# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OUR MISSION &amp; VISION</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FORMULATING A STRATEGY</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RESEARCH PROGRAMS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cancer Biology</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population Sciences in the Pacific</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OFFICES AND RESOURCES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared Resources</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Outreach and Engagement</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cancer Research Training</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
OUR MISSION & VISION

The mission and vision of the University of Hawaiʻi Cancer Center are based on respect and incorporation of the unique cultural context of Hawaiʻi and reflect our winning aspiration. We also recognize that our vision should reflect our scientific and medical goals and resonate with the community we serve. Our vision also needs to align with the team culture we value and the strategy of the University of Hawaiʻi at Mānoa, our parent institution. This alignment ensures that our strategies and actions as a UH Cancer Center resonate with the broader mission of our university. This vision now acts as our beacon, steering us toward a future where we can significantly reduce the burden of cancer in Hawaiʻi and the Pacific while conducting cancer research, prevention, and treatment, while being sensitive to the cultural heritage of the communities we serve.

WINNING ASPIRATION

The University of Hawaiʻi Cancer Center's primary focus is reducing the burden of cancer within our community. President and First Lady Biden’s Cancer Moonshot℠ national goal is to reduce the cancer death rate by at least 50% over the next 25 years. Therefore, aligning our primary focus with the national goal, our Winning Aspiration is to reduce the number of cancer deaths by 30% in Hawaiʻi and the US-Affiliated Pacific Islands within the next ten years (by 2033).

We view our winning aspiration as the fundamental driver for our mission and vision.

MISSION

To reduce the burden of cancer through research, education, patient care, and community outreach, focusing on and embracing the unique and diverse ethnic, cultural, and environmental characteristics of Hawaiʻi and the Pacific.

VISION

To be a global leader in cancer screening, prevention, treatment, and education, significantly reducing the cancer burden in Hawaiʻi and the Pacific. We commit to collective team strategies for innovation and discovery to meet the specific needs of all our communities, including underrepresented ethnic groups.
CORE VALUES

INNOVATION, HO‘OULU
To Inspire, Foster Growth
We aim to inspire hope, foster growth in knowledge, and pioneer breakthroughs in the fight against cancer.

COLLABORATION, LAULIMA
Many Hands, Cooperation
We recognize that by pooling our resources and expertise, we can make a greater impact in the fight against cancer.

COMMITMENT, KULEANA
Responsibility, Privilege
We don’t just see this as our job but as our honor and privilege to serve those affected by cancer, and we commit to making a lasting difference in their lives.

DIVERSITY, PONO
Righteousness, Fairness
We are dedicated to maintaining a fair and respectful environment and seek justice both within UH Cancer Center and in the communities we serve.
The UH Cancer Center’s Strategic Plan is a blueprint for our scientific endeavors and investments based on our mission and vision. This plan, updated quarterly, maintains dynamism, allowing it to stay abreast of the ever-evolving sphere of cancer research. We encourage active scrutiny of our strategies through various planning and evaluation committees and insightful retreats. Further, we have fostered a culturally sensitive and diverse work culture by undergoing an inclusive and introspective process to develop our core values and align our work ethic with these newly established principles.

The foundation of our strategic plan rests on three pillars – breakthroughs with impact, outreach with value, and equity with respect. They guide us in our mission to reduce the burden of cancer through research, education, patient care, and community outreach in Hawai‘i and across the Pacific.

The three pillars are integrated into our Cancer Biology (CB) and Population Sciences in the Pacific (PSP) research programs; Shared Resources; and Community Outreach and Engagement (COE), Cancer Research Training (CRT), and Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) offices.
Breakthroughs with Impact

This pillar emphasizes our commitment to pioneering and groundbreaking research in cancer that is relevant to Hawai‘i and the Pacific. Our focus is not merely on discoveries but on topics that have the potential to alter the current understanding of cancer or significantly impact the prevention and treatment approaches available. This involves harnessing talent within the UH Cancer Center, collaborating with global partners, and leveraging cutting-edge technologies and methodologies to drive impactful cancer research.

Outreach with Value

This pillar underscores our duty to share and communicate our work, not just with the scientific community but with the public as well. We aim to enhance public understanding of cancer research, prevention, early detection, and treatment. We are also committed to providing valuable resources, education, and support to cancer patients, their families, and the broader Hawai‘i and Pacific Island communities. This extends to advocacy at the policy level to ensure that necessary resources and support are available for cancer prevention and care.

