



Catalyst Pilot Awards Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)

The Massey Comprehensive Cancer Center (Massey) has a rolling call for pilot research funding for Massey investigators who apply to the NCI and receive a promising score but miss funding pay line; mechanism is key strategy to continuing to grow the cancer focus within the VCU community of scientists. The requirements are outlined in this NOFO.

Purpose

The Massey Comprehensive Cancer Center (Massey) has a rolling call for pilot research funding for Massey investigators who apply to the NCI and receive a promising score but miss funding pay line; mechanism is key strategy to continuing to grow the cancer focus within the VCU community of scientists. The requirements are outlined in this NOFO.

Massey Comprehensive Cancer Center Priorities

- Massey will continue to prioritize application addressing the 2021-2025 research strategic plan focal areas – breast, prostate, lung and GI cancers; the lifestyle factors of tobacco and obesity and survivorship.
- Projects that genuinely demonstrate transdisciplinary, interdisciplinary, or translational approaches to addressing cancer-related research question(s).
- Proposals that represent collaborative, team science approaches, particularly those that involve investigators from more than one Massey research program in meaningful ways.
- Projects that utilize Massey-supported shared resources, especially those applicants who have collaborated with one or more Massey-supported shared resource directors to optimize the full capabilities or innovative capabilities of a shared resource.

Investigator Eligibility

This award is for Massey Research Members who apply to the NCI which receives a promising score but not recommended for funding. These applications have a high probability for funding in an A1 submission. Criteria for funding includes:

- NCI R01 Renewal (Type 2) Applications with a percentile of 25 and lower will be considered for funding up to \$50,000 based on the strength of the plan to address the critiques.
- NCI R01 New applications (Type 1) Applications with a percentile of 25 and lower or a score of 30 or lower for special study sections will be considered for funding up to \$50,000 based on the strength of the plan to address the critiques.

Award Information

- Total awards are dependent upon available funding. The number of awards and the award amount may increase or decrease each year dependent upon the Massey budget and philanthropic funding available in any given year.
- The number of awards and the award amount may increase or decrease each year dependent upon scientific merit of the projects submitted for review and the priorities established for any released NOFO.
- Projects are expected to be completed within the specific budget period. No cost extensions will only be granted in highly exceptional circumstances. Projects will be monitored quarterly for scientific progress and expenditures, and the PI will be expected to account for any inactivity in any given quarter.

- Projects must have compliance approvals (e.g., IRB, IACUC) in place within 90 days of receipt of the Notice of Award or funding may be rescinded. The official start date of the award and the release of funding will begin once the compliance approvals have been submitted.

Funding Limits

- Applicant(s) can request up to \$50,000 for their project, but may be asked to amend their budget if the budget requested is not fully justified.

Award Period

- The award period for the Massey Catalyst Award is 12 months.

Submission Guidelines

- A letter from the PI outlining the strategies to address the prior NCI critique.
- NCI Summary Statement
- Specific Aims and Research Strategy of Original Application
- NIH Biosketch for Principal Investigator(s) and all key personnel

Terms of Award

- Acceptance of funds implies a firm commitment to provide a brief verbal/email check-in progress report quarterly (financial and scientific) by the deadline outlined in the Notice of Award (NOA) and subsequently, a written annual update for a five-year follow-up period. Awardees who do not reply to the five-year follow-up requests will jeopardize their eligibility for future Massey awards.
- MPIs must spend on their Massey assigned index within 60 days of receipt of the Notice of Award or funding may be rescinded and will require a written explanation for the delays addressed to Massey Senior Leadership.
- All awards must have appropriate institutional compliance approvals (e.g., IRB, IACUC) within 90 days of receipt of the NOA and before funds will be allocated. Restrictions may be applied for expenditures prior to receiving compliance approvals.
- Following the initial 60-days Massey expects that the grantee will completely utilize the full amount of funding during the term of the award and are required to meet regularly with the Massey Post-Award and Administrative Teams.
- Projects are expected to be completed within the specific budget period. Projects will be monitored quarterly for scientific progress and expenditures, and the PI will be expected to account for any inactivity in any given quarter.
- A No Cost Extension is highly discouraged and will only be considered under exceptional circumstances and **must be requested no later than 60-day before the end of the project period**. All unspent funds at the end of the grant period will be returned to the Massey.
- All awards, publications, and presentations must acknowledge Massey Comprehensive Cancer Center as specified in the NOA.
- Acceptance of funds implies a firm commitment to provide the Massey leaders access to meet the team, give talks to the public, and tours of your facilities. Access to your laboratory will be facilitated by Massey Administration.

Review Process

- The Massey Scientific Steering Committee (SSC) will review the application materials and determine whether the project will be funded through the Catalyst Award. The application process ensures the applicant has provided all of the necessary application materials, is eligible and in good standing within Massey and the project truly aligns with Massey's goals and priorities.
- The SSC will provide a recommendation to the Massey Director who is responsible for the final decision.
- The SSC will monitor the project's progress and review the annual progress reports. Awardees may be asked to present the progress and/or outcomes of their pilot projects in Massey program meetings/retreats, center retreats, or at an Massey Scientific Steering Committee meeting.

Questions

Questions can be addressed to **Alex Haynes, Manager of Membership and Research Data Analyst**, at haynesa4@vcu.edu or 305-915-4200.