**REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS**

**2025 Kenneth and Verna Mae Jessen Award**

*Posted October 1, 2024*

**BACKGROUND**

The Big Ten Cancer Research Consortium (Big Ten CRC) Foundation established the Kenneth and Verna Mae Jessen Award to support basic, correlative, clinical, or population science oncology research based at a Big Ten CRC institution. The award is made possible through the generous support of the Verna Mae Jessen Trust.

**DESCRIPTION**

The 2025 Kenneth and Verna Mae Jessen Award will provide $65,000 in funding. It is expected that 100% of the award will support direct research costs. The Big Ten CRC Foundation will provide up to 10% overhead (F&A) from other funding sources.

**ELIGIBILITY**

Award recipients must be employed by Big Ten CRC member institutions.

**CRITERIA**

Applications must meet the following criteria:

* Proposal may involve basic, correlative, clinical or population science research.
* Proposal must include a direct tie or lead to oncology research involving human subjects.
* Proposal must be collaborative between two or more Big Ten CRC member institutions.
* Collaborations with investigators from outside the Big Ten CRC are permitted, but funding will be limited to Big Ten CRC institutions.
* Projects may be fully supported by the award or combined with other funding sources.
* Projects must have a defined endpoint (within 2 years), with plans to submit a publication no later than six months after project completion.

**APPLICATION PROCESS**

Applicants should submit a Letter of Intent (LOI) describing the proposed project to Jonathan Ang at [jang@hoosiercancer.org](mailto:jang@hoosiercancer.org) by December 1, 2024. The LOI should be a maximum of one page and include the following information:

* Title of proposal.
* Proposed PI and co-investigators.
* Institutions involved.
* Brief summary of project.
* Project endpoint with anticipated timeline for achieving the endpoint.
* Potential for future funding (grant, industry support, etc.).

LOIs will be reviewed by a committee of senior investigators from the Big Ten CRC institutions, and feedback will be provided within 2 weeks concerning:

* Enthusiasm of the committee for the concept.
* Whether or not the research team will be invited to submit a full proposal.
* Suggestions on additional collaborators or issues to address in the full proposal.

Invited full proposals will be a maximum of 2-4 pages without references. The applicant should include a biosketch, and clinical trial protocols and letters of support as appropriate.

Applications may include the proposed use of available banked samples. See available samples:  
<https://www.bigtencrc.org/samples>

**REVIEW PROCESS**

The Board of Directors of the Big Ten Cancer Research Consortium Foundation, Inc., will appoint the chair of an ad hoc award review committee. The chair will appoint additional members to the review committee. The committee will consist of an odd number of members (at least 3) including the chair.

The committee will review the proposals and make a recommendation to the Big Ten CRC Foundation Board of Directors who will vote to approve funding for the recommended proposal.

The award recipient will be asked to submit a one-page progress report within one year of funding.

**IMPORTANT DATES**

* **December 1, 2024:** LOIs due.
* **December 15, 2024:** Feedback provided on LOI.
* **February 1, 2025**: Invited full proposals due.
* **March 1, 2025**: Award announced.
* **March 1, 2026**: Progress report due.
* **March 1, 2027**: Project endpoint due.
* **September 1, 2027**: Publication submission due.

The award recipient will also provide progress reports during the annual Big Ten CRC Summit throughout the life of the project.