

**Fred & Pamela Buffett Cancer Center American Cancer Society Institutional Research Grant
Seed Grant Program
2024 Request for Applications**

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Fred & Pamela Buffett Cancer Center (BCC) is soliciting applications for American Cancer Society-supported seed grants. The American Cancer Society Institutional Research Grant (ACS IRG) is a block grant that allows the BCC to award funding to early-career independent investigators who do not have current national peer-reviewed research grant support. This seed grant program is intended to support junior faculty in initiating cancer research projects, so they can generate preliminary results that will enable them to compete successfully for national funding in all areas of cancer research.

ELIGIBILITY

- University of Nebraska investigators at the level of Assistant Professor or equivalent, who are eligible to apply for independent national competitive research grants but do not hold an NIH R01-equivalent grant.
- The investigator must be within six years of their first independent faculty appointment and have a commitment from their institution for salary, space, and appropriate research resources.
- All applicants must be members of the Buffett Cancer Center. Faculty who are interested in submitting an application but who are not currently Cancer Center members are encouraged to apply for membership at: https://unmc.formstack.com/forms/buffett_cancer_center_membership_application
- If not a United States citizen, noncitizen national, or permanent resident, an applicant must have a visa that will allow them to remain in the U.S. throughout the grant period and long enough to fulfill all obligations of the award.
- Previous recipients of BCC ACS IRG seed grants are ineligible to apply.
- Applicants from populations that are underrepresented in the U.S. biomedical, clinical, behavioral, and social sciences research enterprise are strongly encouraged to submit proposals. Refer to the [Notice of NIH's Interest in Diversity \[NOT-OD-20-031\]](#) for definitions and information about underrepresented populations. Additionally, the American Cancer Society has made targeted supplemental funding available via this mechanism for members of underrepresented populations.

FUNDS AVAILABLE

One-year seed grants of up to \$60,000 are available. Up to four awards will be made.

APPLICATION GUIDELINES AND RESTRICTIONS

- Investigators are limited to one application.
- The requested project budget must be in increments of \$5,000, and total budget requests may not exceed \$60,000. Below is a table listing allowable and unallowable expenditures, per ACS IRG regulations:

Expenditures Allowed	Expenditures Not Allowed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ^ 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 (<i>Special justification is necessary for items exceeding this amount.</i>) ^ Registration fees at scientific meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ^ Foreign travel (<i>Special consideration given for attendance at scientific meetings held in Canada.</i>) ^ Secretarial/administrative salaries ^ Membership dues ^ Student tuition and fees ^ Books and periodicals ^ Office and laboratory furniture ^ Office equipment and supplies ^ Rental of office or laboratory space ^ Construction, renovation, or maintenance of buildings/laboratories ^ Recruiting and relocation expenses ^ Non-medical services to patients (<i>Travel to a clinical site or patient incentives are allowable.</i>) ^ Salary of principal investigator ^ Honoraria and travel expenses for visiting lecturers ^ Indirect costs

▪ **Regulatory Approvals:**

- For projects involving human subjects, vertebrate animals, and/or select agents research, prior IRB, IACUC, and/or IBC approval is not required at the time of application submission. However, it is expected that the appropriate protocols will be submitted so approval is imminent at the anticipated project start date. All applicable institutional approvals must be in place before award funds can be released. *IRB protocols must be submitted for review within 30 days of notice of award and final IRB approval provided to Cancer Center administration within 60 days of NoA.*

- For projects involving cancer studies being conducted at UNMC, the relevant protocols must be submitted simultaneously to the IRB and to the BCC Scientific Review Committee (SRC). Contact the BCC Protocol Review and Monitoring System (PRMS) office at 402-559-4232 with questions regarding this process.

APPLICATION FORMAT AND SUBMISSION

The BCC ACS IRG Seed Grant Program 2024 Application template must be used.

Required Application Components:

1. **Application Template**
2. **Underrepresented Populations form**
3. **Detailed Budget (PHS 398 Form Page 4) with Budget Justification**
4. **NIH Biosketch** for the Principal Investigator (*5-page limit*)
5. **Other Research Support** for the Principal Investigator

Note: Other Support demonstrates active and pending support; the purpose of this document is to allow for assessment of an investigator's overall research commitment and to identify any overlap with existing projects.

General Formatting Requirements: Minimum 0.5-inch margins and Arial 11-point font are required. (Smaller type size may be used for figures and legends.)

Submission Instructions and Deadline

All applications must be submitted as a single PDF to buffettcancercenter@unmc.edu no later than **11:59 PM CT on Friday, December 13, 2024**. Please include the last name of the project Principal Investigator in the subject line of the email. Proposals not adhering to the page limitations, formatting requirements, and/or application deadline will not be reviewed. Final funding decisions are expected to be made in December/January.

APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS

Applications will be reviewed by members of the Buffett Cancer Center ACS IRG Review Committee, which is made up of faculty representing a majority of UNMC departments that are involved in various aspects of cancer research. These individuals have been asked to serve on the Review Committee based on their cancer research focus and expertise, home department, and academic rank to ensure that the Committee has adequate representation and input from an appropriate cross-section of the NU cancer research community.

APPLICATION REVIEW CRITERIA

- Reviewers will be instructed to consider scientific merit, innovation, and feasibility in the application scoring criteria.
- Other review factors that will be considered include appropriateness of the project for the ACS IRG seed grant mechanism, as well as the likelihood of future research productivity of the investigator.
- The BCC has a special interest in submissions that address the following **Special Areas of Emphasis (SAEs)**. The purpose of identifying these SAEs is to encourage submissions in these focus areas:
 1. **Community-Engaged Research:** The BCC and its Office of Community Outreach and Engagement (COE) are charged with the development of research that incorporates the input of and directly serves the needs of the population within our catchment area, which includes the entire state of Nebraska. Projects demonstrating evidence of interaction with the BCC COE are a funding priority. Refer to the [COE webpage](#) for additional information and resources.
 2. **Priority Cancers:** The BCC COE has identified several cancers that pose significant incidence, morbidity and/or mortality burdens and disparities in Nebraska and represent important opportunities to improve cancer outcomes for our catchment population. Projects focusing on the following cancers will be prioritized for funding:
 - **Sites for comprehensive growth:** **Brain, Breast, GI (Colorectal and Pancreas), Lung, and Prostate**
 - **Sites for additional growth:** **Heme Malignancies and Melanoma**
 3. **Strategic Thematic Areas:** The BCC is strategically focused on the following four transcenter research themes and applications relating to these themes are strongly encouraged:
 - **Rural and Frontier Health**
 - **Obesity and Nutrition**
 - **Novel Cancer Therapeutic Interventions**
 - **Precision Prevention and Medicine**

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For questions regarding this funding opportunity, please contact Buffett Cancer Center Administration at buffettcancercenter@unmc.edu.

FRED AND PAMELA BUFFETT CANCER CENTER
ACS IRG SEED GRANT PROGRAM 2024 RFA
APPLICATION TEMPLATE

PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Title:

Principal Investigator:

Name and Credentials:

Title:

Department / Division:

Institution:

Principal Investigator Citizenship Status:

Check appropriate box:

U.S. citizen or U.S. national

U.S. permanent resident

U.S. visa holder* (*Must have visa that will remain active throughout the proposed project period.)

Principal Investigator Eligibility Certification:

Applicants must be within six years of their first independent faculty appointment as a full-time NU faculty member at the level of assistant professor or equivalent with appropriate committed research resources, and not hold competitive national research grant funding active at the proposed project start date.

Check boxes to certify the PI meets each of the following eligibility criteria:

Full-time NU faculty member in first independent appointment at the level of assistant professor

Current independent appointment began no more than six years ago

Do not have active national research grant funding and will not have such funding as of Feb. 1, 2025

Principal Investigator Mentor:

Successful candidates will identify and work closely with an appropriate institutional mentor.

Mentor Name and Credentials:

Mentor Title:

Mentor Department / Division:

Institution:

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED RESEARCH

Scientific Abstract:

500-word maximum.

Lay Abstract, including how the proposal addresses the needs of the FPBCC catchment area:

500-word maximum.

Research Plan:

A. Specific Aims

1-page maximum.

B. Background Significance and Innovation

C. Preliminary Studies, if applicable

D. Approach

6-page maximum for sections B-D.

E. References

UNDERREPRESENTED POPULATIONS INFORMATION

Underrepresented Populations in the U.S. Biomedical, Clinical, Behavioral, and Social Sciences Research Enterprise

Despite advancements in scientific research, some populations have not had access to cutting-edge research and training opportunities and do not participate fully in the U.S. sciences research workforce. These underrepresented populations are identified using an evidence-based approach that considers reports from the National Science Foundation, national data sets, and data from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The National Institutes of Health encourages institutions to diversify their student and faculty populations to enhance the participation of individuals from groups that are underrepresented in the biomedical, clinical, behavioral, and social sciences. Innovation and scientific discovery are enhanced by including individuals from diverse groups, including those that are underrepresented in the U.S. sciences research enterprise. Underrepresented groups include individuals from certain racial / ethnic groups, individuals with disabilities, individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds, and women.