Equity with Respect

The third pillar encapsulates our pledge to honor the rich cultural diversity in Hawai‘i, and to ensure equal access to cancer care and participation in research. Recognizing the unique ethnic and cultural demographics of Hawai‘i and the Pacific, we strive to address the disparities in cancer burden among different population groups. We aim to ensure that all individuals, regardless of their background or circumstances, receive equitable, respectful, and high-quality care, and have the opportunity to contribute to, and benefit from, research.

Ultimately, our institutional long-term goal is to achieve national and international recognition as a cancer center that serves underserved communities and minimizes health disparities. We aspire to become a role model of a DEI-based National Cancer Institute-designated Cancer Center.
The Cancer Biology (CB) program is committed to reducing cancer incidence and mortality rates in Hawai‘i and the Pacific Region. Through collaborative and integrated research, we focus on key areas such as cancer genetics, gene-environment interactions, the tumor microenvironment, and the development of cutting-edge diagnostics and therapeutics. We are dedicated to translating our fundamental research findings into investigator-initiated clinical trials for effective cancer interventions. Our research is motivated by the aggressive nature of the cancers prevalent in our catchment area and the influence of diverse ethnic backgrounds on cancer incidence and outcomes.

### Objectives

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<th>Understand the immunomicroenvironment and immunotherapy</th>
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<td>- Study molecular mechanisms of immunotherapy</td>
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<td>- Identify biomarkers for immunotherapy</td>
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<td>- Analyze immune profiles in cancer</td>
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<td>- Expand clinical trials for immunotherapies</td>
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<th>Identify natural products and new drug development</th>
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<td>- Collect and analyze natural products from Hawai‘i’s unique ecosystem</td>
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<td>- Establish a high-throughput screening platform</td>
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<td>- Translate into clinical trials</td>
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<th>Characterize genes, pathways, and gene-environment interactions in cancers</th>
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<td>- Expand research leading to the understanding of tumor initiation, progression, and metastasis</td>
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<td>- Enhance biological research efforts on cancer disparities</td>
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<td>- Establish a biorepository core</td>
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<th>Innovative clinical trials</th>
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<td>- Expand Phase I/II pharmaceutical clinical trials</td>
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<td>- Expand clinical investigator recruitment</td>
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<td>- Tailor IITs to specifically target populations</td>
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<th>Collaboration and growth of the next generation of cancer biologists</th>
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<td>- Expand cancer focused groups</td>
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<td>- Facilitate multi-PI grant applications</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Promote DEI-driven recruitment</td>
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<td>- Support shared equipment and establish core facilities</td>
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### Actions

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<th>Deepened understanding of tumor microenvironment to improve personalized cancer treatment tailored for specific ethnic backgrounds.</th>
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<th>Discovery of novel therapeutic agents that pioneer therapeutic interventions and pave the way for innovative investigator-initiated trials.</th>
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<th>Insights into carcinogenesis and disparities that will lead to advanced interventions.</th>
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<th>Innovative clinical trials will improve cancer outcomes, especially in communities traditionally facing poorer outcomes.</th>
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<th>Enriched collaborative research environment to bring together the strengths of different fields.</th>
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<th>Development of next-generation cancer biologists to ensure a continuous influx of innovative ideas and approaches by providing the necessary training and resources to young scientists.</th>
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**Acronym Key:**
- DEI: Diversity, Equity, Inclusion
- IIT: Investigator-Initiated Trials
- PI: Principal Investigator
The mission of Population Sciences in the Pacific (PSP) is to conduct epidemiological, behavioral, and translational research to understand patterns of cancer occurrence across catchment area populations and decrease overall cancer burden, as well as cancer disparities, through the development of innovative interventions.

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<th>Objectives</th>
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| Expand research in Populomics to understudied groups, and with attention to ethnic diversity, acculturation, generation, SDH, genetic ancestry, life-course | • Refine and validate appropriate measurement instruments  
• Compare genetics vs. self-reported ancestry in the Multiethnic Cohort Study  
• Establish new multiethnic cohort                                                                                                                | Diversified and comprehensive cancer research focusing on understudied groups and integrating ethnic identity, acculturation, generation effect, and genetic ancestry. |
| Address cancer disparities through translational and implementation research | • Recruit faculty with expertise in community based participatory research and cancer health  
• Multi-project opportunities (e.g., P50 SPORE, ACS CHERG)  
• Test multilevel interventions                                                                                                                                  | Reduced cancer health disparities through community-centric research, increased expertise, and collaborative ventures. |
| Investigate the effects of climate change and environmental factors on cancer burden and disparities | • Collaborate with SOEST, NOAA  
• Form an affinity group  
• Recruit new Epidemiology principal investigator  
• Develop a Program Project Grant                                                                                                                               | Clarity on climate and environmental influences by understanding the effects of climate change on cancer incidence. |
| Develop research in the cancer care continuum from risk classification, cancer screening/early detection, treatment & cancer survivorship | • Leverage the Multiethnic Cohort Study  
• Collect data on cognitive and physical functioning, social support, etc.  
• Interventions                                                                                                                                           | Comprehensive cancer healthcare research through a cancer care continuum expansion and exploring telemedicine and other technology in cancer care delivery. |
| Further integrate Data Science applications in PSP’s research             | • Develop a library of tumor H&E whole slide images  
• Expand Artificial Intelligence Affinity Group  
• Develop imaging Artificial Intelligence Research Program Project Grant  
• Recruit a bioinformatician/biostatistician                                                                                                                 | Incorporation of advanced technologies in research by integrating artificial intelligence, machine learning, and partnering with data science departments. |

