

Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center | New Mexico State University
Partnership for the Advancement of Cancer Research
U54 Collaborative NIH Grant

INTERNAL CALL FOR PROPOSALS
for U54 Competing Renewal Application 2018

Release Date: January 24, 2017

Background: New Mexico State University (NMSU) and the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center (Fred Hutch) have been funded for the past 15 years by the [National Cancer Institute's Partnerships to Advance Cancer Health Equality \(PACHE\)](#) program. The overall goal of this U54 [Partnership for the Advancement of Cancer Research \(PACR\)](#) is to build upon the increasing cancer-research capacity at NMSU and increase knowledge and attention to cancer-related health disparities research at Fred Hutch.

The partnership is guided by three specific aims to achieve this overall goal:

Objective One: Conduct a diverse portfolio of cancer research projects. This is done through a collection of pilot and full projects that span from basic science to public health research;

Objective Two: Maintain, strengthen, and evaluate our effective training programs for current and future underserved scientists. The Integrated Training and Evaluation Core (ITREC) builds on successful undergraduate and graduate internship programs, courses, and workshops hosted by NMSU and Fred Hutch and capitalizes on the reciprocal nature of the partnership by continuing to train Fred Hutch post doctoral fellows in classroom teaching at the undergraduate level, meanwhile enhancing cancer education at NMSU; and

Objective Three: Implement cancer-related public health interventions in underserved communities. As part of this aim, we conduct research and disseminate evidence-based practices.

The partnership seeks proposals that will be included in the next U54 competing renewal, anticipating a submission in January 2018, with the award period starting in September 2018. Research projects, in general, may be in any area of basic, clinical, translational, prevention, control, behavioral, and/or population research.

U54 Portfolio: The current U54 award funds one full research project, three pilot research projects, and five cores that involve investigators from the five research divisions at Fred Hutch and five scientific departments at NMSU. A complete listing of all recently funded projects can be found [here](#).

Project / Core Title	Project / Core Leaders
Administrative Core	Co-Program Directors: Drs. Mary O'Connell and Graciela Unguez (NMSU) and Beti Thompson and Julian Simon (Fred Hutch)
Planning and Evaluation Core	Co-Program Directors: Drs. Mary O'Connell and Graciela Unguez (NMSU) and Beti Thompson and Julian Simon (Fred Hutch)
Development Core: Research Projects	See reference to Project Leaders below
Full Project 5: <i>A new paradigm to identify targeted therapies for triple negative breast cancer</i>	Project Leaders: Drs. Amanda Ashley (NMSU) and Chris Kemp (Fred Hutch)

Pilot Project 6: <i>Engaging School and Family in Navajo Gardening for Health</i>	Project Leaders: Drs. Kevin Lombard (NMSU) Shirley Beresford (Fred Hutch)
	Co-Investigator: Dr. India Ornelas (UW / Fred Hutch)
Pilot Project 7: <i>A Culturally Adapted Enhancing Connections Program for Hispanic Mothers Diagnosed with Cancer: A Partnership Feasibility Study</i>	Project Leaders: Drs. Rebecca Palacios (NMSU) Fran Lewis (UW / Fred Hutch) and Elizabeth Trice Loggers (SCCA / Fred Hutch)
Pilot Project 8: <i>Toward Collective Dynamics of Solid Tumor with its Microenvironment</i>	Project Leaders: Drs. Paul Tian (NMSU) and Eric Holland and Sarah Holte (Fred Hutch)
Core E: <i>Integrated Training and Evaluation Core</i>	Core Leaders: Drs. Mary O'Connell (NMSU) and Julian Simon (Fred Hutch)
	Co-PI: Dr. Michele Shuster (NMSU)
	Co-Investigators: Dr. Karen Peterson (Fred Hutch) and Dr. India Ornelas (UW / Fred Hutch)
Core F: <i>Outreach Core</i>	Core Leaders: Drs. Rebecca Palacios (NMSU) and Beti Thompson (Fred Hutch)

Funds Available:

Funds are available for two different levels of collaborative research: pilot and full projects. This U54 collaboration seeks diversity in its PI's, in addition to projects that make the **partnership sustainable** and result in the **training of underrepresented students** and/or work toward **eliminating cancer health disparities**. Investigators with or without currently-funded projects through the U54 are eligible to apply for a pilot or full proposal. **Research proposals at the pilot level are especially encouraged.**

- Pilot proposals will be accepted for projects that have the potential to develop into U54 full projects or small NIH grants. These awards are for a 3-year period for up to \$120,000 in direct annual costs shared between the Fred Hutch and NMSU.
- Full proposals will be accepted for projects that have the potential to develop into NIH R21 or R01 grants. These awards are for a 3-year period for up to \$275,000 in direct annual costs shared between the Fred Hutch and NMSU.

