

Florida Department of Health

Biomedical Research Advisory Council (BRAC)

Update - April 23, 2026

Daniel Armstrong, PhD
Chair, Florida Biomedical Research
Advisory Council



Biomedical Research Advisory Council

Daniel Armstrong, PhD (Chair)
University of Miami Miller School of Medicine
Seat: American Cancer Society

Stephen Black, PhD
Director, Center for Translational Science
Florida International University
Seat: Governor

Shaye Moskowitz, PhD
Neurosciences Medical Director
Broward Health Physicians Group
Seat: Governor

Akram Shibani, PhD
Ascension Medical Group
St. Vincent's Lung Institute
Seat: Governor

Nicole de Lara Puente
Chief Executive Officer
Live Like Bella® Childhood Cancer Foundation
Seat: Governor

Guilherme Oliveira, MD, MBA
Tampa General Hospital, University of South
Florida
Seat: House of Representatives

Roxana S. Dronca, MD
Director, Mayo Clinic Comprehensive Center
Seat: House of Representatives

Tushar Patel, MB, ChB
Mayo Clinic Jacksonville
Seat: Senate

Jennifer I. Vidrine, PhD, MS
Assistant Center Director of Research Community
Partnerships, Senior Member, Department of
Health Outcomes and Behavior
Moffitt Cancer Center
Seat: Senate

Fiscal Year 2025-26 Funding Opportunities

James and Esther King Biomedical Research Program - \$7.85 million

Bankhead-Coley Cancer Research Program - \$10 million
(Includes \$500,000 appropriated annually to the McKnight Brain Institute paid for through this fund)

Live Like Bella Pediatric Cancer Research Initiative - \$3 million

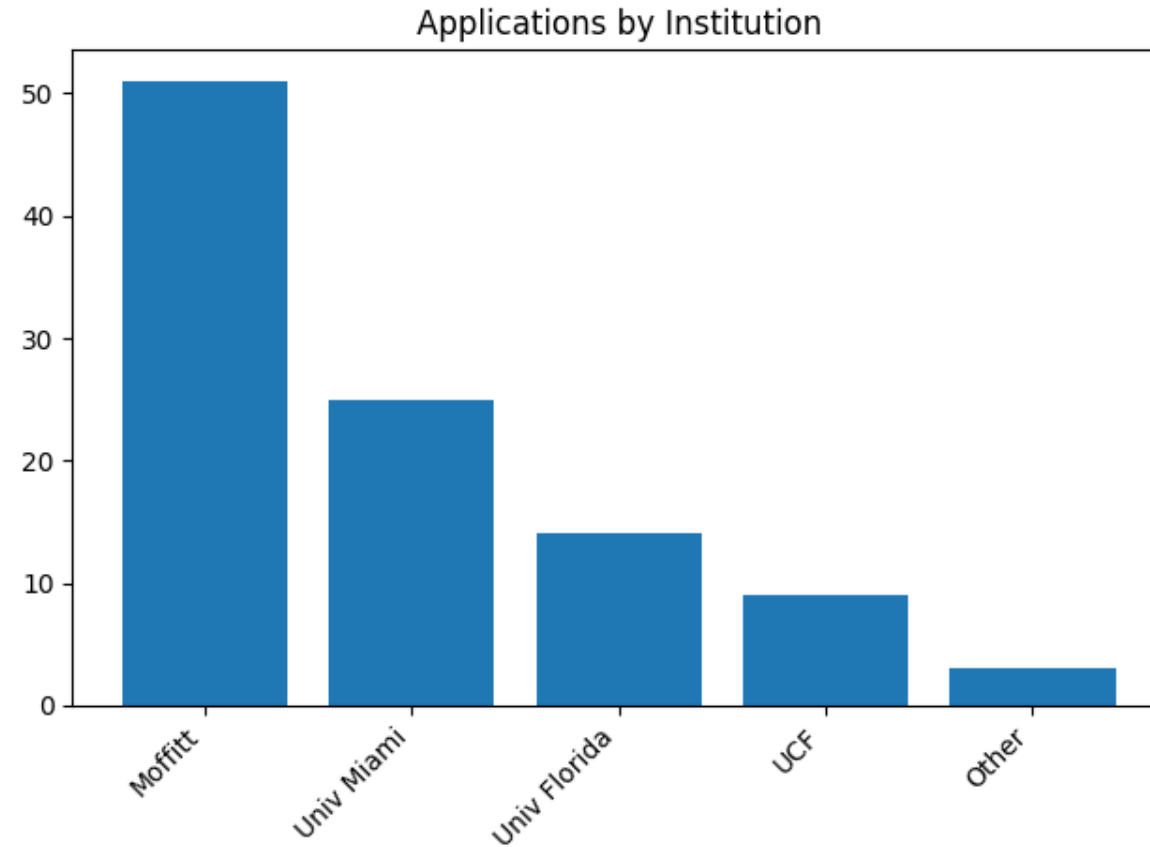
Rare Pediatric Disease Research Initiative - \$500,000

