

# 2026 GTO Awards & GTO Fellowships

## Call for Applications

### 2026 GTO Awards

The Center for Research in Translational Oncohaematology (CRTOH) invites applications for the **Geneva Translational Oncology (GTO) Awards**, which aim to significantly reduce the gap between scientific discoveries and their translation into patient care. We are committed to funding translational projects that promise real patient benefit. This work will be led by at least one research scientist affiliated to the CRTOH. This call aims to reuse data generated during the GTO program, either alone or in the context of the generation of new data.

### 2026 GTO Fellowships

In addition, the CRTOH invites applications for **GTO Fellowships**, which are designed to provide protected time for clinicians at HUG to conduct translational research.

# 2026 GTO Awards

## Objective

To fund substantial, multidisciplinary translational oncology initiatives that capitalize on the resources of the HUG digital infrastructure. This endeavor is dedicated to deepening our comprehension, management, and treatment of cancer. Central to our mission is the acceleration of the journey from basic scientific discovery to tangible patient benefits.

## Eligibility criteria

To qualify, at least one project leader (PI or co-PI) must be affiliated to the CRTOH.

The reuse of spatial omics data from any of the eight GTO Awards 2025/2026 projects, or from the GTO digital infrastructure, is mandatory.

To supplement existing datasets, projects may generate new data from biological samples. When new HUG specimens are considered, the active participation of a pathologist from the HUG's 'Service de Pathologie Clinique', as a collaborator or as a co-PI, will be a critical condition for eligibility.

The inclusion of collaborators within and outside of Switzerland is welcome.

By submitting a proposal, the PI(s) implicitly accept(s) further reuse, in due time, of the data generated within the project. Project outputs (e.g. data, derived models, algorithms) will be incorporated into the GTO digital biobank.

## Funding availability

We offer financial support of up to CHF 250'000 annually, extendable for a period of up to two years.

Proposals requesting lower levels of funding are equally encouraged. The funds required for data reuse or new data generation will need justification. For example, if the project involves generation of new data, budget proposal should include resources to fund tissue retrieval and sample processing.

## Application process

Applicants are required to submit their application by May 15th, 2026, adhering to the requirements outlined below to [ilse.jonker@unige.ch](mailto:ilse.jonker@unige.ch).

### Information required for submission

1. Name of PI or co-PIs
2. Title (max. 20 words)
3. Research question (max. 200 words)

4. Importance of question (max. 400 words)
5. Hypothesis and goals (max. 400 words)
6. Conceptual experimental work (max. 400 words)
7. Clinical cohort criteria and samples (max. 400 words)
8. Milestones and timelines (max. 400 words)
9. Applicant suitability (max. 400 words)
10. Requested budget, including the resources to fund tissue retrieval and sample processing to be performed with the Pathology collaborator — if applicable (max. 400 words)
11. Short CVs (max. 2 pages) of the PI or co-PIs
12. Letter(s) of intent stating that the data owners agree in principle to share their data for the purposes of this proposal. Information about GTO Awardees can be found [here](#) or by contacting Prof. M. Pittet or Prof. O. Michielin.
13. If a PI is part of the HUG, letter of support from the head(s) of the HUG PI service(s)

## Evaluation process

The assessment of projects will be conducted by an independent Scientific Advisory Board, ensuring an unbiased and comprehensive review. Each project will be evaluated based on several key criteria:

- Potential to address significant unmet medical needs: The project's ability to contribute to areas with inadequate medical solutions will be a key consideration.
- Effective utilization of the HUG digital biobank: The strategic and efficient reuse of the digital biobank's assets in the project will be critically assessed.
- Promotion of collaborative excellence: The potential of the project to enhance synergy between clinical and research teams will be evaluated.
- Potential for high-impact translational outcomes: The likelihood of the project to achieve substantial translational impacts, effectively bridging research and clinical practice, will be an essential factor in the evaluation.

In addition, project feasibility criteria will be evaluated:

- Project management feasibility and governance: Clarity and adequacy of the project's organizational structure, coordination mechanisms, and management of collaborations with data owner. Particularly when involving co-PIs or partners not affiliated with the CRTOH.
- Institutional integration and access to resources: Demonstrated and guaranteed access to the GTO digital infrastructure, datasets, computing resources, and relevant clinical expertise required for the project.
- Technical and methodological feasibility: Realism of the proposed methodology, data integration strategy, and expected deliverables within the available infrastructure, expertise, and project duration.

- Data and sample availability: Credibility of plans for timely access to biological material and associated digital data.
- Timeline and risk mitigation: Soundness of the project schedule and identification of critical risks; presence of contingency measures to ensure smooth execution and to prevent delays, particularly in multi-institutional settings.
- Regulatory and ethical readiness: Anticipation and handling of all regulatory, ethical, and data-governance requirements, including ethics approvals, data transfer and collaboration agreements.

The decisions of the scientific committee are final and cannot be challenged or contested by applicants.

### **Deadlines**

- Full application: May 15th, 2026 (late submissions will be ineligible)
- Notification of awards: by September 30th, 2026
- Funding commencement: by March 1st, 2027

## **2026 GTO Fellowships**

### **Objective**

Our goal is to fund clinicians who wish to be substantially engaged in translational research, ensuring they have the necessary resources and time for their research while active in the clinic.

### **Eligibility criteria**

This opportunity is open to interns, chefs de cliniques, and médecins adjoints, provided they are under the age of 45. Their Head of Service has to be supportive of this project.

### **Funding availability**

We offer flexible funding options tailored to the needs of each candidate. Our program is designed to accommodate varying durations of scholarships, such as one year or more, up to a maximum of three years. We provide variable rates of activity, ranging from 50% to 100%. Funding for rates of activity below 50% will not be given priority, unless duly justified.

### **Application process**

- Applicants are required to submit their full applications by May 15th, 2026 to [ilse.jonker@unige.ch](mailto:ilse.jonker@unige.ch), adhering to the detailed requirements outlined below.

## Information required for the submission

1. Name of the applicant
2. Position
3. Affiliation
4. Requested amount of funding
5. Justification for the use of these funds (max. 400 words)
6. Outline of the research project the applicant will contribute to (max. 400 words)
7. Short CV (max. 2 pages)
8. Letter of Support from Head of Service
9. Up to two letters of reference (one of them can be from the Head of Service)

## Evaluation process

The evaluations of applications will be conducted by an independent Scientific Advisory Board, ensuring a rigorous assessment process. Funding will be selectively awarded to the candidates who present the most promising and impactful research proposals.

## Deadlines

- Full application: May 15th, 2026 (late submissions will be ineligible)
- Notification of awards: by September 30th, 2026
- Funding commencement: by March 1st, 2027