

# CCNY-MSK



## PARTNERSHIP

FOR CANCER RESEARCH, EDUCATION,  
AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH

### U54 COMPETITIVE RENEWAL – REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

#### KEY DATES

RFA Issue Date:	January 10, 2023
Letter of Intent Deadline:	March 24, 2023
Application Deadline:	April 26, 2023
Expected Award Date:	Sept 1, 2024

#### OVERVIEW

The **CCNY-MSK Partnership for Cancer Research, Training, and Community Outreach** is funded under the NCI U54 mechanism, which is designed to foster and support inter-institutional collaborations. Individuals from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups are encouraged to apply.

The primary goals of the Partnership are to fund collaborative translational research projects, collaborate with diverse communities to define and address cancer disparities, and provide mentoring and cancer research training opportunities to minority and low socio-economic students.

We will be submitting our 4th renewal application in January of 2024 and are requesting applications for highly competitive, and innovative Full and Pilot projects to include within our application. All projects must be conducted jointly by investigators from CCNY and MSK, and funding must be divided appropriately between the two institutions. Funding is for direct costs only; indirect costs are not allowed. **Earliest start date for selected projects is Fall 2024.**

- Full Projects may request up to \$250K per year in direct costs across a three-year project period.
- Pilot Projects may request up to \$100K per year in direct costs across a two-year project period

This funding opportunity differs from our previous calls. **Funding for the selected proposals is contingent upon the renewal of the Partnership's overall grant application.** Research proposals are a critical component in the evaluation of the U54 Partnership's renewal application, as such it is essential that the proposals submitted are of the highest quality possible.

#### ELIGIBILITY

Investigators at any career stage are welcome to apply.

- Every application must have two Principal Investigators (PI) – one from MSK and one from CCNY.
  - The following combinations are acceptable: 2 experienced PIs (one from each institution), 2 Early-Stage Investigators (ESI/New Investigators (NI) (one from each institution), or 1 ESI/NI PI partnered with one experienced PI (one needs to be from each institution).
  - If a PI is an ESI/NI then an additional Career Development section will be required, as outlined later in this RFA.

*\*Please Note: According to the NIH, a PI is considered a New Investigator if he/she has not previously competed successfully as PI for a substantial NIH independent research award. A PI is considered an ESI if he/she is within 10 years of completing his/her terminal research degree or is within 10 years of completing medical residency (or the equivalent).*

Your application must include:

- A descriptive title of proposed research
- Specific aims
- A description of the research design and methods for achieving the stated goals
- Names of the Principal Investigator from each institution
- Detailed budget and budget justification from each institution
- Specify whether you are submitting a **full project** or **pilot project**:

Proposals from any area of translational cancer-related research will be considered. However, **priority areas** include: 1) translational cancer health disparities; 2) biomedical engineering projects to impact cancer health disparities; 3) differences in tumor biology related to genetic variation across racial and ethnic groups; 4) barriers to biospecimen / biobanking collection among racial / ethnically diverse and underrepresented populations; 5) the impact of discrimination on cancer outcomes; and 6) risk factors for cancer, e.g., obesity, tobacco etc.

Full Research Projects are expected to be well developed and supported by preliminary data and structured along the lines of an R01. Preliminary data is not required for Pilot Research Projects, but they are expected to be soundly based on information available from various sources and structured along the lines of a R21.

## **REVIEW PROCESS**

All proposals will be evaluated by two to three external reviewers with appropriate expertise in the proposed area of research. Applications will be reviewed and ranked with respect to the evaluation criteria described below. Proposal reviews and rankings will be triaged and discussed by the Partnership's scientific committees: Internal Advisory Committee (IAC) and the Program Steering Committee. Our scientific committees will provide recommendations for proposal selection to U54 PI leadership. The review process is expected to be completed by June 2023 and reviews will be shared with the investigative teams. Based on committee feedback, select applicants may be asked to revise their proposals within a 3 to 4-week turnaround period, prior to final selection and inclusion in the U54 renewal.

The U54 renewal application is submitted in January 2024, proposals will be reviewed by the NIH during their evaluation of the overall grant renewal application.

### **Evaluation Criteria**

- Traditional NIH criteria: Significance, Approach, Innovation, Feasibility of Methods, Investigative Team, Environment, Ethical Considerations, Rigor and Transparency, as well as Goodness of Fit with the goals of the CCNY-MSK Partnership.
- Applications must describe a true, working collaboration involving at least one principal investigator from CCNY and one from MSK.
- Applications must provide a plan describing how they will carry out joint activities.
- Applications must further the [Partnership's objectives](#) (i.e., training and career development in cancer research and/or addressing cancer health disparities).