Casey DeSantis Cancer Innovation Fund (CCIF) - \$60 million

Bankhead-Coley Applications and Funded Projects

- **Applications Received for FY 25-26**
- **143 TOTAL received.**
- **100 moved forward to review (eligibility/ validation / completion)**
- **Comparable in volume to previous year**
- **56 had overall scores <4 (\$38.4M requested)**

Applications by Institution (BHC FY25-26)

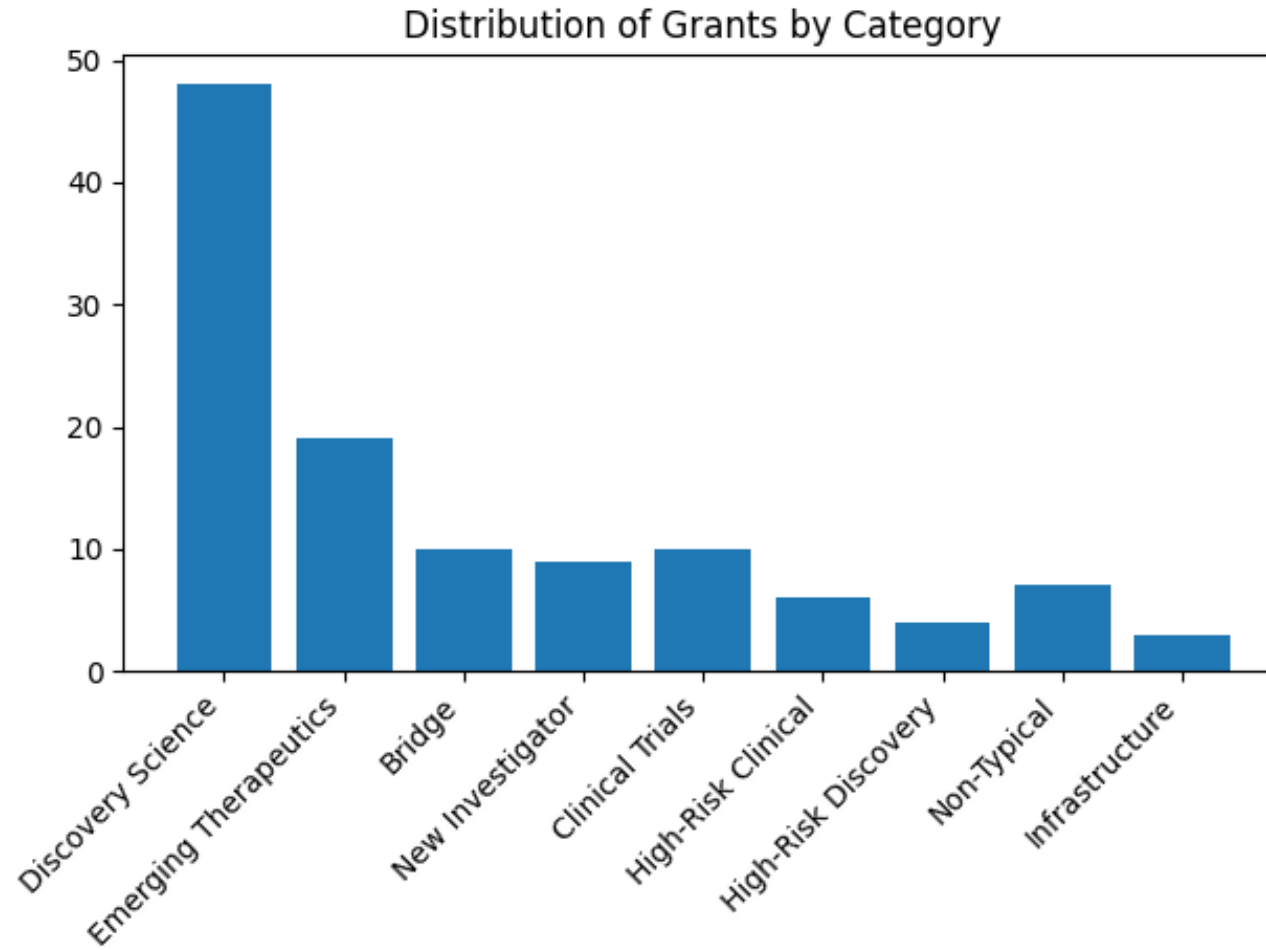


Applications by Institution (BHC FY25-26)

Key insights:

- **Moffitt Cancer Center** - largest contributor by a wide margin)
- **University of Miami** is the clear #2 contributor
- **University of Florida** forms a strong third tier
- **University of Central Florida** contributes a moderate number
- Other institutions (Nova, Florida Institute of Technology)

Grant Category Distribution (BHC FY25-26)

