

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

IMPORTANT DEADLINES

For the fall 2022 cycle:

- Applications will be accepted **August 29, 2022 through September 9, 2022**.
- Awards will be announced and funding available in **November 2022**.

GOALS OF THE PROGRAM

To support faculty investigators with interest in cancer research, the UCCC 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 are areas of strategic priority and/or supported by philanthropic funds:

- Cancers of the breast, head and neck, lung, pancreas, and prostate (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 UCCC administration and scientific leadership.

ELIGIBILITY

All full-time UC faculty (inclusive of UC faculty at Cincinnati Children's) are eligible to apply for UCCC membership and, subsequently, pilot project funding. Interested pilot project award applicants who are not yet members of the UCCC **must** first apply and be approved for membership. The membership application can be completed 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 does not apply to medical residents.

APPLICATIONS

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

Applications will only be accepted electronically and should be submitted in REDCap (Research Electronic Data Capture) using the following link:
<https://redcap.research.cchmc.org/surveys/?s=JFR8WC34YTWCRDAP>.

Applicants may save their progress and return their applications to complete and submit at a later date. Text can be entered directly or copied and pasted where indicated. Supportive documents, tables, and figures will be uploaded as detailed below.

- **Applicant Information:** Please enter name, degree(s), position, institution, and contact information. Read the description of an early stage investigator (ESI) and indicate whether the applicant is an ESI by answering the provided question.
- **Research Proposal:**
 - **Abstract:** Copy and paste text. Please summarize the proposed project and explain why this work is important (not to exceed 250 words).
 - **Background:** Copy and paste text. Please provide the goals of the project, timeline, and enough information to provide a context of common knowledge for the reviewers, who might not be experts in the field (700 words).
 - **Hypothesis and Specific Aims:** Copy and paste text. Please outline the steps to fulfill objectives and address the critical need that the project is designed to address. Aims should be clear, achievable, and directly related to the content provided in the preceding sections (600 words).
 - **Experimental Design and Timeline:** Copy and paste text. Questions to consider for this section include: Are the overall strategy, methodology, and analyses well reasoned and appropriate to accomplish the specific aims of the project? Are potential problems, alternative strategies, and benchmarks for success presented? If the project is in the early stages of development, will the strategy establish feasibility? (1500 words).
 - **Preliminary Data (optional):** Copy and paste text. 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 (500 words).
 - **Plan to use generated data from the pilot project for future National Cancer Institute (NCI), cancer-relevant NIH, or NCI-approved, peer-reviewed submissions ([see link for list of approved organizations](#)):** Copy and paste text (200 words).
 - **References:** Copy and paste text. 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>
 - **Tables and Figures (limit of 4):** Upload. Must be in .jpg, .tiff, or .png format.

- **Budget:** Upload. An itemized and detailed budget must be submitted with each application and should include only items directly related to the research project.
 - **Budgets are limited to a maximum of \$50,000 for one (1) year** and should be in PHS 398 format: <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/fp4.pdf>.
 - Reviewers will consider whether the budget and requested period of support are fully justified and reasonable in relation to the proposed research.
 - 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 (e.g., computers, laptops, tablets, etc.) belong to the University and must be relinquished to UCCC administration at the closing of the grant or expiration of funding.
 - Salaries and benefits of post-doctoral fellows or research staff relative to the effort on the project may be included.
 - Travel-related expenses **should not be included** on the initial project budget. Every effort should be made to utilize the funding in support of carrying out the proposed research. If funds remain upon completion of the project, the use of these funds for travel will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Travel must be associated with a presentation of significant findings directly related to the pilot project. Awardees must request the use of pilot project funds for travel in writing to UCCCgrants@uc.edu prior to the end of the grant period.
- **Budget Justification:** Copy and paste text. The budget justification is a separate section from the budget and must itemize and explain all items directly related to the research project.
- **Biographical Sketches (applicant required, limit of 3 co-investigators):** Upload. Biosketches of the PI and all co-investigators should be provided in current PHS 398 format: <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm>.
- **Other Support (applicant required, limit of 3 co-investigators):** Upload. All investigators' active and pending sources of research support should be reported in current PHS 398 format: <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/othersupport.htm>.
- **Letters of Support (limit of 3):** Upload. 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 key project collaborators should also be provided.
- **Affirmative Action Survey (optional):** Responses in this section are voluntary and used to comply with government record-keeping and reporting requirements. This information will be kept confidential and may only be used in accordance with the provisions of applicable laws, executive orders, and regulations, including those that require the information to be summarized and reported to the federal government for civil rights enforcement. When reported, data will be in aggregate and not identify any specific individual. The information you provide is vital to the program's compliance with applicable laws.

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 UCCC leadership.
- Innovation and movement towards new scientific directions that align with the strategic initiatives of the UCCC.
- Assessing scientific merit of proposed research.
- Programmatic priorities.
- Scientific opportunities of the UCCC.
- 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 UCCC 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 UCCC 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 (e.g., 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. 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 UCCC scientific leadership and/or other groups may be requested. Opportunities to request no-cost extensions for funded projects will be communicated to awardees by UCCC administration and submitted via the progress report. In addition, awardees are expected to comply with any future requests from UCCC 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 UCCC 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 UCCC 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 UCCC 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 UCCC Pilot Project Award Program.

QUESTIONS?

Please email Katie Fulton, UCCC Administrator for Grants, Pilots, & Program Development, at kathleen.fulton@uc.edu.