American Cancer Society Institutional Research Grant Funding Award

Request for Applications

Funding Opportunity Purpose

Grant applications are now being invited from junior faculty for the award of pilot research grants to perform cancer-related basic, pre-clinical, clinical, and cancer-control research studies (including but not limited to health services, psychosocial/behavioral, epidemiologic and health policy/outcome cancer research).

One Special Interest Award is also available in the area of cancer health equity and disparities research. Grant applications are encouraged in psychosocial and behavioral research and in health policy and health services research focused on achieving health equity and eliminating health disparities.

Key Dates

Posted Date: March 5, 2021
Application Due Date: April 16, 2021
Earliest Start Date: June 1, 2021

Anticipated Number of Awards

It is anticipated that 1-3 awards will be made.

Award Budget and Project Period

Projects will be funded at up to $30,000 and are limited to a 1-year period.

Eligibility

- Only junior-level faculty members are eligible for an American Cancer Society Institutional Research Grant (ACS-IRG) pilot award. Junior investigators are faculty within 6 years of their first independent faculty appointment or equivalent (eg, Assistant Professor, Research Assistant Professor). An individual who is currently an Instructor, but will be appointed as an Assistant Professor by the award date is also eligible (a letter from the Department Chair is required). Investigators who have already received a peer-reviewed national research grant are not eligible to apply. NIH Career Development (K) awards do not count as peer-reviewed national research grants for this purpose. Investigators who have received prior support from the ACS-IRG are not eligible.
- Non-faculty (eg, residents, fellows) are not eligible.
- The applicant does not have to be a tenure track faculty member.
- The applicant must be an independent investigator.
- Citizens, non-citizen nationals, and permanent residents of the United States and its possessions or territories are eligible. Recipients are not required to be US citizens;
however, they must hold a visa that will allow him or her to remain in the US long enough to complete the ACS-IRG pilot project.

- Investigators who have previously been funded through the ACS-IRG, have submitted the project for national-level funding, and who did not obtain national funding for the project may request an additional year of ACS-IRG funding. The investigator must include the grant review critique with their ACS-IRG application and indicate how the research proposed in the ACS-IRG application will be used to respond to the grant review critique.

**Application Components**

Applications must be submitted using the Massey Cancer Center ACS-IRG Application Packet, which can also be found on the MCC website: [https://www.massey.vcu.edu/research/funding/acs-institutional-research-grants/](https://www.massey.vcu.edu/research/funding/acs-institutional-research-grants/)

The application must be submitted as a single PDF file and include the items below in order listed.


2. **Title and Abstracts**
   
   a. Add the prefix “SPECIAL INTEREST APPLICATION to the application title if the project should be considered for a Special Interest Award in the area of cancer health equity and disparities research.
   
   b. The lay and technical language abstracts should summarize in 1 page or less the cancer relevance and significance of the proposed studies, the specific aims and expected outcomes, and how the work will contribute to the development of a full research proposal for submission to a national funding organization.

3. **Project Description for Research Strategy**
   
   a. Specific Aims – *Limit 1 Page*
   
   b. Research Strategy – *Limit 6 Pages*
      
      i. **Significance**
         
         1. Identify the importance of the problem or critical barrier to progress in the field that the proposed project addresses.
         
         2. Identify how the proposed project will improve scientific knowledge, technical capability, and/or clinical practice in one or more broad fields.
         
         3. Identify how the concepts, methods, technologies, treatments, services, or preventative interventions that drive this field will be changed if the proposed aims are achieved.
      
      ii. **Innovation**
         
         1. Describe how the application challenges and seeks to shift current research or clinical practice paradigms.
         
         2. Describe any novel theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation or interventions to be developed or used, and any advantage over existing methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions.
3. Describe any refinements, improvements, or new applications of theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions.

   iii. Approach

   1. Describe the overall strategy, methodology, and analyses to be used to accomplish the specific aims of the project. Include how the data will be collected, analyzed, and interpreted.

   2. Describe and address the potential problems.

   3. Describe any strategy to establish feasibility, and address the management of any high-risk aspects of the proposed work if the project is in the early stages of development.

   4. Address any procedures, situations, or materials that may be hazardous to other research associates and identify the precautions to be taken.

   5. Describe the preliminary studies, data, and or experience pertinent to this application.

   6. Identify the potential problems, alternative strategies, and benchmarks for success anticipated to achieve the aims. Include a description of future directions for your research, as well as a project timeline.

c. Literature Citations
d. *Response to Reviewers’ Comments from Previous Submissions (if applicable) – Limit 1 Page


5. Faculty Research Promotion Form

6. Letter of Support -- Please provide a letter of support from the mentor explaining their role and involvement in the mentoring press.

