

NRG Oncology Health Care Access Fellowship Program Description

Funding and Timeline

Application Submission Deadline: October 23, 2026

Awards Announced: November 2026

Award: \$50,000 (\$25,000 per year for two years. Year two award contingent on satisfactory progress in year one.)

Fellowship Start: January 1, 2027

Please submit [the application](#), letter of support, biosketch and relevant materials to Fellowships@NRGOncology.org

The NRG Oncology Health Care Access Fellowship Program trains selected early-stage investigators in the NRG Oncology system by means of a structured mentorship experience, with particular emphasis given to the recruitment of researchers with a passion for improving health care access. Our vision is to have at least one scholar for every disease site we study. Applications for the 2027-2028 fellowship will be due **October 23, 2026**. Support for the fellowships will be provided by the [West Valley Ovarian Cancer Alliance](#) (WVOCA) and [Gilead Sciences Inc.](#)

Background

Most current treatments for cancer in the U.S. are based on the results of clinical research trials. Several of the significant improvements in survival seen over the last 40 years in breast, gastrointestinal, genitourinary, and gynecologic malignancies were made possible by clinical research, most often sponsored, designed, and carried out by National Cancer Institute (NCI) cooperative cancer groups. The most critical component of the cooperative groups, including NRG Oncology, has always been its early-stage investigators. Bright, well-trained, and hardworking researchers have provided both the creative spark and driving force behind clinical cancer trials.

However, in recent years, young researchers have faced increasing time and financial pressures that threaten their ability and motivation to participate in clinical research. It has become harder than ever for busy physicians and PhD prepared researchers to devote the time and energy needed to develop their career pathway in research and secure independent funding. Likewise, more experienced clinician/investigators' ability to mentor the next generation of clinical cancer researchers.

NRG Oncology recognizes the need to improve health care access in oncology research by developing early-stage investigators to quickly and efficiently develop innovative studies that will lead to future improvements in cancer care with a focus on health access for rural, elderly, and special needs populations. This program will build on the work of the NRG Early Career New Investigator Committee through collaboration with the committee to recruit applicants and mentors.

Eligibility

The program will match early-stage researchers who wish to develop a successful research career with more experienced NRG Oncology investigators who are capable and willing to serve as mentors. Selecting fellows and mentors with a passion for improving health care access is the main goal for the

program. We are interested in studies where investigators are developing protocols that focus on health care access.

Eligibility criteria for interested early-stage researchers (Fellows) will include:

- 1) Medical, surgical, gynecologic, or radiation oncologists or PhD prepared researchers who have completed fellowship/postdoc training.
 - a. There is a specific opportunity sponsored by Gilead Inc, and the West Valley Ovarian Cancer Alliance (WVOCA) for researchers interested in diagnostic and treatment approaches for ovarian and gynecological cancer research.
- 2) Anyone who has not been a principal investigator or co-principal investigator on a clinical trial/NIH R level grant within the past 10 years is eligible.
- 3) Must have previous experience within NRG Oncology or make a future commitment to do so.
- 4) Strong desire to develop a research career to address health care access.
- 5) Must have support from their institution/employer for the program (protected time, access to research resources, etc.) A commitment of at least 10% FTE to this program.
- 6) Applicants are encouraged to confirm that their institution can accept an award that allows for only 10% of the awarded funding to be used for institution assessed indirect costs.

NRG Oncology will select investigators willing and capable of serving as mentors to the Fellows.

Eligibility criteria for interested Senior Mentors who would like to be a part of the Fellowship program:

- 1) Medical, surgical, gynecologic or radiation oncologists or PhD prepared researchers with at least 5 years of experience with NRG Oncology or another NCI-sponsored cooperative group.
- 2) Must be willing to make a commitment of at least two years to participate in the mentorship program.
- 3) Has served as a principal investigator/co-principal investigator for a completed NCI-sponsored cooperative group trial or a R level NIH grant.
- 4) Must have support from their institution/employer for the program (adequate time, access to clinical research resources, etc.)

The mentor(s) will assist the selected Fellow in eventually developing a trial within an NRG committee. Special emphasis is given to investigators with experience working to improve health care access.