**Acronym Key:**  
- ACS CHERC: American Cancer Society Cancer Health Equity Research Centers  
- CBPR: Community-Based Participatory Research  
- H&E: Hematoxylin & Eosin  
- NOAA: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
- P50 SPORE: Specialized Programs of Research Excellence Grant  
- SDH: Social Determinants of Health  
- SOEST: School of Ocean and Earth Science Technology
OFFICES AND RESOURCES
**SHARED RESOURCES**

The Shared Resources (SR) of UH Cancer Center functions as an administrative structure to coordinate Shared Resources and institutional research cores and facilities. Its mission is to provide research services that our researchers need. These services must be of high quality, aligned with the institution’s mission, equally accessible to all UH Cancer Center members, be cost-effective, and offer quality state-of-the-science products and services. Shared Resources are critical to the success of the PSP and CB research programs and contribute to meeting our goals for COE, CRT, and DEI.

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| Identify the research services and resources needed, ensure services are available, investigate possible new research services and resources that could be useful | • Survey Cancer Center members for research needs  
• Discover new requirements and services through discussion at faculty retreats and with new faculty and through collaboration with Shared Resource Directors at other Cancer Centers | **Enhanced research infrastructure and services** through enhanced availability and accessibility, service evolution, and financial feasibility. |
| Elevate the knowledge of researchers regarding methods used in the Shared Resources | • Hands-on instruction for methods and equipment use with users  
• Seminars  
• Formal classes | **Increased researcher competence and capacity** by incorporating educational initiatives, improved grant application quality, and feedback-driven service enhancement. |
| Evaluate and improve the quality and efficiency of the services and operations of the Shared Resources and Cores | • Monitor number of users and turnaround time for each service  
• Survey Cancer Center members for satisfaction with Shared Resource offerings and implementation  
• Advice from Shared Resource Oversight committee | **Optimized operational efficiency and quality** by ensuring quality assurance, adaptive service provision, and budget optimization. |

**Acronym Key:**
- CB: Cancer Biology
- CRT: Cancer Research Training
- DEI: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- PSP: Population Sciences in the Pacific
COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

The mission of the Community Outreach and Engagement (COE) office is to engage in bi-directional interactions with catchment area populations, community partners, and UH Cancer Center members, to foster research, and to conduct health education addressing catchment area cancer control priorities, including cancer health disparities.

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<th>Objectives</th>
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| **Extend COE’s reach to better serve NHPI and other underserved populations** | • Implement Native Hawaiian health initiative  
• Develop similar initiative in Filipino Americans in Hawai‘i and Guam  
• Launch and implement mobile clinic program  
• Leverage participation in NCCCP and other partnerships | **Extending COE’s Reach**, mainly focusing on underserved populations such as Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders, and Filipino Americans. |
| **Further develop public education and increase minority accrual** | • Implement mobile skin check education project  
• Further utilize new technologies for public education  
• Expand RCT to neighbor islands  
• Develop Lung Cancer Screening Program | **Enhancing Public Education and Minority Accrual** by developing culturally appropriate health education programs to reach and serve more people in our catchment area. |
| **Facilitate new COE-relevant research studies and infrastructure-building grants** | • Fund pilot studies  
• Facilitate clinical and basic research  
• Foster multi-project grant applications (e.g., P50 SPORE, ACS CHERC)  
• Further support US4 partnership with University of Guam | **Facilitating Catchment-Relevant Research** to stimulate the development of new, innovative research projects that directly address our catchment area’s cancer priorities. |
| **Further expand evaluation component of our activities** | • Build process or outcome evaluation for all COE activities  
• Conduct second COE survey on knowledge, awareness, attitude, and behaviors | **Expanding Evaluation Components** to refine our strategies and better target our efforts to reduce cancer burdens. |
| **Strengthen UHCC’s brand to increase support and elevate impact** | • Develop and disseminate key messages and materials that underscore our value to the USAPI  
• Develop relationship with Legislature  
• Formalize on-boarding of new staff/faculty to reflect the mission and core values  
• Leverage faculty’s own networks  
• Further develop ethical training on conduct of research in NHPI | **Strengthening UH Cancer Center’s Brand** to facilitate increased funding and support, amplifying our impact on the areas we serve and improving cancer control and community health outcomes. |

