

Winship Invest\$: Request for Pilot Grant Proposals Summer 2023

Winship Cancer Institute is pleased to release the Summer 2023 Request for Pilot Grant Proposals for its *Winship Invest\$* pilot project program. *Winship Invest\$* is a peer-reviewed program that provides pilot funding for novel, innovative cancer research projects. This program enables Winship investigators to obtain preliminary data for publication and for subsequent peer-reviewed funding. *Winship Invest\$* has two funding opportunities every year. Successful applications are supported by philanthropic contributions to Winship and by developmental funds from Winship's NCI Cancer Center Support Grant (CCSG).

Proposals with a budget of up to \$50,000 for one year may be considered for Winship Invest\$ (unless otherwise stated for specific research domains). Investigators may submit only one proposal as PI to the *Winship Invest\$* Request for Pilot Grant Proposals (RFP) per funding cycle. The current *Winship Invest\$* RFP seeks applications in the following research domains:

Winship Invest\$ Summer 2023 Research Domains:

I. RESEARCH PROGRAMS

1. **Cancer Immunology (CI) Program** – The CI Program will be considering applications with the following emphasis:
Inter-Programmatic Activities – Research projects that stimulate inter-programmatic team science activities. Must have at least two program members, one from CI and at least one from another research program (DDT, CMB, or CPC), each of whom has a substantial intellectual contribution to the project. CI studies involving human subjects are highly encouraged in addition to projects with direct relevance to the Winship catchment area*.
2. **Cancer Prevention and Control (CPC) Program** – The CPC Program will be considering proposals with the following emphasis:
 - a. ***Cancer Epidemiology***, which aims to identify risk factors, including individual biological and behavioral factors, community and policy factors, and environmental exposures in an effort to inform targeted interventions and strategies to reduce cancer risk in Georgia.
 - b. ***Interventions***, which focuses on chemoprevention trials, individual behavioral interventions, and policy and systems-level changes with the ultimate goal of broad-scale implementation of effective strategies.
 - c. ***Cancer Survivorship***, which focuses on treatment-related early effects, including patient-reported outcomes, biobehavioral changes in the brain, and late effects such as cardiovascular diseases, all of which substantially affect the quality-of-life of cancer survivors.
 - d. ***Quality of Cancer Care***, which aims to conduct population-based research that describes, interprets, and predicts the impact of health care interventions and other factors on quality of cancer care and outcomes.

From amongst the most competitive proposals in these topic areas, proposals fostering inter-programmatic collaborations with CMB, DDT and CI research programs will be prioritized, and preference will be given to those that: (a) have the best potential to provide preliminary data supporting external grant submissions; (b) establish new inter-programmatic collaborations; (c) make use of Winship shared resources; (d) make use of the Georgia Cancer Registry as a resource to understand cancer prevention and control priorities in the state; or (e) address disparities in social determinants of health and other demographics with direct impact on the Winship catchment area*.

3. **Cell and Molecular Biology (CMB) Program** – The CMB Program will be considering applications with the following emphasis:
Inter-Programmatic Activities – Research projects that are intended to stimulate new inter-programmatic collaborations. Preference will also be given to the collaborations with either CPC program members or a disease-team at Winship. Each application must have two or more co-PIs. Since the funding is intended to stimulate new interactions, the co-PIs cannot have a record of prior joint funding or publications within the last three years. Research with a direct impact on Winship catchment relevant priorities*.
4. **Discovery and Developmental Therapeutics (DDT) Program** – The DDT Program will be considering applications with the following emphasis:

- a. Research focused on therapeutic discovery and development. Collaborations with chemistry/pharmacology faculty to propel novel drug development are strongly encouraged.
- b. Research to develop novel radiology diagnostics/theranostic approaches.

*Winship catchment area is the state of Georgia and priorities include cancers with increased incidence, disparities, vulnerable populations and/or risk factors in Georgia. This includes but is not limited to:

- Cancers: lung, breast, prostate, colorectal, pancreatic, multiple myeloma
- Risk Factors: Obesity, Low Screening Rates, Health Literacy, HPV vaccination, UV exposure, tobacco use, poverty
- Vulnerable Populations: Black/African American, rural, low socioeconomic status, people living with HIV, uninsured

II. PROMOTING CANCER HEALTH EQUITY

Promoting Cancer Health Equity and Reducing Cancer Disparities – This opportunity will support research projects that focus on the unique cancer needs and priorities to reduce the cancer burden within the Winship catchment area (state of Georgia). Projects may focus on research related to high incidence tumors in our state, populations that experience health disparities, social determinants of health, prevention and cancer control efforts, assessment of community needs, implementation/ dissemination of evidence-based interventions, and impact on policy. Projects can also include basic/translational research that addresses mechanisms contributing to cancer disparities in our catchment area. Projects should aim to investigate or point to potential solutions needed to promote cancer health equity throughout the state of Georgia. Catchment area data and priorities may be accessed at: <https://winshipcancer.emory.edu/research/community-outreach-and-engagement/index.html>

III. WINSHIP AND BIOMEDICAL ENGINEERING COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH

Joint Winship and Biomedical Engineering Focused Research Projects – Winship and the Coulter BME Department seek new and innovative research ideas that bring biomedical engineering tools to bear on cancer. The goals of this seed funding are to increase interactions between Coulter BME faculty and Winship members, to support generation of key preliminary data that will lead to funding from extramural peer-reviewed sources, and to make strides toward improving human health. The proposed project should have a clear link to cancer. Preference will be given to projects that represent a collaboration between tenured/tenure track faculty with at least a partial appointment in Coulter BME and Winship members in other departments. Budgets of up to \$50,000 for one year will be considered.

