

Request for Applications (RFA) **O'Neal Nextgen Faculty Development Awards**

RFA Announced: November 15, 2024

Letter of Intent: December 16, 2024 (5:00pm)

Application due date: February 3, 2025 (5:00pm)

Peer-review: April 2025

Award start date: September 1, 2025

Purpose: To support early career faculty at the Instructor rank at UAB within the faculty member's cancer research discipline and facilitate transition into a tenure-track faculty role. This integrated program is expected to enhance the individual's potential to develop into a productive, independent cancer researcher.

Letter of Intent: A Letter of Intent must be sent to Mr. Bolack (pbolack@uab.edu) no later than 5:00 pm December 16, 2024. The Letter should include: The name of the instructor, the name of the associated lab, the title of the project, the composition of a mentoring committee, and a letter of support from the Department Chairperson stating their support in advancing the applicant to a faculty status with relevant matching funds, should the grant be awarded. If applicable, please include the names of other investigators involved in the project.

Eligibility: Current full-time faculty appointment at the Instructor (non-tenure track) rank at UAB. The applicant should have been appointed at this rank on or before February 3, 2025, but not held the position for more than two years.

Award details: Up to \$35,000 per year for two years from the O'Neal Comprehensive Cancer Center. These funds will support laboratory research and will not support faculty salary.

- All applicants must secure matching funds from their Department to support laboratory research, exclusive of any faculty salary support from the Department.
- Funds remaining at the end of Year 2 will be allowed to carry over to a third year. Unspent funds at the end of the third year must be returned to the O'Neal Comprehensive Cancer Center.
- The individual must commit at least 70% of their time on the proposed research.

Application: This includes the following components -

- Title page including Instructor's name, title of the project, and associated lab. On the same page, include a list of collaborators and details of faculty members comprising your mentoring committee.
- Abstract (limit 300 words),
- Specific Aims (1 page),
- Research strategy (2 pages)
- Independent research plan (1 page): Discuss what you plan to work on as you start your own laboratory in 2-3 years. This can be in general terms and does not need to outline specific experiments.
- Applicant's career advancement plan (1 page):
- Mentoring plan (3 pages): This should be completed by the research mentor and the Department Chair and clearly outline a path to an independent tenure-track research position in the Department within 3 years. While receiving this award does not require the department or the applicant to move forward to a tenure track position it should provide clear details regarding what milestones would be expected for such a position and how the applicant will be mentored towards achieving these milestones. The mentor should discuss their willingness to let the applicant work in their planned area without competition from the mentor.
- Use same font and margin limits as for NIH grants (Arial 11 and 0.5 margins).
- The Instructor's current NIH Biosketch (please list current and pending grants).
- Mentor's biosketch, current support and list of trainees and their current positions.
- A Letter from Department Chairperson required at the time of submission. The letter must state the Department's commitment to providing matching funds (Up to \$35,000 per year for 2 years) that are distinct and non-overlapping with any funds that the Department may have already committed to the applicant.

- Files should be compiled into one PDF in the order above and sent to Patrick Bolack, M.S. Ed, at pbolack@uab.edu prior to the deadline.

Peer Review and Selection Criteria

Applications will be reviewed by a committee comprised of O'Neal Cancer Center faculty. Proposals will be judged according to the following criteria:

- Originality of the project idea
- Scientific merit of the proposed project
- The applicant's potential for and commitment to a productive independent scientific cancer research career.
- Potential for this award to have a notable impact on a candidate's career success (Scholarly excellence of the applicant)
- To what extent did the applicant identify measurable goals, outcomes and/or benchmarks relevant to the overall purposes of the Nextgen Instructor Award to enhance their portfolio for career advancement (e.g., the development of new skills or form of expression; the development of creative works; the generation of new data for future research or grant applications, enhanced peer recognition outside of UAB; and general career advancement by means of exhibitions/performances, workshops, grants, publications, manuscripts and/or presentations)?
- Can the project be completed within the time frame of the Award mechanism?
- Mentoring and support efforts the Department is undertaking to advance the professional career development of the applicant.
- Applicants that are positively reviewed will be asked to give a talk/chalk talk about their project prior to a final decision about their application.

Reporting Requirements for Awardees

A report should be submitted to the O'Neal Cancer Training and Career Development Office (pbolack@uab.edu) 12 months after the award is made. The report should include a summary of accomplishments (activities and outcomes) and additional supporting materials (for example, publications, reports or conference presentations). Further details on reporting requirements will be provided at the time awards are made.

Obligations of Faculty Development awardee and the associated mentor:

- The awardee shall list in their UAB email signature that they are an O'Neal Faculty Development Award recipient.
- The awardee will ensure that the award is stated in the Acknowledgements section of any manuscript or article that is authored/co-authored by the Instructor.
- An annual report will be due to Mr. Bolack on or before August 1, 2026. Award for Year 2 will be contingent upon demonstration of satisfactory progress that is endorsed by the O'Neal Cancer Training and Career Development Office.
- At the end of two years, the Final report shall be submitted in the format of a manuscript with the awardee as a senior (corresponding) author with plans to submit this for peer-reviewed publication.

Additional considerations:

- It is the awardee's responsibility to ensure that all applicable institutional compliance certifications are obtained before commencement of the research. The funds shall be made available to the awardee only upon presentation of all relevant compliance certifications to Mr. Bolack.
- This RFA is designed specifically for research that does not involve leading an independent clinical trial, a clinical trial feasibility study, or an ancillary study to a clinical trial.