

Golfers Against Cancer (GAC) Funding Opportunity 2026 – 2027 Award Cycle

Background

The University of Colorado Cancer Center is interested in promoting the development of research projects by Cancer Center members that have a high likelihood of leading to NCI or other national peer-reviewed cancer research funding. The CU Cancer Center has the great fortune of working with groups willing to raise philanthropy to support this purpose. For fiscal year 2026-27, the Cancer Center anticipates having funds available to support two to three pilot projects of up to \$50,000 direct costs each. Funds for these projects will be provided by the Denver chapter of Golfers Against Cancer.

The Denver chapter of Golfers Against Cancer was formed in 2009 with the following mission:

- Help fund efforts to find a cure for cancer through local research at the University of Colorado Cancer Center in Aurora.
- Raise research money from individuals and corporations.
- Select projects through comprehensive proposals and on-site visits. The Denver GAC Grants Committee follows and reports on the progress of the research on a regular basis.
<http://www.denvergolfersagainstcancer.org/projects.htm>

Funds raised by the Denver GAC at their [18th Annual Golf for Cancer Research](#) will be donated to support research at the University of Colorado Cancer Center. The Golf Tournament, sponsored by AutoNation Subaru West, will be on **July 23rd** at The Ridge at Castle Pines. Please visit the [Denver Golfers Against Cancer](#) for more details.

Important Dates

01/09/2026	RFA release
01/30/2026	Mandatory <i>Intent to Apply</i> form submission deadline – 5:00 pm (MST)
02/26/2026	Proposal deadline – 11:59 pm (MST)
05/14/2026	Review committee meeting
06/18/2026	GAC Board meeting
10/01/2026	Award start date

Eligibility

Pilot projects will be competitively awarded to Cancer Center members¹ who submit innovative ideas that have a high likelihood of attaining NCI or other national funding. Collaborative efforts leading to multi-PI and/or multi-project grants are encouraged. Projects will be awarded for 1 year only.

Funds are not intended to support extensions on prior pilot project efforts or to extend funding already provided by the Cancer Center for the development of multi-project grants. *GAC will not fund largely duplicative pilots when they have been funded through another pilot award or other foundations. All progress reports, including previous GAC pilot updates, must be current. Eligibility requires active awards to be in good financial standing; applicants with awards in deficit will not be considered.* Individuals who received Golfers, or Wings of Hope pilot

¹ Cancer Center membership is available to individuals holding research or tenure track faculty appointments at the instructor level or above, who have a demonstrated track record in cancer research and who meet all membership guidelines. Application for membership is voluntary and is required to submit under this RFA. Applications are located at: <https://medschool.cuanschutz.edu/colorado-cancer-center/research/membership-resources>

grants awarded in calendar years 2023, 2024 or 2025 and/or who received a pilot grant from one of these sponsors prior to calendar year 2023 that is not yet complete are ineligible for this round of Golfers pilot awards. If you were listed as a co-PI on one of these grants, you are also ineligible to apply. Recipients are expected to submit competitive national grant proposals (R level) within 6 months following the completion of this scope of work. Failure to uphold this provision may limit future opportunities for pilot funding.

Review Criteria

Applications will be competitively reviewed and assigned an NIH-style overall priority score based on the scientific impact and significance; the qualifications, experience and productivity of the applicant(s); project feasibility given facilities, budget and timeline; and the likelihood of leading to successful NCI or other national-level funding.

Application Process

Intent to Apply: Individuals interested in applying for a GAC Pilot grant **must** complete an *Intent to Apply* form by **5:00 pm January 30, 2026**. Only those individuals who submit an *Intent to Apply* form will receive a link to submit a full proposal. The *Intent to Apply* form is located at:

[GAC Intent to Apply](#)

Application: Individuals who submit an *Intent to Apply* form will receive a web link to submit a full proposal. Be sure to save the email confirming your Intent to Apply submission as this includes the link for the full submission. Proposals are due by **11:59 pm February 26, 2026**. No late proposals will be accepted.

Full Proposal Requirements

Proposals must include all sections outlined below. Non-conforming proposals will not be reviewed. All narrative sections must maintain at least ½ inch margins; must be at least single-spaced; and must be in a font size not less than 11 point.

Individuals interested in applying must hold research or tenure track faculty appointments at the instructor level or above and must be current or pending members of the CU Cancer Center. Pending members must meet all membership criteria. Membership applications and guidelines are found on-line at:

[Membership Resources](#)

Only one proposal per contact/lead PI will be accepted.

Title Page: Provide the title of the project and the name and email address of the Principal Investigator(s) and other Key Personnel.

Summary: Provide a summary of the project not to exceed one-half page or 30 lines of single-spaced type. The summary should consist of a brief description of the objectives, rationale, methods, and expected results.

Lay Audience Summary: On a separate page, describe in one page or less, the objectives, the expected results, and the *significance* of your proposed research in non-scientific language. This summary may be used by the donors to determine final funding decisions and therefore should be informative and user-friendly.

