

**NCI Career Development Workshop:
Advancement to Research Independence**

March 9, 2026



WELCOME!

We will begin at 10:00 AM Eastern Time



Introductory Remarks

Nas Zahir, PhD

Acting Director, Center for Cancer Training (CCT)

Director, Cancer Training Branch, NCI

NCI Career Development Workshop: Advancement to Research Independence

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Goals of the Workshop

- Become acquainted with the elements involved in advancing to cancer research independence.
- Hear perspectives from current and former NCI career development awardees.
- Learn about the NCI Grants Process.
- Understand what peer-reviewers are looking for in an NCI grant application.
- Obtain advice on designing your research career, negotiating your first faculty position, and navigating the tenure path.
- Gain insight from the NCI Director, Dr. Anthony Letai.

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Logistics of the Workshop

- The workshop is being recorded.
- Participants are muted and cameras are off.
- Closed captioning is available through WebEx.
- Audio/Visual support: direct message the A/V technician via meeting chat.
- Use meeting chat to ask questions for the speakers.
- Workshop will be kept on time. Speakers will be interrupted with a verbal 2-minute warning from the moderator and will be interrupted at the end of the time allotted.

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Overview of the National Cancer Institute

The National Cancer Institute is the federal government's principal agency for cancer research and training. Currently led by Dr. Anthony Letai, **NCI's mission is to lead, conduct, and support cancer research** across the nation to advance scientific knowledge and help people live longer healthier lives.



Dr. Anthony Letai
NCI Director



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NCI Bottom Line Blog Post Highlighting Commitment to Training



About Cancer ▾ Cancer Types ▾ Research ▾ Grants & Training ▾ News & Events ▾ About NCI ▾

[Home](#) > [Grants & Training](#) > [NCI Bottom Line Blog](#) > NCI Remains Committed to Cancer Research Training

NCI Remains Committed to Cancer Research Training

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January 13, 2026, by Sanya Springfield, Ph.D., Nastaran Zahir, Ph.D., Douglas Lowy, M.D., Nelson Aguila, D.V.M.

At NCI, we recognize that the discoveries that will redefine cancer research are already taking shape in the hands of today's trainees and early-stage investigators. By continuing to invest in their growth, we are cultivating the leaders and innovators who will chart the future of cancer research.

We are eager to start a new year. In 2026, NCI is strengthening our commitment to train the next generation of researchers and support a robust and skilled cancer research workforce. The future of cancer discovery is being shaped now, and it is our responsibility to ensure emerging talent is ready to lead it.

Cancer research training that supports everyone, from middle school students to established, independent scientists, is a fundamental pillar of NCI's mission that was forged when the institute was started more than 80 years ago. Many of the field's most influential leaders—pioneers in basic,



Scan QR Code



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NCI Supports Funding for Training in All Areas of Cancer Research

CANCER RESEARCH CONTINUUM

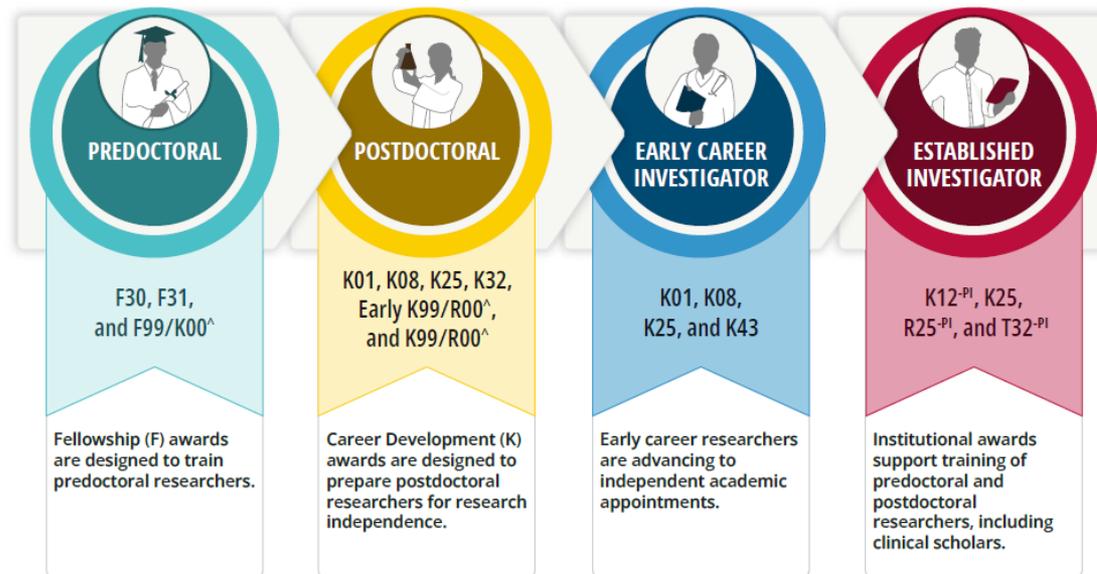


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NCI Funding for Cancer Training

The career stage indicated is when an applicant is eligible to apply for each award.



