



Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer



## 2026-2027 SITC-Merck Cancer Immunotherapy Clinical Fellowship Award

One-year, \$50,000 Award

**Eligibility:** Applicants must meet the following criteria to be eligible to apply:

- The applicant must hold an MD, PhD or combined MD/PhD degree
- Currently hold a position at academic institution or government cancer center
- If the applicant has completed postdoctoral or residency training, the applicant must be within four years of completing such training
- The applicant may not yet hold a tenure track faculty position
- The applicant may be in a role such as postdoctoral fellow, instructor, resident, or fellow
- Applicants must be SITC members in good standing at time of submission
- Domestic and international applicants are eligible to apply

The ideal candidate meets the eligibility criteria above and is at a career stage prior to securing a tenure track faculty position, has not yet secured significant R level funding or other awards on par (ex, DOD, ACS), and should demonstrate how this award will aid in advancing to the next stage in their career.

**Selection:** The SITC Awards Review Committee oversees the selection process. The process includes a Letter of Intent (LOI) stage. Thereafter, selected applicants will be invited to Full Application stage. Notifications will be communicated via email.

**Terms:** Receipt of this award does not preclude the applicant from obtaining grant support from other sources. Support from the **2026-2027 SITC-Merck Cancer Immunotherapy Clinical Fellowship Award** is to be acknowledged in presentations and publications resulting from the research sponsored by the award.

The award is nontransferable. The award recipient will carry out the project as proposed in the application, in accordance with the timeline and budget in the application. The award recipient is directly responsible as an employee to the supporting academic institution. The sponsoring institution is responsible for documenting their role in terms of supporting the education and research efforts as well as providing adequate research capacity, including space and equipment, for the award. The sponsoring institution of the selected awardee is also responsible for ensuring that the terms of this award are compatible with grant support from other sources, if applicable.

SITC may discontinue the award if it is documented that the purpose or the terms of the award are not being fulfilled. In this event, the recipient will be notified in writing of this determination, the reason, and the effective date.

The recipient must submit a halfway point (six months) and a final written progress report to SITC, including disposition of funds. Any unused funds will be returned to SITC. The recipient is invited to submit an abstract during the regular abstract submission process for the chance to present the final results of his/her research at a SITC Annual Meeting.

**Application Process and Timeline** The application process consists of two stages

**Stage 1: Letter of Intent (LOI):** In the initial stage, applicants are required to submit a completed application form, an abstract, a biosketch, and a Mentor's Statement of Support. The Awards Review Committee will review LOI's and will determine which applicants move to the second stage.

**Stage 2: Full Application:** Applicants that are selected to move onto the second stage will be notified according to the timeline below. Applicants selected for the second stage will need to provide a research and budget plan, a description of facilities, a mentor's statement of support, a mentor's bio sketch, an institutional letter of support, and two personal references.

#### **Application Timeline 2026:**

Please reference the SITC website ([www.sitcancer.org/fellowships](http://www.sitcancer.org/fellowships)) to see the fellowship timeline.

**Reporting:** The award recipient is required to submit the following reports:

#### **Interim Report: 6-month Report Request Requirements**

1. Project title, award amount, recipient's name
2. Brief overview of the project progress to date
3. Describe highlights related to the award (presentation, publication, abstract, etc.)
4. Outcomes determined at this date.
5. Do you anticipate that you will be able to spend the full award amount by the end date of the fellowship term? Please include any details if needed.

#### **Final Report: 12-month Report Request Requirements**

A 1-2 page synopsis of research project with the following information.

1. List the original specific aims of project. If the aims have changed, please explain.
2. Synopsis of research progress to date
3. Abstracts or other publication resulting from the research project (please provide copy)
4. Any additional pending funding resulting from the studies performed in this research project (title of grant, PI, amount, duration, and agency)

## 5. Plans after the award term

### Guidelines for Letter of Intent (LOI):

All application information must be submitted as a single PDF with images and charts included within the document. Application information must adhere to the listed page limits.

#### Required Documents:

- I. Abstract (1 page)
  - The abstract should outline the project's aims, expected outcomes, and overall impact. It must include the team members and explain how this award will assist the applicant in securing their next grant.
- II. Biosketch/Credentials (up to 5 pages)
  - NIH Biosketch format, instructions and samples available [here](#)
    - Use the "non-fellowship" format
    - Add this section at the end of the document to disclose additional research funding: Additional Information: Research Support
- III. Mentor's Statement of Support (maximum 2 pages)
  - This letter should be from the individual acting as a fellowship mentor to the applicant. It must clearly present:
    - The applicant's role and academic appointment(s)
    - The sponsor's role in the proposed research, including plans to provide support as necessary
    - Plans and potential for the applicant to develop into an independently funded investigator

### Guidelines for Full Application:

All application information must be submitted as a single PDF with images and charts included within the document. Application information must adhere to the listed page limits.

#### Required Documents:

- I. Applicant's Statement of Purpose (maximum 2 pages)

This letter should outline the award and career objectives of the applicant toward cancer immunotherapy research. This letter should specify:

  - Current and future cancer immunotherapy research objectives
  - Further training requested by the candidate
- II. Mentor's Biosketch (maximum 5 pages)

NIH Biosketch format, instructions and samples available [here](#).

- III. Institutional Letter of Support (maximum 2 pages)  
The letter must be written on letterhead by the department head, dean, or other senior member of the institution on behalf of the applicant. It should explain the applicant's relationship with the institution, and the nature and extent of support for the proposed research available from the institution, including laboratory space, financials and other resources.
- IV. Research Plan and Budget  
Required Formatting: Calibri 11pt, Single Spaced, 1 inch margins  
Figures do not count towards section page limits.  
The research plan should include a thorough statement of the candidate's proposed research plan in cancer immunotherapy, including:
- a) Specific aims (maximum 1 page)
  - b) Background and significance (maximum 1.5 pages)
  - c) Preliminary results (if applicable) (maximum 1.5 pages)
  - d) Methods and procedures (maximum 4 pages)
  - e) Anticipated outcome (maximum 1 page)
  - f) Long-range objectives (maximum .5 page)
  - g) References (no limit)
  - h) Research project budget (Note: The research project budget should outline the anticipated allocation of the fellowship award. Allowable expenses include salary support for the fellow, as well as the necessary equipment and supplies required to carry out the project effectively.) (maximum 1 page)
- V. Facilities (maximum 1 page)  
Required Formatting: Calibri 11pt, Single Spaced, 1 inch margins  
A description of the facilities for research and training needed by the candidate must be included.
- VI. Two Personal References (maximum 2 pages each)  
Two letters of recommendation from two persons familiar with the candidate's qualifications must be included with the application.