

# THE HOPE FOUNDATION FOR CANCER RESEARCH

## **NCORP Pilot Grant Program**

*Improving Participation of Underrepresented Populations in Clinical Trials*

### **2023 Announcement**

#### **OVERVIEW**

The mission of SWOG Cancer Research Network is to significantly improve lives through cancer clinical trials and translational research. SWOG is a National Cancer Institute-supported network of more than 5,000 cancer researchers at more than 650 institutions in the U.S., Canada, and beyond. Additional educational and cancer research support is provided by SWOG's non-profit, philanthropic partner, The Hope Foundation for Cancer Research.

Awards are made from the NCORP Pilot Grant Program to foster improved representation of underserved populations in cancer clinical trial accrual. Grants from the program are issued through a competitive, peer-reviewed process, and projects are funded for up to \$50,000 (direct costs) and may be spent over a 1- or 2-year award period. Indirect costs are limited to a rate of 25%. The source of these funds is nonfederal.

#### **OBJECTIVES**

Fundable project proposals should:

- 1) Establish infrastructure or test an intervention to improve access for underserved population(s);
- 2) Strive to remove structural barriers (e.g., policies, protocol-specific);
- 3) Be action-oriented and measurable (vs. descriptive);
- 4) Challenge and seek to shift current research or clinical practice paradigms;
- 5) Describe how the effort will be communicated to patients and other stakeholders;
- 6) Be scalable for potential application at sites across the NCTN/NCORP.

Not fundable: Any proposal which solely seeks validation of an existing problem.

#### **ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS**

Project teams should include: 1 or more NCTN/NCORP investigators, in combination with any nurse practitioners, clinical research staff, statisticians, patient advocates, etc. Multi-disciplinary, broad-based

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teams are encouraged and will be granted special consideration through the scoring criteria described below.

Funding will be administered directly through an institution. Eligible institutions include:

- Non-profit organizations
- Public or private institutions, such as universities, colleges, hospitals, and laboratories
- Units of state and local governments
- Eligible agencies of the federal government
- Domestic or foreign institutions/organizations

## **TO APPLY**

Please first complete and submit the Outline Template found on the [program page](#).

## **FULL APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS**

If invited to apply, the full application requires:

- Cover Letter (< 2 pages) that introduces project and team
- Specific Aims Page (1 page, 1-inch margins, Arial 11 font)
- Budget for Entire Proposed Period (Utilize template provided)
- Brief Budget Justification (salary for PI not allowed)
- Biographical Sketch for Key Personnel (max 5 pages)
- Other Support Form
- Research Strategy (Significance, Innovation, Approach – including metrics for measurement of ongoing success). 5-page limit, including tables and graphs.

Applicants may submit more than one application, provided that each project is scientifically distinct.

## **SUBMISSION**

Completed submission materials should be uploaded as a single PDF using the application form found [here](#).

*Additional submission details:*

- The Error Correction Window for the NCORP Pilot Grant Program is 48-hours from time of submission.
- Should the due date fall on a weekend or holiday, the deadline is automatically extended to next business day.

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- In case of emergency situation or extreme weather, documentation of institutional closing should be sent along with application, which must be received by 5pm local time on the first business day that the Institution is open.

Late submissions will not be accepted but will be referred to the next award cycle.

## SCORING CRITERIA

All proposals that are reviewed by the full study section will receive an Overall Impact score and brief written critique.

**Overall Impact.** Reviewers will provide an overall impact/priority score to reflect their assessment of the likelihood for the project to succeed within and across the National Clinical Trials Network, in consideration of the following five core review criteria, and additional review criteria (as applicable for the project proposed).

**Core Review Criteria.** Reviewers will consider each of the six review criteria below in the determination of scientific and technical merit and give a separate score for each.

*Significance.* Does the project address an important problem or a critical barrier to progress in clinical trial representation? If the aims of the project are achieved, how will scientific knowledge, technical capability, and/or clinical practice be improved?

*Team.* Are the PD/PIs, collaborators, and other researchers well suited to the project? Is the team multi-disciplinary, and do its members have complementary and integrated expertise? Is at least one NCTN/NCORP investigator included?

*Innovation.* Does the application challenge and seek to shift current research or clinical practice paradigms by utilizing novel theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions?

*Approach.* Are the overall strategy, methodology, and analyses well-reasoned and appropriate to accomplish the specific aims of the project? Are potential problems, alternative strategies, and benchmarks for success presented

*Environment.* Will the scientific environment in which the work will be done contribute to the probability of success? Are the institutional support, equipment and other physical resources

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available to the research team adequate for the project proposed? Will the project benefit from unique features of the scientific environment, subject populations, or collaborative arrangements?

*Feasibility.* Is the project feasible within the NCTN/NCORP framework? Will this project be concluded within projected timeframe?

## **Payment:**

Payment will be remitted as described in the executed Award Notice from The Foundation. Certain contingencies for release of funds may exist, including provision of Just In Time data, confirmation of SWOG samples/bank inventory, IRB approval, or updated Other Support forms, as applicable. Funding is non-federal.

## **Progress Reports:**

Awardees are expected to present their progress reports as an oral presentation at one or more semi-annual SWOG meetings upon request, and with an annual 2-page progress and financial report submitted to The Hope Foundation.

*Please note: In compliance with the Physician Payments Sunshine Act, components of this program (travel, meals, research payments, educational materials) may require reports of payment or transfer of value provided to all US licensed physicians. The Foundation will alert grantees should regulations mandate reporting.*

All inquiries related to this award may be directed to:

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