IV. DISEASE TYPE-SPECIFIC RESEARCH

1. **Breast Cancer** – Thanks to the generous donations from the Glenn Family Breast Center, we are pleased to solicit investigator-initiated proposals for breast cancer-specific translational research from both Preclinical Research Scientists AND Clinical Investigators. Junior faculty are strongly encouraged to apply. Awards under this opportunity are limited to this RFP cycle only. All selected breast center RFP recipients will be required to present their projects to the Glenn Family Breast Center working group at both the start and conclusion of the project timeline. This opportunity aims to support:
 - a. Therapeutic or non-therapeutic studies which prospectively enroll patients for research studies, utilize breast cancer samples/data, or develop innovative technology to address patient care opportunities or improve patient well-being.
 - b. Preclinical studies which prospectively utilize translationally minded in-vitro studies, breast cancer tissue samples, or drug delivery and animal-based disease models.

Submitted projects that leverage the strengths and expertise of multiply investigators from across two or more Winship research programs or research disciplines will be prioritized.

Project proposals should focus on (but are not limited to) the following breast cancer research concentration areas:

- Addressing Disparity
- Novel Targets and Therapeutic Strategies
- Development of Prognostic and Predictive Markers
- Non-immune Therapeutic Mechanisms

- Immune Therapy Pathways and Overcoming Resistance

For all research program domains, special consideration will be given to early career investigators and those from populations underrepresented in cancer research. The populations commonly identified as underrepresented in cancer research include: women, Black and African American, Hispanic American, American and Alaskan Native, and Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander. Applicants must self-identify as a member of an underrepresented population in the submitted proposal to be considered during the review process.

Winship Invest\$ Eligibility Criteria and Application Requirements:

1. Pilot projects will be awarded to active Winship members. To maintain active membership status, the following criteria must be met:
 - a. Attendance of at least 50% to published meetings of the research program to which s/he belongs;
 - b. Maintenance of good financial standing with Winship (no pilot projects in deficit);
 - c. Acknowledgement of the Winship Cancer Center Support Grant (CCSG) on all publications resulting from utilization of services in one or more of Winship Shared Resources;
 - d. Acknowledgement of the appropriate pilot funding source on all publications resulting from work supported by the *Winship Invest\$* Program.
2. Winship members may receive only one pilot project award in a 12-month period and may not submit more than one proposal through any RFP. Members who have an active Winship Invest\$ pilot project are not eligible to apply.
3. Salary support for the principal investigator is not allowed except for junior faculty at the rank of Assistant Professor and below.
4. All proposals must include a clear plan for subsequent extramural grant submissions as a result of the work proposed, and a one-year timeline based on specific aims.
5. Data Management – Proposals must include a plan to maintain research data in Redcap or other secure data management system (if relevant) with quality control and stored on the Emory system with back-up and potential for data sharing. Consultation for data sharing plans are recommended with the Winship Data and Technology Applications (DATA) Shared Resource. (<https://winshipcancer.emory.edu/research/shared-resources/winship-data-and-technology-applications.html>)
6. Community Outreach and Engagement Statement – Applications must include a community outreach and engagement statement justifying how proposed research will address and help reduce the cancer burden in Winship’s catchment area (state of Georgia), or state how proposals will disseminate evidence-based interventions to communities in Georgia or beyond. Investigators should highlight how their research aligns with catchment area priorities when appropriate. Questions about catchment area-relevant research can be directed to Theresa W. Gillespie, PhD (tgilles@emory.edu), Associate Director for Community Outreach and Engagement (COE).
7. Clinical Research – Proposals can only be submitted by MDs, MD/PhDs, or RN/PhDs. All clinical research awardees are expected to follow clinical research guidelines set by Emory IRB, Winship Clinical Trials SOPs and the Winship Protocol Review and Monitoring Committee and must satisfy clinical research training requirements. Proposals must include the following:
 - a. A Human Subjects Research document
 - b. Winship PRMC Application
 - c. Clinical Protocol and Informed Consent Form
 - d. A plan to maintain clinical research data in Oncore or with the support of the Winship DATA shared resource
8. Vertebrate Animals Research - Proposals that include *in vivo* studies must include a section addressing *Vertebrate Animals* research and include either a draft to be submitted or IACUC-approved protocol.

Letter of Intent

A Letter of Intent must be submitted and approved by Winship to advance a proposal to full application status. This document must identify the PI, all potential co-investigators and/or collaborators on the project, the research program of the applicant, the research domain for which the project is to be considered, a proposed title and a brief description of the proposed research project. Letters of Intent should be no longer than two pages and should be uploaded as a single document to <https://intranet.winship.emory.edu/pilotgrant> **no later than 11:59 pm on Wednesday, August 30, 2023**. Please direct any questions you have regarding this funding opportunity to winshipgrants@emory.edu or Venus Henriques (venus.henriques@emory.edu).

Cycle 14 Timeline:

RFP Announcement:

Letter of Intent Receipt Date:

Application Receipt Date:

Anticipated Start Date:

Date:

8/9/2023

Wednesday, 8/30/2023

Friday, 9/29/2023

January 1, 2024