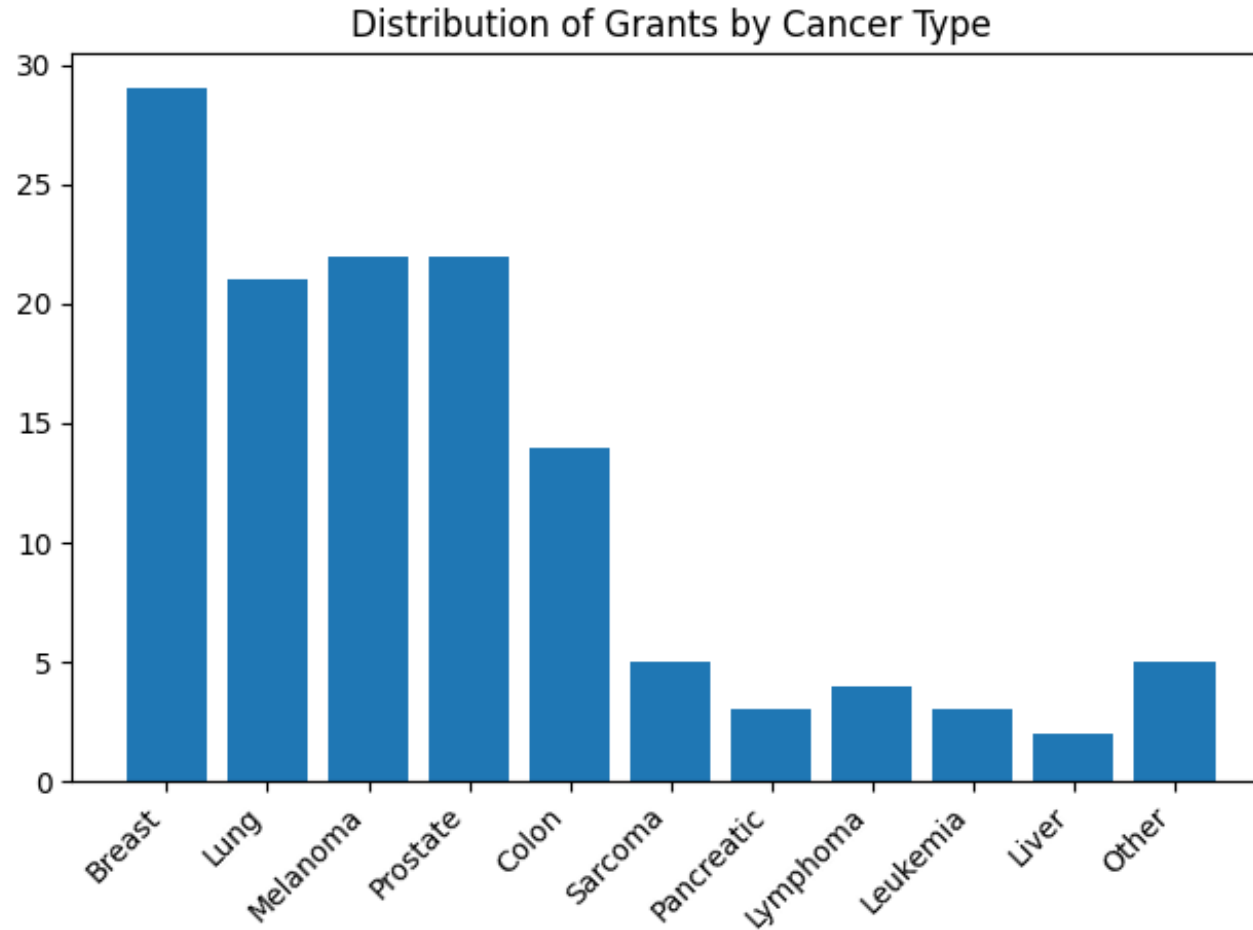


Grant Category Distribution (BHC FY25-26)

Key insights:

- **Discovery Science dominates** — by far the largest category (core of the portfolio)
- **Emerging Therapeutics & Technologies** is the **second largest**
- **Bridge grants** form a meaningful chunk (indicates strong near-miss federal funding pipeline)
- **New Investigator Research (NIR)** shows solid investment in early-career researchers
- Smaller but important segments:
 - **Clinical Trials / Socio-behavioral**
 - **High-Risk, High-Reward (both clinical + discovery)**
 - **Non-typical clinical / behavioral research**
 - **Research Infrastructure** (low volume but strategic)

Cancer Type Distribution (BHC FY25-26)

