

MEMORANDUM

TO: All Faculty at the institutions aligned with the University of Colorado Cancer Center

FROM: TORI Executive Committee and TORI Career Enhancement Program Committee

RE: **Request for Applications for Career Enhancement Program Awards 2025**

DATE: February 27th, 2025

The Thoracic Oncology Research Initiative (TORI) within the University of Colorado Cancer Center is providing up to two Career Enhancement Program Awards in lung cancer as part of this Request for Applications (RFA). Each award is up to \$50,000 direct costs. Individuals interested in being considered for this funding should submit an application in response to this RFA. **The deadline for applications is midnight Monday, March 31st, 2025**, with an expected start date of May 1, 2025.

This RFA is part of our continued goal to demonstrate active high-impact lung cancer research for the purpose of successfully competing for a SPORE in Lung Cancer grant. The purpose of the Lung SPORE is to promote translational research¹ objectives in lung cancer by moving basic research findings into studies for improving the detection, diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of human lung cancer; and/or by investigating patient phenomena at the bench – e.g. identifying a gene altered by a chromosomal rearrangement that has occurred in a patient with the disease or correlating data from patient samples with clinical outcomes.

Individuals who received TORI award/funds in 2022, 2023 and 2024 are eligible for this round if they are up to date with their progress reports and only if it is for continuation of the same project and the application clearly demonstrates its potential of developing into a lung SPORE project. Projects that are translational will have priority. Applications from investigators who propose to move their work from other disciplines into the lung cancer space are highly encouraged. Multidisciplinary collaborations across CU departments, schools, and/or campuses are highly encouraged.

The goal of the Career Enhancement Program is to prepare new investigators for careers in lung cancer research. Eligibility for this award includes advanced post-doctoral or clinical fellows, instructor and junior faculty who wish to develop or refocus their careers on translational research in lung cancer. Associate Professors and Professors are not eligible for this award. The Career Enhancement Program is not intended for pre-doctoral candidates or junior level post-doctoral and clinical fellows. To enhance the diversity of the program women and minority candidates are strongly encouraged to apply.

Applications will be judged on 1) the potential of the applicant for a successful career in lung cancer research; 2) the quality of the research proposed; and 3) the mentor. Awards will be for 12 months and may be renewed for one additional year, given adequate progress of the candidate towards an independent career in lung cancer research.

¹ Translational research uses knowledge of human biology to develop and test the feasibility of cancer-relevant interventions in humans AND/OR determines the biological basis for observations made in individuals with cancer or in populations at risk for cancer. The term “interventions” is used in its broadest sense to include molecular assays, imaging techniques, drugs, biological agents and/or other methodologies applicable to the prevention, early detection, diagnosis, prognosis or treatment of cancer. Translational research in SPOREs is always based upon knowledge of human biology stemming from research involving the use of any cellular, molecular, structural, biochemical, genetic, or other appropriate experimental approach. (NCI SPORE Guidelines, September 2022).

Applications should include:

1. Title Page (please use the attached format).
2. A 1 – 2 page description of the path the candidate will follow as he/she moves into an academic research career in lung cancer. The description should include information on how a career enhancement program award from TORI will support their path; their career path should include plans to write an independent lung cancer research grant.
3. Translational Research Statement: A short description (no more than ½ page) of the translational nature of the proposed research.
4. Project Narrative: A complete but concise description of the project including Specific Aims (no more than ½ page), Background & Significance (limited to 1 page), Preliminary Studies (limited to 1.5 pages), Experimental Design and Methods (limited to 3 pages), and any other information required to fully describe the proposed work. **The Project Narrative should be no more than 6 pages, including figures, tables and other relevant data.**
 - Margins must be at least ½ inch all around.
 - Font must be 11 point Arial
 - References cited are not included in the 6 page maximum.
5. Description of continuation Project (if applicable): If requesting continual support of a previously funded TORI award, include up to a one-page description/justification of how an additional year of support for this project will help it develop into a SPORE-ready project to be considered for the upcoming application.
6. Estimated budget of up to \$50,000 direct costs, including personnel, supplies, equipment, and other expenses.
7. Candidate's NIH-style biosketch and complete Other Support documentation (list all pending and current funding including external grant funding and all institutional and philanthropic support). If there is conceptual overlap with your proposal, please describe any budgetary overlap.
8. Mentor's NIH-style biosketch if applicable
9. A letter of support from the Mentor outlining the plan for mentorship and support for career enhancement.
10. A list of pre- and post-doc candidates trained by the mentor in the past, and the current positions of those individuals.

