



# **Pancreatic Cancer Action Network-AACR Pathway to Leadership Grant**

## **2016 Program Guidelines and Application Instructions**

**American Association for Cancer Research**

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## PROGRAM GUIDELINES

### PROGRAM SUMMARY

The Pancreatic Cancer Action Network-AACR Pathway to Leadership Grant represents a joint effort to ensure the future leadership of pancreatic cancer research by supporting outstanding early career investigators beginning in their postdoctoral research positions and continuing through their successful transition to independence. Applicants must hold a full-time, mentored research position, have completed their most recent doctoral degree or medical residency within the past 5 years, and not already have a full-time faculty position.

The grant provides up to five years of support, for a total of \$600,000, consisting of two phases. The initial Mentored Phase is expected to last up to two years, during which time the recipient will receive \$75,000 per year while working closely with a mentor(s) to develop a strong research project. During the subsequent three years, the recipient is expected to be in an independent research position and will be funded at \$150,000 per year.

*Mentored Phase:* This initial phase of mentored support will allow the applicant time to complete research, publish results, and prepare to bridge to an independent research position. As part of the application, the applicant must propose a research project and career development plan to pursue during the mentored phase. Funds will support the salary and benefits of the grant recipient as well as expenses related to the research project, which include technical/statistical personnel, research/laboratory supplies, equipment, publication charges for manuscripts that pertain directly to the funded project, career development and training expenses, including tuition and fees, travel to research meetings or training, and professional membership dues.

The applicant must select an appropriate primary mentor with a track record of funded research related to pancreatic cancer research and with experience as a supervisor and mentor, and may also identify additional mentors as appropriate to the goals of the program. Additional mentors do not have to be at the same institution as the applicant. The applicant and primary mentor together will be responsible for all aspects of the mentored research and career development plan.

Applicants must be at a sponsoring institution/organization with faculty, facilities, and resources to support the proposed research endeavor. The sponsoring institution must ensure that the applicant has the protected time needed to conduct the proposed research. It is expected that during the mentored phase, the recipient will dedicate at least **75%** time to completing the proposed research plus additional time fulfilling the career development plan.

Applicants at sponsoring institutions/organizations that do not have a specialized pancreatic program must propose a mentorship team that includes pancreatic cancer research experts from other institutions. Their areas of expertise and mentorship role/responsibilities with the applicant should be described. A communication plan should also be presented, which specifies the proposed frequency and form(s) of communication that will be maintained with these mentors.

*Independent Phase:* As part of the application, the applicant must propose a pancreatic cancer research project that will be pursued as a tenure track independent investigator during the second phase of the grant. Applicants may request \$150,000 of support per year during the independent phase. Funds will support the salary and benefits of the grant recipient, postdoctoral or clinical research fellows, graduate students and/or research assistants, technical/statistical personnel, research/laboratory supplies, equipment, publication charges for manuscripts that pertain directly to the funded project, and other research expenses. This support will allow the individual to continue to work towards establishing his/her own independent research program in pancreatic cancer research and progressing along the

path to leadership within this critical field. The grant recipient is expected to apply for additional independent research grant support during the independent phase of the grant.

Support for the independent phase is not automatic and is contingent upon several factors, including being accepted by an institution, the position being accepted and the institutional resources that will be available, and the successful scientific review of the individual's mentored phase of the grant.

It is anticipated that one grant will be funded.

#### **APPLICATION DEADLINE**

October 27, 2015, at **noon** Eastern Time

#### **DECISION DATE**

February 2016

#### **ANNUAL GRANTS RECEPTION AND DINNER AT AACR ANNUAL MEETING 2016**

April 19, 2016 - Grant recipient must attend the Grants Reception and Dinner and formally accept the grant. Support for travel and complimentary registration to attend the Annual Meeting will be provided separate from the grant by the AACR.

#### **START OF GRANT TERM**

July 1, 2016

#### **PANCREATIC CANCER ACTION NETWORK GRANTEE WEEKEND**

August 18-21, 2016 in San Diego, CA and 2017 (date and location to be determined) - Grant recipients are required to attend if invited. The weekend involves grantees in scientific sessions where they provide updates of their funded research projects and receive input from the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network's Scientific and Medical Advisory Board, networking receptions and other activities. Support for travel to attend the event is provided separate from the grant by the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network.

#### **APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

Applicants must have a doctoral degree (including PhD, MD, DO, DC, ND, DDS, DVM, ScD, DNS, PharmD, or equivalent doctoral degree) in the biomedical sciences or in a field applicable to health science research and not currently be a candidate for a further doctoral or professional degree.