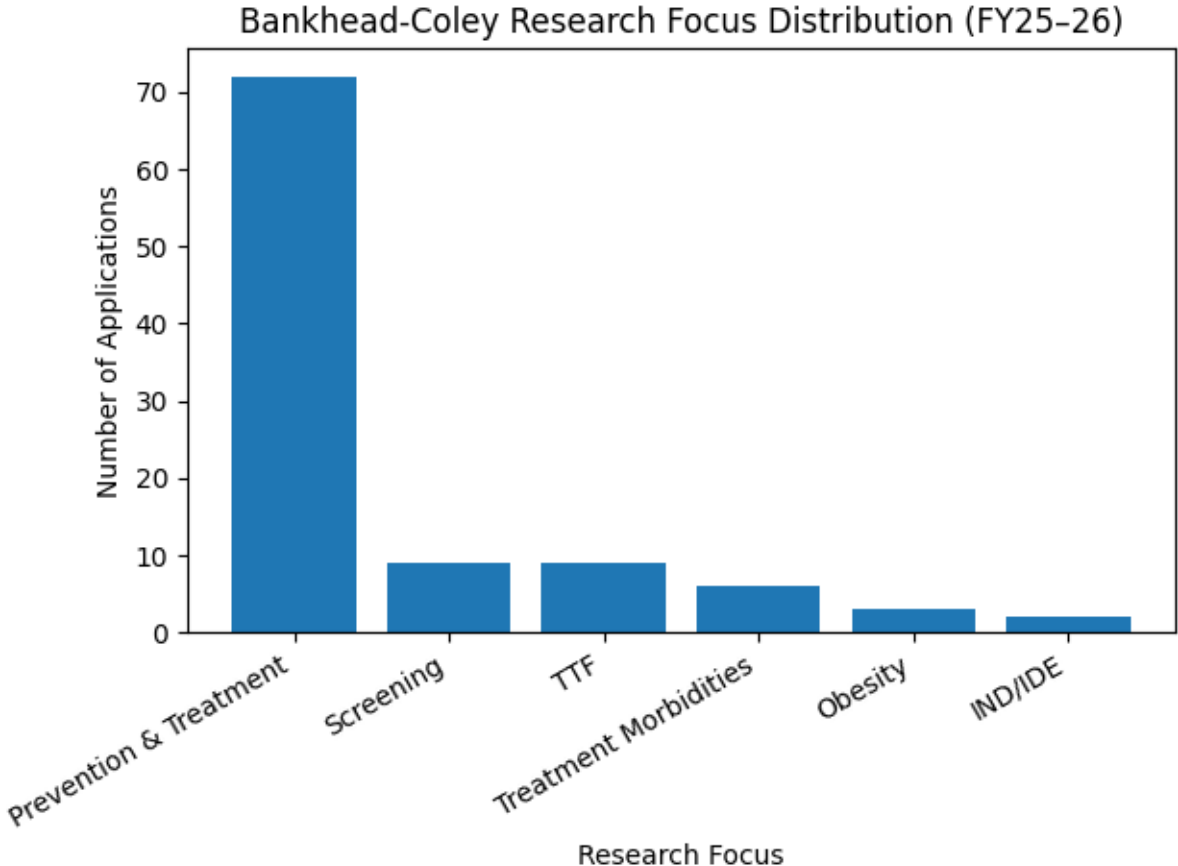


Cancer Type Distribution (BHC FY25-26)

Key takeaways:

- **Breast cancer** is the most represented category
- **Lung, melanoma, and prostate cancers** are also heavily represented
- **Colon cancer** forms a strong second tier
- Long-tail categories include:
 - Sarcoma, lymphoma, leukemia
 - Pancreatic, liver, ovarian, etc.
- Some entries reflect **broad or multi-cancer applicability**, which is common in translational research

Research Focus Distribution (BHC FY25-26)



Research Focus Distribution (BHC FY25-26)