Key

F = Fellowship

K = Career Development

R = Research

T = Training

^ = NIH intramural postdocs are eligible to apply

-PI = The principal investigator of the application must be an established investigator

Loan Repayment Programs (LRPs)

cancer.gov



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NCI Center for Cancer Training: Fiscal Year 2025 at-a-Glance



1,799
Competing
Applications



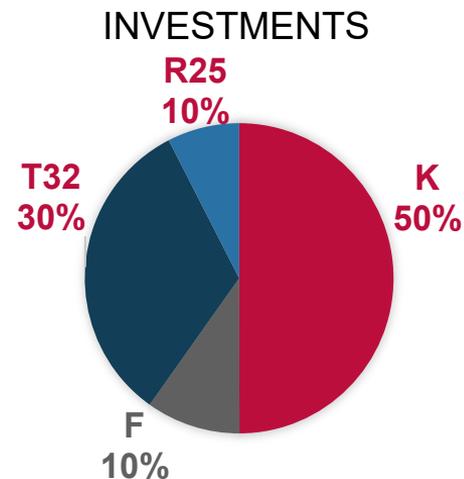
358 Competing
Awards



796 Non-
Competing
Awards



\$197M Total
investment



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NIH Loan Repayment Program Helps Pay Back Educational Loans

- NCI Eligible Candidates: Researchers with post-graduate degree and eligible educational debt conducting cancer-focused studies
- Award is up to \$100K over 2 years and renewable if applicant continues to meet eligibility criteria and has eligible educational debt
- 2-year research commitment
- Application deadline: annually in November
- FY25: NCI funded 245 applications. Success rate: 93%
- Contact: NCILRP@nih.gov



NIH Repays Your
Student Loans



Website: <https://www.lrp.nih.gov/>

Technical Assistance Webinar Recording:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l63xAYf4-Os>

<https://cassyni.com/s/nci-rising-scholars>

NCI Rising Scholars: Cancer Research Seminar Series

A virtual monthly seminar series highlighting the research and important contributions made by NCI-supported postdoctoral fellows and early career investigators.



Scan me



NATIONAL CANCER INSTITUTE
Center for Cancer Training

<https://cassyni.com/s/nci-rising-scholars>

Temporal and Spatial Composition of the
Tumor Microenvironment Predicts Response
to Immune Checkpoint Inhibition



Noah Greenwald
University of California, San Francisco

Thursday, April 16, 2026 2:00 PM (EDT)

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NanCI Provides Tools for Managing the Literature & Connecting via Shared Interests

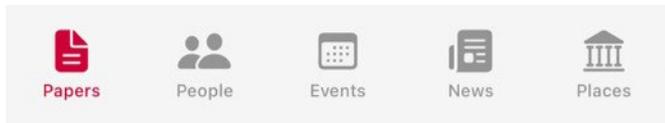
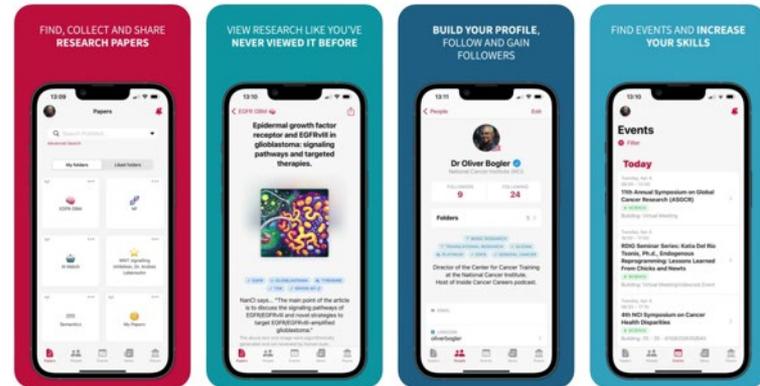
- Utility : managing the literature - **Papers**
 - Gather papers on a theme into a folder to get AI recommendations
 - Navigate the author & citation network to explore literature
 - Follow authors to get preprint alerts
 - AI-drive 'chat with papers'
- Eventually, NanCI will allow you to build a scientific social network – **People** - and receive recommendations for learning opportunities through it
- NanCI also has **Events, News & Places** localized AI chatbot
- Roadmap developed – user input welcome



NanCI by NCI ⁽³⁷⁾
Blue Pane Studio LLC
★★★★☆ 5.0 + 1 Rating
Free



iPhone Screenshots



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Newsletter: Great Way to Stay in Touch



Scan to Subscribe



Contact a program director to discuss!

