

Request for Proposals
Team Science Grants (TSG) 2026
Fifteenth Round
Supported by Simmons Cancer
Institute at SIU

TSG Award Goals and Scope

The Simmons Cancer Institute at SIU (SCI) is seeking to fund proposals led by clinician-basic scientist teams that focus on translational cancer research. The main objective of the awards is to stimulate novel research programs that complement the SCI Cancer Research mission. Clinicians will be required to play an active role in the proposed research. It is envisioned that a clinician and a basic scientist, both with major interest in cancer research, will pair to create a TEAM leading an innovative research project that is TRANSLATIONAL in nature. Applications must have an explicit focus on investigating biological mechanisms of cancer and/or improving therapeutic efficacy. Research results obtained through this award are expected to be published in peer-reviewed journals and used as preliminary data in competing for extramural funding. Successful recipients of the **TSG awards** are expected to become nationally recognized leaders of innovative translational cancer research that leads to improved cancer patient care.

Award Information

Two **TSG awards** will be funded contingent upon quality of applications and availability of SCI research funds. Duration of the award is 2 years and each applicant can request up to **\$50,000** per year. The second year of funding is subject to submission of a **Progress Report** 30 days prior to the end of the first year and acceptable progress on the specific aims. Progress will be determined by an independent review committee. Full approval of the report by the SCI selection committee is required prior to the second year funding.

Eligibility

All cancer-orientated clinicians and basic scientists from the Springfield and Carbondale campuses holding an M.D., Ph.D. or M.D./Ph.D. degree are eligible for the award. The applicants must be members of the SCI. Principal Investigators (PI) of currently active awards cannot serve as PI on additional applications. Co-PI and other team members of active TSG awards are not eligible to apply unless the application is clearly different in scope and topic. The grant of a previous award must have expired at least one year before a new and significantly different proposal can be submitted by the same team.

Letter of Intent: Due Feb. 9, 2026

One page letter of intent needs to include: the names of all key personnel, a brief overview of the project including specific aims, significance and research plan of the application and attestation that the personnel and scope of the intended application meets eligibility criteria for TSG. The letter of intent is not binding for submission of a full application.

Full Application Process and Contents: Due April 6, 2026

Each full application will contain:

- A completed **TSG Application cover sheet** signed by Principal Investigator (PI), co-PI and collaborators.
- A statement explaining the **Translational Potential and Plans for Future External Funding** of this award (1 page limit).

- **Budget Specifics.** **Budget form page** (1 page) and a **Budget Justification** (1 page) detailing proposal expenditures and justification for covering personnel and commodities. The award will not cover the cost of equipment larger than \$2,000. Publication and service fees are allowed. Personnel costs are not subject to fringe benefits and the grant is not subject to indirect costs.
- A one-page **Other Support** page detailing overlap with other funded projects and/or past SCI funding is required.
- **NIH Biosketches** (5 pg. max. each) of the key personnel including PI, co-PI, collaborators, residents and fellows using the most recent NIH Forms (Version C).
- **Research Plan narrative** containing the following sections: Specific Aims and Hypothesis (**one pg. limit**), Research Strategy (**six-page limit**) with subheadings of Significance, Innovation, Preliminary Data (if any), Research Design, and References. The list of references is excluded from the six-page limit and should sufficiently support the text, but does not need to be exhaustive. The proposal should be modeled after NIH guidelines.
- A **list of six experts** in the fields directly relevant to the main topic of applications who can serve as **external reviewers** of the proposal. Suggested reviewers cannot be collaborators or co-authors in any of the applicants' projects and publications for the past 5 years. Reviews will be modeled after NIH guidelines and format. It is the responsibility of the principal investigator to verify that reviewers are willing and available to review their proposal during the period April 13, 2026 through June 1, 2026. It is also the PI's responsibility to ensure that a correct mailing address, phone number and current email are submitted. Reviewers MUST be USA/Canada based.

Format:

Use Arial 11-point (or larger) font with at least half-inch margins throughout the application. The LOI is available online or from Denise Kauffman and all application form pages are available from her (dkauffman98@siumed.edu). Completed applications are to be submitted as a single, collated PDF document directly to Denise Kauffman.

Selection Committee and Fund Allocation

The internal SCI selection committee will consist of a designee of the Executive Committee of SCI, and representatives of clinical and basic science cancer researchers. Members of the TSG award selection committee will be ineligible for awards that cycle. The committee will administratively pre-review the submitted proposals, will verify the eligibility, select reviewers out of six suggested external reviewers, and will be responsible for assembling the final scores obtained from the external reviewers. Scores will be based on an NIH scale, and all applications will be ranked, discussed, and the top two applications will be funded. Direct relevance to cancer will be a major consideration by the committee. If the number of meritorious applications exceeds the available funds, the committee will have the option to reduce the submitted budget of some or all funded applications. If the number of meritorious applications is less than the available funds, the committee will not fund less qualified applications and may instead decide to carry the funds over into the next year.

Funding Timeline

Letters of Intent will be accepted until end of business on February 9, 2026. The deadline for full proposals is April 6, 2026. Internal administrative review and external merit review will be completed by mid-June. Funded projects are anticipated to begin July 1, 2026. Progress reports for funded applications are due on June 1, 2027. The second year of funding will begin on July 1, 2027 pending the approval of a progress report by the SCI selection committee.

Inquiries about the TSG Award

Inquiries should be emailed to Dr. Torry (dtorry@siumed.edu), Director for Basic and Translational Research at SCI, or to his secretarial assistant, Denise Kauffman (dkauffman98@siumed.edu).

LETTER OF INTENT

2026 Team Science Grant (TSG) Proposal

Supported by Simmons Cancer Institute at SIU

Deadline: Monday, Feb. 9, 2026 by 4:30 p.m.

Applicants' Information:

Principal Investigator:

Academic Degree (MD, PhD): _____

Title: _____

Department: _____

Telephone: _____

Fax: _____

E-mail: _____

Co-Principal Investigator:

Academic Degree (MD, PhD): _____

Title: _____

Department: _____

Telephone: _____

Fax: _____

E-mail: _____

Collaborators (if applicable, add as needed):

Academic Degree (MD, PhD): _____

Title: _____

Department: _____

Telephone: _____

Fax: _____

E-mail: _____

Check box to attest:

<input type="checkbox"/>	SCI Team Scientist Grant (TSG)	Submission of TSG application affirms that PI/Co-PI/collaborator(s): meet eligibility criteria for funding, understand that one aspect of evaluation is potential to secure future external funding for the project, and acknowledge that a requirement of the award is application(s) to secure external funding within one year of completing the TSG award.
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The spirit of TSG funding is to foster new research teams and/or new research avenues. A previously TSG-funded team may submit a new application **ONLY** if it is significantly different from previously funded TSG projects. If any team members have been co-funded before, include the specific aims of the previous grant and clearly define the novelty of the current LOI project (use a separate page; 1 page limit).

Please email LOI to Denise Kauffman [dkauffman98@siumed.edu] prior to deadline.
If you have any questions, please call 217-545-2220.

Title of Proposal:

Brief Summary of the Project (max 500 words) including Background, Significance, Hypothesis, Specific Aims, and Design

Please email LOI to Denise Kauffman [dkauffman98@siumed.edu] prior to deadline.
If you have any questions, please call 217-545-2220.