I. Purpose

The primary objective of these awards is to support the development of research in population sciences, specifically cancer prevention and control and cancer epidemiology. Eligible research projects include studies on the prevention and early detection of cancer, as well as research on dissemination, cancer survivorship, behavioral and social sciences research, and health services/outcomes research. Cancer epidemiology research projects include but are not limited to studies on etiology and cancer risk. Other fields may also be relevant and inter- and transdisciplinary projects are especially encouraged. These awards are intended to provide funding for initial pilot studies and/or small efficacy studies that will lead to grant funding for larger studies and/or published work. Funds may not be used to support ongoing research projects.

Awards are offered twice per year -- in April and October. **For both deadlines, the Center encourages submissions relevant to any cancer disease site.** The April offering also submission of GI cancer grants. Similarly, the October offering also encourages submission of breast cancer grants. Projects relevant to breast and GI cancers may be evaluated for funding by the UNC Lineberger’s Breast Cancer and GI Cancer SPORE programs.

During both rounds, the Center is open to all high-quality, relevant clinical/translational projects but also will be interested in grants that address UNC Lineberger research strategic directions. For more information about UNC Lineberger strategic directions, see the five-year strategic plan webpage: [http://cancer.med.unc.edu/research/stratplan.pdf](http://cancer.med.unc.edu/research/stratplan.pdf)

II. Funding

Several one-year awards of up to $25,000 are available. The number and amount of awards will depend upon the quality of the proposals received and the available funding. Expenditures may begin at any time after the official start date but generally should be expended within one year of receipt. No-cost extensions are possible (but not encouraged), and renewal for a second year is possible for particularly meritorious projects that have made appropriate progress in their first year.

III. Eligibility

UNC Chapel Hill faculty, fellows, residents, and postdoctoral trainees are eligible to apply, although the emphasis is on applications from faculty that will lead to R01-type applications based at UNC Chapel Hill. Applicants who are not Cancer Center members must include a brief letter of sponsorship from a member with their application. The sponsor could be a project collaborator or a Center member who knows the research and considers it appropriate for the Center. Postdoctoral trainees must have a faculty mentor who is a Cancer Center member. An investigator (acting as principal investigator) may submit only one proposal per year per award program (Clinical/Translational; Population Sciences).
Investigators can be co-investigators on multiple projects or principal investigator on one project and co-investigator on one or more other projects.

IV. Application Procedure

a. Applications are accepted twice a year. Specific deadline dates vary from year to year but are generally in mid April and mid October.

The hardcopy original application must be received by 5:00 PM on the deadline date. Submit the complete hardcopy original application to: Dr. Michael S. O'Malley, Associate Director, UNC Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center, CB# 7295, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 27599-7295. A complete original includes cover sheet, a lay abstract, a technical abstract, text, budget, budget justification, letters of support, appendices, etc.

Investigators must concurrently submit an electronic version of the application -- a single PDF. The electronic application can be submitted as an email attachment or as a CD. If you lack the scanners or software to prepare an electronic submission, visit the Center’s Digital Imaging Facility where you can access hardware, software, and technical tips from Facility Manager, Younger Ye.

b. The text of the applications is limited to five pages (single-spaced). The abstracts, budget, budget justification, references, human subjects, etc are not included in the five-page limit. Appendices and other supporting materials (such as letters of support) are allowed and are also not included in the page limit. Reviewers are not compelled to read appendices. Please make sure that your application is interpretable without appendices.

The five pages of text should follow the standard NIH outline: specific aims, background and significance, previous studies, and research plan. Specific aims, background and significance, and previous studies should be limited to provide a sufficient description of the research plan. Use at least one-inch margins and a font no smaller than Times Roman 12 pt or its equivalent (Arial 11). Use of NIH 398 forms is not required (except for the budget). For example, you don’t need to submit an NIH face page.

