University of CINCINNATI CANCER CENTER
University of Cincinnati • UC Health • Cincinnati Children's

Request for Applications Spring 2022
The University of Cincinnati Cancer Center (UC Cancer Center)
Pilot Project Award Program

IMPORTANT DEADLINES
UC Cancer Center pilot project awards are available twice per year, as detailed below:

Cycle I (Spring):
- Applications accepted **March 1, 2022 through March 11, 2022**.
- Awards announced and funding available by **May 1, 2022**.

Cycle II (Fall):
- Applications accepted **August 29, 2022 through September 9, 2022**.
- Awards announced and funding available by **November 1, 2022**.

GOALS OF THE PROGRAM
In support of faculty investigators with interest in cancer research, the UC Cancer Center is requesting applications for its pilot project award program, which seeks to:
- Increase collaborative interactions to foster innovative research.
- Facilitate novel approaches.
- Encourage entry of new investigators into cancer research.
- Facilitate the translation of laboratory findings into clinical interventions.
- Generate preliminary data that will lead to peer-reviewed, cancer-relevant extramural funding, conference presentations, and publications.

PROPOSALS OF PRIORITY INTEREST
While all types of cancer-relevant pilot research applications are encouraged, the following proposals in areas of strategic priority as well as in disease sites supported by restricted philanthropic funds are most needed:
- Breast and pancreatic cancers (supported by donor gift funds).
- Early drug development, investigator-initiated trials, and correlative studies.
- Cancer prevention, control, and population sciences (e.g., community outreach and engagement, health education and promotion, screenings, etc.).

AMOUNT AND LENGTH OF FUNDING
Funding is limited to a **_maximum_** of $50,000 per project and will be awarded for a period of one (1) year. Awards will be matched to an appropriate funding source by UC Cancer Center administration and scientific leadership.

ELIGIBILITY
All full-time UC faculty (inclusive of UC faculty at Cincinnati Children's) are eligible to apply for UC Cancer Center membership and, subsequently, pilot project funding. Interested pilot project award applicants who are not yet members of the UC Cancer Center **_must_** first apply and be approved for membership. Apply at: https://ucwebapps.uc.edu/institutemember/Account/Login.

In addition, ***eligible applicants are limited to one (1) submission per grant cycle as principal investigator (PI)***. Clinical and post-doctoral research fellows, instructors, and research associates are eligible as co-investigators on applications in which their faculty advisor/mentor serves as official PI. This condition is not applicable to medical residents.

APPLICATIONS

Please submit an application using the criteria below. Applications will undergo rigorous peer review by the UC Cancer Center Grant Review Committee and approval by UC Cancer Center leadership. Reviews will be scored in accordance with the guidelines established by the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

The following items should be submitted together as a single electronic document (i.e., PDF) via email to UCCCgrants@uc.edu for an application to be considered complete and eligible for review:

- **UC Cancer Center Cover Sheet:** Please see the attached template, which requires PI and co-investigator name(s), credential(s), department(s), division(s) (if applicable), membership status, active mentorship committee with committee members listed (if applicable), and dated signature(s).

- **Abstract:** Explain why this work is important (not to exceed 250 words in 11-point Arial font).

- **Project Narrative:** The narrative is limited to a maximum of four (4) typewritten pages (excluding references) in no less than 11-point Arial font. All text, tables, and figures must be included in the body of the application, and ***no appendices*** will be accepted other than appropriate letters of support. Included in the narrative should be background, hypothesis and specific aims, preliminary data (not mandatory), experimental design, and a timeline of the study plan, including submission to the institutional review board and other appropriate review committees. In addition, please describe plans to use data generated from the pilot project award for future National Cancer Institute (NCI), cancer-relevant NIH, or NCI-approved, peer-reviewed submission(s). NCI-approved organizations with peer-review funding systems: https://cancercenters.cancer.gov/PoliciesResources/PoliciesResources#.

- **References:** NIH guidance on suggested formatting of citations can be found here: https://grants.nih.gov/grants/how-to-apply-application-guide/format-and-write/format-attachments.htm.

- **Budget:** An itemized and detailed budget and budget justification must be submitted with each application and should include only items directly related to the research project.
  - PI's salary, cellular devices, capital equipment, indirect costs, or administrative services should not be included. Exceptions may be made if a proven need exists.
  - Any purchase of electronics (i.e., computers, laptops, tablets, etc.) belong to the University and must be relinquished to UC Cancer Center administration at the closing of the grant or expiration of funding.

