General conditions and guidelines for applying for an American Cancer Society Fellowship for Beginning Investigators (ACSBI)

General Conditions

UICC's Mission

UICC's mission is to unite the cancer community to reduce the global cancer burden, to promote greater equity, and to integrate cancer control into the world health and development agenda.

Founded in 1933, UICC has provided grants to more than 6,000 cancer professionals and institutions in support of cancer control, prevention and early detection, research, education, advocacy and community outreach. For more information, visit www.uicc.org

The ACSBI Fellowship's aim

The ACSBI fellowship emphasizes the transfer of knowledge from the host institute to others at the home institute. It offers the fellow the opportunity to be mentored by experts in the chosen field, receive hands-on experience in population, behavioral, clinical or basic research, intellectual stimulation, research guidance, narrative transfer and many other opportunities to evolve scientifically and academically.

The goals include not only developing future leaders in cancer research with an orientation towards research relevant to low/middle income countries, but also facilitating a global effort in cancer prevention and control. This will be done by developing the necessary intellectual infrastructure in home countries (since ACSBI fellows must return to their home institute), encouraging collaborative interactions to facilitate interdisciplinary basic and applied cancer research, and establishing a network of researchers and translational scientists for rapid dissemination of new knowledge and technology in developing and sharing of best practices.

Objectives

- To foster a bi-directional flow of research knowledge, experience, expertise, and innovation between countries
- To support the promotion of cancer control in developing countries through epidemiology, cancer control, and other areas of cancer research
- To advance the academic career development of beginning cancer investigators through translational, clinical, behavioural, or population-based research projects

Target candidates
Preference will be given to research investigators, clinician scientists, epidemiologists, public health professionals studying projects with relevance to low-, lower-middle- and upper-middle-income countries (as defined by the World Bank).

Application Review Criteria
ACSBI applications are evaluated by an independent Scientific Review Panel according to a peer-review process. The competitive selection is made on the basis of scientific and expert evaluation of the application and the proposed course as set out by the applicant in the project description. The assessments are strictly confidential and cannot be divulged outside of UICC and its selection committees, or to the applicants themselves. The decisions are final and cannot be appealed.

All applications are reviewed for their completeness and compliance with the guidelines. Any incomplete application or application not compliant with stated guidelines will be disqualified.

Annual competitive selection is based on:

- the scientific evaluation of the research plan
- the value of the research to low- and middle income countries
- the experience and qualifications of the candidate
- a telephone interview with the candidate
- the suitability of the host organization and host supervisor
- an appropriate duration
- the availability of appropriate facilities and resources to apply and disseminate the acquired skills upon return to the home organization

Eligibility criteria are the following:

- Be a beginning investigator or clinician in the early stages of their independent investigator career and possessing a terminal* advanced degree
- Applicants are to be in the early phases of their career and no longer under research mentoring.
- Hold an academic university or hospital position with an explicit commitment to return to the home institute
- Have not been previously awarded an ACSBI
- Conduct the research at not-for-profit institutions in an area of cancer research listed below:
    - Biology
    - Etiology (causes of cancer)
    - Prevention
    - Early Detection, Diagnosis, and Prognosis
    - Treatment
    - Cancer Control, Survivorship, and Outcomes Research
    - Scientific Model Systems

- N.B. Candidates attached to commercial entities or have associations with the tobacco industry are not eligible. Fellowships cannot be granted to candidates who are already physically present at the proposed host institute whilst their applications are under consideration. One can apply to only one fellowship scheme (ACSBI, YY, or ICRETT) at a time. Candidates who have obtained a UICC fellowship in the past may apply for further UICC awards only if they are Members of the Association of UICC Fellows.

*Definitions

Terminal degree: is generally accepted as the highest degree in a field of study. An earned academic (or research) doctorate such as a Doctor of Philosophy is considered the terminal degree in most academic fields of study in some countries. Many professional degrees are also considered terminal degrees because they are the highest professional degree in the field, even though "higher" research degrees exist.

