

University of Maryland
Marlene & Stewart Greenebaum Comprehensive Cancer Center (UMGCCC)
FY25 Pilot Grant Program
Applications due Friday June 14, 2024

Types of Awards Available:

- 1. Collaborative Research Awards**
- 2. Payline Program Awards**
- 3. Program Project Seed Awards**
- 4. Translational Research Award**
- 5. Radiometry Pilot Project**
- 6. Community Informed Research Award**
- 7. IDEA Para-PACHE Research Award**
- 8. IDEA Early and Mid-Career Faculty Research Award**
- 9. Fellowship Research Awards**

UMGCCC encourages cancer-relevant applications which will demonstrate our collaborative approach to membership by working with other University System schools and campuses. Expansion and collaboration within the Cancer Center Network with our affiliate hospitals, especially for pragmatic clinical trials, is also a priority for which we encourage applications.

1. Collaborative Research Awards

Applications will be accepted from Program in Oncology members. The purpose of this award is to stimulate broad institutional collaboration with the ultimate goal of securing cancer-related sponsored funding. Inter-programmatic, inter-campus & inter-school collaborations are strongly encouraged. Final funding decisions will be made by the UMGCCC Pilot Project Study Section. One award of \$50,000 will be made to each of the five UMGCCC Research Programs. When appropriate, at least 25% of the proposed budget must be devoted to use of Cancer Center Shared Services. Applicants that elect not to employ the use of a Shared Service must include adequate scientific justification. The Shared Services portion of the budget will be administered by the UMGCCC Shared Services staff. Full instructions and review criteria for this application are provided at the end of this RFA

2. Payline Program Awards:

Applications will be accepted from Program in Oncology members who have submitted research applications to cancer-related funding agencies (e.g., NCI, ACS, VA) that were rejected but scored well following peer-review, as reflected by both the score and review comments. The purpose of this award is to provide funding to support additional pilots, data analysis or experimentation requested during the peer-review that will ultimately support resubmission and funding of the application. Priority will be given to NCI applications. Applicants must provide the peer review score and the review comments as part of the justification request for pilot funding. Final funding decisions will be made by the UMGCCC Pilot Project Study Section. Inter-programmatic collaborations are strongly encouraged. The number of final awards will depend on the size and scope of the proposals. Awards will not exceed \$50,000. When appropriate, at least 25% of the proposed budget must be devoted to use of Cancer Center Shared Services. Applicants that elect not to employ the use of a Shared Service must include adequate scientific justification. The Shared Services portion of the budget will be administered by the UMGCCC Shared Services staff. Full instructions and review criteria for this application are provided at the end of this RFA.

3. Program Project Seed Awards:

Applications will be accepted from Program in Oncology members. This award will support a team of investigators to generate preliminary data leading to the submission of a Multi-PI U01, P01, SPORE or other similar cancer-based NIH/NCI application. Specific plans must be included to ensure grant submission by Summer of 2025 including evidence of planned or ongoing collaborative research among the PIs, plans for

joint lab meetings, and co-authored publications. A clear plan for how the successful completion of the proposed studies will set the foundation for submitting a viable application is required. An expected submission date and indication as to which funding opportunity the grant(s) will be submitted is required. Inter-programmatic collaborations are strongly encouraged. Final funding decisions will be made by UMGCCC Pilot Project Study Section. Two awards of \$150,000 for the first year will be made. At least 25% of the proposed budget must be devoted to use of Cancer Center Shared Services. Applicants that elect not to employ the use of a Shared Service must include adequate scientific justification. The Shared Services portion of the budget will be administered by the UMGCCC Shared Services staff. UMGCCC will provide the administrative support required to assist in arranging meetings and supporting required logistical infrastructure needs, all of which should be outlined in the application. Full instructions and review criteria for this application are provided at the end of this RFA.

4. Translational Research Award

Applications will be accepted from Program in Oncology members that facilitate the transition of UMGCCC-developed discoveries and treatments from the lab to the proof-of-concept stage, or to clinical trials. Recognizing the unique nature of these requests, there are no specific budgetary limits and the timeline for approval and implementation is flexible. Applications that propose pragmatic clinical trials are encouraged as well.

