Postdoctoral Fellow and Graduate Student Matching
Grant Award Program
APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Objective
The primary purpose of this pilot grant award program is to support postdoctoral fellows and graduate students who are carrying out cancer-focused research that advances the goals of the UNM Comprehensive Cancer Center (UNMCCC) Research Programs and Clinical Working Groups.

Eligibility
Graduate students and postdoctoral fellows working in a lab headed by a UNMCCC member are eligible to apply. It is possible for the applicant to have more than one mentor if the proposed research involves a collaboration between two or more Cancer Center members. Priority will be given to applications that enhance the development of research programs of new and junior Cancer Center members, as well as those that enable existing members to develop new areas of research and/or establish collaborations between Cancer Center members.

Term of Funding
These awards are intended to provide funding for innovative projects that can be completed within 1 year – funding for a second year may be possible and will be contingent on productivity during the initial funding period and competition with new applications. The number and amount of awards will depend upon the quality of the proposals received and available funding. Expenditures may begin at any time after the official start date but all funds should be expended within one year of receipt. Successful applicants must produce a 1-2 page 6-month progress report as well as a 2-3 page final report within 30-days of completing the project.

Awards may be up to $25,000 each. The number of projects awarded will depend on quality of applications and the availability of funds.

Key Dates

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<th>Cycle 1</th>
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<tr>
<td>Application Due Date</td>
<td>July</td>
<td>February</td>
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<tr>
<td>Estimated Award Announcements</td>
<td>August</td>
<td>March</td>
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<tr>
<td>Estimated Earliest Start Date</td>
<td>September</td>
<td>April</td>
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*Specific dates will be available when RFAs for current fiscal year are released.*
Allowable Costs
The award(s) should be used for postdoctoral fellow or graduate student salary support only. You must also provide evidence that the balance of salary will be covered from mentor(s) grant activity.

Format
Proposals should be submitted in one PDF file and include the following items:

Application Components:

1. **Application Face Page** (2 pages). Complete the application’s face page (see template Application Face Page) and be sure to include a 100 to 150 word abstract typed in 11-point Arial font.

2. **Narrative** (2-page limit). The collaborative research project narrative must include the following content: (1) Hypothesis (2) Specific Aims, (3) Background and Significance, (4) Innovation (5) Research Plan/Experimental approach.

3. **Human Subjects** or **Vertebrate Animals** (if applicable) – half page each (* see below)

4. **Literature Cited** (No page limit).

5. **Biographical Sketches** (new NIH format) Provide complete bio-sketches in NIH specific format for applicant and mentor(s). A modified personal statement is not necessary for this application.

6. **Budget and Budget Justification**. The application must include a budget outlining salary support requested and justification that the remainder of salary will be covered by mentor(s) grant activity.

* Proposals involving human subjects must have approval from the School of Medicine HRRC prior to funding.

* Proposals utilizing laboratory animals must submit a completed Laboratory Animal Utilization form prior to funding.

Application Process

1. Proposals should be submitted electronically in one PDF by 5 PM on the due date to UNMCC-PilotProgram@salud.unm.edu. Late applications will not be accepted but additional calls may be issued if there are insufficient applications for the first call.

2. Application narratives should not exceed 2 single-spaced, typewritten pages. Note that the face page, references, biographical sketches, and budgets are not included in this page limit. Additional supportive attachments are allowed, but they must be pertinent (i.e. protocols, IRB/IACUC approvals, letters of support, etc.).

   - Complete the face page in the template provided (Application Face Page).
   - The required font for the proposal is 11-point Arial.
   - Margins must be at least 0.50 inches wide on all four sides of each page.
   - Attach biographical sketches (new NIH format) for all key research personnel.
   - If available, please attach copies of the IRB approval and approved protocols for the project. All applicants are encouraged to submit IRB applications at the same time as the funding application due the potentially long time-line for IRB approval. Funds will not be released without IRB approval.
3. Incomplete proposals or those that exceed the page limits (not including attachments) will not be considered.

4. The applications will be reviewed by UNMCCC Senior Leadership and invited content-expert members as needed.

**Application Review Process**

The applications will be reviewed by two or more reviewers using the NIH 1-9 scoring system based on the review criteria described above. After discussion, the applications will be assigned an overall score and ranked.

Based on their ranking, applications recommended for further consideration will be selected. Applications recommended for further consideration will be evaluated by the UNMCCC Senior Leadership and then selected for funding.

Priority will be given to applications that enhance the development of research programs of new and junior Cancer Center members, as well as those that enable existing members to develop new areas of research and/or establish collaborations between Cancer Center members. The following additional criteria will be considered in the review process:

1. Scientific merit and feasibility
2. Technical soundness
3. Innovation
4. Track record of applicants (publications, funding, awards/honors)
5. Compatibility with the scientific goals and strategic plan of the Cancer Center’s research programs and clinical working groups
6. Plan for obtaining extramural funding and description of how the pilot project will contribute to this

Each reviewer will assign a score of 1 (exceptional) to 9 (poor) for each of the standard NIH criteria, considering all of the above criteria.

**Selection of Awardees**

The UNMCCC Senior Leadership and other ad hoc reviewers will review all applications and make the selection of awardees. Applications will be assessed in the context of broad Center goals and the criteria outlined above. Proposals with the best (i.e., lowest) mean priority scores will be considered for funding. Proposed budgets will be scrutinized and may be reduced at the discretion of the Cancer Center Senior Leadership. The maximum award is $30,000 for one year. Funding for a second year may be possible and will be contingent on productivity during the initial funding period and competition with new applications.

Applicants will be notified of award status upon senior leadership approval.

**Award Management**

If awardees apply for and receive an additional year of funding, second year payments are contingent upon receipt of progress reports and publications and on their approval by the Senior Leadership. The progress report at the end of the first year of funding will be a component of a
new application for the second year of funding. All funds must be spent within the 12 month period; unused funds will be returned to the central Cancer Center budget for redistribution during the next budget cycle. If the Senior Leadership terminate an award for non-compliance or non-performance, remaining balances will be returned to the Cancer Center budget for redistribution within the next award cycle.

Change In Status Of Awardee
Awards must remain solely with the designated awardee and cannot be transferred to any other personnel. If a recipient decides to discontinue his or her work in the Cancer Center, the award will be terminated as described above, and unused funds will be returned to the UNMCCC. Likewise, if an investigator awardee changes institutions during the funding period, the award cannot be transferred and the remaining balance will be returned to the central UNMCCC budget.

Expectations of Award Recipients
Recipients of these awards are expected to actively participate in UNMCCC activities such as seminars, meetings, and retreats. Awardees will be expected to present their research findings at an applicable UNMCCC retreats and/or meetings if requested. All correspondence should be sent to UNMCC-PilotProgram@salud.unm.edu including:

- All required progress reports (6-month, and final), and all additional requests for updates for the Cancer Center Senior Leadership, and/or Administration.
- A financial accounting of project funds.
- Annual reports for up to 5 years of funding and publications (with PMCID numbers) resulting from the award.

Additionally, recipients are expected to appropriately acknowledge the pilot funding. All material derived from the research supported by UNMCCC funding that is published or presented must carry a statement that credits the Cancer Center Support Grant P30CA118100 and Shared Resources, where appropriate. Publications resulting from this award fall under the NIH Public Access Policy and must obtain a valid PMCID. Publications that cite the Cancer Center Support Grant funding will be included in progress reports to NCI.

Any questions about this pilot program should be direct to Dr. Alan Tomkinson, ATomkinson@salud.unm.edu