



Ponce Health Sciences University- Moffitt Cancer Center Partnership

U54 Partnership Pilot Research Project Application Guidelines

Overview

The Ponce Health Sciences University (PHSU) and the Moffitt Cancer Center (MCC) are recipients of a National Cancer Institute (NCI) Partnership to Advance Cancer Health Equity (PACHE) Award. This is also known as the U54 Partnership. PACHE partnerships are between Minority-Serving Institutions and NCI-designated Cancer Centers to understand and reduce cancer health disparities. The PHSU-MCC Partnership is making available Pilot Research Project (PRP) funding for eligible faculty members at the Ponce Health Sciences University and Moffitt Cancer Center. PRPs are targeted to develop as full research projects in the U54 PHSU-MCC Partnership or R-type grants, and to provide a mechanism for faculty development and increased cancer publications in peer-reviewed journals. Funded PRPs will have access to various Partnership resources including but not limited to PHSU-MCC Partnership Cores, scientific editor, and career enrichment activities for Early-stage investigators.

Eligibility

Each Pilot Research Project must be submitted as a collaboration between a faculty member from PHSU and a faculty member from MCC by submitting one joint application.

At MCC, only tenure/tenure-earning faculty members are eligible to apply for these awards. If institutional commitment to an applicant is unclear, we will request an institutional letter of support.

Funding Information

- Applicants may request **up to \$120,000** in direct costs for a one-year period, generally to be distributed equally between the two investigators (\$60,000 per institution). A second-year with an equal amount of funding is available contingent upon demonstrated scientific productivity.
- A maximum of 5 pilot research projects will be funded.

Proposal Guidelines

- There must be potential for the proposal to lead to a full project in the PHSU-MCC Partnership or to competitive peer-reviewed grants (NIH, ACS, DoD).
- Proposals should support research projects with the potential to lead to peer-reviewed publications and long-term external funding.
- Proposals can be in any area of cancer research (e.g., Basic, Translational, Pre-clinical, Psychosocial, or Outreach).
- Research conducted primarily at the PHSU may be in any area of cancer research and not necessarily limited to cancer disparities, but work conducted primarily at MCC must specifically address a cancer health disparity relevant to the Hispanic/Latino population.

- During the development of their proposals, investigators **must coordinate** with the Puerto Rico BioBank (PRBB) and Quantitative Sciences Core (QSC) for support in the development of the biobank, bioinformatics and biostatistics aspects of their proposal in order to determine feasibility and proper budget for the proposed services. **Please allow one (1) month prior to the application deadline for consultation with the PRBB and QSC.** (For PRBB Services, please email Douglas.Cress@moffitt.org and iflores@psm.edu For QSC services, please email Steven.Eschrich@moffitt.org and jduutil@psm.edu).
- Only one application per faculty member is permitted per cycle.

Format and Application Methods

An application is available on the Partnership website: www.phsu-moffitt.org.

An electronic copy of the proposal should be submitted **by 5:00 pm on March 16, 2020** to:

Sabrina Rodriguez at Moffitt Cancer Center (Sabrina.Rodriguez@moffitt.org) **and**
 Hannia Delgado at Ponce Health Sciences University (hdelgado@psm.edu)

Funded PRPs to start June 1, 2020.

Proposal Review

Proposals will be reviewed by the Partnership's Internal Advisory Committee and funding decisions made in consultation with the Partnership's external Program Steering Committee. Written reviews and feedback will be provided to the applicants within two months of the receipt deadline. The proposal review will be conducted using the NIH scoring system and criteria, as follows:

Review Criteria

- **Significance** – Projects must address a relevant research question and have potential to lead to peer-reviewed publications and competitive extramural funding.
- **Innovation** – Projects must address a novel hypothesis or develop novel methodologies.
- **Approach** – Projects must provide a clear plan to achieve stated goals (e.g., Can the work be completed in the proposed time within the proposed budget with the available resources?).
- **Investigators** – Projects must clearly benefit from the leadership of investigators from both institutions.
- **Environment** – Projects must be relevant to the overall Partnership objectives and benefit from the Partnership's resources (such as the Puerto Rico BioBank).
- **Rigor and reproducibility** – Proposals should also address strategies to ensure reproducibility and rigor of their research findings as outlined by NIH (<https://www.nih.gov/research-training/rigor-reproducibility/principles-guidelines-reporting-preclinical-research>)

Funding

It is our intention to make funding available for selected projects no later than June 2020. Indirect costs are not allowed and no-cost extensions will be granted only with approval of the Partnership PIs. Funds will be administered through the Partnership at each institution's Grants and Contracts Office.

PROJECT PERIOD: 06/01/2020 – 08/31/2022 (estimated)

TOTAL AMOUNT REQUESTED: \$60,000 per institution

Allowable and Unallowable Costs

****NOTE: The Administrative Core reserves the right to request budget changes.***

Allowable

- PI and Co-PI salary
Note effort and salary coverage will take up budget dollars. Please consider this in assessing your level of effort on the project. Any effort will be charged at full Institutional salary, no salary cap will be applied
- Research supplies and animal expenses
- Technical assistance
- Publication costs
- Shared resources costs
- Domestic travel to MCC/PHSU for research project collaborations
- 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 faculty member
- Equipment costing less than \$2,000 (Special justification is necessary for items exceeding this amount and must be included in the proposal budget and justified for specific research purposes)
- Tablets and e-readers for specific scientific purposes and must be justified and budgeted in the application. Data plans, if needed must also be justified. NOTE: Data plan costs for tablets and e-readers are not supported by the Institution.

Unallowable

- Cost share (including salary cap)
- Secretarial/administrative salaries
- Tuition
- Foreign travel
- Honoraria and travel expenses for visiting lecturers
- Books and periodicals
- Membership dues
- Office and laboratory furniture
- Office equipment and supplies
- Most computer purchases
- Rental of office or laboratory space
- Recruiting and relocation expenses
- Non-medical services to patients
- Per-diem charges for hospital beds
- Construction, renovation, or maintenance of buildings/ laboratories

Awardees' Obligations

PHSU-MCC Partnership awards carry several important obligations and responsibilities. Specifically, award recipients agree to the following:

- Must adhere to IRB, IACUC, and other regulatory and funding requirements prior to release of funds.
- If an award is made to a proposal involving an Early-stage investigator, the Early-stage investigator will participate in the Partnership career development program, and must submit a career and professional development plan within **3 months** of the award.
- Any deliverables or other products and resources produced as a result of these funds will belong to the governance of the PHSU-MCC Partnership.
- For **2 years** following award receipt, awardees will complete an annual Progress Report. These reports are completed via email, average 1-2 pages, and describe: 1) project progress and results; 2) all publications and funding resulting from the funded project.
- During the funding period, fully participate in the activities of the Partnership including, but not limited to: teleconferences, meetings, retreats, workshops and seminars.
- Awardees must acknowledge the Partnership in any related publications or presentations by including the statement "*This publication is supported by (insert grant name and number) from the National Cancer Institute*".
- Awardees agree to serve on a future Review Committee or participate in a U54 PHSU-MCC Partnership activity (e.g., retreat, workshop), if requested.

For more information about the PHSU-MCC Partnership, please contact:

Jaime Matta, PhD at Ponce Health Sciences University (jmatta@psm.edu)

Kenneth Wright, PhD at Moffitt Cancer Center (Ken.Wright@moffitt.org)

Information about the PHSU-MCC Partnership is also available at www.phsu-moffitt.org.

For more information about the NCI PACHE U54 funding mechanism, please visit:
<https://www.cancer.gov/about-nci/organization/crchd/diversity-training/pache>.