

2025 Ovarian Cancer SPORE Developmental Research Program

Background

HCC Ovarian Cancer Specialized Programs of Research Excellence (SPORE) supports a Developmental Research Program (DRP). The SPORE grant mechanism is aimed at translational research projects, defined by the NIH as:

Translational cancer research transforms scientific discoveries arising from laboratory, clinical, or population studies into clinical applications that reduce cancer incidence, morbidity, and mortality.

The goal of the DRP is to expand the pool of researchers committed to translational ovarian cancer research. Research initiatives that will be funded by the DRP are expected to have a major translational component focused on 1) prevention and early detection, 2) mechanisms of tumorigenesis and therapeutic resistance, 3) predictive and prognostic biomarkers, and 4) novel targets and approaches to therapy. The DRP provides a unique venue for developing cutting-edge new projects by providing significant financial support and active institutional commitment through a program that is rapidly responsive to new ideas or initiatives. These awards are intended to provide funding for collecting preliminary data and developing full projects to be considered for alternate peer-reviewed funding. Funded pilot projects that have the potential to be incorporated as a component of the HCC Ovarian Cancer SPORE are encouraged. Laboratory, clinical, epidemiological, and behavior-based projects emphasizing translational ovarian cancer research are all eligible for this award.

Funding

The **DRP will fund up to five awards for \$50,000 for one year**, with the possibility of a one-year renewal for projects with highly promising results. Funds cannot be used for salary coverage of Principal or Co-Investigators, indirect costs, travel, publications, or equipment not specifically needed for the proposed research. Salary coverage for technicians, graduate students, or postdoctoral fellows is permitted.

Successful applicants must (i) attend and present their ongoing work at monthly Ovarian Cancer SPORE meetings and the Ovarian Cancer SPORE annual retreat and (ii) submit a final progress report at the end of the funding period.

A second year of funding will be considered for applicants with an extremely productive initial year.

Eligibility

- Full-time Faculty Member, Associate Professor level or higher
- Full-time Faculty Member, Assistant Professor with current or past R01-type grant award

Deadlines

Full proposals, including all documents listed below, are due **June 9, 2025, at 5:00 pm ET**. **Late submissions will not be accepted.**

Format

Applicants must adhere to a modified NIH R21 format; required documents and page length are provided in the **Cover Page Checklist** below. For applicants outside of the University of Pittsburgh, a letter of institutional commitment of matching funds (\$25,000 per year funded) is required

All data critical to review must be included in the proposal text. **No Appendices are allowed.**

Review Criteria

All applications will be reviewed by scientific investigators and patient advocates using a modified NIH research project review criteria and the NIH scoring system (1-9). These criteria include:

- Significance
- Approach
- Potential to produce definitive results within the proposed time frame
- Potential to advance to a SPORE Individual Research Project or R01-type funding
- Investigator and Team
- Translational Potential
- Innovation

Resubmissions

Previously submitted applications that did not receive a fundable score are eligible for funding consideration. Resubmissions must include a 1-page response to previous reviewer comments and indicate the application as a resubmission on the cover page.

Renewals

Previously funded DRPs are eligible for renewal. However, the program's priority is to fund new applications. DRP recipients who are considering a renewal application are encouraged to contact the DRP scientific contacts to discuss the likelihood of success of an additional year of funding. Renewal submissions must include a 2-page progress report and indicate the application as a renewal on the cover page.

Questions

For scientific questions, please contact:

Dr. Francesmary Modugno (modugno@upmc.edu)

Dr. Katherine Aird (katherine.aird@pitt.edu)

For administrative questions, please contact: **Cait Kelly** (kellyc23@upmc.edu)

Timeline for the HCC Ovarian Cancer DRP (dates tentative and subject to change)

06/09/2025	5pm ET Full proposals due – late submissions will NOT be accepted
07/15/2025	Applicant notifications
09/01/2025	Budget start date
10/01/2026	Final project report due
10/15/2026	Present results to SPORE IAB/EAB

Cover Page and Checklist

Part A: Applicant information			
Principal Investigator:			
Faculty Title:			
Department:		Email address:	
Co-Investigators		Department & Email address	
PROJECT TITLE (80-character limit)			
Resubmission?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO		
Funding requested	\$		
Part B: IRB / IACUC Approvals <i>Include approval documentation as appropriate.</i>			
IRB	<input type="checkbox"/> YES #: _____	date: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> PENDING
IACUC	<input type="checkbox"/> YES #: _____	date: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> PENDING
Is there anyone who would have a conflict of interest if they were asked to review this proposal?			
<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO			
<i>If yes, please provide list of names on separate page (not included in page limits)</i>			
Part C: PI Signature and date			
Part D: Checklist of required documents			
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div> <input type="checkbox"/> Cover Page <input type="checkbox"/> Response to Reviewers (for resubmission applications only) <input type="checkbox"/> Specific Aims <input type="checkbox"/> Translational Potential <input type="checkbox"/> Research Plan <input type="checkbox"/> References Cited <input type="checkbox"/> Timeline and Milestones <input type="checkbox"/> PI's Biosketch <input type="checkbox"/> Other Support (verified by applicant's fiscal office) <input type="checkbox"/> Letter of Institutional matching funds (non-Pitt applicants only) <input type="checkbox"/> Biosketches for co-investigators – OPTIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> Budget and Justification <input type="checkbox"/> If human subjects or animals are involved, include IRB/IACUC approval letter or submission date </div> <div> (must use provided cover page) (1-page max) (1-page max) (1/2 page max) (3-page max) (no page limit) (1 page max) (NIH Format) (PHS 398) (1-page max) (NIH Format) (2-page max) </div> </div>			
NO APPENDICES ARE PERMITTED			

**Email final application in a single PDF document by June 9, 2025, at 5:00 pm ET to
Cait Kelly (kellyc23@upmc.edu)**