Proposal Requirements

- All proposals must have a minimum of **two** co-PIs; one from NMSU and one from the Fred Hutch;

Letter of Intent (Required) Due: 5 pm PST / 6 pm MT on Friday, April 14, 2017

Proposal Submission Due: 5 pm PST / 6 pm MT on Monday, July 31, 2017

Study Section Review: August, 2017

Internal Advisory Committee / Program Steering Committee Review: October 2017

Revision and submission to NIH TBA (expected due date between November 2017 and January 2018)

Notice of Award: August 2018

Start Date: approximately September 2018

Submit to: [Mary O'Connell](#) and [Graciela Unguez](#) or [Beti Thompson](#) and [Julian Simon](#)

Co-Program Directors: [Mary O'Connell](#), Regents Professor, Department of Plant and Environmental Sciences, NMSU and [Graciela Unguez](#), Professor, Department of Biology, NMSU

[Beti Thompson](#), Full Member, Public Health Sciences Division, Fred Hutch and [Julian Simon](#), Associate Member, Clinical Research and Basic Sciences, Fred Hutch

For more information

Abstracts for current and formerly funded projects and application forms can be found on the PACR sites maintained by either [NMSU](#) or the [Fred Hutch](#). For more information, including referrals to prospective collaborators per institution, contact any one of the four co-program directors listed above.

Travel support for potential collaborators

The program has limited funds to support travel of prospective applicants to visit potential collaborators in Seattle or Las Cruces. Please contact Lené Loest via phone at: (575) 646-5104 or [email](#) or Jennifer Anderson via phone at: (206) 667-7480 or [email](#) for travel assistance and information.

Application Forms and Deadlines

1. Letter of Intent (LOI): due by 5 pm PST / 6 pm MT on **Friday, April 14, 2017**. A sample LOI can be downloaded as part of the template packet [here](#). The LOI must include the following:

- Proposal type: pilot or full;
- The names of NMSU and Fred Hutch collaborators, including indication of ESI status as appropriate; and
- Specific aims

2. Proposal: due by 5 pm PST / 6 pm MT on **Monday, July 31, 2017**. A packet of required NIH PHS 398 forms can be downloaded via NMSU's PACR site [here](#). The proposal must include the following:

- NMSU/Fred Hutch Cover Page signed by each PI on the collaborating proposal;
- NIH PHS 398 form Page 2 (abstract);
- NIH PHS 398 Budget form page 4 and Justification form page 5 (see instructions for budget preparation below)
 - This is an internal RFA; therefore institutional sign-off is NOT required for this application
 - An institution-specific budget is required per co-PI;
 - The total direct cost across both institutions should not exceed \$120,000/year for a pilot proposal or \$275,000/year for a full proposal;
 - Do not include indirect cost (F&A) in the budget total unless the project anticipates having a subcontract; and
 - Pilot and full proposals will be funded for no longer than three years
- NIH Biographical Sketch for each PI and any other key personnel (Note: use the new NIH format, which is included in the template packet that can be downloaded [here](#)).
- Program Description for **pilot** project (1-page for specific aims, 6-pages for the research plan using PHS 398 continuation format pages). For a **full** project (1-page for specific aims, 12-pages for research plan using PHS 398 continuation format pages). The subsections of the research plan should include descriptions of the significance, innovation, approach, expected results, potential pitfalls, and alternative plans; and

- In addition, U54 pilot and full proposals need to describe the distribution of work (who will do what at each institution, where, and when); how the research described in the proposal supports the goals and aims of the U54 NMSU/Fred Hutch U54 partnership; and how the research described in the proposal addresses health disparities.
- If a proposal is recommended for funding, a Just-in-Time (JIT) protocol will be followed for projects that include human subjects, animals or biohazards. Any necessary IACUC, IBC or IRB certifications will need to be in place before research can start. Please address all issues pertaining to human subjects, animal care and use, biosafety or hazardous chemicals in the research narrative.

Submission Instructions

Please submit the LOI and application electronically (including the signed cover page) to either [Mary O'Connell](#) and [Graciela Unquez](#) or [Beti Thompson](#) and [Julian Simon](#).

*Note: institutional sign-off is **NOT** required for this internal application.

Review Process

A study section comprised of faculty from NMSU, the Fred Hutch, and ad-hoc external investigators will review proposals coinciding with their scientific expertise and provide a written evaluation. All pilot and full proposals will be reviewed. The U54 Internal Advisory Committee (IAC) and the Program Steering Committee (PSC) will review the Study Sections' written evaluations and advise the co-Program Directors on the final proposal decisions.