### **Additional Review Criteria:**

- Are the qualifications of the Co-Leaders adequate?
- What are the merits and importance of the proposed project?
- What is the potential of the project to lead to an NIH or other funding agency competing application in 2 years or less?

## LETTER OF INTENT GUIDELINES

Your letter of intent must be submitted by March 24, 2023 and include the following information: the names and department affiliations of all Principal Investigators, project title, objective, specific aims, and the type of project funding (Full or Pilot) you will be applying for.

## APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Please use the PHS 398 forms and instructions, which can be found here:

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/phs398.html>.

- A) Using a PHS 398 continuation page form, create a *Title Page*. Indicate project title, both co-leaders' name, any co-investigators, consultants, the department and institution. Indicate mentor's name, department and institution.
  - B) Using PHS 398 form page 2 to include the following information: Project Summary, Relevance, Project/Performance Sites, Senior/Key Personnel, Other Significant Contributors
  - C) Research Grant Table of Contents
  - D) Budget
    - a. Detailed Budget for 2 – 3 year Budget Period
    - b. A detailed budget with a budget justification must be submitted on separate forms for each partnering institution.
- Please note: Separate budget and budget justification forms for each institution must be provided and funding must be divided evenly between the two institutions.**
- E) Biographical Sketch and Other Support for all key personnel
  - F) Specific Aims
  - G) Research Strategy (this section is limited to 6 pages)
  - H) Bibliography and References
  - I) If applicable, include Protection of Human Subjects, Inclusion of Women and Minorities, Planned Enrollment Report, Inclusion of Children, Vertebrate Animals, Select Agent Research, Letters of Support
  - J) Multiple Project Director/Principal Investigator Leadership Plan (MPI):
    - a. Specify how this collaborative project will contribute to joint external funding and/or other collaborative projects.
    - b. Explain how the collaboration will work: Which parts of the project will be carried out at CCNY or at MSK and how will you coordinate your team?
    - c. Describe how your project will incorporate CCNY students or MSK fellows. A plan should be included describing training activities that occur as a component of the proposal.
  - K) Appendix (follow the guidelines here: <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-17-098.html>)
  - L) Career Development section (if applicable):

If one or both PIs is an ESI/NI, per the NIH definition (<https://grants.nih.gov/policy/early-stage/index.htm>), that individual(s) will also need to supply a Career Development plan under an additional section called **The Candidate**, and structured as follows:

**Career Development and Mentorship Plan (2-3 pages within “The Candidate” section of each plan plus other required administrative items).** Include a Career Development and Mentorship Plan for each faculty investigator on the project who is considered an Early Stage Investigator per the NIH definition. Additional guidelines can be found here:

<https://www.ninds.nih.gov/Funding/Training-Career-Awards/Mentored-Career-Awards/Suggestions-Good-Career-Development-Plan>.

**The plan description must follow the format similar to applications for Career Development Awards (e.g., K Awards), by providing the following information:**

**The Candidate (2-3 pages for items A-D):**

- A.** Candidate’s Background
- B.** Career Goals and Objectives: Scientific Biography
- C.** Career Development/Training Activities during Award Period
- D.** Training in the Responsible Conduct of Research

**Formal/administrative Items Required for Each Career Development Plan (no page limitation):**

- Statements by Sponsor, Co-Sponsor(s), Consultant(s), Contributor(s); and Environment and Institutional Commitment to Candidate

## **FORMAT SPECIFICATIONS**

- Use an *Arial, Helvetica, Palatino Linotype, or Georgia* typeface, a black font color, and a font size of 11 points or larger.
- Use black ink that can be clearly copied. Print must be clear and legible.
- Use standard paper size (8 1/2" x 11")
- Use at least one-half inch margins (top, bottom, left, and right) for all pages, including continuation pages. No information should appear in the margins, including the PD/PI's name and page numbers.
- Applicants are strongly encouraged to use only a standard, single-column format for the text. Avoid using a two-column format since it can cause difficulties when reviewing the document electronically.
- The application must be single-sided and single-spaced.
- Consecutively number pages throughout the application. Do not use suffixes (e.g., 5a, 5b).
- Do not include additional pages between the face page and page 2, or unnumbered pages.
- Figures, graphs, diagrams, tables, figure legends, and footnotes may be smaller in type size (not less than 9), but it must have a black font color, readily legible, fall within the margins, and follow the font typeface requirement.

**Please Note: Deadline for submission is April 26, 2023, 5:00 PM EST.**

Please email your application to Program Manager, Nicole Roberts-Eversley at [u54partnership@mskcc.org](mailto:u54partnership@mskcc.org).