At the start of the grant term on July 1, 2016, applicants must:

- Hold a full-time, mentored research position with the title of postdoctoral fellow, clinical research fellow, or the equivalent
  - *In order for applicant to be considered eligible, any pending full-time mentored position can **NOT** be contingent upon receiving this grant.*
- Have completed his or her most recent doctoral degree within the past 5 years (i.e., degree cannot have been conferred **before** July 2, 2011; the formal date of receipt of doctoral degree is the date the degree was conferred, as indicated on your diploma and/or transcript)
  - Applicants with a medical degree must have completed his or her most recent doctoral degree or medical residency - **whichever date is later** - within the past 5 years (time spent in medical specialty or subspecialty training is not considered part of medical residency and **will** be counted against the 5 year window).
- Not be a current recipient of a K08 or any other research grant in which the applicant has committed to a percent effort that conflicts with the 75% research time commitment mandated by the Pathway to Leadership Grant

- Work **under the auspices of a primary mentor** at an academic, medical, or research institution **within the United States** (There are no citizenship requirements. However, by submitting an application for this grant, an applicant who is not a U.S. citizen or permanent resident assures that his/her visa status will provide sufficient time to complete the project and grant term within the United States.)

An exception to the 5-year window may be granted for parental leave or other well justified leave from research for pressing personal or family situations of generally less than 12 months duration. Applicants whose experience exceeds the maximum of 5 years but who believe they are eligible (e.g., maternity/family leave) should contact AACR **before** submitting an application to verify their eligibility.

Applicants who believe that they are at the level of postdoctoral or clinical research fellow, but hold a different title (e.g., MD with an Instructor title), may be eligible and should contact AACR **before** submitting an application.

Employees or subcontractors of a U.S. government entity or for-profit private industry are not eligible.

AACR membership is required. Nonmembers interested in this grant opportunity must submit a satisfactory application for AACR Associate membership by Tuesday, October 27, 2015. The application will be applied to 2015 membership dues. Applications may be submitted using the Official AACR Membership Application [online](#) or [downloaded as a PDF](#) and submitted to the AACR office with the required documents.

**Any individual who currently holds an active AACR grant may not apply.** Past AACR grantees may apply if they complied with all progress and financial report requirements.

Investigators may submit only **one** application for the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network-AACR Pathway to Leadership Grant but may concurrently apply for other AACR grants. However, applicants are expected to accept the first grant they are awarded. Individuals may accept and hold only one AACR grant at a time.

Investigators currently or previously holding the rank of instructor, adjunct professor, assistant professor, research assistant professor, the equivalent or higher are not eligible. Qualified researchers are invited to apply for an AACR Career Development Award.

**Exception:** If you are an MD who is considered a postdoctoral fellow but hold the title of instructor so that you can see patients, you may be eligible. Potential applicants possessing an MD are encouraged to contact AACR **before** submitting an application to verify your eligibility.

All applicants with questions about eligibility should contact AACR's SRGA at [grants@aacr.org](mailto:grants@aacr.org) **before** submitting an application.

## RESEARCH PROJECT CRITERIA

Research projects must have direct applicability and relevance to pancreatic cancer. They may be in any discipline of basic, translational, clinical, or epidemiological research, and fall within at least one of the categories of the Common Scientific Outline (Biology; Etiology; Prevention; Early Detection, Diagnosis, and Prognosis; Treatment; Cancer Control, Survivorship, and Outcomes Research; or Scientific Model Systems [<https://www.icrpartnership.org/CSO.cfm>]).

## APPLICATION DOCUMENT REQUIREMENTS

The application includes several important sections. Four key sections relate to the applicant information and career development plan, proposed research during the mentored and independent

phases of the grant, letters of reference, and statement of institutional support. Details about each of these four sections follow.

