

Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center SPORE in Gastrointestinal Cancer

Developmental Research Program Call for Applications

We are pleased to announce the availability of pilot project grants to support basic, translational, or clinical research on the cause, prevention, detection, control, or treatment of gastrointestinal (GI) cancers. High-risk, high-reward projects with a clear focus on GI cancers and strong potential to develop into independent R01-funded studies will be considered for review.

Funds are available to qualified faculty from Vanderbilt University Medical Center, Vanderbilt University, Meharry Medical College, and Tennessee State University. Investigators are not required to be a member of the VICC at the time of application. Up to \$50,000 will be awarded with the opportunity for a one-year renewal based on measurable progress of impact. Current GI SPORE pilot project recipients who are considering a renewal application are encouraged to contact Dr. Bob Coffey (robert.coffey@vumc.org) to discuss the likelihood of success of an additional year of funding before applying. All eligible applications will undergo peer review. In 2026, at least two grants of \$50,000 each are expected to be awarded to support 12-month projects.

Interested applicants for the Developmental Research Program should submit the following:

- 1.) Face page (below)
- 2.) NIH biographical sketches for the proposed investigator(s)
- 3.) Research proposal limited to 5 pages as follows:
 - a. Specific aims
 - b. Background and significance
 - c. Experimental design
- 4.) Budget for the project period using the [NIH PHS 398 detailed budget form page](#) (earliest anticipated start is July 1, 2026)
- 5.) Budget justification (include a certification that there is no financial or scientific overlap with existing projects)

Applications are due June 1, 2026. To apply, please submit a single PDF containing all documentation through the [VICC Pilot Project Application Portal](#). A link to the application portal can also be found at the top right-hand corner of the VICC Funding Opportunities web page (<https://www.vicc.org/research/funding-opportunities>). In the VICC Pilot Project Application Portal, please select "GI SPORE DRP pilot project" from the dropdown options.

The VICC GI SPORE may require presentations of competitive projects to the Developmental Research Advisory Committee before final funding selections. Periodic oral and written progress reports will be required. If you have questions or comments, please contact Meghan O'Loughlin at meghan.oloughlin@vumc.org.

GI SPORE Pilot Project Application - Face Page

Applicant Name, Degree(s),
Academic Rank

eRA Commons Username/ID

Department & Work Address

Work Phone

Work Email

Department Administrator
Who should be notified?

Co-Investigator(s)
If applicable

Major fields of study to which
project is related

Pilot Project Title

Amount Requested

\$

Does this study involve:

Yes

No

Use of human subjects?

(If yes, include IRB status or approval)

Use of vertebrate animals?

(If yes, include IACUC status or approval)

Recombinant DNA?

Radioactive isotopes?

IRB Status:

IACUC Status:

GI SPORE Pilot Project Application - Budget and Justification

Budget

Use the NIH PHS 398 detailed budget form page (Form Page 4: Detailed Budget for Initial Budget Period) <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/phs398.html>. The earliest anticipated start is July 1, 2026.

Pilot project funds are to be used to support research activities.

- Budget Expenditures Allowed Include:
Small equipment purchases or rentals, research supplies, animal purchases and maintenance costs, technical assistance, domestic travel (necessary to carry out proposed research), registration fees at relevant meetings & special fees (computer time, pathology, photography, etc.)
- Expenditures NOT Allowed Include:
Large equipment, salary for the principal investigator, salary for secretarial / administrative personnel, office supplies or office equipment, office or laboratory furniture, foreign travel, purchasing and bindings of periodicals, dues and membership fees, recruiting and relocating expenses, rental of office or laboratory space, per diem charges for hospital beds & non-medical or personnel services to patients.

Budget Justification

Provide a short description of each expenditure. Include a certification that there is no financial or scientific overlap with existing projects.