Evaluation Criteria

The U54 proposal evaluation template is appended for reference.

a. Pilot and Full Proposal Evaluation Criteria

- **Significance:** Does this proposal address an important problem consistent with the objectives of the CPACHE program? If the aims of the application are achieved, how will scientific knowledge be advanced? What will be the effect of these studies on the concepts or methods that drive this field of cancer research and/or research on cancer disparities?
- **Investigator:** Are the investigators appropriately trained and well suited to carry out this work? Is the research proposed appropriate to the experience level of the principal investigators and other researchers (if any)? Is the CDP and mentorship plan adequate?
- **Innovation:** Does the project employ novel concepts, approaches or methods? Are the aims original and innovative? Does the project challenge existing paradigms or develop new methodologies or technologies?
- **Approach:** Are the conceptual framework, design, methods, and analyses adequately developed, well-integrated, and appropriate to the aims of the project? Does the applicant acknowledge potential problem areas and consider alternative tactics?
- **Environment:** Does the scientific environment in which the work will be done contribute to the probability of success? Do the proposed experiments take advantage of unique features of the scientific environment or employ useful collaborative arrangements? Is there evidence of institutional support?
- **Compatibility with the U54 goals:** To what extent does the project address the development of collaborative programs of research? To what extent does the project build new bridges across programs or areas that could benefit from seed funding? To what extent does project offer training opportunities for students?
- Pilot projects need to demonstrate potential to develop into a full project.
- Full projects need to demonstrate potential to develop into an independently funded research project (R01 or similar).

Hyperlinks in this Document:

Download a complete template packet, including a sample LOI and most recent NIH biosketch at <http://cancer.nmsu.edu>

Listing of recently funded U54 projects:

- <http://www.fredhutch.org/en/labs/science-projects/pacr/partnership-research-projects/u54-ll-former-projects.html>

Fred Hutch main website:

- <http://www.fredhutch.org>

NMSU main website:

- <http://www.nmsu.edu>

Partnership for the Advancement of Cancer Research (PACR):

- PACR FHCRC: <http://www.fredhutch.org/en/labs/science-projects/pacr.html>
- PACR NMSU: <http://cancer.nmsu.edu>

National Cancer Institute's Partnerships to Advance Cancer Health Equality (PACHE):

- <https://www.cancer.gov/about-nci/organization/crchd/diversity-training/pache>

Email addresses:

- [Mary O'Connell: moconnel@nmsu.edu](mailto:moconnel@nmsu.edu)
- [Graciela Unquez: gunquez@nmsu.edu](mailto:gunquez@nmsu.edu)
- [Beti Thompson: bthomps@fredhutch.org](mailto:bthomps@fredhutch.org)
- [Julian Simon: jsimon@fredhutch.org](mailto:jsimon@fredhutch.org)
- [Jennifer Anderson: janderso@fredhutch.org](mailto:janderso@fredhutch.org)
- [Lené Loest: hloest@nmsu.edu](mailto:hloest@nmsu.edu)

EVALUATION INSTRUCTIONS

Use a 1 - 9 rating for each of the following areas (1 – 2 = outstanding; 3 = excellent; 4 - 6 = average; 7 - 9 = poor). Reviewers should not only consider the relative number of strengths and weaknesses noted, but also the importance of these strengths and weaknesses to the criteria or to the overall impact when determining a score. For example, a major strength may outweigh many minor and correctable weaknesses. The table below provides additional guidance to assist reviewers in determining their ratings.

IMPACT	SCORE	DESCRIPTOR	ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE ON STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES
High Impact	1	Exceptional	Exceptionally strong with essentially no weaknesses
	2	Outstanding	Extremely strong with negligible weaknesses
	3	Excellent	Very strong with only some minor weaknesses
Moderate Impact	4	Very Good	Strong but with numerous minor weakness
	5	Good	Strong but with at least one moderate weakness
	6	Satisfactory	Some strengths but also some moderate weaknesses
Low Impact	7	Fair	Some strengths but with at least one major weakness
	8	Marginal	A few strengths and a few major weaknesses
	9	Poor	Very few strengths and numerous major weaknesses

Minor Weakness: An easily addressable weakness that does not substantially lessen impact. **Moderate Weakness:** A weakness that lessens impact. **Major Weakness:** A weakness that severely limits impact.

Project Title			
Investigators			
<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-pilot	<input type="checkbox"/> Pilot	<input type="checkbox"/> Full	

1. Significance	
Comments	

2. Investigators	
Comments	

3. Innovation	
Comments	

4. Approach	
Comments	

5. Environment	
Comments	

6. Relevance	(score)
<i>To what extent might this project have an impact on cancer health disparities? Compatibility with U54 goals</i>	

7. Future Funding	(score) Have the PIs proposed a realistic plan to advance this research project to be competitive for additional funding?
Comments	

8. Progress Report (if applicable)	(score) Has the prior support allowed any junior investigators to develop their career; has significant progress been demonstrated in publications, grants and student training?
Comments	

Overall Score	
Summary Comments	