**I. Applicant Information and Career Development Plan. Includes the following:**

- a. Applicant's Background.** Applicants should describe their:
  - i. Past education and training in pancreatic cancer research
  - ii. Current research training or fellowship program
  - iii. Commitment to a career in pancreatic cancer research
  - iv. Potential to develop into a successful independent investigator
  - v. Current as well as long-term research objectives
  - vi. **For individuals in postdoctoral positions with other titles**, although still in non-independent training positions, describe evidence of non-independence.
- b. Career Goals and Objectives.** Applicants should state their career goals and measureable objectives, including how the research proposed for the mentored phase of the grant will lead to independent investigator status.
- c. Career Development Plan.** Separated into Year 1 and Year 2 of the mentored phase, applicants should list their mentor(s), describe the career development plan that will be pursued, and discuss how the plan will promote their success and scientific independence. The career development plan must be tailored to meet the specific needs of the applicant. Applicants must be specific and describe:
  - i. **Mentors.** The applicant should list his or her primary mentor and any additional mentors, including current title(s) and institutional affiliation(s) and the year(s) in which the mentor will be providing guidance. A primary mentor is required and the applicant may also identify additional mentors as appropriate to the goals of the program. Additional mentors do not have to be at the same institution as the applicant. Applicants should ensure that communication with additional mentors is addressed in the Communication Plan.
  - ii. **Skill Development.** This includes specific activities that will lead to, for example, new and/or enhanced research, grant-writing, and communication and laboratory management skills and knowledge. The applicant should also describe how these skills will contribute to research productivity and facilitate the development of new approaches and directions for investigation. Courses or other activities that might allow the applicant to expand the scope of his/her research and improve the potential for success as an independent scientist are particularly encouraged.
  - iii. **Transition to Independence.** The applicant should describe a specific plan for transition, including the indicators of success that will be used to determine their readiness for the independent phase (i.e., independent faculty position, publications, funding track record, etc.).
  - iv. **Communication Plan with Mentor(s).** For the primary mentor and each additional mentor, describe the plan for mentorship and communication.



and objectives that will be pursued during each phase. It should discuss the significance, novelty and creativity of the ideas and/or approaches that are proposed for the project. For the mentored phase, the applicant should describe what will be accomplished that will enable him/her to launch an independent research program and be a successful independent researcher. Plans should be presented for achieving independence from the mentor(s) and developing a separate scientific research program. For the independent phase, be sure to include how this work is a continuation from the mentored phase and the impact it will have on the field of pancreatic cancer research.

- d. **Experimental Design and Methods.** This section should provide a detailed description and rationale for the experimental approach that will be used during the mentored and independent research phases. For each phase, a systematic plan should be proposed that includes: i) the major tasks that are planned; ii) a timeline for completion of these tasks, and major milestones that will reflect progress; and iii) tangible outcomes, products and deliverables, including biomarkers, novel therapies, and new technologies. If mentors in addition to the primary mentor are proposed, their respective areas of expertise and responsibility should be described. Note: For research plans involving Phase I or Phase II clinical trials, plans for data and safety monitoring must be included. Documentation of the sponsoring institution's approved plan should be provided.

III. **Letters of Reference.** Each applicant must have **at least three but no more than six total letters of reference** accompany the online application. Details for the required letters of reference are as follows:

- a. **Letter of Reference by the Primary Mentor.** The primary mentor, together with the applicant, is responsible for the planning, direction, and execution of the mentored phase program. The primary mentor should hold a full-time faculty position at the sponsoring institution, be recognized as an accomplished investigator in pancreatic cancer research, have a track record of success in training individuals in postdoctoral positions who have gone on to become independent investigators, and have sufficient independent research support to cover any costs of the proposed research project in excess of the allowable costs of this grant. The letter should confirm the proposed interaction described by the applicant and explicitly state that the applicant will be permitted to continue the research project once the applicant has attained the independent position.
- b. **Letter(s) of Reference from Additional Mentor(s).** A letter of reference is required for **up to three** of the additional mentors identified by the applicant. The letter(s) should confirm the proposed role and interaction described by the applicant.
- c. **Letters from Well-Established Scientists. Based on the number of letter(s) of reference from mentors,** applicants must have **at least two (but no more than five)** letters of reference submitted on their behalf from well-established scientists. These letters should be from individuals **not directly involved in the application**, but who are familiar with the applicant's qualifications, training, and interests, including advisory committee members (if applicable).



**NOTE:** If the primary mentor is **not** an active, emeritus, or honorary member of AACR, applicants **must** provide at least **one** letter of reference from an active, emeritus, or honorary member of AACR.

Applications that are missing the required letters of reference may be delayed in the review process or not accepted. (See below in Section 6 of the Application Instructions for further information.)