**Acronym Key:**  
- ACS CHERC: American Cancer Society Cancer Health Equity Research Centers  
- NCCCP: National Comprehensive Cancer Control Program  
- NHPI: Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander  
- P50 SPORE: Specialized Programs of Research Excellence  
- RCT: Randomized Control Trials  
- USAPI: United States Affiliated Pacific Islands  
- US4: Pacific Island Partnership for Cancer Health Equity
## CANCER RESEARCH TRAINING

The mission of the Cancer Research Training (CRT) office is to create a cancer research training and education hub that provides innovative training and mentorship for individuals at every career stage, focusing on cancer health disparities.

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| Extend capability of CRT to reach trainees and enhance UHCC training culture | • Recruit staff for CRT  
• Set clear training priorities for UHCC  
• Offer mentoring workshops & provide clear expectations to UHCC faculty  
• Add training topics to faculty meetings & on-boarding  
• Re-establish monthly trainee meetings | Broaden reach particularly from disadvantaged backgrounds like Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders. |
| Increase activities and funding base for training at different levels | • Implement a pilot program and submit training grant for high schools  
• Submit T32 on mechanisms of cancer etiology and progression  
• Facilitate training by Shared Resources  
• Explore needs for additional grants | Increase activities and funding to develop more training programs for different levels, from high school students to postdoctoral fellows. |
| Strengthen partnership with UH departments and collaborate with disparity-focused institutional grants | • Establish closer relations with UH faculty  
• Leverage grants at JABSOM and UH Mānoa (e.g., PIKO, CORBREs) to provide access to additional career enhancement activities  
• Participate in graduate and undergraduate symposia and grants (e.g., UROP) | Strengthen partnerships with other departments at the University of Hawai‘i to provide more opportunities for students interested in cancer research. |
| Increase outreach to identify and follow outstanding candidates at all levels with a focus on DEI | • Conduct outreach to high schools in the community  
• Expand CRT recruitment network in and outside of Hawai‘i  
• Utilize new technologies to identify candidates and track trainees | Enhanced outreach by identifying potential students interested in cancer research early on, guiding them to a career in this field and bringing back Hawai‘i-born researchers to serve their local communities. |
| Expand evaluation component of CRT activities | • Build process for outcome evaluation for all CRT activities  
• Automate annual tracking activities to reach previous trainees | Improved timely evaluation to help UH Cancer Center understand what’s working and what might need to change. |

**Acronym Key:**
- COBRE: Centers of Biomedical Research Excellence
- DEI: Diversity, Equity, Inclusion
- JABSOM: John A. Burns School of Medicine
- PIKO: Pacific Innovations, Knowledge, and Opportunities
- T32: Training grant
- UHCC: UH Cancer Center
- UROP: Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program
The mission of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion office is to establish a formal infrastructure to enhance diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in the UH Cancer Center and implement a plan to enhance diversity (PED).

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| Establish Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Office | • Appoint diversity Associate Director  
• Appoint office staff  
• Establish roles for implementing a plan to enhance diversity  
• Coordinate with COE and CRT about diversity in community outreach and research training | Successfully establishing the DEI Office.                                                                                                                                                               |
| Enhance pipeline for trainees, faculty/staff, administration | • Outreach to high schools, community colleges, undergraduates, UH Mānoa, University of Guam  
• Cancer Biology introduction course and capstone  
• Summer internships through CRT, PIPCHE, PIKO  
• Targeted recruitment                                                                                                             | Greater demographic diversity in research trainees, from undergraduates to postdocs, and in UHCC administration and advisory committees.                                      |
| Establish infrastructure to support early and mid-level researchers | • Identify barriers  
• Formal mentoring  
• Grant writing workshops  
• Seminars, journal clubs, affinity groups  
• Funding for pilot studies and travel  
• Specialized programs, clinical trials shadowing                                                                                      | Increased demographic diversity in clinical trial participation in the Clinical Trials Office.                                                                                                           |
| Collect baseline, longitudinal metrics, ongoing evaluation | • Identify measures, baseline survey, analyze data  
• Report to faculty, staff, admin  
• Follow-up surveys  
• Analyze, correct  
• Report to faculty, staff, admin                                                                                                       | Sponsoring educational activities on diversity including historical context of health disparities and workshops on health equity, cultural humility, or implicit bias. |