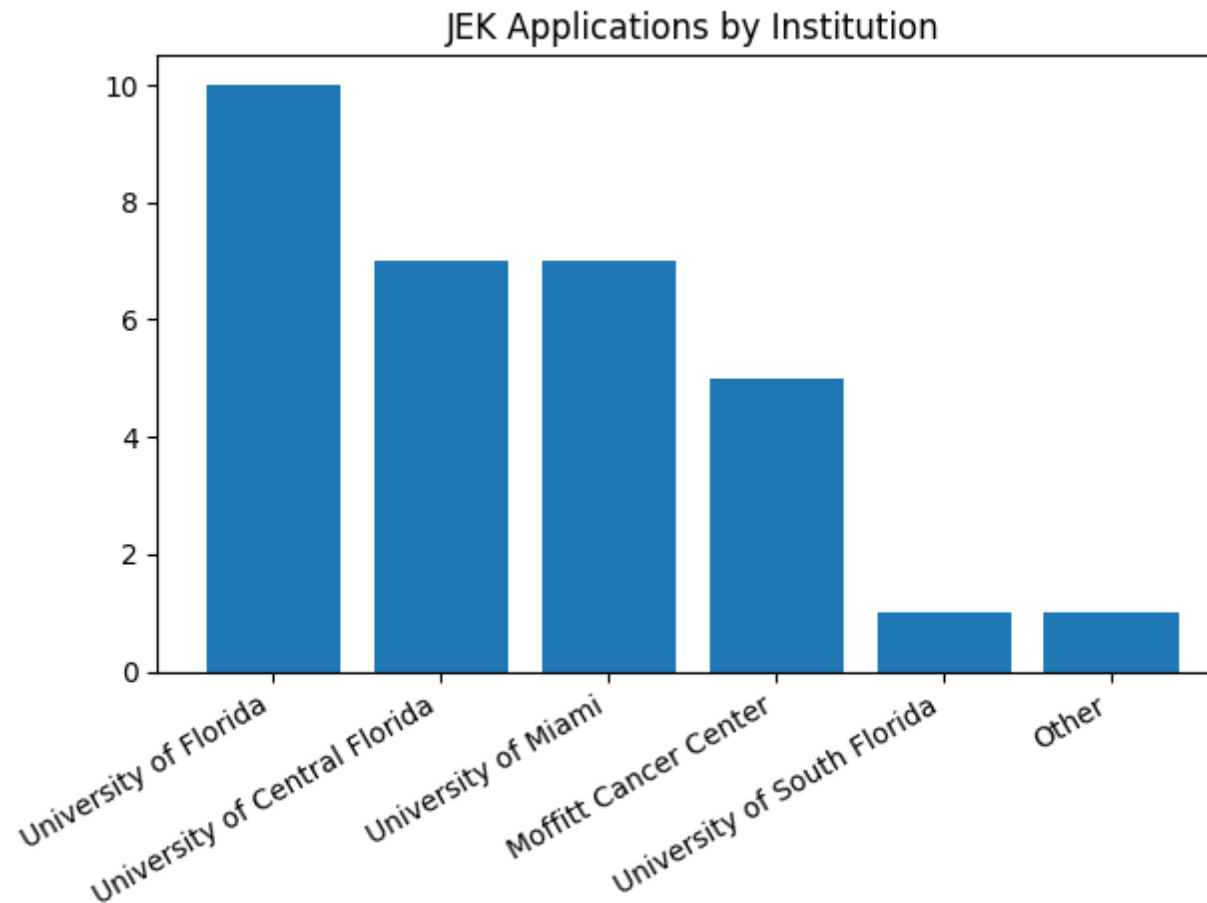
Key Insights:

- Prevention & Treatment overwhelmingly dominates the portfolio
- Screening and TTF are tied as secondary priorities
- Moderate attention to treatment-related morbidities
- Very limited pipeline activity (IND/IDE – Drug design and Discovery) and obesity research

JEK/King Applications and Funded Projects

- **For FY25-26 JEK**
- **55 applications were submitted.**
- **31 moved forward to review (eligibility/completion/validation)**
- **This is similar to the volume in the previous year.**
- **18 had scores overall scores <4 (\$11.1M requested)**

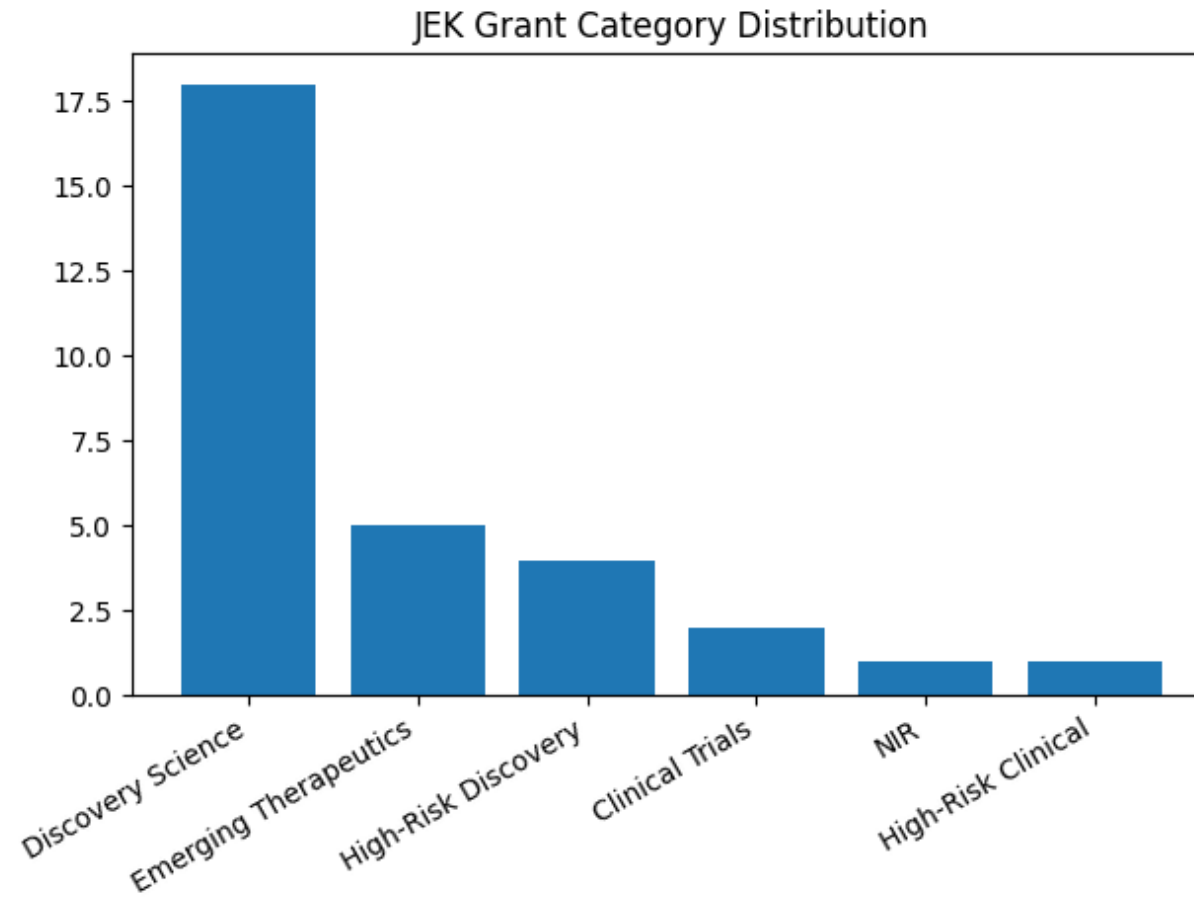
JEK Applications by Institution (FY25-26)