**IV. Statement of Institutional Support.** A signed statement must be provided by the head or Dean of the institution sponsoring the mentored phase research. The statement should address the following elements:

- a. Institutional Environment and Commitment.** Describe the sponsoring institution's scientific environment, including the specific resources and facilities that will be available to the applicant. Provide assurance that these facilities and resources will be available for the applicant's planned career development and research programs. It should be clear that the institutional commitment to the applicant is not contingent upon receipt of the grant.
- b. Fit for Accomplishing Grant Goals.** Describe how the institutional research environment is particularly well-suited for the development of the applicant's research career and the pursuit of the proposed research plan and progression to the independent phase.
- c. Applicant's Dedicated Time.** Provide assurances that the applicant will be able to devote a minimum of 9 person-months (75% of full-time professional effort) to the implementation of the research plan. The remaining effort should be devoted to implementation of the career development plan and other activities related to enhancing the applicant's career as an independent scientist.
- d. Mentor(s) Involvement.** Provide assurances that the primary mentor, any additional mentor(s) at the institution/organization, and other staff, as appropriate, will devote time and support to the applicant consistent with the proposed mentored research and career development plans.
- e. Visa Status.** If the applicant is not an U.S. citizen or permanent resident, the sponsoring institution must include information about his/her visa status and an assurance that the applicant's visa provides sufficient time to complete both phases of the grant at a U.S. institution.

#### **EVALUATION OF APPLICATIONS**

Applications are peer-reviewed by the Scientific Review Committee comprised of scientists respected for their own accomplishments in pancreatic cancer research and as leaders in the field. The President of AACR will appoint the members of the Scientific Review Committee.

The Committee will consider the following criteria when reviewing applications and determining funding decisions:

- **Applicant.** What is the applicant's record of research productivity, including the quality of peer-reviewed scientific publications? What is the applicant's potential to become an outstanding, successful independent investigator who will contribute significantly to pancreatic cancer

research and become a leader in this field? Will the research experiences in the mentored phase prepare the applicant to successfully implement the independent phase research project?

- **Career Development Plan.** Are the content and duration of the proposed career development plan appropriate for the applicant's current stage of scientific and professional development and proposed research career goals? Does the plan satisfactorily address the format of instruction (e.g., lectures, coursework, and/or real-time discussion groups)? Does the plan include a sufficiently broad selection of subject matter (e.g., conflict of interest, authorship, data management, human subjects and animal use, laboratory safety)? Does the plan adequately describe the role of the mentor(s) or other faculty involvement in the applicant's instruction? Will the plan adequately prepare the applicant to successfully transition to the independent phase of the award? Is the timeline planned for the transition to the independent phase of the award appropriate for the applicant?
- **Research Plan.** Are the proposed mentored and independent research phases scientifically sound and significant? Is the proposed independent phase a logical extension of the mentored phase research? Is there evidence of long-term viability of the proposed independent phase research plan? To what extent is the proposed independent phase research likely to foster the career of the applicant as an independent investigator in the field of pancreatic cancer research? Is the budget fully justified and reasonable in relation to the two phases of the proposed project?
- **Mentor(s).** To what extent does the mentor(s) have a strong track record(s) in training future independent researchers? To what extent are the pancreatic cancer research qualifications and experience, scientific stature, and mentoring background appropriate for the applicant's career development needs? Do(es) the mentor(s) adequately address the applicant's strengths, potential, and areas needing improvement? Does the mentor(s) have a comprehensive plan to support the proposed mentored phase career development and research plans as well as the applicant's efforts to transition to independence? Is there adequate description of the quality and extent of the mentor(s) proposed role?
- **Environment and Institutional Commitment.** What evidence is provided that the mentored phase sponsoring institution is strongly committed to fostering the applicant's development and transition to the independent phase? Is there adequate assurance that the applicant will be able to devote the required percentage effort to the research project and career development plan?

The Committee will consider each year's applicants independently, without regard to the topics covered in previously funded proposals or to the institutions of the previous grantees.

#### **TOBACCO INDUSTRY FUNDING AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST STATEMENT**

A Fellow whose named mentor is funded by the tobacco industry for any research project is not eligible for any AACR-administered grant. A Grantee or his/her named mentor who accepts funding from the tobacco industry for any research project during the term of an AACR-administered grant must inform AACR of such funding, whereupon the AACR-administered grant will be immediately terminated.

Tobacco industry funding is defined for purposes of applicants and recipients of AACR-administered grants as money provided or used for all or any of the costs of any research project, including personnel, consumables, equipment, buildings, travel, meetings and conferences, and operating costs for laboratories and offices. It is not defined as money provided or used for meetings or conferences that do not relate to any particular research project.