Clinical trial support, including all Regulatory services, must be provided by the UMGCCC Clinical Research Office. The CRO should be consulted *in advance* in order to confirm coverage analysis, allowability and effort/resources. All proposed clinical trial awards are subject to UMGCCC Feasibility and CRC review as well as other institutional reviews. UMGCCC will provide the administrative support required to assist in arranging meetings and supporting required logistical infrastructure needs, all of which should be outlined in the application. Applications that propose new staffing should be fully justified and should include a rationale for that support. *New staffing will be assigned to existing UMGCCC units.* When appropriate, applications must also include the use of UMGCCC Shared Services laboratories. Full instructions and review criteria for this application are provided at the end of this RFA.

5. Radiometry Pilot Award

Applications will be accepted from Program in Oncology members. This is a short-term call for cancer-relevant applications that may be advanced/completed in the next several months. The Tumor Metrics (Radiometry) Core at UMGCCC invite proposals for projects related to cancer research that have the potential to advance our understanding, detection, treatment, and monitoring response to treatment of cancer. Applications from UMGCCC members are invited & must be related to cancer with an interest in imaging and basic, translational, informatics, or clinical research. Projects related to PET-MR are encouraged but not required. Interdisciplinary collaborations are highly encouraged. Applications must include at least one faculty member within the Department of Radiology and Nuclear Medicine. Awards are \$25,000 each.

For inquiries or assistance, please contact:

Dr. Jean Jeudy at jjeudy@som.umaryland.edu

Dr. Vikas Kundra at vkundra@som.umaryland.edu

Community Outreach & Engagement Awards

Background

The National Cancer Institute elevated the emphasis on Community Outreach and Engagement (COE) activities in NCI-designated cancer centers. Centers must demonstrate ways in which community voices inform cancer research are considered responsive to the review criteria. While COE often has a natural linkage to some Population Science research, the connection between COE, the Cancer Network and basic and clinical research Programs is nascent. NCI-designated Cancer Centers are evaluated on the extent to which ALL research Programs incorporate COE. Centers are expected to show specific ways in which engagement with community members in the catchment area has informed or shaped the research conducted in the Programs. This goes beyond statistical catchment area cancer relevance and includes basic, clinical, and translational research.

An example of COE bidirectional research influence could include a new grant proposal or other similar research activity in which the area of study, specific aims, research methods, dissemination plan or other aspect was directly informed by interaction with community member(s). Other examples could include a secondary analysis of study data that was informed by community input, or a peer-reviewed manuscript in which community input influenced the way that study findings were interpreted or otherwise disseminated. This bidirectional relationship between communities and Cancer Centers promotes an understanding of cancer that is more holistic (bench-to-bedside-to-community), transdisciplinary, encompassing of different views and experiences, culturally sensitive, and reflective of mutual goals.

6. Community-informed Research Award

Applications will be accepted from Program in Oncology members. This funding opportunity is designed to foster integration of COE into one or more UMGCCC Research Programs including the Cancer Network. We invite applications led by a UMGCCC member in Molecular and Structural Biology, Experimental Therapeutics, Tumor Immunology and Immunotherapy, or Hormone Related Cancers. Population Science members are not eligible to apply unless the Principal Investigator's research to date has no demonstrated community-engaged aspect.

Expectations

Applicants should propose a process to incorporate patient or community member input into the proposed research. This can include plans for communication/discourse with community members (e.g., meetings, interviews, surveys, clinical observations) or other methods as appropriate. Applications should specify the target community member(s) or partner(s) to be involved, how they will be involved, and should speculate ways in which community involvement may inform the proposed research. Applications should have a clear endpoint deliverable such as a new grant application, peer-reviewed manuscript, or other research product that would be submitted subsequently as a result of this pilot research. Applicants are encouraged to use the pilot data as the basis for an NCI grant application within 12 months of pilot study completion. Because community-engagement is a time-intensive investment, applications should allow fiscal support for both the study team and community partner(s), as well as supportive staff if appropriate. A two page (maximum) single spaced application, excluding references, budget, biosketches, and letters of support is required. *Applicants are encouraged to contact the UMGCCC Office of Community Outreach and Engagement for support or technical assistance with application development (cholt14@umd.edu, Cheryl L. Knott, UMGCCC Associate Director for COE).*

One year of support will be provided with a budget of up to \$50,000. Up to two awards are expected to be made. Renewal for a second year is dependent upon progress. Full instructions and review criteria for this application are provided at the end of this RFA.

Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility (IDEA) Awards

Background

UMGCCC's Plan to Enhance Diversity – a new review criteria in the NCI's Cancer Center Support Grant is being implemented by its Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility (IDEA) Office. The NCI is increasingly focused on the need to diversify the cancer research workforce because this creates stronger cancer science and is a critical step in reducing the burden of cancer for an increasingly diverse United States. NCI is therefore supporting initiatives and providing grant funding for research on all aspects of cancer disparities including cancer biology, incidence, prevention, treatments, outcomes and survivorship among diverse racial, ethnic, sex, gender, ability, and disadvantaged groups (See NIH Notice of Interest in Diversity – [NOT-OD-20-031](#)). UMGCCC has created several pilot funding programs to enhance the diversity of our research programs. One of the core objectives of the IDEA Office is sustained engagement with Maryland's four Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) in joint research and capacity building activities. We will support collaborative research projects between UMGCCC and HBCU faculty that would lead to either P20 or U54 Partnerships to Advance Cancer Health Equity (PACHE) grants, a program that provides institutional awards for the development of partnerships between institutions serving underserved health disparity populations and underrepresented students and NCI-designated Cancer Centers. Another objective is to support career-enhancing research opportunities for junior, early- and mid-career researchers, including those from diverse backgrounds. Full instructions for this application are provided at the end of this RFA. *Applicants are*

encouraged to contact the UMGCCC IDEA Office for support or technical assistance with application development. (Dr. Clement Adebamowo, Assoc Director for IDEA, cadebamowo@som.umaryland.edu.)

7. IDEA Para-PACHE Research Award:

Applications will be accepted from Program in Oncology members. This funding opportunity is designed to foster collaborations between UMGCCC and HBCU researchers to conduct research in any cancer area. Applications must be led by Multiple Principal Investigators (MPI) comprising at least one UMGCCC faculty and one faculty from any of the four Maryland HBCUs. Each partnership is expected to conduct cancer and cancer health disparities research, develop, and implement cancer research experiences and research education for scientists and students, and effectively outreach and disseminate cancer advances to underserved communities.

Expectations

The collaborative research project should build on the training, resources, and previous research of each of the MPIs and generate new data or resources for future P20 or U54 PACHE grant applications. Applicants are strongly encouraged to look at the objectives and expectations of the [NCI PACHE Program](#) and use these to design their applications.

No more than one award will be made. Successful applicant will be supported with a budget of a minimum of \$50,000 for one year and this is renewable for another year on satisfactory attainment of year one deliverables. Funded MPIs are expected to submit at least one jointly authored publication in a peer reviewed journal, show commitment to agreed timeline and demonstrable progress towards submission of a P20 or U54 PACHE grant by the end of year one to qualify for renewal. Full instructions for this application are provided at the end of this RFA.

8. IDEA Early and Mid-Career Faculty Research Award:

This pilot funding program provides career enhancing support for junior, early- and mid-career researchers, including those from diverse backgrounds, to conduct cancer diversity research. All UMGCCC faculty in these categories are invited to submit research proposals for this opportunity.

Expectations

Applicants should propose cancer disparity research throughout the cancer continuum. Research should generate data, samples, and other resources for R21, R01, U01 or equivalent NIH or non-NIH funding. Only one award will be made and the successful applicant will be supported with a budget of up to \$50,000 for one year only. Full instructions for this application are provided at the end of this RFA.