The National Cancer Institute also requires NCI-designated cancer centers to develop a Plan to Enhance Diversity. NIH and NCI are committed to ensuring that all Americans share equally in the medical advances that result from cancer research and that current disparities in the burden of cancer are reduced or eliminated. Diversity creates stronger cancer science and is a critical step in reducing the cancer burden for a diverse America.

Definitions and more information about underrepresented populations are available in the [Notice of NIH's Interest in Diversity \(NOT-OD-20-031\)](#) and on the [NIH Diversity in Extramural Programs website](#), and more information about Plans to Enhance Diversity in NCI-designated cancer centers is available in the [Cancer Center Support Grant program announcement](#).

1. Is the Principal Investigator a member of an underrepresented population or populations per [NOT-OD-20-031](#)?

- Yes
 No
 Prefer not to answer

2. If "Yes" to Question 1, indicate which underrepresented population(s) by checking the appropriate box(es) below:

- A. Individuals from racial and ethnic groups that have been shown by the National Science Foundation to be underrepresented in health-related sciences on a national basis** (see data at <http://www.nsf.gov/statistics/showpub.cfm?TopID=2&SubID=27> and the report [Women, Minorities, and Persons with Disabilities in Science and Engineering](#)). 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 Natives, Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders. In addition, it is recognized that underrepresentation can vary from setting to setting; individuals from racial or ethnic groups that can be demonstrated convincingly to be underrepresented by the grantee institution should be encouraged to participate in NIH programs to enhance diversity. For more information on racial and ethnic categories and definitions, see the OMB Revisions to the Standards for Classification of Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity (<https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-1997-10-30/html/97-28653.htm>).
- B. Individuals with disabilities**, defined as those with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, as described in the [Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended](#). See NSF data at, <https://www.nsf.gov/statistics/2017/nsf17310/static/data/tab7-5.pdf>.
- C. Individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds**, defined as those who meet *two or more* of the following criteria:
1. Were or currently are homeless, as defined by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (Definition: <https://nche.ed.gov/mckinney-vento/>);
 2. Were or currently are in the foster care system, as defined by the Administration for Children and Families (Definition: <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/focus-areas/foster-care/>);
 3. Were eligible for the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Program for two or more years (Definition: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/income-eligibility-guidelines/>);
 4. Have/had no parents or legal guardians who completed a bachelor's degree (see <https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2018/2018009.pdf>);
 5. Were or currently are eligible for Federal Pell grants (Definition: <https://www2.ed.gov/programs/fpg/eligibility.html>);
 6. Received support from the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) as a parent or child (Definition: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/wic-eligibility-requirements/>);
 7. Grew up in one of the following areas*:
 - a) a U.S. rural area, as designated by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Rural Health Grants Eligibility Analyzer (<https://data.hrsa.gov/tools/rural-health/>), or
 - b) a Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services-designated Low-Income and Health Professional Shortage Areas (qualifying zip codes are included in the file available at: <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-20-031.html>).

**Only one of the two possibilities in #7 can be used as a criterion for the disadvantaged background definition.*

Students from low socioeconomic (SES) status backgrounds have been shown to obtain bachelor's and advanced degrees at significantly lower rates than students from middle and high SES groups (see https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator_tva.asp), and are subsequently less likely to be represented in biomedical research. For background, see Department of Education data at, <https://nces.ed.gov/>; https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator_tva.asp; <https://www2.ed.gov/rschstat/research/pubs/advancing-diversity-inclusion.pdf>.

- D. Women in the biomedical workforce.** Literature shows that women from the above backgrounds (categories **A**, **B**, and **C**) face particular challenges at the graduate level and beyond in scientific fields. (See, e.g., From the NIH: A Systems Approach to Increasing the Diversity of Biomedical Research Workforce <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5008902/>).

Women have been shown to be underrepresented in doctorate-granting research institutions at senior faculty levels in most biomedical-relevant disciplines, and may also be underrepresented at other faculty levels in some scientific disciplines (See data from the National Science Foundation National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics: Women, Minorities, and Persons with Disabilities in Science and Engineering, special report available at <https://www.nsf.gov/statistics/2017/nsf17310/>, especially Table 9-23, describing science, engineering, and health doctorate holders employed in universities and 4-year colleges, by broad occupation, sex, years since doctorate, and faculty rank).

Upon review of NSF data, and scientific discipline or field related data, NIH encourages institutions to consider women for faculty-level, diversity-targeted programs to address faculty recruitment, appointment, retention, or advancement.