Tobacco industry funding includes: funds from a company that is engaged in or has affiliates engaged in

the manufacture of tobacco produced for human use; funds in the name of a tobacco brand, whether or not the brand name is used solely for tobacco products; funds from a body set up by the tobacco industry or by one or more companies engaged in the manufacture of tobacco products.

The following do not constitute tobacco industry funding for the purposes of this policy:

- Legacies from tobacco industry investments (unless the names of a tobacco company or cigarette brand are associated with them)
- Funding from a trust or foundation established with assets related to the tobacco industry but no longer having any connection with the tobacco industry even though it may bear a name that (for historical reasons) is associated with the tobacco industry

## APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

### APPLICATION PROCEDURES

AACR requires applicants to submit an electronic application by **noon** Eastern Time on Tuesday, October 27, 2015, using the proposalCENTRAL website at <https://proposalcentral.altum.com>.

In order to submit a complete application, applicants need to directly input information (i.e., sections 1, 4, 5, and 7-9 below) into the online application platform as well as upload a number of documents. The following instructions provide details about information that needs to be inputted and the materials that need to be uploaded. The section numbering corresponds with the section number of the Application Instructions and the online proposalCENTRAL application.

Information to be Entered Directly into proposalCENTRAL	Application Instructions Section	proposalCENTRAL Section
Project Title	1. Title Page	1) Title Page
Applicant Information	4. Applicant	4) Applicant
Institution and Contact Information	5. Institution & Contacts	5) Institution & Contacts
Scientific Abstract	7. Scientific Abstract	7) Scientific Abstract
Budget	8. Budget	8) Budget
Organizational Assurances	9. Organizational Assurances	9) Organizational Assurances

Templates to be Downloaded, Completed and Uploaded	Application Instructions Section	proposalCENTRAL Section
Applicant Information and Career Development Plan	10.A. Application Documents	10) Application Documents
Research Project Proposal Template	10.B. Application Documents	10) Application Documents
Secured Other Support Template	10.C. Application Documents	10) Application Documents
Pending Other Support Template	10.D. Application Documents	10) Application Documents
Budget Justification Template	10.E. Application Documents	10) Application Documents
Project Milestones Template	10.F. Application Documents	10) Application Documents

Non-Template Materials to be Uploaded	Application Instructions Section	proposalCENTRAL Section
Letters of Reference (uploaded by Primary Mentor, Additional Mentors [if applicable], Well-Established Scientists)	6. Letters of Reference	6) Letters of Reference
Applicant's Curriculum Vitae	10.G. Application Documents	10) Application Documents
Statement of Institutional Support	10.H. Application Documents	10) Application Documents
Mentor's Biographical Sketch(es)	10.I. Application Documents	10) Application Documents
Supporting Documentation (if applicable)	10.J. Application Documents	10) Application Documents

Materials to be Downloaded, Printed, Signed, Scanned and Uploaded	Application Instructions Section	proposalCENTRAL Section
Terms and Conditions Signature Page	10.K. Application Documents	10) Application Documents
Application Signature Page	10.L. Application Documents	13) Signature Page(s)

### GETTING STARTED IN proposalCENTRAL

If you are a new user of proposalCENTRAL, follow the "REGISTER" link and complete the registration process. After you register, complete your Professional Profile (green tab, second tab from the left) before starting an application.

If you are already registered with proposalCENTRAL, access the site and log in with your Username and Password. If you have forgotten your password, click on the “Forgot your password?” link. Supply your User ID or e-mail address in the space provided; your password will be sent to you by e-mail.

To start an application, select the “Grant Opportunities” tab (gray tab furthest to the right). A list of applications will be displayed. The list of applications can be filtered for just this organization by selecting “American Association for Cancer Research” in the drop down menu at the top and clicking “Filter List by GrantMaker.” Find the “Pancreatic Cancer Action Network-AACR Pathway to Leadership Grant” and click the “Apply Now” link (second to last column) to create your application.

Complete all fields in the application and all templates that are provided. Upload all requested documents in portable document format (PDF). See the proposalCENTRAL FAQ section, <https://proposalcentral.altum.com/FAQ/FrequentlyAskedQuestions.asp>, for more information.

If you have any difficulties registering, logging in, or creating your application, contact proposalCENTRAL Customer Support immediately:

Phone: 1-800-875-2562 or 703-964-5840

E-mail: [pcsupport@altum.com](mailto:pcsupport@altum.com)

### APPLICATION FORMAT

The following information is required to submit a complete application. Numbers correspond to the application sections found on the left side of the proposalCENTRAL website.

