

AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH GRANT SEED MONEY FOR PILOT PROJECTS IN CANCER RESEARCH

The USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center has available funds from the American Cancer Society (ACS) Institutional Research Grant (IRG-22-144-60) to provide funding up to \$40,000 for beginning cancer research projects. The primary purpose of these grants is to serve as “seed” money to permit the initiation of promising new projects or novel ideas by junior faculty. Support of investigators who have a competitive national research grant or who have received prior support from the American Cancer Society Institutional Research Grant is not permitted. Projects in any area of cancer research – basic, clinical, epidemiological, and behavioral, etc. - will be considered.

We are strongly encouraging applications from Under-Represented Minority faculty based on NIH definition of “Populations Underrepresented in the Extramural Scientific Workforce” by race and ethnicity (<https://diversity.nih.gov/about-us/population-underrepresented>). *The following racial and ethnic groups have been shown to be underrepresented in biomedical research: Blacks or African Americans, Hispanics or Latinos, American Indians or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiians, and other Pacific Islanders (Samoan, Guamanian or Chamorro, Fijian, Tongan, or Marshallese peoples).”*

Allocations are made based upon the recommendations of the ACS-IRG Scientific Review Committee of the Cancer Center after its review of each application. Review of proposals takes approximately six to eight weeks. Only one application per applicant is allowed. Awards are made for a one-year period. Anticipated start date of funding is October 1, 2024. Please submit electronic version of your application (single PDF file) to the Cancer Center at acs-irg@usc.edu **no later than 12PM PT on Monday, July 15, 2024.**

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENT:

1. Principal Investigator must be a USC junior faculty member who is within the first six years of independent research or faculty appointment at the start date of the proposed IRG allocation, October 1, 2024.
2. Principal Investigator must not have an active or prior competitive national research grant (e.g., NIH K99/R00, R03, R01, R21, DOD, etc.). Recipients of career development (K) awards intended for salary are eligible.
3. Recipients of IRG pilot project grants are not required to be United States (U.S.) citizens. However, any applicant for IRG pilot project funding who is not a U.S. citizen must hold a visa that will allow them to remain in the U.S. long enough to complete the IRG pilot project and provide the appropriate documentation at the time of submission.
4. IRB/IACUC Approvals – ACS-IRG funding will not be released without IRB and/or IACUC approval(s), if applicable to your project.

FORMATTING THE APPLICATION

a. American Cancer Society (ACS) Forms

The submitted version must be on American Cancer Society forms and be easily readable considering that the local ACS-IRG Reviewers are reading many applications.

b. Page Length

See individual page instructions. Please use single-spaced text throughout the application.

c. Type size, Margins, and Page Numbering

Use ARIAL font, no less than 11-point type. A 9-point Arial font type may be used for figures, legends, and tables. The margins of your text should be at least 1/2 inch all around. All pages must be consecutively numbered on the upper right-hand corner (do not use page designations such as "4A" or "4B").

PREPARING THE APPLICATION

a. Face Page

Complete Face Page form. Please note: your departmental chair must provide signature for the “Verification of Applicant Eligibility by Department Chair”.

b. Biographical Sketch

Complete ACS-IRG biographical form included in the template.

c. Abstract

Complete ACS-IRG form included in template. Provide a brief (300-500 words) summary of the research, including Background, Objective/Hypothesis, Specific Aim(s), Study Design, and Cancer Relevance. The final sentence of the abstract should summarize the focus and cancer relevance of the project in non-scientific terms.

d. Description of Research Proposed

Five (5) single-spaced pages maximum (including tables, figures, graphs) are allocated for this section. The requested information should be under the following headings:

- A) Specific Aims
- B) Methodology
- C) Significance and Relevance to Cancer, and
- D) Future Directions and Funding Prospects

Please note that References (limited to two pages) do not count towards the 5-page limit. No appendices allowed.

e. Budget/Budget Justification

Complete Budget Justification Proposed form and the Detailed Budget for Initial Budget Period form. See ACS-IRG Expenditures allowed/not allowed listed below. Provide details on the proposed budget and justifications for the project period. Allocations are restricted to a maximum of \$40,000 direct costs for **one year only**. List percentage of effort for ALL individuals who will be involved in the project under personnel, even if no funding is requested. Indicate if cost sharing will be provided from other funding sources to complete the project and provide source of funding and amount. One additional page for budget justification may be included. Indirect costs are not allowable.

ACS EXPENDITURES ALLOWED

- Research supplies and animal maintenance
- Technical assistance
- Domestic travel when necessary to carry out the proposed research program.
- Publication costs, including reprints.
- Costs of computer time
- Special fees (pathology, photography, etc.)
- Stipends for graduate students and postdoctoral assistants if their role is to promote and sustain the project presented by the junior faculty member.
- Equipment costing less than \$2,000. (Special justification is necessary for items exceeding this amount)
- Registration fees at scientific meetings

ACS EXPENDITURES NOT ALLOWED

- Salary of principal investigator (IRG Chair or pilot project recipient)
- Honoraria and travel expenses for visiting lecturers.
- Secretarial/administrative salaries
- Student tuition and student fees including graduate and undergraduate; however, tuition is an allowable expense for the principal investigator of a Mentored Research Scholar Grant.
- Foreign travel (special consideration given for attendance at scientific meetings held in Canada)
- Books and periodicals except for required texts for coursework in the approved training plan for Clinician Scientists Development Grants.
- Membership dues
- Office and laboratory furniture
- Office equipment and supplies
- Rental of office or laboratory space

- Recruiting and relocation expenses
- Non-medical services to patients (travel to a clinical site or patient incentives are allowable expenses)
- Construction, renovation, or maintenance of buildings/laboratories

f. Additional Information

Complete the Underrepresented Minority, Mentor(s), and Narrative sections. Please follow the instructions listed on the application form.

Revision/Resubmission Instructions:

Applicants are eligible for **ONE** revision/resubmission of their original proposal. Applicants **must** submit a letter with their revised proposal to the Review Committee that summarizes the substantial additions, deletions, and changes in the newly submitted proposal. The letter must include response to the criticisms and issues raised in the critiques. Changes to the research plan should produce a significant change in direction and approach to the research project. Hence, a new application would include substantial changes in all sections of the Description of Research Proposed, particularly the Specific Aims, Methodology and Future Directions sections.

Competitive Renewal Instructions:

If your proposal for an ACS-IRG pilot project was funded in FY24, you **may** be eligible for a second year of funding. If you are seeking a second year of funding, include in your proposal a progress report, up to one page in length, describing the progress made in relation to the specific aims of the original submitted proposal, as well as a projection of funds to be expended and unexpended by the end of year 1 of the project. These requests for a second year of funding will be competitively reviewed. New projects unrelated to the first year of funding will not be considered, per ACS grant terms and conditions.