



State of New Jersey

COMMISSION ON CANCER RESEARCH

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[www.nj.gov/health](http://www.nj.gov/health)

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## New Jersey Commission on Cancer Research (NJCCR)

### Notice of Funding Opportunity

### 2020 Pre- and Post-Doctoral Cancer Research Fellowship Awards

#### Executive Summary

The New Jersey Commission on Cancer Research (NJDOH-NJCCR) announces the availability of Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 funds to support pre- and post-doctoral fellows who will conduct original basic, biomedical, behavioral or clinical science research related to the causes, prevention, survival and treatment of cancer.

Applications will be reviewed and scored objectively by a committee of experts. (See page 10 for Review Information.) The total project period is 24 months, with a 24-month budget period and an anticipated award date of **December 20, 2019**.

A Technical Assistance Meeting will be held on **July 8, 2019** for all fellows and research institutions that have submitted a Letter of Intent by **July 1, 2019**. The location and time of the Technical Assistance Meeting will be announced on the NJCCR website (<http://www.state.nj.us/health/ces/cancer-researchers/njccr.shtml>). This technical assistance meeting will provide the opportunity for potential fellows to review, clarify and ask questions about the information presented in this RFA. No further technical assistance on the RFA will be provided after this meeting.

The NJCCR funds research projects that focus on the genetic, biochemical, viral, microbiological, environmental, behavioral, socioeconomic, demographic and psychosocial aspects of cancer prevention, causes, development, treatment and palliation. Such research may include studies that relate to fundamental aspects of cancer, but these must include biologic systems, tissues, cells, human subjects and/or other materials that have a direct relationship to cancer.

NJCCR seeks to stimulate fundamental research by early-career scientists and scholars of outstanding promise. These two-year fellowships are awarded in recognition of their distinguished performance and unique potential to make substantial contributions to their field.

## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this granting vehicle is to lessen the burden of cancer in New Jersey. An estimated 53,400 people in New Jersey will be diagnosed with cancer in 2019, and 15,860 will succumb to the disease, according to the American Cancer Society's report "Cancer Facts & Figures 2019". During the period 2012-2016, a total of 254,603 cases of invasive cancer were diagnosed among New Jersey residents, comprised of 50.9% women and 49.1% men, which included 81.7% whites, 11.4% blacks, and 4.2% Asians and Pacific Islanders (API). Hispanics of any race accounted for 9.6% of the total cancer cases.

## **BACKGROUND**

The NJCCR, whose members are appointed by the Governor, was established on January 17, 1983, with the passage of the "Cancer Research Act" by the New Jersey State Legislature. Its central mission is to promote significant and original research in New Jersey into the causes, prevention and treatment of cancer. The NJCCR also serves as an important resource to providers and consumers of cancer services in the State.

Funding for the NJCCR fellowships is fueled by revenue generated from the check-off boxes on the New Jersey State Individual Income Tax forms as well as proceeds from the specialty conquer cancer license plate available from the New Jersey Motor Vehicles Commission. The Governor's FY 2020 State Budget included an allocation of \$2 million for cancer research.

Administered through the NJDOH, the NJCCR grant system provides fellowship awards to attract and retain talented young scientists who wish to pursue a career in cancer research in New Jersey. An independent evaluation of the NJCCR Pre- and Post-Doctoral awards programs has indicated that award recipients contribute significantly to their laboratories by identifying new research directions of relevance to cancer and improve opportunities for grants and contracts. Additionally, almost 70% of NJCCR post-doctoral fellows go on to pursue successful research careers in academia and the private sector.

## **TYPE OF RFA**

This is an open and competitive cancer research fellowship program, based on a National Institutes of Health (NIH) system of scientific review. Awards are available to all non-profit research institutions, cancer centers, hospitals or scientific organizations in New Jersey who meet the minimum eligibility requirements described in the section below.

Graduate and postdoctoral candidates must apply for this award through an authorized individual at their University or Institution. Applications sent directly from candidates will not be accepted.

Each application must be identified as intended for either a Pre- or Post-Doctoral Cancer Research Scholar Award.