- 1. TITLE PAGE.** Enter the title of the research project directly into the proposalCENTRAL system. The title is limited to no more than 75 characters in length (including spaces). Do not use abbreviations. A project title must be entered and saved before additional sections may be accessed.
- 2. DOWNLOAD TEMPLATES & INSTRUCTIONS.** The Program Guidelines and Application Instructions document, the Terms and Conditions document and all templates can be downloaded from this page.

You must download and complete the following templates: Applicant Information and Career Development Plan Template, Research Project Proposal Template, Secured Other Support Template, Pending Other Support Template, Budget Justification Template and Project Milestones Template.

- Click the “Download” link to save each of the templates to your computer.
- Use your word processing software (e.g., MS Word, WordPerfect) to complete the Applicant Information and Career Development Plan Template, Research Project Proposal Template, Secured Other Support Template, Pending Other Support Template, and Budget Justification Template, and your spreadsheet software (e.g., MS Excel) to complete the Project Milestones Template on your computer and then convert templates to PDF format. You do not need to be connected to the internet or proposalCENTRAL while working on the templates.
- Upload the completed template files to your online application.

See below in Section 10 of the Application Instructions for how to complete and upload the templates. This application also requires additional attachments for which templates are not provided (applicant’s curriculum vitae, mentor’s biographical sketch[es], statement of institutional support, and supporting documentation [if applicable]).

- 3. ENABLE OTHER USERS TO ACCESS THIS PROPOSAL.** Optional.
- 4. APPLICANT.** Enter information for the applicant directly into the proposalCENTRAL system.

Applicants must include their contact information, including e-mail address, phone number, and mailing address.

- 5. INSTITUTION & CONTACTS.** Enter information regarding the applicant's institution, the primary mentor, and signing official directly into proposalCENTRAL system. If the primary mentor is **not** an active, emeritus, or honorary member of AACR, enter one letter of reference author that **is** an active, emeritus, or honorary member of AACR in the endorser section.
- 6. LETTERS OF REFERENCE.** Enter directly into the proposalCENTRAL system the e-mail address of the primary mentor, up to three additional mentors (if applicable), and well-established scientists that will be submitting letters of reference. Enter the e-mail address again to confirm and click "Add." If the e-mail address is in the proposalCENTRAL system, you will be prompted to "Send E-mail" to the individual. **The e-mail will contain instructions and a link to upload the letter of reference directly to the application.** If the e-mail address is not in the proposalCENTRAL system, you will be prompted for the individual's first and last name before being prompted to "Send E-mail." Repeat the steps above for all those submitting a letter of reference.

At least three but no more than six total letters of reference will be accepted. See above in Section III. Letters of Reference in the Application Document Requirements of the Program Guidelines for additional information.

**NOTE:** If the primary mentor is **not** an active, emeritus, or honorary member of AACR, applicants **must** provide at least **one** letter of reference from an active, emeritus, or honorary member of AACR.

The letters of reference are uploaded directly to the proposalCENTRAL application; these letters must be uploaded before the application can be submitted. Applications cannot be submitted without Letters of Reference. Applicants can view letter submission status by returning to proposalCENTRAL's Letters of Reference section.

- 7. SCIENTIFIC ABSTRACT.** Enter the abstract directly into the proposalCENTRAL system. The abstract is limited to 3,000 characters (including spaces) and must provide a clear, concise and comprehensive overview of both the proposed mentored phase research and independent phase research. For each, include the research background; objective or hypothesis and its supporting rationale; specific aims of the study; study design; and relevance of the proposed work to pancreatic cancer.

**NOTE:** The proposalCENTRAL system does not lock the scientific abstract field after 3,000 characters have been entered. You may erroneously enter more than the maximum allowed. Excessive spacing in your scientific abstract (e.g., line breaks or spaces between paragraphs) also affects the character limit. To ensure that your abstract submission is not too long, before proceeding to the next section, click the red "Save" button at the top or bottom of the screen. If your scientific abstract is too long, you will receive an error message at the top of the page.

From the list provided, select the research areas that are most applicable to this project. Select no more than two areas.

From the list provided, please indicate how you found out about this grant opportunity.

- 8. BUDGET.** Enter expenses for the entire term of the grant. Period 1-2 are for the expected mentored phase, expenses should total \$75,000/year; Periods 3-5 are for the expected independent phase, expenses should total \$150,000/year. For each year, delineate the personnel and non-personnel support requested. Eligible expenses for both the mentored phase and independent phase include the salary and benefits of the grant recipient, technical/statistical personnel, research/laboratory

supplies, equipment, and publication charges for manuscripts that pertain directly to the funded project. (See Terms and Conditions document for information on publishing in AACR journals.) Budget requests for equipment that exceed 10% of the total budget must be accompanied by a detailed justification.