Program Strategy

The program's main intent is to develop successful clinical trialists that can compete in grant writing processes. The NRG Health Care Access Fellow will be asked to provide a preliminary concept idea during the application process and will receive support to follow this idea through the protocol development process. This will be used primarily to help evaluate the applicant's critical thinking process and to help develop a relationship with mentor(s) related to health care access and the relevant specific committee. The mentor(s) will assist the selected Fellow in eventually developing a trial within an NRG committee.

Through this program the NRG Health Care Access Fellows will acquire the skills needed to develop innovative protocols that will be of great interest within the NRG committees as well as the community and participating sites. Fellows will receive guidance and instruction from their mentor, committee leaders and NRG staff members in the processes related to concept/protocol development, principles of ethical research, data collection and analysis, statistical design, critical decision-making, and other NRG procedures. In addition, investigators selected for this program are required to attend educational

offerings sponsored by the Early Career New Investigator Committee and the Health Care Access Committee. Specific challenges of health care access research are also included in the mentoring plan.

Each Fellow will be enrolled in the program for a two-year period, with the result of developing an NRG Oncology research project.

Fellow Requirements and Expectations:

- Devote a minimum of 10% effort for the duration of the award to NRG Oncology research activities under the direction of an NRG Oncology mentor. The Fellow will work under the guidance of their NRG mentor and is expected to develop at least one clinical trial in [radiation oncology, surgical oncology or medical oncology or other area] related to health disparities in cancer research in which the Fellow will serve in the primary investigator role.
- Attend all summer and winter NRG Oncology meetings during duration of award. (The award includes travel to two NRG Oncology Meetings each year during the award period).
- Attend NRG Oncology New Investigator Committee meetings and training forums.
- Attend NRG Oncology and NCORP meetings including NRG Health Care Access Committee (HCA) and the Cancer Prevention & Control (CPC), Cancer Care Delivery Research (CCDR) or specific disease site committee meetings/workshops as applicable.
 - Engage in HCA Research Implementation and Concept Development Special Interest Groups (SIGs).
- The Fellow will be assigned to and actively participate in an NRG Oncology disease site or NCORP committee.
- Highly encouraged to develop and participate in ancillary studies and proposals for other NRG Oncology studies.
- Pursue independent funding in support of career development/clinical trial/research (independent K or R type funding)
- Fellow and his/her mentor will meet at least monthly at initiation of scholarship, and every other month after significant progress has been demonstrated.
- Submission of quarterly and annual progress reports (see below for progress report metrics)
- Present project updates at HCA committee meetings
- Encouraged to attend an ASCO Methods in Clinical Cancer Research Workshop (if not previously attended).
- Provide final presentation at an NRG Oncology semiannual meeting.
- Maintain communication throughout the award period with NRG personnel as outlined in award/agreement.

Progress Reports: must include the following (maximum of 3 pages)

- Review of aims/goals
- Progress and activities to date related to NRG Oncology protocol and original concept
 - Include completed and/or ongoing activities (i.e., IRB approval, agreements for outside vendors, procured equipment, device/drug or other items to support study)
 - Describe pharmaceutical or other support for their NRG project
 - Other collaborations – are they connecting with other NRG staff or researchers?
- Recruitment progress and study activity
- Collaboration with mentor
- Training/education activities
- Activities planned for the remainder of the project and timeline to meet aims/goals

Program Oversight

Three senior NRG Investigators along with the Health Care Access Committee (HCA) chair and vice-chair, HCA Research Implementation SIG leaders comprise the Health Care Access Fellowship Program Oversight Working Group and they oversee the progress of the fellows funded by this program. Quarterly and annual reports will be submitted by each Fellow for review by the working group and by a funding partner if applicable. Meetings/conference calls of this working group occur at least semiannually to discuss the progress of each fellow.

The working group may provide recommendations to help each Fellow accomplish their project goals and follow up as needed.

The working group also provides recommendations to strengthen and advance the program.

Funding for year two for the Fellow is contingent on approval by the program oversight working group based on progress in these goals and requirements.