Project Narrative: Provide a complete but concise description of the project using standard NIH sections:

- Specific Aims – **1 page maximum**. Describe succinctly the specific objectives of the proposed research and summarize the expected outcome(s), including the impact that the results of the proposed research will have on the research field(s) involved.
- Narrative – Significance, Innovation and Approach – **3 page maximum combined**

- **Significance**
Explain the importance of the problem or critical barrier to progress that the proposed project addresses. Describe the scientific premise for the proposed project, including consideration of the strengths and weaknesses of published research or preliminary data crucial to the support of your application. Explain how the proposed project will improve scientific knowledge, technical capability, and/or clinical practice in one or more broad fields. As appropriate, discuss how your proposal addresses cancer issues that are relevant to the challenges faced by Coloradoans (see the [COE Fact Sheet](#) for catchment-relevant issues); issues addressing diversity, equity, inclusion, or access; and or supports the training of the next generation of researchers.
- **Innovation**
Explain how the application challenges and seeks to shift current research or clinical practice paradigms. Describe any novel theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions to be developed or used, and any advantage over existing methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions. Explain any refinements, improvements, or new applications of theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions.
- **Approach**
Describe the overall strategy, methodology, and analysis to be used to accomplish the specific aims of the project. Describe the experimental design and methods proposed and how they will achieve robust and unbiased results. Include how the data will be collected, analyzed, and interpreted. For trials that randomize groups or deliver interventions to groups, describe how your methods for analysis and sample size will yield statistically significant results. Discuss potential problems, alternative strategies, and benchmarks for success anticipated to achieve the aims. Explain how relevant biological variables, such as gender, are factored into research designs and analyses for studies in vertebrate animals and humans.

Other information required to fully describe the proposed work may be included. **However, the Specific Aims and Project Narrative should be no more than a total of 4 typed pages, including figures, tables and other relevant data.** (Appendices will not be accepted).

References: References should be limited to two pages and are in addition to the Specific Aims and Narrative page limits.

Timeline: Using a GANTT chart or similar visual, outline the timeline for the major activities associated with your specific aims. Briefly describe the timeline by providing sufficient information for reviewers to evaluate whether these activities are a reasonable scope of work for a 12-month period.

Multiple PI leadership plan (if applicable; 1 page limit): Provide a multiple PI leadership plan if your proposal involves co-PIs. Describe the rationale for choosing a multi-PI approach; the governance and organizational structure of the leadership team; and the technical/scientific responsibilities of each PI as they relate to this pilot project.

Other Factors (if applicable; ½ page limit): Applicants may include a concise description of any other factors that should be considered in evaluation of the proposal, for example, specialized resources or equipment available to the study, collaborative arrangements (verified by letter of agreement), etc.

Budget: Provide a **single** detailed, categorical budget for the project. The budget request can be up to \$50,000 direct costs for one year only. Faculty salary support and tuition for students is not allowed. Funds will not be provided to pay for standard of care clinical services or other expenses that are reimbursable through insurance. No indirect costs will be funded. We anticipate a start date of October 1st.

Budget Justification: Provide a detailed budget justification for all costs. Requests for travel funds or for items of capital equipment (i.e. equipment at or exceeding \$5,000 per item) will require detailed justification.

Biographical Sketch: Include an NIH-style biographical sketch (new format please) for all key personnel listed on the title page.

Other Support: Provide a complete list of all current and pending research support for all key personnel. Be sure to include the funding Agency, project title, award amount (annual direct costs and total project direct costs), period of award and Principal Investigator. Overlap with the present application must be defined and justified. Unsigned NIH-style other support documents can be used.

Human Subjects, Vertebrate Animals, Radiation Safety, and Biosafety: As applicable to your proposed project, please have protocol numbers and most recent approval dates available at the time you submit your application.

Scientific Review

Applications are peer-reviewed using a typical NIH-style study section approach. Reviewers are comprised of cancer center members and other investigators with relevant scientific expertise; and are chaired by cancer center Associate Directors. Each application is assigned 2 to 3 reviewers and will be judged by the following criteria:

- Scientific merit and quality of the proposed research
- Impact – will the proposed research provide sufficient preliminary data to support an application for extramural funding from a national-level sponsor?
- Qualifications and experience if the investigator(s) – is the combination of expertise, experience and qualifications likely to lead to success?
- Project feasibility – is it likely that the proposed research can be accomplished within the timeline outlined, given the laboratories, research teams, facilities, and budget?

Award Process

Those applications selected for funding consideration will be expected to present a brief lay summary of the aims of the project and the potential impact to the Board for the Denver Chapter of the Golfers Against Cancer. Final funding decisions will be made following the Board meeting. The start date for the award is anticipated to be October 1st.

Pre-Award Requirements

Institutional Approvals: Awardees must obtain research approval from appropriate institutional review bodies, such as COMIRB, IACUC, Biosafety, IBC, Children's Hospital Research Institute, CSU IRB or any other regulatory group relevant to their project. **FUNDS CANNOT BE RELEASED UNTIL ALL REQUIRED APPROVALS ARE OBTAINED.** It is the investigator's responsibility to provide all required approval memos to the UCCC Administrative Office to secure release of award funding. **Investigators who fail to obtain all regulatory approvals within three (3) months of the intended start date of the award will forfeit their award.**

Post-Award Requirements

Awards are issued for 12 months only. The official start of the 12 months is dependent on the submission of any required regulatory approvals. Please note the limitation above regarding failure to obtain regulatory approvals within 3 months of the intended start date.

No Cost Extensions may be granted on a limited basis for extraordinary circumstances only. Please contact Cancer Center Administration at CC_FundingOps@cuanschutz.edu if you have questions.

An initial summary of progress and the impact of the funding will be required 13 months after the start date of the award. Subsequent information on publications, the success of your national grant submission, subsequent grants, and any other research resources resulting from the pilot funding will be solicited for up to 3 years following the completion of your pilot grant.

Funds awarded through this mechanism are non-transferable. Should the Principal Investigator leave the institution before the award is fully spent, and no Co-PI is available to assume responsibility for the project, the remaining funds will institution and will revert to the administering office or program. Any transfer of project leadership to a Co-PI as a result of an institutional transfer, requires prior approval from the appropriate institutional, programmatic, administrative, and/or board authority.

Investigators who receive awards will be expected to serve as Reviewers in future rounds.

Publications

All publications, abstracts, or similar communications resulting from an award must acknowledge this support by inclusion of the statement: *"Supported (in part) by pilot funding from the Denver Chapter of Golfers Against Cancer."*