Career development and training expenses, including tuition and fees, travel to research meetings or training, and professional membership dues are allowable expenses **only** for the mentored phase.

Salary and benefit expenses for individuals other than those noted above, such as postdoctoral or clinical research fellows, graduate students and/or research assistants, are allowable expenses **only** for the independent phase.

Indirect costs, pre-award charges, and any other research-related expenses not directly related to this project are **not** allowable expenses. For the purposes of this grant, any general office supplies or individual institutional administrative charges (e.g., telephone, other electronic communication, utilities, IT network, etc.) are considered to be part of indirect and are **not** allowable budget line items. In addition, no grant funds may be directed towards salary or benefits of any individuals from a U.S. government entity or for-profit industry, nor for any research expenses related to the project that are incurred by these individuals.

**A detailed budget justification explaining the allocation of the grant funds must accompany the application.** See below in Section 10.E. for Budget Justification instructions.

- 9. ORGANIZATIONAL ASSURANCES.** Select the appropriate assurances options for your proposed research and complete the Approved or Pending Date field as appropriate (i.e., mm/dd/yyyy, N/A, or None). The assurances/certifications are made and verified by the signature of the institutional official signing the application. If a grant is awarded, IRB and/or IACUC approval (if applicable) must be submitted in writing to the AACR's Scientific Review and Grants Administration Department.

## **10. APPLICATION DOCUMENTS.**

*Formatting Instructions.* Applicants must adhere to the following instructions in completing the templates. Failure to observe type size specifications and/or page limits may result in the return of the application without review.

- Type size. Must use 12-point Times New Roman for the text, and no smaller than 9-point type for figures, legends, and tables.
- Single-spaced text. Single-spacing is acceptable, and space between paragraphs is recommended.
- Margins. The page margins must be no less than 0.75 inches on each side.
- Page numbering. The Proposal Narrative must be numbered consecutively; do not use section designations such as "3A" or "3B."
- Tips and techniques for inserting images in documents.
  - Reduce the file size of documents with images by "inserting" the image (as opposed to "cutting" and "pasting"). Save graphical images as JPG or GIF files. Insert the image into the document by selecting "Insert – Picture – From File" from the MS Word menu.
  - Insert only GIF or JPG graphic files as images in your Word document. Other graphical file formats are either very large or difficult to manipulate in the document.
  - Do not insert Quick Time or TIFF objects into your document.

- Anchor the images you embed in your document.
- Once you have anchored the inserted image, you can format text to wrap around the image.
- Do not edit your images in Word. Use a graphics program.
- Do not embed your images in tables, text boxes, and other form elements.
- Do not add annotations over the images in Word. Add annotations to the image in a graphics program.

**When a template is provided, the template MUST be used. Prepare and upload the following documents into your application in portable document format (PDF):**

**A. Applicant Information and Career Development Plan.** *Applicants are required to use the template available from the proposalCENTRAL website. (Refer above to Section I of the Application Document Requirements in the Program Guidelines for content details and Section 2 of the Application Instructions for downloading template details.)* Limited to four pages. The information must be presented in this order:

1. Applicant's Background
2. Career Goals and Objectives
3. Career Development Plan (separated into Year 1 and Year 2 of the mentored phase)
4. Training in the Responsible Conduct of Research
5. Applicant Statement

**B. Research Project Proposal.** *Applicants are required to use the template available from the proposalCENTRAL website. (Refer above to Section 2 of the Application Instructions for downloading template details.)* The information must be presented in this order:

1. **Contents Page.** Complete the Table of Contents by indicating the appropriate page numbers for each section. The Table of Contents page should not exceed one page.
2. **Lay Abstract.** This abstract, limited to 4,000 characters (including spaces), must provide a clear, concise and comprehensive overview of the proposed work. The lay abstract should be different from the scientific abstract described on page 14, Section 7 in the Application Instructions. Please make sure to prepare the lay abstract in language suitable for a non-scientific audience of pancreatic cancer survivors. Do not use abbreviations. Using three separate sections, briefly describe the: i) mentored phase research; ii) independent phase research; and iii) career development plan. Each of your research sections should include the background, purpose, objectives, and study design of the project; how it builds on existing research and will contribute to the field of pancreatic cancer research; and how the results will help pancreatic cancer patients in the future. If the project is new and innovative, discuss how.
3. **Proposal Narrative.** *(Refer above to Section II of the Application Document Requirements in the Program Guidelines for content details and Section 2 of the Application Instructions for downloading template details.)* Limited to 10 pages, including figures and tables. The Contents Page, Lay Abstract, Facilities, and References sections do not count against this page limit. The information should be presented in this order and should include these subheadings:
  - Background and Significance to Pancreatic Cancer Research