9. Fellowship Research Award:

Awards are available to 2nd and 3rd year Hematology/Oncology M.D. Fellows only. The goal of the project will be to publish an abstract, author a paper or navigate the steps required to initiate an Investigator Initiated Trial. Distinct research projects may also be proposed. Projects may be proposed in Outcomes Research, Cancer Disparities Research or feasible translational research. Translational research projects should include collaborations with current M.D. or Ph.D. UMGCCC faculty. Progress will be monitored by each Fellow's Mentorship Research Committee. Infrastructure to support the project (clinical research staff support, biostatistics etc.) will be provided by UMGCCC.

Projects may span two years with funding for the second dependent upon progress during the first year. Award of \$5,000 will be made. Full instructions for this application are provided below.

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Review Criteria - UMGCCC FY25 Pilot Awards:

- Significance – Does the research address an important cancer related scientific question and support the mission of the UMGCCC? Will support lead to a Multi-PI, U01, P01, SPORE or similar application for external funding? Will it lead to peer-reviewed publications?
- Does the proposed project support initiatives on all-aspects of cancer disparities including cancer biology, incidence, prevention, treatments, outcomes and survivorship among diverse racial, ethnic, sex, gender, ability, and disadvantaged groups?
- Approach – Are the design and methods appropriate and can the research be completed within the proposed time frame?
- Innovation – Are the scientific questions and/or approach novel?
- Investigators – Are the researchers qualified and does the team include one or more collaborations among PIO research programs?
- Environment – Is the environment supportive and are UMGCCC Shared Services used?

All Applications - Application Components:

Unless specifically stated, 5 page maximum single spaced (except COE applications), excluding references, budget and biosketches.

Applications will be accepted from Program in Oncology members only.

- Title
- PIO Program
- Principal Investigator(s)
- Other Key Personnel
- Specific Aims and Hypotheses
- Background and Significance – include rationale, significance, innovation, how results will support an application for external funding
- Scientific Approach – include overall design, participant eligibility, data collection, intervention (if appropriate), data analysis plan, statistical power/sample size justification, strengths and limitations
- Budget (NIH 398 format) – faculty salary is not allowable
- A current Biosketch, including Other Support of Key Personnel – use NIH style
- Scores and reviewer comments for Payline Program Applications
- References

All Applications - Award Conditions: Applications that span more than one PIO research program are **strongly** encouraged.

The application must demonstrate how funds will be spent by June 30, 2025 unless stated specifically in the RFA.

- Unspent funds **cannot** be carried forward.
- Applicants are responsible for cost overruns.
- Any expenses that are determined to be unallowable will become the responsibility of the recipients.
- F&A costs (indirect costs) will not be provided.
- Reasonable staff salaries will be funded. Faculty salary will not be permitted.
- Funding requests for travel (except Fellowship awards), memberships, subscriptions and telecommunications are not permitted.
- Applicants are solely responsible for having appropriate institutional approvals (IRB, IACUC, EHS, etc.) before projects are undertaken.

All Applications - Reporting:

The State of Maryland Cigarette Restitution Fund and the NCI Cancer Center Support Grant, both of which fund this initiative, include very strict reporting requirements. Be sure to carefully cite & track publications, research applications, patents, inventions, collaborations, etc. that come to fruition as a result of this funding. A one to two-page final scientific report **will** be required.

All Applications – Mandatory Citations:

All efforts resulting from this funding opportunity must include the following citations:

This (article, conference, publication, etc) was supported by funds through the Maryland Department of Health Cigarette Restitution Fund Program – CH-649-CRF.

This (article, conference, publication, etc) was supported by funds through the National Cancer Institute – Cancer Center Support Grant (CCSG) – P30CA134274.

Questions & Application Due Date:

Questions about the RFA should be addressed to Bob Mitchell, UMGCCC Associate Director for Administration at x86834 or rmitchell1@umm.edu or to Sarah Laye, Assistant Director for Administration at slaye@som.umaryland.edu

The Due Date for all applications is: 5pm EST on Friday, June 14, 2024. Email PDF applications to Sarah Laye, Assistant Director for Administration at slaye@som.umaryland.edu