JEK Applications by Institution (FY25-26)

- University of Florida leads in submissions
- UCF and University of Miami are strong contributors
- Moffitt participation is moderate (less dominant than BHC)
- Applications are more distributed across institutions

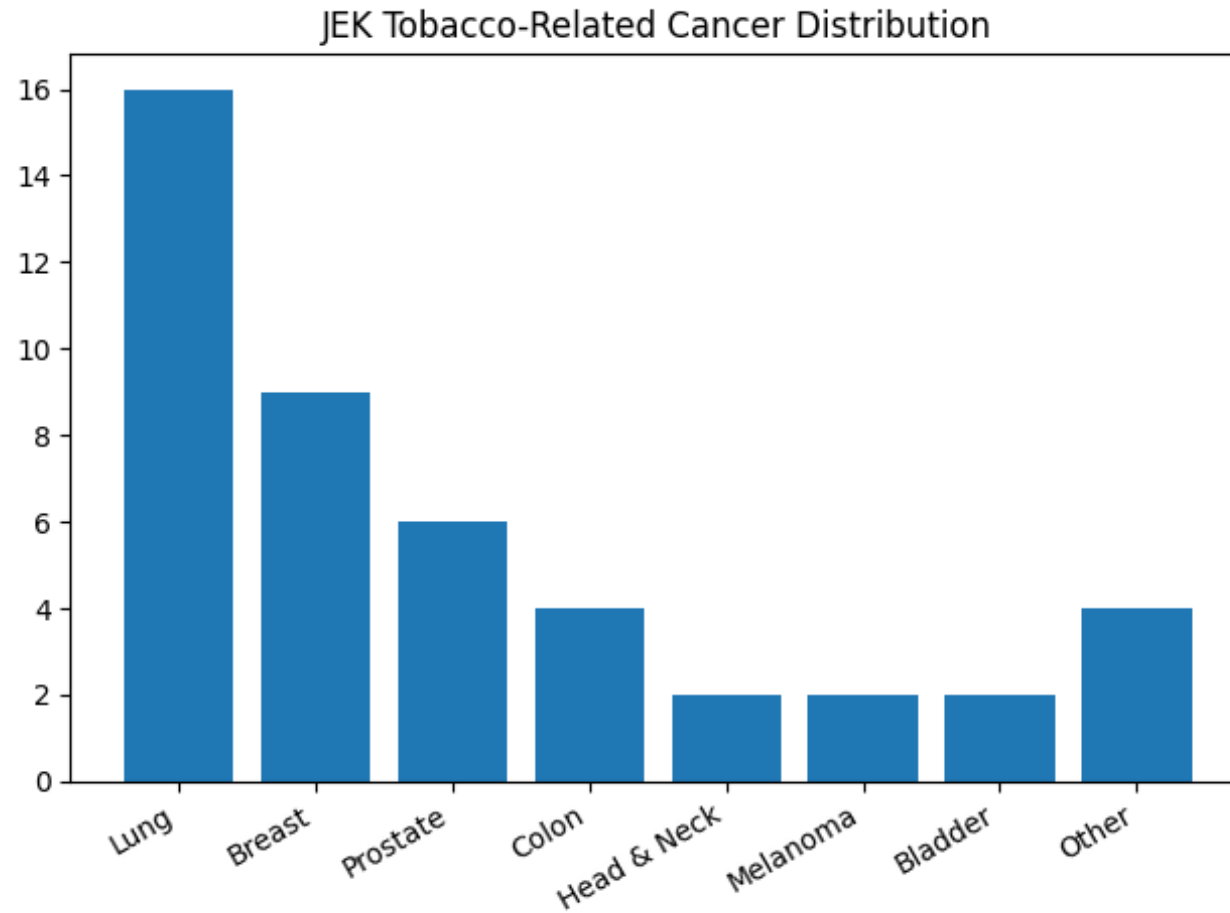
JEK Grant Category Distribution (FY25-26)