Applied research: is directed towards achieving specific objectives such as the development of a new drug, diagnostic test or procedure, therapy, or surgical procedure. It involves the application of existing knowledge, much of which is obtained through basic research, to a specific biomedical problem. It can be conducted with animals, non-animal alternatives such as computer models or tissue cultures, or with humans.

Clinical research: builds upon knowledge learned through basic and applied research, and is conducted on human beings, usually in a hospital, clinical or community setting. The knowledge obtained from this research results in establishing treatments and drugs, psychosocial and behavioral interventions, or policy changes that directly improve human health, quality of life or healthcare delivery.

Translational Research: is the movement of novel findings obtained from basic research laboratories into testable hypotheses for evaluation in clinical trials in human subjects or for epidemiology studies.

Research plan

- Epidemiological, applied, clinical, or translational cancer research projects will receive funding preference over basic cancer research.
- We especially encourage research from the target candidate group
- Note: This is not a clinical training fellowship

Conditions

All Fellowships are subject to adequate funds being available and are conditional on Fellows returning to the home institutes/country at the end of the fellowship period. The fellowships are not awarded for basic training, courses, lectures, meetings, conferences, congresses or for visiting institutes. Fellowships cannot be granted to candidates who are already physically present at the proposed host institute whilst their applications are under consideration i.e. the period between the application closing date and receipt of the countersigned Letter of Award by the UICC. The original Fellowships cannot be prolonged, or run concurrently with other awards, even those funded by other agencies. They can however, be extended by a maximum of 12 months subject to the written approval of home and host supervisors and at no additional cost to UICC. Funding for such extension periods may be secured from other funding agencies. Fellowships that are terminated prematurely must be notified promptly to UICC and appropriate funds reimbursed. The UICC requires an end-of-project report in English within 1 month of the end of the project. The reports of all members of the Association of UICC Fellows are available on line in the AUF Directory.

Awards

The awards are based on published fares for travel and living costs, and UICC scales but are only a contribution towards least expensive international travel and living costs. They are not intended to completely cover all travel or normal salary or income levels. They are for the initial travel from home to host countries but do not include internal travel within the home and/or host countries. Costs for visa, passports, airport taxes etc. are the responsibility of the Fellows. The awards do not cover medical care, insurances or taxes; none of which UICC or the Sponsors are liable for. They also do not provide support for accompanying dependents.

End of project report

Within one month of the end of the project, a report describing the work undertaken and the results achieved must be submitted to the UICC. To enhance the presentation of your report, please email us several high resolution photos of yourself performing in your host laboratory. This report must be approved and the performance during the fellowship evaluated by the host supervisor. Please use the end of project report template provided at the time of the award and return by email.

Evaluation after 1 year report

Approximately 1 year after the return of the applicant to her/his home institute/hospital, the Fellow will submit an "Evaluation after 1 year" report. Please use the template provided for this report and return by email. Note that applicants may not apply for another Fellowship program (YY or ICRETT) until such time that the ACSBI fellowship is completed and the Evaluation after 1 year report has been received by the UICC. Failure to comply with this condition may result in the request for the return of UICC funds. Your home and host supervisors will be notified should this occur.

Association of UICC Fellows

Upon successful completion of a UICC fellowship, i.e. submission of the endorsed end-of-project report to UICC, Fellows are invited to join the Association of UICC Fellows (AUF). Only Association Members are eligible to submit further applications for any UICC fellowship scheme. New members who work in developing countries or in Eastern Europe may benefit from a one-year complimentary subscription to the UICC International Journal of Cancer, a generous offer made by its Publishers, Wiley & Son Inc., New York. Life-time Membership carries a subscription fee of USD 50.

No distinction will be made among candidates on the basis of gender, ethnic origin, religious or political beliefs. Any infringement of these conditions will result in the withdrawal of an application from the selection process or the cancellation of an award already made.

