

Bern, January 2026

Swiss Cancer Institute / Astellas GU-GI Research Award

The future of oncology is fueled by efforts of outstanding researchers and their research teams. Innovative preclinical and clinical research projects will continuously improve our knowledge in oncology and address emerging challenges.

Research is a continuous professional and personal commitment; therefore, Swiss Cancer Institute's and Astellas' intent is to motivate and honor young researchers on this important journey.

To further foster preclinical and clinical oncology research in Switzerland, Swiss Cancer Institute and Astellas team up to confer a Swiss GU-GI Research Award. A researcher will be awarded as representative of a research group or project for an outstanding scientific and/or clinical achievement documented by a scientific publication (published paper or accepted manuscript in a peer-reviewed journal).

The focus of the Swiss Cancer Institute / Astellas GU-GI Research Award lies on potential tangible improvements for patient management and outcomes in the treatment of genitourinary and/or gastrointestinal cancers.

The award is endowed with CHF 30'000.- and should encourage the continuation of research activities. Hence the awarded sum is to be used for ongoing and future research within the respective research group or project.

Call for Applications

Prior to submitting your application, please carefully read the applicable Award Rules. In case of questions, do not hesitate to contact the Swiss Cancer Institute.

Send your application until April 27th, 2026.

Full applications must be sent via e-mail to events@swisscancerinstitute.ch and shall include:

- Curriculum Vitae of the candidate
- Letter of support, which shall emphasize and highlight the scientific and/or clinical achievement of the candidate relevant to the Swiss Cancer Institute / Astellas GU-GI Research Award
- Relevant publication or manuscript (published paper or accepted manuscript in a peer-reviewed journal)
- Publication list of the candidate relevant to this award
- If applicable, any other relevant information or documentation

Selection Process

An independent jury of experts, elected by the Swiss Cancer Institute scientific committee, will evaluate the submitted applications based on (i) alignment with the scope of the award, (ii) scientific quality, (iii) national and (iv) international (future) scientific and/or clinical impact, and (v) innovative potential and novelty.

Award Announcement

The winner of the Swiss Cancer Institute / Astellas GU-GI Research Award 2026 will be awarded during the Swiss Cancer Institute semi-annual meeting on 18 June 2026.

Award Rules

The award will be conferred to an eligible candidate, who may be a surgeon, physician, or scientist, active in genitourinary and/or gastrointestinal oncology research within Switzerland. The research project must have been accepted or published in a peer-reviewed journal within the past 12 months (until the application deadline). The winner will be awarded as representative of a research group or project for outstanding scientific and/or clinical achievements within the thematic focus of the Swiss Cancer Institute / Astellas GU-GI Research Award 2026.



Eligible Candidates

An eligible candidate must fulfill the following criteria:

- a. Researcher – this may be a surgeon, physician, or scientists – currently active in preclinical or clinical urogenital/gastrointestinal cancer research in Switzerland. The minimum requirement is a research activity in Switzerland from January 1st to December 31st, 2026
- b. Principal investigator, research group head or researcher with a leading role in a research project
- c. Under 45 years of age as of December 31st, 2026

Valid Applications

1. Candidates can nominate themselves
2. The candidate must submit the complete candidature and documentation to Swiss Cancer Institute until April 27th, 2026:
 - a. Recent Curriculum Vitae of the candidate
 - b. Letter of support written, dated, and signed. The letter of support shall emphasize and highlight the scientific and/or clinical achievements of the candidate and the respective research group or project relevant to the Swiss Cancer Institute / Astellas GU-GI Research Award 2026
 - c. Publication list relevant to the Swiss Cancer Institute / Astellas GU-GI Research Award
 - i. Publications may be primary research or review articles
 - ii. The candidate must be an author on all publications
 - iii. Publications must have been published in the period 2021-2026 in a peer-reviewed journal or must be accepted for publication in a peer-reviewed journal
3. Any other information if applicable
4. The application must be submitted in English
5. Resubmission of applications that did not win in past editions are permitted as long as eligibility criteria are met
6. Applications must be sent via e-mail to Swiss Cancer Institute, events@swisscancerinstitute.ch

Evaluation of Applications

1. An independent jury composed of 3-4 Swiss experts and a jury chair determined by the Swiss Cancer Institute scientific committee. Employees of Astellas must not be part of the jury
2. Jury members must not evaluate applications of their own institution or university
3. Project proposals will be evaluated only if they are deemed to be eligible and feasible
4. The independent jury will evaluate the submitted valid applications on a scale from 1-10 (1 = worst, 10 = best) for each of the following criteria:
 - a. Alignment with scope of award, i.e. potential tangible improvements for patient management and outcomes in the treatment of genitourinary and/or gastrointestinal tumors
 - b. Scientific quality
 - c. National (future) scientific and/or clinical impact of research achievements
 - d. International (future) scientific and/or clinical impact of research achievements
 - e. Innovative potential and novelty
5. The jury elects the winner based on the evaluation scoring. In case different applicants achieve the same scoring, the top scoring applications shall be discussed amongst the jury members. The jury shall elect 1 winner by consensus. In case consensus cannot be reached, the jury chair has the final decision
6. The jury is free and independent in its decisions. Its decisions are final and not subject to appeal
7. If additional scientific expertise is needed the Swiss Cancer Institute president can request written evaluations from additional reviewers



8. The Swiss Cancer Institute and Astellas Pharma AG may waive the award of the Swiss Cancer Institute / Astellas GU-GI Research Award if the jury considers none of the submitted applications worthy of support

Awarding

1. At least 2 weeks before the award ceremony, all applicants will be notified, and the winner shall be confidentially informed by Swiss Cancer Institute about winning the Swiss Cancer Institute / Astellas GU-GI Research Award
2. The winner or, if unable to attend, a representative of the winning research group or project shall present the scientific and/or clinical achievements for which the award is distributed at the Swiss Cancer Institute semi-annual meeting on 18 June 2026.
3. After the winner announcement, the Swiss Cancer Institute / Astellas GU-GI Research Award shall be distributed officially to the winner by an Astellas employee and the jury chair
4. Three weeks at most after the ceremony Swiss Cancer Institute will transfer the prize money to the winning research group or project
5. The award winner must provide a brief update on the progress or the results of the project at the next Swiss Cancer Institute semi-annual meeting the following spring/summer. The winner must further provide a written summary of the project no later than 1 year after the award ceremony. The written summary sent to the Swiss Cancer Institute, will be forwarded to the jury president.

Role of Astellas Pharma AG

1. Astellas Pharma AG is the sole sponsor of the Swiss Cancer Institute / Astellas GU-GI Research Award
2. Astellas Pharma AG informs about the Swiss Cancer Institute / Astellas GU-GI Research Award on its own website, describing the award, the candidature process and the selection of the winner
3. Astellas Pharma AG must not be part of the award jury and thus must not evaluate applications
4. Together with the support of the Swiss Cancer Institute an employee of Astellas Pharma AG will announce the winner together with the jury head and hand over the award at the Swiss Cancer Institute semi-annual meeting on 18 June 2026.