JEK Grant Category Distribution (FY25-26)

- Discovery Science dominates the portfolio
- Emerging Therapeutics is a distant second
- Limited clinical and high-risk research submissions
- Portfolio is heavily basic science-focused

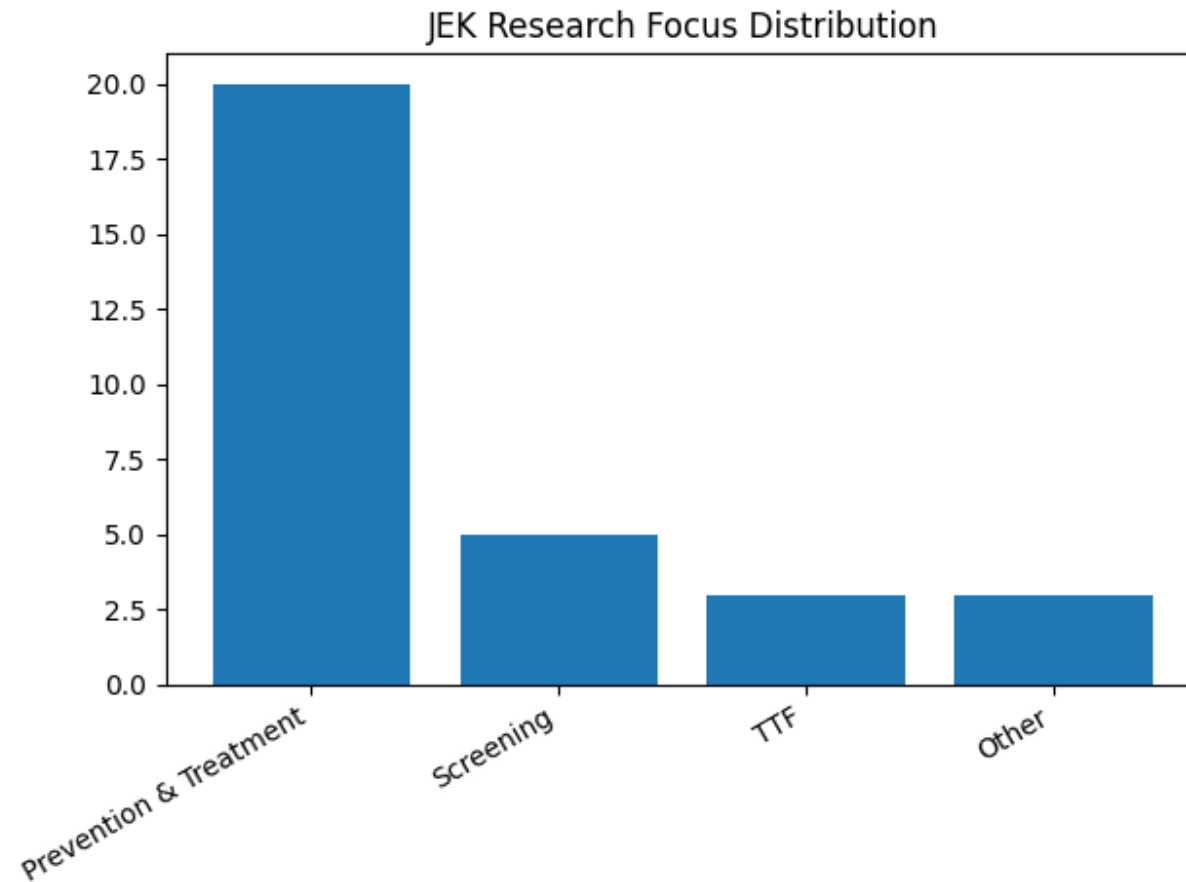
JEK Cancer Distribution (FY25-26)



JEK Cancer Distribution (FY25-26)

- Lung cancer is the primary focus (tobacco-related)
- Breast and prostate cancers are secondary priorities
- Includes multiple smoking-associated cancers
- Reflects alignment with tobacco-related disease burden

