

Guidelines for Letters of Support

To ensure that our program meets the highest standards in selecting fellowship awardees and to enhance the review process, we encourage **potential mentors** to use the following guidelines when writing a **Letter of Support** for your fellowship applicant. **NOTE:** Letters of Support are only required from predoctoral and postdoctoral fellowship applicants, **not summer program applicants**.

Letter Format and Requirements

- All letters should be addressed to Dr. Shine Chang, Director, UT MD Anderson Cancer Center, Cancer Prevention Research Training Program.
- All letters must be recently dated.
- All letters should be signed and on letterhead. **Electronic signatures are acceptable.**
- **Copies** of *Letters of Support* may be included with the stitched application submitted by the applicant.
- **Original** *Letters of Support* are to be emailed by the mentor or their support staff (not the applicant) directly to apply@cancerpreventiontraining.org.
- **Descriptive subject line:** Since we often have multiple fellowships running concurrently, the subject line should include applicant name, fellowship and letter type. Example: *Jane Doe, Summer Research Experience - Letter of Recommendation.*
- Letters submitted without these features may result in your application being considered incomplete and any incomplete applications will not be reviewed.
- Letters must address the (3) three areas detailed below. Following these guidelines will increase the likelihood that the applicant's application is successful.
 - [1\) The applicant.](#)
 - [2\) The Potential Project.](#) and
 - [3\) Your Role As Mentor.](#)

The Applicant

- The letter should be 1) submitted on institutional letterhead, 2) signed by the mentor and 3) addressed to the CPRTP Director, **Professor Shine Chang**
- Please address these criteria with respect to the applicant:
 - In what capacity you know the applicant
 - Potential for conducting research
 - Evidence of originality
 - Adequacy of scientific background
 - Quality of research or publications to date
 - Commitment to cancer prevention research
 - Need for further research experience and training
- State how you would rank the applicant's overall ability and potential. Top 10%? Top 25%?

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The Potential Project

- Include a paragraph describing how the applicant's proposed general line of research relates to the CPRTP objectives
- If your applicant is applying for the short term program, indicate how their research could be a gateway into future doctoral or postdoctoral research in cancer prevention.

Your Role As Mentor

- Describe the degree of mentoring capacity you currently have, including
 - How many trainees at each level (predoctoral, postdoctoral, other) you advise
 - How often you will meet with the applicant
- Data and resources your lab has available to support the applicant's proposed line of research
- Your plans for working with other mentors. How does your expertise complement theirs
- Your capacity to provide required supplementary stipend funds and other research, travel, and supply costs appropriate to the particular mechanism applied for (i.e. R25T, R25E, donor-funded, etc.)
- In a separate paragraph, please outline your previous mentoring experience
- List any dissertations you have chaired
- Mention number of postdoctoral trainees you have advised, what their important projects are, and where they are today