## **APPLICATION FORMAT**

### **Letter of Intent**

A Letter of Intent MUST be submitted via email to NJCCR prior to accessing the System for Administering Grants Electronically (SAGE). “*Notice of Intent to Apply*” should be the Subject Line of the email. It must be sent no later than the close of business on **July 1, 2019**. The Letter of Intent should include the name of the fellow, institution, title of the research project, name of the sponsoring researcher, hypothesis, aim/goal of the research and a brief description (about 1-2 paragraphs) of the research.

The Letter of Intent should be emailed to: **[njccr@doh.nj.gov](mailto:njccr@doh.nj.gov)**.

A Technical Assistance Meeting will be held on **July 8, 2019**. The location and time of the Technical Assistance Meeting will be announced on the NJCCR website at (<http://www.nj.gov/health/ces/cancer-researchers/njccr.shtml>). The purpose of this meeting will be to review any questions and concerns about the application and the SAGE process.

The date for the applications to be available on SAGE will be announced at the Technical Assistance Meeting.

### **APPLICATION CRITERIA**

Fellows must submit a detailed project narrative, describing how the research will be conducted during the funding period. It should be succinct, self-explanatory and organized in the order outlined in this section, so reviewers can understand the proposed project. The narrative should include the following:

#### **Lay Abstract**

An abstract written and easily understood by individuals who do not conduct cancer research.

#### **Abstract of Research Planning**

The official abstract describing the hypothesis, goals, and significance of the research to cancer.

#### **Specific Aims**

These are broad statements of the focus and desired outcomes of the research, or the general intentions of the research, that 'paint a concise picture' of the research project.

## **Significance**

This section describes the rationale for conducting the research. Overall, this section answers several questions: Why is this work important to the field of cancer? What are the implications of doing this work? How does this work link to other knowledge?

## **Progress Report/Preliminary Studies**

This section should describe any preliminary studies that serve as the foundation for the proposed study.

## **Experimental Design**

Describe the strategy that will be used to direct the research and address support the specific aims.

In addition, the fellow will need to include:

- Biographical Sketch using the standard NIH format
- Research Funding Support of Sponsor
- Resources and Environment
- Comments from Sponsor

## **Use of Funds**

Upon award, the recipient shall ensure that funds are immediately accessible and used for activities described in the approved application.

Funds may be used to support:

- Equipment, supplies, or educational materials for the purpose of conducting cancer research.
- In-state travel to meetings/events relevant to the study.

## **Funding Restrictions**

Please refer to Subpart H\* for the Allowability of Cost that MUS be considered while planning the research and writing the budget:

Recipient may not use funds for the following:

- purchasing vehicles.
- travel outside of the state of New Jersey.
- food or refreshments.

- interest on loans for the acquisition and/or modernization of an existing building.
- tuition reimbursement.

\*(See NJSAGE for Terms and Conditions – Subpart H)

### **Submission and Funding Dates and Times**

Applications must be submitted via the NJSAGE system at:

<https://njsage.intelligrants.com/Login2.aspx?APPTHEME=NJSAGE>

no later than **4:00 p.m. on September 3, 2019.**

Paper submissions will not be considered. Incomplete grant applications will not be considered and will be disqualified. Applications that do not meet the above criteria will not be considered and will be rejected. Successful applicants will be notified of funding decisions on or about **December 20, 2019.**

### **Your research institution MUST be registered in NJSAGE**

Applicants are required to submit financial documents in accordance with the NJDOH Cost Controlling Initiatives. Failure to provide required documentation by the date of application submission will result in the application being deemed non-responsive. Please attach the requested documents in word or PDF to the application through the NJDOH System for Administering Grants Electronically (SAGE):

1. Valid Internal Revenue Services (IRS) 501(c) (3) tax exempt status.
2. Statement of Total Gross Revenue and/or Annual Report (if applicable). If grant is less than \$100,000 and agency doesn't receive any other funds from the state or federal government an audit report is not required. Agency should submit the Statement of Total Gross Revenue to determine if an audit report is required.
3. Tax Clearance Certificate is to be submitted – Application for Tax Clearance can be obtained at <http://www.state.nj.us/treasury/taxation/busasst.shtml> (fee of \$75.00 or \$200.00).
4. NJ Charities Registration - If your organization is registered with the NJ Charities Registration, then each year a "Letter of Compliance" from the Division of Consumer Affairs must be obtained. All registered charities must renew their registration yearly. For more information contact the Division of Consumer Affairs. Forms can be found at:  
<http://www.njpublicsafety.com/ca/charity/charfrm.htm>.

