

RELEASE DATE: November 3, 2021

LETTER OF INTENT DUE DATE: November 22, 2021

PROPOSAL DUE DATE: January 7, 2022

The **Chao Family Comprehensive Cancer Center (CFCCC) Anti-Cancer Challenge (ACC)** is now accepting applications for cancer-related pilot projects.

The overall objectives of the CFCCC Anti-Cancer Challenge Pilot Project Program are to: (1) increase the number of extramural peer-reviewed grant awards, particularly collaborative and multi-PI grants; (2) support the development of investigator-initiated early phase clinical trial protocols by clinical investigators, particularly interventional trials; (3) advance novel diagnostic or screening technologies, therapeutic molecules or devices, and bio-behavioral interventions from bench to bedside; and (4) advance research on cancer control, cancer population science, and pediatric cancers.

Eligibility:

- Principal Investigators should be UCI researchers (e.g. faculty or project scientists), CHOC Hyundai Cancer Institute-affiliated physicians, or collaborators at the Long Beach VA Medical Center.
- Projects must focus on cancer burden in the [CFCCC catchment area](#).
- Inter/intra-programmatic collaboration between Cancer Center members is strongly encouraged.
- Applicants should leverage [CFCCC Shared Resources](#) whenever possible.
- Priority will be given to early-stage investigators (as defined by the NIH early-stage investigator definition).

This competition will provide **awards of up to \$40,000 each** (total direct costs) along two tracks, with a specific emphasis on projects capable of **significant impact within 1-2 years**.

Applications are categorized into two tracks:

- **Track 1** projects are basic, translational, or population-based cancer science projects limited to one year. These applications are expected to generate pilot data necessary for obtaining peer-reviewed extramural grants (such as an NIH R01) or enable additional data collection to respond to prior critiques for resubmission applications (NIH A1 applications).
- **Track 2** projects support Early Phase Clinical Research, with the goal of launching an interventional investigator-initiated interventional clinical trial at UCI Health within a 2-year time frame. While Track 2 projects are not necessarily expected to lead to extramural peer-reviewed funding, pharmaceutical industry co-sponsorship is encouraged. These projects must be managed by the Stern Center for Cancer Clinical Trials & Research and must meet the following criteria:
 - Be developed in collaboration with a CFCCC Disease-Oriented Team or a multidisciplinary tumor board
 - Include a DOT-approved clinical protocol
 - Be capable of obtaining full regulatory approval (e.g., IRB) within 6 months of the award.

The CFCCC will prioritize funding for projects in the following areas:

- Research addressing [cancer health disparities](#) in the [CFCCC catchment area](#) of Orange County. This includes:
 - Cancers with unusually high rates of incidence, prevalence or mortality in the catchment area, such as melanoma, breast and lung cancer
 - Cancers disproportionately affecting racial or ethnic groups in Orange County, such as liver and gastric cancer in Hispanics and Asians, cervical, gall bladder, and young onset colorectal cancer in Hispanics
 - Projects that address *unique aspects* of a specific cancer burden in the catchment area (e.g., etiology of lung adenocarcinoma in Asian female never-smokers or of Ph-like B-lymphoblastic leukemia in Hispanics; basis for low HPV vaccination rates in different racial/ethnic groups; melanoma detection/prognosis in Hispanics)

- Projects that include community engagement in the research development, methods, analyses, and/or dissemination of results
- Collaborations between members of the Cancer Control Program with one or both of the other CFCCC research programs (Biotechnology, Imaging & Drug Development, and Systems, Pathways & Targets)
- Research supporting the development of an Investigator-Initiated Trial in the detection or prevention of cancer, with the ultimate goal of obtaining extramural funding
- Collaborations involving [Disease-Oriented Teams](#) or multidisciplinary tumor boards that seek to advance a novel diagnostic or screening technology, therapeutic molecule or device, or bio-behavioral intervention to a clinical trial
- Basic, translational or investigator-initiated clinical research on cancers impacting the pediatric and adolescent/young adult population

Details on catchment area demographics and cancer incidence and mortality can be found at: <https://youtu.be/5yPWuDd-Ygo>.

