biology and medicine, the physical sciences, computer science and engineering. And we're looking for diversity of experience: everyone from post-docs to professors, from industry, biotech, and academia. If this sounds interesting - or irresistible - then please consider applying to join us this Fall.

WHAT'S ON OFFER | The Ideas Lab will put your best ideas to the test! We have generous support from the Joel Walker Family and Fanconi Anemia Research Fund, and will competitively award up to \$500,000 to allow teams to pursue the best collaborative projects that emerge from the Ideas Lab.

INTERESTED? HERE'S HOW TO PARTICIPATE! The application process is easy, but be prepared to answer questions about yourself, your work experience, your research focus, and most importantly **WHY** you are interested in and qualified to participate in the Ideas Lab. Be aware too of our expectations for participants as outlined below.

Applications will be reviewed by members of the FA research community and FARF staff. Research-related information will be kept confidential. We'll look forward to hosting up to 30 participants selected from this call in November. Details and deadline for the Ideas Lab application process have been provided below:

1. Starting August 18th, apply on the FARF website here: <https://www.fanconi.org/explore/joel-walker-cancer-series>

2. The deadline to submit an application is 5:00 pm Pacific on Friday September 24, 2021.
3. Notifications to applicants (selected, not selected, waitlisted) will be emailed to individuals by October 1. Note: Individuals who are waitlisted will be notified if their application has been selected for participation by mid-October.
4. The RSVP deadline for selected participants is on or before October 13.

PARTICIPANT EXPECTATIONS | The 2021 Ideas Lab will take place virtually. ***Due to the highly interactive nature of the workshop, partial attendance is not allowed. Participants are required to attend the workshop in its entirety*** (the primary lab dates on November 1, 2, 5 & 9 will last up to 4 hours each day). See below for a breakdown of the anticipated time commitment for selected participants:

Virtual Ideas Lab: General Framework

Pre-Lab TechOrientation with Participants: October 28th @ 9:30 am PDT

Day 1: November 1st from 9:30 am – 1:30 pm PDT

Day 2: November 3rd from 9:30 am – 1:30 pm PDT

Day 3: November 5th from 9:30 am – 1:30 pm PDT

Day 4: November 9th from 9:30 am – 1:30 pm PDT

Day 5: November 12th from 9:30 am – 12:00 pm PDT (Final Team Presentations)

QUESTIONS? Contact the Fanconi Anemia Research Fund organizers by emailing helen@fanconi.org.