**Research Scholars must register with NJSAGE as a "New User" at the following website address [www.sage.nj.gov](http://www.sage.nj.gov) .**

**Instructions for each applicant to set up a user account on NJSAGE must be followed as below and completed on SAGE in order to be considered for the grant award.**

## **Set-up New User NJSAGE Account**

At the login screen, click on the New User link. Complete the **Contact Registration Information** form and click **SAVE**. All fields marked with an asterisk (\*) are mandatory.

**Username:** Letters and numbers - 5 to 20 characters (*example: abattle1, alb12*)

**Password:** Letters and numbers - 7 to 20 characters

## **New User Validation**

When the form is completed, you will be returned to the login screen. Notify your organization's Agency Administrator or Authorized Official so they can validate you as a new user for your agency. Please note you will not be able to log into NJSAGE until you are validated by your organization.

## **Validating Users (for Agency Administrators and Authorized Officials)**

An organization's Agency Administrator (AA) or Authorized Official (AO) must give new users access in NJDOH SAGE. The following instructions are for AAs and AOs only.

Log into NJDOH SAGE, scroll below **My Information** to **My Organization** and click on the name of your agency. Your agency's information will appear. Find and click on the **Members** tab. In the **Search** field, enter the name of the person you wish to add to your agency. When you locate the correct person check the box next to their name, select a **Security Role** from the dropdown menu, and enter a **Start Date**. Click **SAVE** to associate the user with your agency and validate them.

## **Instructions for New Agencies: Contact Cynthia Satchell-Gore at (609) 633-8009.**

1. Complete the FORM for Adding Agency Organizations Into NJSAGE.
2. Identify your validated Authorized Official, or if none, have the Authorized Official register as a new user. The new user (Authorized Official) will be validated when the organization is validated and assigned to the organization.
3. Sign a **hard copy** of the FORM for Adding Agency Organizations into NJSAGE and submit it via FAX or as an email attachment to Cynthia Satchell-Gore at:
  - a. FAX number: (609) 633-1705; or
  - b. Email address: [Cynthia.Satchell-Gore@doh.nj.gov](mailto:Cynthia.Satchell-Gore@doh.nj.gov).

**NOTE - If you have previously established a user account in NJSAGE, please do not complete this process again. Your Organization information has already been established.**

For assistance in NJSAGE you may also email [SAGE.unit@doh.nj.gov](mailto:SAGE.unit@doh.nj.gov)

## **ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

Candidates must apply for the fellowship under the guidance of a Sponsor—a scientist (tenured, tenure-track or equivalent position) capable of providing mentorship to the Fellow. In addition to aiding in the planning, execution and supervision of the proposed research, the Sponsor's role is to foster the development of the Fellow's overall knowledge, technical and analytical skills, and capacity for scientific inquiry. The Sponsor is also expected to assist the Fellow in attaining his/her career goals.

Awards are made to institutions for the support of the Fellow under direct supervision of the Sponsor. Candidates who have already accepted another pre or postdoctoral research fellowship award are not eligible.

Applicants must be New Jersey non-profit research institutions with formally established and active graduate research programs.

### **PRE-DOCTORAL:**

- Applicants must be United States citizens or have the appropriate study visa.
- Applicants must be full time graduate students in residence in a proposed course of study directly related to cancer.
- The NJCCR prefers to support pre-doctoral candidates who have completed most of their course work and are devoting at least 80% of their time to research. It is expected that applicants will not be less than two years from their expected completion of their thesis work.
- Teaching and other non-research responsibilities should not exceed 20% of an applicant's time without permission from the NJCCR.

