

Oklahoma Center of Medical Imaging for Translational Cancer Research
An NIH P-20 Center of Biomedical Research Excellence (COBRE)
Call for Research Project Leader (RPL) Applications

The Oklahoma Center of Medical Imaging for Translational Cancer Research was established in 2022 through a COBRE Phase 1 award (P20GM135009). The mission of this COBRE is to enhance medical imaging research capabilities in Oklahoma, focusing on the common research theme of pursuing the development and application of novel medical imaging techniques and/or AI-based image informatics tools to improve accuracy of early cancer detection and/or efficacy of cancer treatment. A major goal of this COBRE is the development of a critical mass of cancer imaging researchers through a dedicated mentorship program designed to guide the research and professional development of promising Research Project Leaders (**RPLs**), enabling them to successfully compete for peer-reviewed external funding. A competitive renewal COBRE Phase 2 grant application aiming to further expand the local research capacity in Medical Imaging and Translational Cancer Research will be submitted in May 2025.

Applications for RPLs are requested. Following the NIH COBRE guidelines (<https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/par-23-063.html>), we plan to select 4-5 new RPLs for the competitive renewal COBRE Phase 2 grant application submission. Each RPL will propose a research project aligned with the COBRE common research theme. If the COBRE Phase 2 grant is awarded, each RPL will receive ~\$150,000 in direct cost per year for up to three years to carry out their research projects. The projects are expected to generate preliminary results for RPLs to prepare competitive NIH R01-like grant applications. If you have any questions regarding this call, please contact Dr. Javier Jo (javierjo@ou.edu), Director of the Oklahoma Center of Medical Imaging for Translational Cancer Research.

RPL Eligibility Criteria. Full-time faculty members from any academic unit on the OU Norman and OUHSC campuses are eligible to apply by meeting the following criteria:

- Must be an NIH Early Stage Investigator (ESI) or New Investigator (NI) and hold an independent, multi-year faculty appointment.
- Must be able to devote 6 months/year of their research effort to their proposed projects.
- Cannot receive simultaneous research support as a project lead from any other IDeA parent award.

Application Guidelines. Applications should include the following components.

- A. Cover Page with the following information: 1) Applicant's Name, Department/Unit, Current Rank/Position; 2) Project Title; 3) Brief description of the project and alignment with the COBRE common research theme.
- B. NIH style Specific Aims section (one page), describing a 3-year project to be supported by this COBRE.
- C. NIH style Biosketch (5 pages max), including a Personal Statement section tailored to this COBRE.
- D. List of previously submitted proposals (funded, pending, under review, not funded).

Application Submission. Applicants should submit all application components as a single PDF file no later than November 15, 2024, to Dr. Yuhua Li (yhli1500@ou.edu) with the following the Subject on the email: 'Applicant Name – COBRE Cancer Imaging RPL Application - 2025'.

Review Process. All applications will be screened by an internal committee to determine the investigator's eligibility as COBRE RPL. Applications that pass the initial screening will be evaluated by a review committee composed of COBRE Internal Advisory Committee members and External Review Committee members. The evaluation will be based on the project's relevance to the COBRE common research theme, scientific merit, the PI's productivity and potential for developing extramural grant proposals and becoming an independent NIH-funded investigator. The review committee may request further information for clarification. Selection of RPLs will be completed by December 6, 2024. Selected RPLs are expected to submit an initial draft of the full proposal of their projects by January 31, 2025. The COBRE leadership and mentor team will work with the RPLs to revise their proposals and integrate them with the rest of the COBRE Phase 2 grant application, which will be submitted to NIH in May 2025.