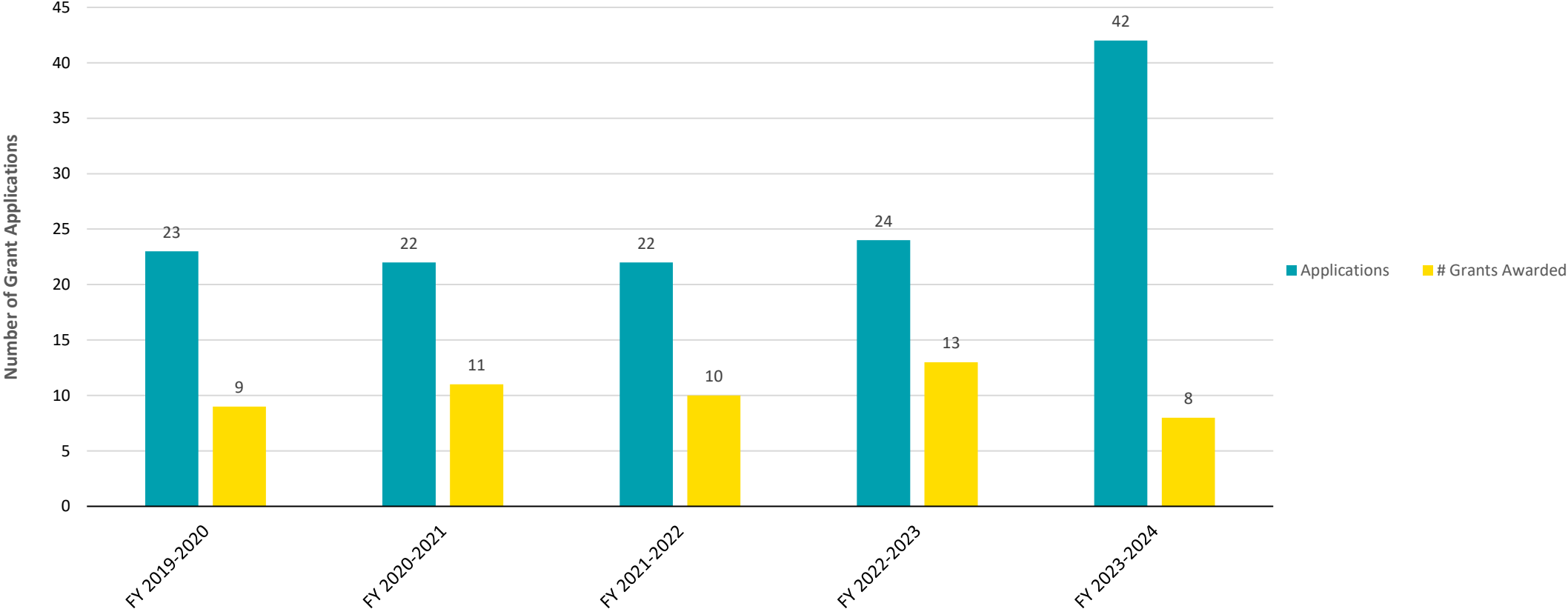
JEK Research Focus (FY25-26)



JEK Research Focus (FY25-26)

- Prevention & Treatment overwhelmingly dominates
- Screening is the secondary focus area
- Limited commercialization (TTF, IND/IDE)
- Strong public health and intervention emphasis

Live Like Bella Applications and Funded Projects



Live Like Bella 2025-26

- 36 Applications received and moved forward for review
- \$2,550,000 available for funding (15% administrative costs for reviews)
- 13 applications have overall scores 1-3.99; Total funding requests for these proposals is \$6.074M
- BRAC will meet next week to make funding recommendations

Casey DeSantis Cancer Innovation Fund

Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Budget - \$20 Million

20 Grants Awarded

Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Budget - \$60 Million

Funding Opportunity Announcement anticipated June 2024

The Florida Cancer Centers of Excellence Re-Designation

Peer reviews for Fall 2024 re-designation applications were completed for the following:

- Moffitt Cancer Center
- UM Sylvester Cancer Center
- UF Health Cancer Center (includes UF Shands Hospital, UF Health Proton Therapy Institute and Orlando Health's Orlando Regional Medical Center)

Joint Committee for the Florida Cancer Centers of Excellence Program

The Joint Committee, consisting of 13 members (7 from CCRAB, 6 from BRAC) is required to:

- Develop rigorous performance measures, a rating system, and a rating standard that must be achieved to document and distinguish a cancer center that excels in providing quality, comprehensive, and patient-centered coordinated care.
- Review at least every 3 years and revise, if applicable, the performance measures, rating system, and rating standard to ensure providers are continually enhancing their programs to reflect best practices and advances in cancer treatment and care from the perspective of quality, comprehensive, and patient-centered coordinated care.

Performance Measures and Rating System:

[Re-AccreditationCancerCenterofExcellencePerfMeasuresFINAL.pdf \(floridahealth.gov\)](#)

The Florida Cancer Control and Research Advisory Council and the Biomedical Research Advisory Council will review and approve prior to the evaluation of any provider under such criteria.

Current Cancer Centers of Excellence

- Moffitt Cancer Center
- University of Miami Sylvester Cancer Center
- UF Health Cancer Center (includes UF Shands Hospital, UF Health Proton Therapy Institute and Orlando Health's Orlando Regional Medical Center)
- Mayo Clinic Jacksonville
- Memorial Cancer Institute and Florida Atlantic University
- Cleveland Clinic Florida Maroone Cancer Center

Contact Information



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