### **POST-DOCTORAL:**

- Candidates of outstanding quality must hold a PhD, MD, DrPH, DO or equivalent graduate degree.
- Appropriate degrees must be awarded prior to activation of award.
- Candidate must be accepted for postdoctoral training under the supervision of an appropriate sponsor at a non-profit research institution in New Jersey.
- Very senior postdoctoral fellows, or candidates pursuing second training fellowships, will not be supported under this award.

**Three (3) letters of recommendation and a recent transcript** (an unofficial transcript is acceptable) must be included in the application packet. The letters of recommendation are to be emailed separately with the name of the applying fellow in the subject line. The transcript can be uploaded into Misc. Attachments in SAGE. Letters and transcript are to be received in the NJCCR Office no later than 4:00 p.m. on the application due date September 3, 2019.

It is the responsibility of the candidate to make sure that letters of recommendation and transcript arrive at the NJCCR Office on time and separately, as these letters must remain confidential. **Late letters of recommendation and transcripts will not be accepted.** The Fellow's name must be included in the subject line of all correspondence.

**Letters of Recommendation and Transcripts can be emailed to:**  
**njccr@doh.nj.gov**

or mailed to:  
**NJ Commission on Cancer Research**  
**50 East State Street, 6th Floor**  
**PO Box 364**  
**Trenton, NJ 08625-0364**

**\*Please note regular mail may be delayed by several days. Send via overnight mail or regular U.S. postal mail with sufficient time to be delivered to the NJCCR Office by the stated deadline.**

## **TYPE OF FUNDING**

### PRE-DOCTORAL SCHOLAR:

- Pre-doctoral Scholar Awards will be given at \$50,000 over two years.
- Pre-doctoral fellowships are for two years only, based on availability of funding.
- A stipend of \$22,000 per annum will be awarded for salary plus an additional \$2,200 for fringe. The remainder of the funds are for research-related expenses.
- The New Jersey Commission on Cancer Research considers the cost of tuition to be the responsibility of the academic institution. Institutions that accept New Jersey Commission on Cancer Research fellowships must provide tuition remission for the approved fellow.
- Institutions may supplement stipends, but not with other full-time fellowship awards or other NJCCR monies.

- Indirect costs are not allowed in this program.
- NJCCR Pre-Doctoral Scholars should be aware that tax reform includes stipends and other portions of these awards as taxable income.

POST-DOCTORAL SCHOLAR:

- Post-doctoral Awards will be given at \$100,000 over two years.
- All NJCCR Post-doctoral Scholar Awards are for two years, based on availability of funding.
- A stipend of \$40,000 per annum will be awarded to postdoctoral candidates for salary. The remainder of the dollars are for research related expenses.
- Institutions may supplement stipends, but not with other full-time fellowship awards or other NJCCR monies.
- Indirect costs are not allowed in this program.
- NJCCR Post-Doctoral Scholars should be aware that tax reform includes stipends and other portions of these awards as taxable income.

**BUDGETARY OVERLAP**

The NJCCR does not fund studies that have budgetary overlap with research awards supported by other agencies. Accurate and complete information on actively funded, pending, and planned proposals, must be provided on the application form entitled “Application for Other Concurrent Support.”

NJCCR does not provide more than one grant of any type (pre/post doctoral, bridge or pilot) to any PI’s laboratory.

Should funding be accepted from another agency, it is the responsibility of the Scholar or Sponsor to notify the NJCCR immediately. The NJCCR is in communication with other funding agencies and reserves the right to investigate any possible overlaps.

**COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS**

Funding Authorization Number 46.99448.

Terms and Conditions for Administration of Health Services Grant.

Applicable Cost Principles - State and Local Governments, Non-Profit Agencies, Hospitals and Educational Institutions - (copy available from the NJCCR office upon request).

## **TERMS**

All progress reports, expenditure reports and payment vouchers must be submitted through SAGE as dictated in the Contract Agreement. The NJCCR must be notified immediately if awards are not accepted or cancelled. Unspent funds must be returned within 30 days of cancellation.

## **INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

Program administrators and/or grant managers must assure that required progress reports are submitted in a timely and accurate fashion. Failure to submit programmatic reports may delay Scholar payments.