Applicants who are funded will be expected to register as a member of TORI if not already a member, present their project at a TORI *Research In Progress* seminar within 1 to 3 months of the award (in order to receive input on the research plan) and at the end of the 12 month award. Funded applicants may be asked to present their progress at the SPORE Planning Internal or External Advisory Boards or annual TORI retreat.

Submit your application at [TORI Career Enhancement Program 2025](#) by midnight Monday, March 31st, 2025.

If you have any questions about the application process, please email Kristin.Herbst@cuanschutz.edu or call at 303-724-3151.

TORI Lung Cancer Career Enhancement Program Application Title Page

Project Title:

Candidate's Name (First, Middle Initial, Last, Degree):

Candidate's Academic Position:

Candidate's Institution:

Mentor's Name (First, Middle Initial, Last, Degree):

Mentor's Academic Rank:

Mentor's Institution:

(Please attach a separate sheet of information for any additional mentors.)

Regulatory Information

Human Subjects: Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes: Protocol Number:

Approval or Re-approval Date:

Lab Animals: Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes: Protocol Number:

Approval or Re-approval Date:

Radiation Safety: Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes: Authorization Number:

Approval or Re-approval Date:

☐ Ionizing Radiation generating equipment ☐ Other:

☐ Radioactive Materials

Biosafety: Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes: Authorization Number:

Approval or Re-approval Date:

☐ Recombinant DNA ☐ Infectious Agents ☐ Select Agents ☐ Other

Award Administration

1. Awards will be issued for a twelve-month period. **Funds must be spent within the 12 month period.** Requests for no-cost extensions to complete the project will require prior approval of carry forward funds. Carry forward requests are approved in exceptional circumstances only. Please contact Kristin Herbst if you think you may need to request approval to carry forward funds beyond the end date of your award.
2. A brief progress report will be required approximately six to nine months into the award period. A request for the progress report will be sent to each recipient at least one month prior to the date the report is needed by the Cancer Center.
3. Awardees will be invited to present their project at the TORI Research in Progress Seminar at the beginning of the research period, to identify collaborations and resources within TORI that may enhance the research efforts. In addition, award recipients may be asked to present their research to the SPORE planning annual Internal and External Advisory Board meetings and at the annual TORI retreat.
4. A final report is to be submitted electronically to the Cancer Center two months after the final date of the career enhancement award period.
5. In addition to the progress and final reports, award recipients will be asked on an annual basis to identify any publications or grant submissions that have transpired as a result of the career enhancement program award. This information will be included in the grant application for the SPORE. In addition, recipients will be asked to provide information on their academic rank, position, and overall focus of their research. This information is critical to demonstrate the success of the Career Enhancement program's goals.
6. Career Enhancement Program Award recipients interested in seeking a second year of funding may do so by submitting a competitive application responsive to the RFA on or before the due date specified on the annual request for application for the Career Enhancement Program. We recognize that a Career Enhancement Program that is successful in engaging investigators in careers in lung cancer research will often include support for two years. However, funding for a second year of support is not guaranteed and depends on adequate progress in the first year and a compelling application. Support for a third year would occur under exceptional circumstances only.
7. All publications resulting from this project should cite the Thoracic Oncology Research Initiative as well as the University of Colorado Cancer Center Support Grant (P30CA046934) if any Cancer Center Shared Resources are used and must be submitted to PubMed Central. Other sources might also contribute to the Career Enhancement Award. Applicants will be notified of the funding source(s) at the time of their award and should cite these resources.