GUIDELINES

A. PI Eligibility

- An individual cannot serve as a PI on more than one application.
- Principal Investigators should be UCI researchers (e.g. faculty or project scientists), CHOC Hyundai Cancer Institute-affiliated physicians, or collaborators at the Long-Beach VA.
- The PI of the award is required to be a CFCCC Member or Associate Member at the time of award.

B. Application Components

a. Letter of Intent

- Due by 5pm PST on November 22, 2021
- Should be emailed to: cfcccadmin@hs.uci.edu.
- Please save the file as: *Lastname_ACC LOI_YYYY-MM-DD*
- The letter should include:
 - Project Title
 - Indication regarding if you plan a Track 1 or Track 2 application
 - A list of key personnel (Name, academic rank, department affiliation, email address)
 - An abstract not to exceed 30 lines of text. Must include a description of the research design and methods for achieving the stated goals, as well as a project's broad, long-term objectives and specific aims.
- Letters of intent are not binding and will be used to select reviewers for full applications.

b. Full Application

- Due by 5pm PST on January 7, 2022
- Should be emailed to: cfcccadmin@hs.uci.edu.
- Please save the file as: *Lastname_ACC LOI_YYYY-MM-DD*
- Complete the Application Form available on our website.
- The application form consists of the following:
 - Project detail cover sheet
 - Scientific Abstract (limited to 30 lines of text)
 - Lay Audience Summary (3-4 sentences)
 - Research Strategy (limited to 3 pages)
 - Bibliography/References Cited
 - Detailed Budget & Budget Justification
 - NIH-formatted Biosketches for Key Personnel

- Resubmission applications are given an additional ½ page to discuss changes in their application in response to previous reviewer critiques.

C. Timeline

- RFA released: November 3, 2021
- Letter of Intent due: November 22, 2021
- Applications are due: January 7, 2022
- Scientific Merit Review: January 2022
- Award decisions are released: February 14, 2022
- Earliest start date of funding: March 1, 2022

CI. Review Criteria

- Applications will be peer reviewed in accordance with NIH criteria with explicit emphasis placed on the near-term impact (i.e., within 1-2 years).
- Applicants will receive a copy of the review comments in an anonymous format.
- Projects addressing priority areas (above) will be scored more favorably
- Funding priority will also be given to Early-Stage Investigators (ESI), as determined by the NIH ESI definition.
- Projects that extend basic science to a clinical or translational capacity, utilize CFCCC Shared Resources, collaborate with DOTs, or involve significant new collaborations will be ranked more favorably.

CII. Regulatory Approvals

- All projects involving human subjects must have IRB approval prior to the release of funding. If sufficient progress in obtaining regulatory approvals has not been made within 6 months after award date, the CFCCC may withdraw funding for the award.
- All projects involving animal subjects must have appropriate IACUC approvals prior to the release of funding.

CIII. Budgets

- Awards are limited to \$40,000 of total direct costs. As these are gift funds, no indirect costs will be awarded.
- Applications are limited to one year of support for Track 1 projects and 2 years of support for Track 2 projects.
- Unallowable costs: PI salaries (salaries for project staff are allowable), large equipment (e.g., >\$5K), travel, and indirect costs.
- Co-funding is allowable and may be described in the application. However, co-funding is not a requirement of this RFA.
- Funds should be fully spent within the award period, as no-cost extensions will be granted in limited circumstances and are limited to 6 months. All no-cost extensions must be requested in writing and will be reviewed by the Cancer Center Director.
- Any post-award changes to Key Personnel require prior approval from Cancer Center Administration.

CIV. Reporting & Donor Engagement

- Progress reports are due 12 months from the start date of the award. For awards exceeding one-year, annual progress reports are due until the project has finished. Additionally, Cancer Center Administration will track the outcomes of each award for a period of 5 years to determine the return on investment (which is a requirement of federal and philanthropic funding).
- Awardees may be asked to meet with donors and provide updates at philanthropic events.
- Awardees have the option to present a 15-20 minute “chalk talk” to a peer-colleague committee at the CFCCC Annual Scientific Retreat held in September of each year. Chalk talks are intended to help grantees prepare for extramural research grant submissions.