

The Ann C. Mertens Childhood Cancer Survivor Study Career Development Award

The Ann C. Mertens Childhood Cancer Survivor Study Career Development Award is designed to create an opportunity for early career investigators and trainees with an interest and aptitude in childhood cancer survivorship research to develop and complete an initial research study within the Childhood Cancer Survivor Study (CCSS). This will serve as a foundation for the development of a career path that includes survivorship research. The award will allow successful applicants to discover the many scientific opportunities available through the CCSS. These include rich resources for formulation of research hypotheses through CCSS Working Groups, systematic data access, research design and analysis methodology support, and the opportunity to develop important collaborations.

Eligible projects include:

1. Analyses of existing CCSS data
2. Pilot studies (e.g., a survey or pilot intervention) that will be used to justify an external grant application for a CCSS ancillary study (<https://ccss.stjude.org/develop-a-study/ancillary-studies.html>).

Description of Awards (2 categories)

1. **Junior faculty award:** CCSS will award one junior faculty applicant with salary support that will allow protected time to complete the CCSS project. The award is for a maximum of \$20,000 (plus indirect costs) over a 1-year period. A portion of the funds may be used to support travel to present the project at a conference, to visit St. Jude Children's Research Hospital to spend time at the CCSS Coordinating Center, to attend the CCSS Investigators' meeting, or to visit a CCSS mentor's host institution. *Eligible junior faculty must be at the level of Assistant Professor or lower when funding begins.*
2. **Trainee award:** CCSS will offer one trainee award for up to \$3,000. This award will support the trainee's travel to present their project at the CCSS Investigators' meeting or a conference (e.g., ASCO, SIOP, international late effects meetings), or to visit the CCSS Coordinating Center at St. Jude. The award can also be used to visit a CCSS mentor's institution to work on the trainee's approved CCSS project. *Eligible trainees include clinical and/or post-doctoral fellows, residents, and graduate students.*

Other Eligibility

1. Both awards are open to candidates from all countries and are not restricted to those at CCSS institutions.
2. The application is open to individuals in any area of research that may be connected to survivorship research (e.g., medicine, nursing, psychology, occupational/physical therapy, epidemiology, biostatistics, basic science).

3. Applicants *must not* have current or prior involvement as a principal investigator in any CCSS Publications Committee approved project or concept. Applicants who have been co-investigators on CCSS studies are eligible.

Required Application Materials

The application should be submitted as a single PDF file including:

1. Application cover sheet (see below).
2. Curriculum vitae (4-page limit). This should include past educational training, including any post-doctoral work if relevant; positions and honors; published work (list peer-reviewed, non-peer reviewed works, and abstracts separately); and any current/pending or past funding.
3. An outline of the proposed study. This should be a maximum of 4 pages, single-spaced text, half-inch margins or wider, and be inclusive of any tables and figures. The text should be no smaller than 11-point Arial font. It must include a background section reviewing the literature around the proposed study; a statement of specific aims; and a methods section that describes the study population and the data sources for the dependent/outcome variables/measures and independent/predictor variables. Some description of the analytic approach is recommended, recognizing that a more detailed analysis section will be developed later with input from CCSS statisticians and other investigators if the application is successful. References should be included within the 4-page limit and use the same font size as the other text. Appendices beyond the allotted pages (not required and may not necessarily be read by reviewers) are limited to study-specific instruments only (e.g., proposed questionnaire). Applications not meeting the requested format may be rejected.
4. An explanation of how this award will help the applicant's career development in survivorship or related areas of research (maximum 1 page).
5. A letter of support from the applicant's mentor. This must include assurance that the applicant will have sufficient protected time to complete the project should funds be awarded. If the mentor is not from the applicant's institution, then an additional letter from the applicant's supervisor or department head assuring protected time must also be submitted.
6. A copy of the mentor's bio-sketch in the current NIH format:
(<https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm>)
7. Applicants to the Junior Faculty competition should submit a brief budget (not included in the 4-page proposal limit) indicating their request for salary support and travel (along with indication of institutional indirect costs). Applicants to the Trainee competition do not need to submit a budget.
8. All applicants are required to and gain formal approval (include copy of e-mail) from the Chair of the Working Group most closely aligned with their project (see list below). In addition, they must have an Application of Intent (AOI) approved prior to submitting their application to ensure that their proposed project is feasible within the CCSS resource, and that no other investigators have already received approval for a similar project. AOI approval typically takes 2 weeks from time of online submission (<https://ccss.stjude.org/develop-a-study/applications-of-intent.html>). Applicants who have not identified a mentor may ask the applicable Working Group Chair for suggestions of mentors within the Working Group.

Work Group	Chair(s)	Email
Biostatistics/Epidemiology	Cindy Im Wendy Leisenring	imcindy@umn.edu wleisenr@fredhutch.org
Cancer Control and Intervention	Paul Nathan Claire Snyder	paul.nathan@sickkids.ca csnyder@jhu.edu
Chronic Disease	Kevin Oeffinger Eric Chow	kevin.oeffinger@duke.edu ericchow@uw.edu
Genetics	Monica Gramatges Yadav Sapkota	gramatge@bcm.edu yadav.sapkota@stjude.org
Psychology	Tara Brinkman Ellen van der Plas	tara.brinkman@stjude.org evanderplas@uams.edu
Second Malignancy	Lucie Turcotte	turc0023@umn.edu

Criteria Used to Award Funding

Several factors will be taken into consideration when judging proposals. These include:

1. The applicant's potential as a survivorship researcher, as assessed by their prior education and training, and participation in research (as compared to individuals at a similar level of training or early career development).
2. Demonstration that the applicant's career path includes a focus on survivorship research.
3. Confirmation that the applicant will have sufficient protected time to complete the project should funds be awarded.
4. The potential for the proposed project to be completed in the period of funding. Successful completion will be defined by the submission of an abstract to a meeting, submission of a manuscript to a journal, submission of a research grant using the data generated to justify feasibility, etc. Publication of a manuscript or receipt of grant funding will be considered the key indicators of success. In addition, awardees will be expected to present their research findings at the CCSS Investigators' meeting. In addition to these milestones, awarded investigators are also required to submit two progress reports, due 6 and 12 months from the award date. These 1-page reports should describe the progress to date, any issues that have arisen, and what steps the investigator plans to take to complete the project.

Application due date: **October 6, 2025**

Please submit the application by 5pm Central time to: vikki.nolan2@stjude.org

Announcement of funding: **November 14, 2025**

Funding start date: **January 2026**

Application cover sheet

Category (check one) ☐ Junior Faculty ☐ Trainee

Applicant name: _____

Current position: _____

Telephone number: _____ - _____ - _____

Email address: _____

Address: _____

Title of application: _____

Primary CCSS working group (check one):

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Biostatistics | ☐ Cancer Control |
| ☐ Chronic Disease | ☐ Genetics |
| ☐ Psychology | ☐ Second Malignancy |

Primary mentor name: _____

Current position: _____

Telephone number: _____ - _____ - _____

Email address: _____

Address: _____