Application Process

The completed application along with all documents must be submitted online in English and are accepted at any time. Electronic signatures are acceptable. For abstracts and reprints, the specific report PubMed url or manuscript in electronic format can be provided.

Applications will be acknowledged promptly. Candidates will be advised by email if items need clarification. Applications that have undergone a review and selection process and were not approved for funding cannot be resubmitted.

Electronic Submission
- Applicants must submit proposals electronically through ProposalCENTRAL, an electronic grant submission system provided by Altum, Inc.
- Access ProposalCENTRAL at: https://proposalcentral.altum.com.
- If you are a 'new' user in ProposalCENTRAL, click the 'Register' button under 'First Time Users' and complete the registration process.
- If you are already registered in ProposalCENTRAL access the site and log in with your user ID or e-mail address. If you have forgotten your password, click on the 'Forgot Password?' link. Supply your e-mail address or your user ID in the space provided; your password will be sent to you by e-mail.
- After you log in, complete your Professional Profile (second tab from the left) before starting an application. This will allow information provided in your Professional Profile to be populated throughout the application.
- To start an application, select the Grant Opportunities tab (gray tab furthest to the right). A list of applications will display. Find the UICC program that you wish to apply for and click the 'Apply Now' link (second to last column) to 'create' your application.
- If you have any difficulties registering, logging in, or creating your application, contact ProposalCENTRAL Customer Support: phone: 1-800-875-2562 or 001 (703) 964-5840 (between 8:30am - 5:00pm Eastern US Time), and/or e-mail: pcsupport@altum.com.

Application Submission
The application process is conducted online only. In addition, several documents are to be uploaded with the application form:
- **A Biosketch of the applicant** (template provided online)
- **A Project Description and Personal Statement** (template and instructions provided online)
- **An Attestation on Letterhead Paper from Home Supervisor** (template provided online)
- **One-Page Resume of Host's Project-Related Activities**
- **Hand-Signed Host Attestation** (template provided online)
- **Hand-Signed Letter of Invitation on Letterhead Paper from Host Supervisor**

Overview of the Application Form

The application process is comprised of 12 steps:
1) Fellowship Summary
2) Download Templates & Instructions
3) Enable Other Users to Access this Proposal
4) Applicant
5) Host Location
6) Host and Home Supervisors
7) Disciplines & Keywords
8) Application Attachments

9) Certification
10) Validate
11) Print Application for your Files
12) Submit

You may stop at any point in the application, each time remembering to SAVE your entries (especially after completing each page and/or every 25 minutes), and return to continue, revise, and upload until you have actually hit the SUBMIT button.
When you log in to continue, click on the blue tab, MANAGE PROPOSALS, and then the Edit button next to your application's title. Do not start a new application.

1. Fellowship Summary

a. Title of proposed Project
Enter a concise caption, no longer than 80 characters. A project title must be entered and saved before additional sections may be accessed.

b. Proposed start and finish dates of your project
These dates should fall within the specified minimum/maximum duration of the fellowship (i.e. 12 months). They should allow sufficient time after the expected date of the funding decision for you to complete travel, visa, and passport formalities.

c. Funding
The value of the ACSBI award is $50,000. Once awarded, the funding cannot be increased. Please inform us if you have applied for funding from other sources.

Remember to save your work and check it has saved correctly

2. Download Templates and instructions

Four templates are provided:

a. The Applicant CV
The applicant is required to provide a detailed CV.

b. The Project Description and Personal Statement template and instructions
The applicant is required to provide a detailed description of their project. This is the most important component of the application. There is a template available and instructions that can be downloaded.

c. A hand-signed home supervisor attestation on letterhead paper from the home supervisor
Use the template provided for the Hand-Signed Home Attestation on letterhead paper from your Home Supervisor. Electronic signatures are also accepted.

d. A Hand-Signed Host Attestation
Use this template form for the attestation of the host supervisor.