- o Salaries and benefits of post-doctoral fellows or research staff relative to the effort on the project may be included.
- o ***Projects are limited to a maximum of $50,000 for one (1) year***. The budget should be submitted in PHS 398 format: http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/fp4.pdf.

- **Budget Justification:** The budget justification is a separate document from the budget and must itemize and explain all items directly related to the research project.

- **Biographical Sketches:** Current curriculum vitaes of the PI and co-investigators should be provided in PHS 398 format: https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm.

- **Other Support:** All investigators' active and pending sources of research support should be reported in PHS 398 format: https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/othersupport.htm.

- **Letters of Support:** A letter of support is required from a mentor or faculty advisor if the PI is an Early Stage Investigator (ESI). An ESI is a new investigator who has completed their terminal research degree or medical residency (or the equivalent and whichever date is later) within the past ten (10) years and has not yet been awarded a substantial, competing NIH research grant. Letters of support from all project collaborators should also be provided.

Please note that for investigators moving into new, innovative areas of work, the absence of preliminary data will not preclude funding. The role of the proposed project in leading toward successful extramural funding should be addressed. In addition, selected PIs may have the opportunity to present their study findings to UC Cancer Center scientific leadership.

EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS
Proposals will be evaluated in relation to their projected effectiveness in using pilot funding to address the following areas:
- Research priorities, as determined by UC Cancer Center leadership.
- Innovation and movement towards new scientific directions that align with the strategic initiatives of the UC Cancer Center.
- Assessing scientific merit of proposed research.
- Programmatic priorities.
- Scientific opportunities of the UC Cancer Center.
- Growth in the Center's planning and evaluation activities.
- Potential to obtain future NCI, cancer-relevant NIH, or NCI-approved, peer-reviewed submission(s).

REVIEW PROCESS
Each submission will be reviewed by the UC Cancer Center Grant Review Committee based on scientific impact and scored using current NIH peer-review guidelines. Submissions will be assigned a primary and two (2) secondary reviewers. Proposals will be scored following discussion. The Committee will be chaired by the UC Cancer Center Director(s). Standing

members will be assigned reviews, and ad hoc members will be invited based on areas of expertise (depending upon proposals submitted). Avoidance of conflicts of interest (i.e., an applicant may be on the Committee, but will be recused during discussions of their grant and cannot vote on their application) will be communicated. Funding recommendations will be reviewed and approved by the UC Cancer Center Executive Committee, with the Scientific Co-Director making final decisions. Redacted critiques of each proposal, including unfunded proposals, will be sent to all applicants via email. Any required revisions (e.g., budget) will also be noted in this correspondence.

PROGRESS REPORTING AND EXPECTATIONS
All funded investigators will be asked to submit progress reports every six (6) months for the duration of the funding with a final progress report at the end of the active funding period. Presentation(s) to UC Cancer Center scientific leadership and/or other groups may be requested. Opportunities to request no-cost extensions for funded projects will be communicated to awardees by UC Cancer Center administration and submitted via the progress report. In addition, awardees are expected to comply with any future requests from UC Cancer Center administration and scientific leaders for longitudinal, follow-up information related to pilot awards for at least a minimum of five (5) years after the end of the award period. Awardees will also be expected to serve as future ad hoc pilot grant review committee members. The progress reporting template will be provided by UC Cancer Center administration. Progress reports should detail return on investment, including:

- Presentations, abstracts, publications, etc. resulting from projects benefiting from pilot funds.
- External, peer-reviewed funding received using pilot project data and findings.
- Commercialization, such as royalties received, number of licenses, and start-up companies.
- Patent applications and approved patents.
- Trials developed, with number of patients recruited or status of trial provided.

Please note that any resulting presentations, abstracts, publications, grant submissions, etc. should acknowledge the UC Cancer Center pilot project award program and, as applicable, donors/foundations providing source funding for the project. These details will be outlined in award letters.

DISCONTINUATION OF FUNDING
In the event a PI leaves their respective institution or if no substantive progress has been made within twelve (12) months on the project, the UC Cancer Center reserves the right to rescind the remaining funding that is available to the PI. Reviews and decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis. If rescinded, the funds will be reinvested into the UC Cancer Center pilot project award program.

QUESTIONS?
Please email Katie Fulton, UC Cancer Center Administrator for Grants, Pilots, & Program Development, at kathleen.fulton@uc.edu.

Completed applications should be submitted via email to UCCCgrants@uc.edu.