

Indiana University Melvin and Bren Simon Comprehensive Cancer Center
ANNOUNCEMENT

A Request for Pilot Project Proposals with a Focus on Community Outreach and Engagement

IU Simon Comprehensive Cancer Center is inviting proposals for pilot/feasibility research projects focused on how demographics, comorbidities (obesity, diabetes, hypertension etc.) and behaviors (tobacco use, screening, preventive measures such as vaccination, diet and exercise) affect cancer risk, diagnosis and treatment and survivorship. Special consideration is given to the cancers with the highest incidence and morbidities in our catchment area (lung, colorectal, prostate, breast, pancreas and cervical) with the ultimate goal of eliminating cancer's burden in Indiana and beyond.

The duration of this pilot funding is one year, and the budget should not exceed \$50,000. The principal investigator must be an Affiliate, Research Track, Associate or Full member of IUSCCC. Priority is given to proposals that include more than one research program or include patient advocates as part of the research team. Awardees will be required to present the findings of their research in a community setting. Members of the COE Office will assist in identifying and organizing the meeting, as well as help you tailor the communication of your results to ensure they are accessible and relevant to the community.

Applicants must submit a one-page letter of intent (LOI) briefly describing the proposed project, including the study aims and hypotheses/research questions and how the project links a cancer issue in the community with a comorbidity or risk factor. Upon evaluation of the LOIs, selected applicants will be asked to submit a full application.

We are particularly interested in, and priority will be given to, applications from investigators who, with this additional support, are likely to obtain extramural peer-reviewed funding. Applicants may have received prior or current extramural research funding, but the proposed project should clearly be separate from previous/current funded project.

Applications will be completed via WebCAMP. A link to the application will be sent after an applicant's Letter of Intent has been approved. When completing your application, please be sure that you are using Google Chrome and select "IUSCCC" for the Center at the WebCAMP login page. For non-IU applicants this is considered external funding and signatures must be obtained from your representative institutions. Please be sure to allow time to obtain the needed signatures for submission.

Format for full proposal:

- A. Abstract (500 words)
- B. Lay Summary (1 paragraph)
- C. Specific Aims (**One Page**)
 1. Problem
 2. Aims and Hypotheses
 3. Outcomes
- D. Significance (**5-page Limit Starts Here**)
 1. Importance of problem to field
 2. How will project increase scientific knowledge, clinical practice etc.
 3. How will this lead to future funding
 4. Is this proposal related to the cancer burden experienced by our medically underserved populations?
- E. Investigators
 1. Is there adequate expertise to support this study
- F. Innovation
 1. How does the project challenge current research or practice paradigms
 2. Describe novel theoretical concepts, approaches, methodologies
- G. Approach
 1. Overall strategy, methodology, data collection, measures, interventions, theory and sample, power and data analyses.
- H. Preliminary Studies

- I. Relevance to Community Outreach and Engagement
- J. Do the investigators integrate considerations for communities with limited access to healthcare or resources and populations with elevated health needs
- K. Plans for application to external funding
- L. Translational potential (**5-Page Limit Ends Here**)
- M. Budget: A detailed budget and justification must be attached. Proposals should not include percent effort (salary) for faculty.
- N. Biosketches of all investigators
- O. Timeline

Applications will be reviewed by a select panel of cancer center members, community advocates, university content experts, and external reviewers as needed. Final funding decisions will be made by the IUSCCC Senior Leaders Committee, based on scientific review of applications and funding priorities.

Post Award Requirements:

Successful applicants will be required to:

- Participate as a mentor for one of the summer research programs, if appropriate, during the period your project is active
- Participate as a reviewer for at least one IUSCCC pilot funding mechanism during the period your project is active
- Take part in Cancer Research Day, either by sharing their research in the interactive poster session or participating as a volunteer judge
- Awardees are also required to report any publications and grants submitted and/or funded as a result of this pilot award to IUSCCC

Criteria for review:

1. Scientific merit:
 - a. Aims: Is this an important area of research? What is the potential impact? Are the Aims clearly stated?
 - b. Methods: Are the overall strategy, methodology, and analyses well-reasoned, scientifically rigorous, and appropriate to accomplish the aims of the project?
 - c. Significance: Is the importance of this proposal in an overall program of research clear? Will the project add value to science? Are the concepts, methods, or interventions rigorous and technically sound? Will this line of research lead to new findings that will impact health care? Does the proposal support future directions for health care and disease management? Does the proposal speak to the cancer burden experienced by our communities with limited access to healthcare or resources?
 - d. Innovation: How does the project challenge or shift current research or practice? Are there novel theoretical concepts, approaches, or methodologies and what are the advantages over existing methodologies?
 - e. Preliminary Studies: What prior studies have been conducted that are related to the current proposal?
2. Cancer and community engagement relevance
3. Evidence of multidisciplinary, intra-programmatic or inter-programmatic collaboration
4. Translation potential
5. Potential to lead to external funding: Does the proposal address an issue that is part of, or will lead to, a sustained program of research that will be of interest to external agencies?
6. Ability of investigators to conduct the study
7. Investigators with an active IUSCCC pilot project may submit only if the proposed work is an essential next step in their ongoing project
8. Success of prior completed IUSCCC-funded pilot projects lead by the PI of the current project being reviewed *

***Note: If the applicant has received previous pilot funding which has been completed, outcomes from that project will be evaluated and considered in this review. It is expected that all pilot funding**

will lead to submission of externally reviewed research grants. New investigators are strongly encouraged to apply.

The timetable is:

Letter of Intent:
Completed application:

December 1, 2025, at 5:00 pm
January 26, 2026, at 5:00pm

Completed LOI should be submitted to:

Vicki Clements
Project Management Specialist
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