



A MEMBERSHIP ORGANISATION  
**FIGHTING CANCER TOGETHER**

# Virtual Fellowships Application guidelines



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## Virtual Fellowships

The objective of the Virtual Fellowships is to provide an online alternative to the in-person learning experience provided by the [UCC Technical Fellowships programme](#), allowing the transfer and exchange of key skills and knowledge in cancer control to continue despite the existing travel restrictions imposed by the Coronavirus global pandemic. Its focus is to support UICC member organisations, and to complement the Technical Fellowships programme, co-existing alongside it once it re-opens to provide an online alternative to UICC members, allowing access individual training and one-to-one support in cancer control.

Leveraging the extensive expertise in all facets of cancer control across UICC's membership, its long-standing network and collaborations with renowned cancer experts based in international health organisations and world famous cancer centres, and its 50 years' experience in supporting international training and learning opportunities, UICC is ideally-placed to support candidates for the Virtual Fellowships in identifying experts working in the relevant field of cancer control.

A Virtual Fellowship consists of a minimum of four once-weekly video calls with an expert and has a maximum of one-month duration. This initiative complements the [Virtual Dialogues](#) and forms part of UICC's suite of virtual services to support its members in response to the global pandemic. The Virtual Fellowships will be piloted until the end of 2020 in a first instance, with potential to continue into 2021 if successful.

## Target candidates

Cancer professionals including researchers (especially those performing translational, clinical and implementation research), clinicians, nurses and pathologists in addition to public health workers including epidemiologists, health educators, social workers, nutritionists, administrators and other specialised professional workers working in the field of cancer are all encouraged to apply for a Virtual Fellowship, provided that they are employed by a UCC member organisation.

In line with UICC's intention to build capacity and reduce the cancer burden globally, priority will be given to candidates based in low and lower-middle income countries. Applications from candidates from organisations that need to build capacity in basic cancer services will be given priority over those with access to state-of-the-art technologies.

## Eligibility

- Individuals employed by [UICC member organisations](#) who have the endorsement of their line manager/superior are eligible to apply for a Virtual Fellowship.
- Candidates need to demonstrate at least five years' experience working in cancer control.
- To permit effective communication, the candidate must have adequate fluency in a common language with the expert, either English, French or Spanish.
- Candidates who have already obtained a UICC fellowship in the past may apply for a Virtual Fellowship only if they are members of the Association of UICC Fellows (AUF) and one year has passed since the end of their previous fellowship.

## Topics

Applications on all aspects of cancer control are welcomed, however, depending on the level of interest received, priority will be given initially to topics related to cancer control and Covid-19 pandemic, for example how to cope with the challenges facing cancer prevention, screening, treatment and patient support during the pandemic and the social distancing measures put in place to protect health workers and their patients (see examples below).

Examples of potential topics in the current context:

- Strategies to facilitate cancer screening to counteract social distancing measures introduced due to the COVID-19 outbreak
- Analysis of data concerning the incidence and comorbidity of coronavirus infection in cancer patients
- Cancer care during coronavirus pandemic in low-resource settings
- How to best meet cancer patient's needs and answer their queries regarding the COVID-19 pandemic
- COVID-19: how to provide cancer patients with psychological support and palliative care

Depending on an ongoing assessment of needs of UICC members, and if the virtual model proves relevant and of value, the priority of topics will be reassessed with the potential to include a focus on others that are in line with UICC priorities.

## Application process

There is no deadline for application submission, candidates can apply at any time, with the four one-hour online video calls taking place at an agreed time once a relevant expert has been recruited. Template Word application forms in English, French or Spanish are available to download, and include the following sections:

- a) **Personal statement and motivation:** a summary of the candidate's background and current day-to-day professional activities and their motivation for applying.
- b) **Key learning needs:** an outline of the general area of interest and the specific topics and issues to be covered. Examples of the types of questions the candidate would like to ask the expert.
- c) **Desired expertise and suggested experts:** a description of the expertise needed and the names and contact details of experts who could provide the necessary support that UICC to contact on their behalf. If the candidate is not aware of any potential experts, UICC will provide support in identifying them.
- d) **Expected impact:** a description of anticipated impact the learning obtained will have on the applicant's current situation and the potential longer-term impact it could have, for example, on cancer control, cancer services, patients etc.
- e) **Professional positions:** the candidate's professional positions. Candidates should have at least five-year's working experience in cancer control.
- f) **Education/training:** the candidate's education or training received since high school.
- g) **Letter of Endorsement:** a signed letter of recommendation/endorsement from the candidate's line manager/superior.

To apply, download the appropriate Word document and complete it in English, French or Spanish, and send it and a signed copy of a letter of endorsement from your supervisor/manager to [fellows@uicc.org](mailto:fellows@uicc.org) with the title: **Virtual Fellowship Application, your first and last name, and the name of your UICC member organisation.**

UICC is available to provide support to candidates where needed, providing feedback regarding the application's content if necessary.

## Selection of experts

Candidates are requested to suggest and propose potential experts with whom they think it would be useful to be connected given their topic of interest and specific focus. UICC will take these suggestions into account, but also leverage its network to find an appropriate expert with the relevant skills base for example. UICC will contact experts with a copy of the application and invite them to take part in four weeks remote training/Q&A sessions with the applicant. In accordance with the primary language of the

applicant, UICC will make a concerted effort to locate an expert fluent in the relevant language and will endeavour wherever possible to find the most appropriate match.

Depending on the level of interest shown and the number of applications received, UICC may in time need to recruit a selection committee to identify the most competitive applications.

## Fellowship timeframe

UICC members and experts participating in a Virtual Fellowship would meet online through Zoom (or WhatsApp video) a minimum of four times during weekly 30 minute to one-hour video calls, however more flexible arrangements can also be considered.

Members should send the appointed expert an agenda and questions for discussion prior to the meetings. After a first introductory call facilitated by UICC, calls can be arranged independently. With potential to extend or add to this engagement upon agreement, this is the minimum expectation of the support to be provided through the Virtual Fellowships.

When the Technical Fellowship programme re-opens, follow-up in-person visits could be envisaged for 2021, provided eligibility requirements are met and based on a continuing need for training and support.

## Monitoring and evaluation

At the end of the Virtual Fellowship, participants would be expected to complete a short end-of-project report and online survey to review and provide feedback on their experience. The experts involved would also be requested to complete a short survey to provide any feedback they may have, the level of engagement of the Fellow, and to inform future development of the initiative.

## Virtual Fellow Alumni

Opportunities will be explored to engage the “Virtual Fellows” more widely in UICC, either to support best practice sharing, or through introduction with other individuals in the UICC network at the local, regional or global levels, to further share expertise, or increase their networks. Individuals would be encouraged to share their experiences with cancer care during the pandemic through case studies, Virtual Dialogues, and blogs. Where appropriate, they could be recruited to act as mentors for Country Champions, contributors to programme content, or review for or act as host supervisors of the Technical Fellowships programme.

## Association of UICC Fellows (AUF)

Upon successful completion of a Virtual Fellowship, i.e. submission of the end-of-project report to UICC, Fellows will be invited to join the Association of UICC Fellows (AUF). Life-time membership carries a subscription fee of USD 50. Only members of AUF are eligible to submit a further application for a UICC fellowship.

New members who work in developing countries or in Eastern Europe may benefit from a one-year complimentary subscription to the UICC International Journal of Cancer, a generous offer made by its Publishers, Wiley & Son Inc., New York.



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