



HIV-ASSOCIATED MALIGNANCY RESEARCH

Call for Pilot Project Applications

Up to \$49,000 for 1 year

Deadline: Friday, January 16, 2009

Sponsors: Moores UCSD Cancer Center and UCSD Center for AIDS Research

Purpose:

UCSD Center for AIDS Research (CFAR) and Moores UCSD Cancer Center (“awarding Center[s]”) have received supplemental funding from the National Cancer Institute (NCI) to award multiple pilot project grants for HIV-associated malignancy research. Through this mechanism the NCI seeks to expand our knowledge of the pathogenesis of HIV-associated malignancies and foster multidisciplinary collaborations between Cancer Center and CFAR investigators. As a joint solicitation, all proposals will be reviewed and awarded by a collaborative group of CFAR and Cancer Center investigators.

This funding mechanism encourages junior investigators to acquire independent research projects and peer-reviewed funding, and provides a constructive educational mechanism for new investigators entering HIV-associated malignancies research, and for junior investigators to generate more competitive research proposals. Established investigators currently focusing in other areas are encouraged to apply their expertise to the HIV-associated malignancies field. Pilot studies may include basic, epidemiologic, translational and clinical research on the etiology, pathogenesis, prevention, and management of AIDS-defining and non-AIDS-defining malignancies.

The CFAR cohort of patients includes individuals, who have been followed for periods up to several years. Blood mononuclear cells and serum specimens have been carefully collected and collated by the CFAR-supported cores. A number of the patients have subsequently developed not only AIDS-defining malignancies, but also a variety of other cancers. The cohort offers potential opportunities to study genetic factors that may predispose to cancer, biomarkers in blood at single or multiple time points, and informatic approaches to understanding carcinogenesis. The UCSD Center for AIDS Research and the Moores UCSD Cancer Center are seeking novel approaches to understand cancer evolution, from creative physicians and scientists who have not previously worked in the HIV field. Preliminary data will not necessarily be needed if the idea is novel and testable.

It is anticipated that supported research will lead to the development of novel diagnostic, preventive and therapeutic strategies for both AIDS-defining and non-AIDS-defining malignancies in HIV-infected populations. Proposed studies can target diverse populations across the spectrum of age and gender in national and international settings. Proposals should address health disparities, including women and minorities.

Research topics might include, but are not limited to:

- Role of oncogenic viruses and/or HIV in the induction of AIDS-related malignancies
- Impact of prolonged immunosuppression on the development of AIDS-defining and non-AIDS-defining malignancies
- Impact of incomplete or failed responses to HAART on the development of malignancies
- Host genetic susceptibility to AIDS-related malignancies in patients with HIV infection

- Increased infectious burden at mucosal and epithelial barrier sites, causing chronic inflammation
- DNA mutations or epigenetic changes associated with HAART
- Impaired immune surveillance of emerging tumors

Eligibility:

- Eligible applicants **must be faculty** at UCSD or UCSD CFAR participating institutions (San Diego VA Healthcare System, Salk Institute for Biological Studies, The Scripps Research Institute, and La Jolla Institute for Allergy and Immunology) and must be members of either the Moores UCSD Cancer Center or the UCSD CFAR. Priority will be given to junior and less-well-funded investigators.
- Pilot project applications must be led by Cancer Center or CFAR members and represent a true collaboration. Awards from the CFAR require that the PI be a CFAR member in collaboration with a Cancer Center member. Awards from the Cancer Center require the PI to be a Cancer Center member in collaboration with a CFAR member.
- Post-doctoral fellows are not eligible to apply, nor may these grants be used for salary support of post-doctoral fellows.
- Assistant Project Scientists are eligible to apply.
- Investigators may only submit one application per cycle as the Principal Investigator and may only receive one approved application during this supplemental award period.
- Researchers who are identified as co-investigators can participate on more than one project.
- Resubmission of an unfunded proposal is allowed during this 2nd cycle of Academic Year 2008-2009, and must address all Reviewer criticisms.
- Projects involving human or animal subjects must obtain appropriate regulatory approval prior to receiving funding.
- Successful applicants will be expected to generate a written progress report that forms the basis of the awarding Centers' annual reports to NIH.
- Awarded investigators are required to provide documentation of publications and peer-reviewed funding that result from these pilot project grant awards, and to similarly cite Cancer Center and CFAR support in publications featuring data obtained through this funding mechanism.

Budgetary Guidelines:

- The maximum awarded per application will be \$49,000 (direct costs). Investigators at The Scripps Research Institute will have a maximum award of \$39,500 (direct costs).
- Funding is for one calendar year only. We anticipate that awards for the January 16, 2009 deadline will be made by March 2009.
- Any monies remaining after 12 months will be returned to the awarding Center.
- The awarding Center will establish an index number or subcontract, as appropriate. PIs are responsible to monitor and manage their funds. Overspending on the award, which is not allowed, must be repaid by the PI.
- Should extramural funding be awarded to a successful applicant for the same project, unused pilot project funds must be returned to the awarding Center.
- PI salary support is allowed.
- Travel and equipment is not allowed.

Application Procedure:

- The HIV-associated Malignancy Pilot Project forms package is available at <http://cfar.ucsd.edu> and <http://cancer.ucsd.edu/Research/index.asp>.
- The Research Plan must not exceed five pages (not including references), and submitted as a single .pdf file, including additional information such as support letters to: ncipilot@ucsd.edu.
- The proposal must contain a statement with sufficient information to adequately evaluate the representation of women and minorities regarding study subjects or clinical study material.
- Applications must be received by 4:00 pm on Friday, January 16, 2009.

Review Process and Criteria:

- A joint review committee will be established, including members of both the Cancer Center and CFAR. Grants will be distributed among the reviewers according to expertise and lack of conflict of interest. Each grant will receive at least two primary reviews. Approximately three weeks after the submission, all applicants will receive email notification about their proposal status, accompanied by reviewers' comments.
- The review process will consider scientific merit of primary importance; higher review expectations will be applied to senior and well-funded investigators. Reviewers will assess the significance of the question to be addressed, the qualifications of investigators, validity of experimental approach, innovation, human subject aspects, feasibility within the funding timeframe, and budget justification. Reviewers will also assess whether the application fulfills the Cancer Center and CFAR objectives for collaborative translational research.

Submission Deadlines:

Applications for 1-year pilot projects are due by 4:00 pm on Friday, January 16, 2009.

Questions:

Please contact us at ncipilot@ucsd.edu or (858) 534-5545 for additional information or assistance with questions regarding these pilot grant applications.