Format: 12 pt Times New Roman or 11 pt Arial (minimum font size for all elements) – 10 pt. Times New Roman or 9 pt. Arial (figures, legends and tables)

Resubmissions: There is no limit in the number of times that a grant may be resubmitted; however, grants that received highly negative reviews are unlikely to succeed in subsequent submissions unless they have been substantively revised. All Investigators who resubmit a previous application must include a description of revisions made based on the feedback received (maximum 1 page).

*PHS 398 forms and samples can be found at http://grants1.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/phs398.html.

Allowable and Unallowable Expenses

Allowable expenses:

- Research supplies and animal maintenance
- Technical assistance
- Domestic travel, when necessary to carry out the proposed research program
- Publication costs, including reprints
• Costs of computer time
• Special fees (pathology, photography, etc.)
• Stipends for graduate students and postdoctoral assistants if their role is to promote and sustain the project presented by the junior faculty member
• Equipment costing less than $2,000. Special justification is necessary for items exceeding this amount, and permission must be obtained from the Society's Extramural Grants Department for the purchase of such equipment.
• Registration fees at scientific meetings

Non-allowable expenses:
• Secretarial/administrative salaries
• Investigator/faculty salary support/student
• Student Tuition & Fees
• Foreign travel; however, special consideration will be given for attendance at scientific meetings held in Canada
• Books and periodicals
• Honoraria and travel expenses for visiting lecturers
• Per-diem charges for hospital beds
• Non-medical services to patients
• Construction, renovation, or maintenance of buildings/laboratories
• Office and laboratory furniture
• Office equipment and supplies
• Rental of office or laboratory space
• Recruiting and relocation expenses
• Membership dues

**Review Criteria**

Applications will undergo NIH-style peer review and will be scored using the following criteria.

• **Significance**
• **Investigators**
• **Innovation**
• **Approach**
• **Environment**

**Award Conditions**

• Awardedees are responsible for obtaining any required regulatory approvals from the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC), Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC), Institutional Review Board (IRB), Laboratory Safety Committee (LSC), Radiation Safety Committee, other regulatory body as required.
• An award is made for a one-year period as designated in the issued notice-of-award letter. Unexpended funds may not be used beyond the award period unless a no-costs extension (NCE) has been requested and approved.
• Awarded funds are to be used in accordance with the budget submitted in the application. Awardees must obtain prior approval for any changes in the budget.
• The award will be administered through MCC.
• The pilot award funding index will not be released until the awardee provides an alternate index (2-ledger or 6-ledger index) to which over-expenditures on the funding index can be charged.
• A short presentation of ongoing progress and next steps in the sixth month of the award is expected to be made to the IRG Review Committee. The scheduling of this presentation will be made prior to the date by the program coordinator.
• A progress report is required 30 days after the end of the project period.
• Awardees agree to providing periodic updates (eg, resulting publications, extramural awards, patents) and other information as required for up to 7 years following the completion of the project (this information is needed for annual reporting to the ACS and for completion of the competitive renewal application for the ACS-IRG parent award).
• At any time, awardees may be called upon by the ACS-IRG chair to present research at an ACS meeting or event.
• Awardees are required to identify the ACS-IRG support in any abstract, presentation, or publication that ensues from the use of this award by including the statement, “Supported by Institutional Research Grant IRG-18-159-43 from the American Cancer Society.”
• Awardees must return any unused funds when support is obtained from an extramural source for the same project.
• Awardees must remain in compliance with the ACS-IRG policies for the use of these funds, which are available on the Massey Cancer Center website, as well as VCU regulations for the conduct of scientific research.

Submission Instructions

Please email your complete application (one single PDF) to mccsubmission@vcu.edu, Adding “ACS-IRG Application” in the subject line.

Questions can be addressed to Olivia Patterson, MCC Program Coordinator at (804) 628 – 3400 or opatterson@vcu.edu. If acknowledge is not received within 24 hours, please email both Olivia Patterson at opatterson@vcu.edu and Lisa Mallory at malloryld@vcu.edu to confirm receipt of the application.

Do not submit these documents to the VCU Office of Sponsored Programs Administration. The entire application package should be sent directly to the cancer center following the instructions outlined above.

Application Questions

Please direct any questions to Olivia Patterson at opatterson@vcu.edu or 804-628-3400.