<https://www.cancer.gov/grants-training/training/funding>

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Many Thanks to the Co-organizers and Event Coordinator



Sonia Jakowlew, PhD
Program Director
Co-organizer
Cancer Training Branch



Corinne Boulanger-Espeut, PhD, MBA
Program Director
Co-organizer
Cancer Training Branch



Angela Jones
Lead Program Analyst
Event Coordinator
Center for Cancer Training

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Opportunities and Challenges of Transitioning to Research Independence for PhD-trained K Awardees: Perspective from Current R01 Grantees and Former K99/R00, Early K99/R00 and K22 Awardees

Five 10-minute talks followed by 10-minute question and answer (Q&A)

Moderator: Michael Schmidt, PhD, Program Director, Center for Cancer Training (CCT), NCI

Shaneda Warren Andersen, PhD, Associate Professor, University of Wisconsin, Former K99/R00 Awardee

Justin D. Lathia, PhD, Professor, Cleveland Clinic, Former K99/R00 Awardee

Sukh Makhnoon, PhD, Assistant Professor, University of Texas, Southwestern, Former Early K99/R00 awardee

Sigrid V. Carlsson, MD, PhD, Assistant Professor, Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, Former K22 Awardee

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20-Minute Panel Discussion and Q & A with former NCI Career Development Awardees

Moderator: Sergey Radaev, PhD, Program Director, CCT, NCI

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20-MINUTE BREAK

Your input is valuable to us. Please access Slido via the WebEx meeting to provide feedback about the workshop.



NIH Funding to Support Your Research: Perspectives from a Program Director and Study Section Chair

Two 15-minute talks followed by 10-minute Q&A

Moderator: Mariam Eljanne, PhD, Program Director, CCT, NCI

Chamelli Jhappan, PhD, Program Director, Division of Cancer Biology, NCI

Oliver Bogler, PhD, Oliver Bogler Coaching and Consulting



Role of the Grants Management Office in the Management of Your Research Grant

One 20-minute talk followed by 10-minute Q&A

Moderator: Anu Puri, PhD, Program Director, CCT, NCI

Jason Gill, Branch Chief, Office of Grants Administration, NCI

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NCI/NIH Tools and Resources for Applicants and Awardees followed by Q & A

One 20-Minute Talk by an NCI Program Director followed by 10-minute Q&A

Moderator: Sonia Jakowlew, PhD, Program Director, CCT, NCI

Hanna Odeh, PhD, Program Director, CCT, NCI

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LUNCH BREAK

WE WILL RESUME at 2:00 PM EASTERN TIME

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NCI's Commitment to Cancer Research Training

NCI Director, Dr. Anthony Letai

Moderator: Nas Zahir, PhD, Acting Director, Center for Cancer Training



What Reviewers Look for in Your RPG Application: Perspectives from Reviewers

Four 10-minute talks followed by Q&A

Moderator: Mark Damico, PhD, Program Director, CCT, NCI

Elana Judith Fertig, PhD, Director, Institute for Genome Sciences,
University of Maryland, Baltimore

Chi-Chen Hong, PhD, Associate Professor, Roswell Park Cancer Center

Daniel Wahl, MD, PhD, Associate Professor, University of Michigan

Oliver Bogler, PhD, Oliver Bogler Coaching and Consulting

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Negotiating Your First Faculty Position

One 20-minute talk followed by 10-minute Q&A

Moderator: Susan Lim, PhD, Program Director, CCT, NCI

Jacqueline Jeruss, MD, PhD, Professor & Associate Dean, University of Michigan



How to Navigate the Tenure Path

One 30-minute talk followed by 10-Minute Q&A

Moderator: Yansong Bian, MD, PhD, Program Director, CCT, NCI

Andrew M. Smith, PhD, Professor, University of Illinois

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Closing Remarks

Corinne Boulanger-Espeut, PhD, MBA, Program Director, CCT, NCI

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!