Renewal Applications Only: Specific aims should report the original aims and any new specific aims for the second year. Background and significance should address the justification for renewed funding, which should include progress to date and a rationale for a second year of funding. The research plan should outline methods for any new specific aims and plans for accomplishing any work remaining under the original aims. The five-page limit and the format requirements for the initial submissions apply. Appendices with manuscripts, etc are permissible.

c. If your proposed research makes use of a Cancer Center core resource, such as the Tissue Procurement Facility, you should include an indication of support from that core. These indications can be letters, notes, or emails from the core director. The indication/note need not be long or involved, but it must make clear that the core is ready and willing to work with the investigator on the proposed project. The Tissue Culture Facility is an exception; no indication of support from that core is needed.

d. Use the first-year budget form from the 398 application to present your one-year budget. The accompanying justification should be sufficiently detailed so reviewers can
assess whether the proper resources have been requested. Inadequate justification may result in a less favorable score and/or lower funding.

e. Applications must include biosketches for the principal investigator and other key collaborators. PI’s who are not Center members must include a sponsorship letter from a faculty member. Postdoctoral trainee PI’s must provide a letter of support from their sponsoring faculty preceptor.

f. If the investigator has received other grant support for the proposed research or similar research in the past, please include relevant funding information.

g. In your hardcopy original and in your electronic submission, be sure to include two abstracts that describe your proposal: 1) a scientific abstract that summarizes your proposal for potential reviewers and review committee members; and 2) a lay abstract that is understandable to the non-scientific community that supports funding for these grants.

h. Within 72 hours of the deadline, you should receive a notice of receipt of your application. If you submit an application and do not receive notice within 72 hours, please contact Michael O’Malley (clover@med.unc.edu).

V. Review and Regulations

a. The Center generally uses a two-stage review process. First, a panel of peer reviewers evaluates each proposal. Second, an ad hoc review committee of senior leaders reviews the panel review and makes recommendations for award/funding. If the initial number of applications is large, prior to peer review senior leaders may screen and review all applications to identify non-competitive proposals that will not be sent forward for peer evaluation.

Evaluation criteria include:
(a) scientific merit;
(b) relevance to clinical/translational cancer research;
(c) the qualifications, experience and productivity of the applicant;
(d) project feasibility given facilities, budget, time, and other resources available; and
(e) the potential for future grants and/or publications.

Although the above five criteria are most important, the committee also considers the applicant PI's past history of funding through this award mechanism. The committee intends to fund the best grants but may prefer investigators not recently funded through this awards program and/or proposals that address UNC Lineberger strategic research directions. The committee also examines innovation and potential balance across study topics.

Panel peer reviewers remain anonymous, and applicants do not receive the reviews. Applicants, however, will receive two-to-three sentence summaries of the panel critique.

b. Funding must be used for a project that can be completed in the designated period of the grant proposal. Grants are for one year, except when otherwise specified in the application and approved by the committee. No-cost extensions are possible. Renewal
for a second year is possible for particularly meritorious, clinically relevant projects with appropriate progress in the first year.

c. Grant funds may be budgeted for: (a) equipment and supplies; (b) communications; (c) travel; (d) personnel for research assistance; and (e) other purposes deemed necessary for the successful execution of the proposed project. Funds should not be requested for computers or travel to research meetings. Nor should funds be requested for faculty salary and/or graduate student/fellow stipends or supplements. Note: students and fellows may be hired as hourly employees to provide research assistance.

Unused funds will revert to the UNC Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center. All proposed expenses must conform to the general policies of the University and the UNC Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center.

d. Research involving animals or human subjects must be reviewed in accordance with the University's general assurances and HIPAA. Projects involving human subjects must be submitted to an Institutional Review Board (IRB). Intervention studies and clinical protocols must be reviewed and approved by the UNC Lineberger Protocol Review Committee. Prior to receiving any funds, projects must have appropriate approvals from the IRB and PRC. Appropriate animal forms must also be filed and approved. All investigators and all persons named on the budget page must have certification of training in the protection of human subjects.

e. A final progress report shall be submitted 15 months after the start date. This report must be submitted at the conclusion of the grant period, or earlier, if the recipient of the grant is leaving the University.