

Indiana University Melvin and Bren Simon Comprehensive Cancer Center

ANNOUNCEMENT

A Request for Pilot Project Proposals from IUSCCC trainees (graduate students, post-docs, residents, and clinical fellows)

The IU Simon Comprehensive Cancer Center requests applications from trainees for pilot funding to support innovative research focused on cancer. The primary purpose of this funding opportunity is to provide training on proposal writing, grant review process, and, if funded, how to manage funds. Proposals may span cancer biology, early drug development, including target identification, new model systems development and all aspects of cancer prevention and control including population science and symptom management to name a few. Proposals that provide training in new technologies are strongly encouraged. This mechanism may not be used to support clinical trials. Funding is scheduled to begin in **May 2026**, subject to completion of administrative review.

Funding will be allocated from the IUSCCC and will be up to \$10,000. **Eligibility:** Mentors must be an IUSCCC member (at the level of Full or Associate member, Unaligned member or Affiliate member); trainees do not need to be IUSCCC members at the time of application submission but must have applied for trainee membership by the award funding date. Awardees are not eligible to apply for pilot funding in back-to-back cycles (Only awardees who received funding in 2023 or earlier are eligible). A progress report on the previously funded project will be required as part of your application package and will be requested separately via an online report in December 2028.

Those interested in applying **must submit a Notification of Intent to Apply by January 5th, 2026, by 5:00pm** with the following information:

- Your name, a draft title for your proposal, the name of your mentor and 1-2 sentences describing the project. This information will be used to help identify appropriate reviewers.
- Please send this information in an email to Vicki Clements at vlclemen@iu.edu

Final applications are due by **February 9th, 2026 at 5:00pm**. **The deadline is firm, and no extension will be granted.** The body of the proposal (Significance, Innovation and Approach) should not exceed four pages. Follow NIH guidelines and formatting. A budget should be included and is restricted for supplies and any IUSCCC core services; travel costs are not allowed. Budgets should be based on the experiments proposed in the application. It is expected that the proposed project and budget will be completed within 1 year (12 months). **Applications will be completed via WebCAMP. A link to the application will be sent after an applicant's Notice 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.

Required information for application package:

1. Abstract (500 words)
2. Aims (1 page)
3. Significance
4. Innovation
5. Approach
6. Budget
7. Budget justification (1 page)
8. A letter signed by the trainee and their mentor declaring that the proposal ideas and writing are trainee-driven, but the proposal received feedback from the mentor. Letter should include a mentoring plan to help the trainee to transition into an independent research career.
9. NIH biosketch for all team members (trainee, mentor and any collaborators on the project)
10. If you applied for funding through this mechanism in previously but did NOT receive funding, please include a 1-page response to the reviewer critiques. Your 1-page response to the previous critiques should be included at the beginning of the application package and does not count toward the four-page limit for the proposal.

An expert review committee comprising members of cancer center programs will review all proposals. Applicants are encouraged to attend review meeting to witness the review process. Final scoring and funding decision will be made in the absence of applicants. Both funded and unfunded applicants are encouraged to meet one of the Associate Directors of the cancer center to obtain feedback on the application and the review process. Final funding decisions will be made based on the review evaluations and rankings.

If awarded pilot funding through this mechanism, awardees will then need to work with Kaitlin Evans and use the ITRAC process to map the project. Awardees are required to report any publications and grants submitted and/or funded as a result of this pilot award to IUSCCC.

The timetable is:

Notice of Intent	January 5th, 2026, at 5pm (via email to Vicki)
Completed application	February 9th, 2026 (via WebCAMP)
Proposal Review	March 2026
Funding Start Date	May 2026

All questions should be directed to: **Hari Nakshatri** (hnakshat@iu.edu) or **Claire Walczak** (cwalczak@iu.edu).