All NJCCR Scholars are expected to participate in a Scholars Meeting (time and place to be announced) as well as the Annual Retreat on Cancer Research in New Jersey, which is an approved NJCCR sponsored scientific program. Program administrators should make every effort to assist Scholars in this activity.

All publications and presentations made by the applicant or sponsor on the funded project should include the statement "Funded by the New Jersey Commission on Cancer Research."

Applications may be subject to the Open Public Records Act. Acceptance of this award presumes an understanding of, and agreement with these responsibilities. Failure to comply with these terms may result in grant termination.

## **PAYMENTS**

Payments will be made quarterly after the submission and approval of quarterly expense report. All reports are submitted through the SAGE system. All expenditure reports must be submitted through SAGE. **A final expenditure report must be submitted through SAGE no later than 60 days after the end of the award period.** The report must have the signature of the financial officer of the institution. The Commission or its designated representative reserves the right to audit accounts at any time.

## **PROGRESS REPORT**

Progress reports must be submitted every six (6) months for the entirety of the fellowship. The due dates will be provided at a date to be established and will coincide with the expenditure report due dates. The progress reports are a summary of research performed during the reporting period. The summary should be technical but targeted to a general scientific audience. It should be sufficiently detailed such that the Fellow's research activities over the award year are clearly articulated. Figures and references may be included if appropriate. The report should not exceed three (3) pages.

**A detailed Final Progress Report must be completed by the faculty mentor/mentors no later than 60 days after the end of the award period.** The Final Progress Report must summarize the outcomes achieved as a result of the 2019 Pre-Doctoral and Post-Doctoral Cancer Research Scholars Award. The Final Progress Report must also be submitted through SAGE.

## **REVIEW PROCEDURES AND CRITERIA**

All proposals are reviewed by a panel of external scientific experts who are appointed by the NJCCR. The panel evaluates candidates based on academic qualifications, scientific merit of the proposed research areas, the qualifications of the mentors, the adequacy of facilities, institutional support and the relevance of the work to the causes of cancer or methods of clinical treatment.

The reviews and recommendations of the scientific panel are provided to the Commissioners who make the final decision on all awards. The NJCCR reserves the right to consider other contributing factors such as programmatic, geographic diversity and relevancy factors in making decisions among applications that have comparable scientific merit based upon the review panel recommendations.

### **Review and Selection Process**

- 1. Phase I Review:** All eligible applications will be initially reviewed for completeness by the NJDOH staff. Incomplete applications and applications that are non-responsive to the eligibility criteria will not advance to the Phase II review. Applicants will be notified, via email, or SAGE that the application did not meet the eligibility requirements.
- 2. Phase II Review:** An objective external review panel will evaluate complete and responsive applications according to the criteria listed in the criteria section of the RFA. Each application will be reviewed and scored by a minimum of two (2) reviewers.
- 3. Phase III Review:** Scored applications will be ranked **according to the reviews** and award recommendations will be presented to NJDOH **by the NJCCR.**

### **Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates**

Successful applicants should anticipate notice of award on or about **December 20, 2019.**

### **Agency Contacts**

NJDOH encourages inquiries concerning this announcement.

### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Additional information regarding the terms of the 2019 Pre-Doctoral and Post-Doctoral Cancer Research Scholar Awards can be obtained by emailing the NJCCR at [njccr@doh.nj.gov](mailto:njccr@doh.nj.gov) or writing to:

**NJ Commission on Cancer Research  
50 East State Street, 6th Floor  
PO Box 364  
Trenton, NJ 08625-0364**

**IMPORTANT DATES: ·**

RFA Release Date: **June 3, 2019**

Submission Date for Letter of Intent: **July 1, 2019**

Bidder's Conference: **July 8, 2019**

Application Open Date: **July 10, 2019**

Application Closeout Date: **September 3, 2019**

Notification of Award: **December 20, 2019**

Please note:

- A. For problems experienced with the electronic submission website (SAGE), please contact **Cynthia Satchell-Gore at (609) 633-8009**.
- B. For additional inquiries on the application, please contact **Candido.Africa@doh.nj.gov**.