Remember to save your work and check it has saved correctly

3. Enable Other Users to Access this Proposal

You are not required to use this section.
This screen allows you to give other users access to your on-line grant application.

4. Applicant

This section summarizes the information of the applicant, which should be completed for the proposal to be valid. Please ensure that all personal information including numbers and address entered are correct.

> You can edit your personal details by clicking on the 'Edit Professional Profile' Button

Remember to save your work and check it has saved correctly

5. Host Location

In this section you have to provide details about the host institution you are applying for. The system automatically populates this section with your home institution and you need to change this to your host institution. To update the field with your host (not home) institution you need to click on 'Change Institution' then you may select the institution in the list. If your host institution is not listed you can follow the instructions in the greyed out field on the Host location page to get it set up. If you have any difficulties contact ProposalCENTRAL Customer Support using the contact details above.

You are also required to mention the working language at the work institute and state your knowledge of that language.

Remember to save your work and check it has saved correctly

6. Home and Host Supervisors

Provide information for your home and host supervisor in this section by entering their email address and pressing the 'add' button.

Remember to save your work and check it has saved correctly

7. Abstract and Disciplines

a. Abstract
Provide a summary that may be used for general audience.

b. CSO classification: The Common Scientific Outline or 'CSO' is a classification system organized into seven broad areas of scientific interest in cancer research. Choose the area that best fits your proposal.

Area of interest in cancer research	
Biology	Research included in this category looks at the biology of how cancer starts and progresses as well as normal biology relevant to these processes
Etiology	Research included in this category aims to identify the causes or origins of cancer - genetic, environmental, and lifestyle, and the interactions between these factors
Prevention	Research included in this category looks at identifying interventions which reduce cancer risk by reducing exposure to cancer risks and increasing protective factors. Interventions may target lifestyle or may involve drugs or vaccines
Early Detection, Diagnosis, and	Research included in this category focuses on identifying and testing cancer markers and imaging methods that are helpful

Prognosis	in detecting and/or diagnosing cancer as well as predicting the outcome or chance of recurrence
Treatment	Research included in this category focuses on identifying and testing treatments administered locally (such as radiotherapy and surgery) and systemically (treatments like chemotherapy which are administered throughout the body) as well as non-traditional (complementary/alternative) treatments (such as supplements, herbs). Research into the prevention of recurrence is also included here
Cancer Control, Survivorship, and Outcomes Research	Research included in this category includes a broad range of areas: patient care and pain management; tracking cancer cases in the population; beliefs and attitudes that affect behaviour regarding cancer control; ethics, education and communication approaches for patients and health care professionals; supportive and end-of-life care; and health care delivery in terms of quality and cost effectiveness
Scientific Model Systems	Research included in this category looks at the development of new animal models, cell cultures and computer simulations and their application to other studies across the spectrum of cancer research

For more info on the CSO classification please see: https://www.icrpartnership.org/CSO.cfm

c. Cancer Sites
Indicate the cancer site with which the project is linked.

d. Target populations
Indicate whether the ACSBI addresses cancer in a target population

8. Application Attachments

This is the section where you are asked to upload the following documents in pdf format.
- **A CV of the applicant** (template provided online)
- **A Project Description and Personal Statement** (template provided online)
- **Hand-Signed Letter of Invitation on Headed Paper from Host Supervisor**
- **One-Page Resume of Host's Project-Related Activities**
- **An Attestation on Headed Paper from Home Supervisor** (template provided online)
- **Hand-Signed Host Attestation** (template provided online)

Upload all requested documents in portable document format (PDF). See the following link for a list of pdf format converters. http://www.neh.gov/grants/manage/converting-your-documents-pdfs

8a. Further instructions on the Project Description and Personal Statement to be uploaded

You are asked to provide a document split into 3 sections containing a project description (4 pages max), a personal statement (1 pages max) and a bibliography including titles and all authors for literature cited (1 page max). The document should be written in page size A4 with normal margins (1.5cm) and font has to be ARIAL, size 11. Altogether the document should not be longer than 6 pages. Proposals that do not respect this format will not be

reviewed. The document file size should be no bigger than 10mb, please contact fellows@uicc.org if your document is larger than this.
The document sections are:

Project Description (up to 4 pages max)

This is the most important component of your application. It should be prepared by yourself and been reviewed by your host supervisor. The description must include sufficient scientific, medical and/or technical detail to allow evaluation of the significance of the problem and the likelihood that the research plan will have a successful outcome.

- **Abstract** Provide a brief one paragraph summary of the overall problem to be addressed and the experimental or theoretical approach that will be taken towards a specific objective.
- **Background & Significance** Provide sufficient information so that the current state of knowledge and significance of the problem is clear. Refer to relevant literature, including work from the host or your own experience that pertains directly to the proposal.
- **Specific Aims** Concisely detail the project as a set of specific experimental goals or questions that will help you establish the central goal or hypothesis of your project. 2 - 3 aims per project are usual, phrased for example as "In order to determine____, we will do ____".
- **Experimental Design** This is the most critical portion of the project. Describe in sufficient experimental detail how you will accomplish each Aim. Include controls, how data will be assessed and interpreted, and alternative approaches if outcomes are not as expected.

Personal Statement (1 pages max)

The Personal Statement is your introduction to the selection committee. You are asked to address the following potential benefits that you hope to obtain from the Project:

- **Relevance** Describe the relevance of the project to the cancer problem in your home country
- **Host Institute** Describe the reason for choice of the host institute and mentor
- **Project Duration** Justification of project duration – will Specific Aims be accomplished in that time?
- **Skills** Describe the skills you hope to gain and how you will apply these after the Fellowship, both immediately and to your long term career goals
- **Facilities upon return** Explain which facilities or resources will be available upon your return to continue the work, and to apply and disseminate the new skills

Literature Cited (1 page max)

Provide bibliography in standard scientific bibliographic format including titles and all authors for literature cited.

9. Certification

By submitting a grant request to UICC, if this application is successful, you agree to return to your home institute at the end of the fellowship and certify that the foregoing statements are true and complete to the best of your knowledge. You understand that any false statement is sufficient cause for rejection of this application or for cancellation of a fellowship already awarded.

10. Validate

Validate the application on proposalCENTRAL. 'Validate' checks that something is completed for required data and required attachments. You will not be able to submit if all the required data and attachments have not been provided. If there is missing information the system will give you a list of fields or documents that you need to go back and complete.

11. Print the application for your files (Optional)

This step is optional. We only require hand-written signatures on your uploaded host and host attestations therefore you do not need to print the 'signature pages' (i.e. the sections you have completed online) of your application.

If you wish to review a pdf version of your application you can use the second print button "Print Signature Pages and Attached PDF Files." This assembles the files in the order specified by the UICC and allows you to check that everything is how you would like it. You can also keep a copy for your records.

(Note you can view and print your application after you have submitted by using the 'Manage Proposals' section of your profile.)

12. Submit

To submit your Proposal, please click the 'Submit' button. You will be unable to submit if you have not provided all the required information. Any missing information will be listed on the screen. A confirmation email will be sent by proposalCENTRAL to confirm that the application was submitted. If you do not receive an email confirming the submission of your application, please contact proposalCENTRAL immediately. **It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure the application was completed correctly, all required information is present, and that the proposal was officially submitted through proposalCENTRAL.**

Authorization

Funding of a proposal authorizes UICC to use the applicant's name and proposal in soliciting contributions to fund its cancer research and training programs.

CONTACT INFORMATION

All communication regarding the Grant and Fellowship Program should be directed to the following address: fellows@uicc.org
If you need help using the online application system contact proposalCENTRAL at 1-800-875-2562 or 001 (703) 964-5840 between 8:30am - 5:00pm Eastern US Time. You may also email Customer Support at pcsupport@altum.com.