- Preliminary Studies and Data
  - Research Description and Specific Aims (for both the mentored phase and the independent phase)
  - Experimental Design and Methods (for both the mentored phase and the independent phase)
- \*Note that AACR strongly encourages the authentication of cell lines intended for use in the proposed research project.** If use of cell lines is proposed, it is encouraged that information related to cell line authentication is included in the Research Design and Methods section of the proposal. For a list of cell line authentication services, please visit:

[http://www.aacrjournals.org/site/AuthServCtr/cell\\_line\\_auth.xhtml](http://www.aacrjournals.org/site/AuthServCtr/cell_line_auth.xhtml)

4. **Facilities.** Limited to two pages. Please provide a description of the research facilities, resources, and equipment that are available to the applicant for the mentored phase and that will allow successful implementation of the proposed research program and career development plan.
5. **References.** Limited to three pages. AACR reference style follows that of the [Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals](#). Note that the *Uniform Requirements* specify that for articles with more than six authors, the names of the first six authors must be listed, followed by "et al." For articles with six or fewer authors, all authors should be listed.

**Reference examples:**

**Journal article**

Warrell RP Jr, Frankel SR, Miller WH Jr, Scheinberg DA, Itri LM, Hotelman WN, et al. Differentiation therapy of acute promyelocytic 584 leukemia with tretinoin (all-trans-retinoic acid). *N Engl J Med* 1991;324:1385–93.

**Book chapter**

Yuspa SH, Hennings H, Roop D, Strickland J, Greenhalgh DA. Genes and mechanisms involved in malignant conversion. In: Harris CC, Liotta LA, editors. *Genetic mechanisms in carcinogenesis and tumor progression*. New York: Wiley-Liss; 1990. p.115–26.

**Article in press**

Articles in press may be listed among the references provided a journal name and tentative year of publication can be verified.

- C. **Secured Other Support.** *Applicants are required to use the template available from the proposalCENTRAL website. (Refer above to Section 2 of the Application Instructions for downloading template details.)* In the table provided, list all **existing** support (institutional, federal, etc.) that has been **secured** and will be used in whole or in part by the applicant during the term of this grant (07/01/2016 – 06/30/2021). List all support for the applicant, including those grants for which the applicant is not the Principal Investigator. This may include support for different projects. For each grant or funding source, please provide:

- Name of Principal Investigator

- Name of Grant/Funding Source
- Title of Project
- Funding Agency
- Grant Term
- Amount of Funding
- Percent Effort of Applicant
- List of Specific Aims as Stated in Grant Proposal (summaries will NOT be accepted)

**D. Pending Other Support.** Applicants are required to use the template available from the *proposalCENTRAL* website. (Refer above to Section 2 of the Application Instructions for downloading template details.) In the table provided, list all **pending** support (institutional, federal, etc.) that will, **If secured**, be used in whole or in part by the applicant during the term of this grant (07/01/2016 – 06/30/2021). List all pending support for the applicant, including those grants for which the applicant is not the Principal Investigator. This may include support for different projects. For each pending grant or funding source, please provide:

- Name of Principal Investigator
- Name of Grant/Funding Source
- Title of Project
- Funding Agency
- Grant Term
- Amount of Funding
- Percent Effort of Applicant
- List of Specific Aims as Stated in Grant Proposal (summaries will NOT be accepted)

**NOTE:** If at any time prior to selection and notification an applicant is awarded any funding that may overlap with the 2016 Pancreatic Cancer Action Network-AACR Pathway to Leadership Grant, the applicant must notify AACR immediately

**E. Budget Justification.** Applicants are required to use the template available from the *proposalCENTRAL* website. (Refer above to Section 2 of the Application Instructions for downloading template details.) Limited to three pages. Under the separate headings entitled mentored phase and independent phase, justify all personnel and non-personnel support that is being requested. Eligible expenses for both the mentored phase and independent phase include the salary and benefits of the grant recipient, technical/statistical personnel, research/laboratory supplies, equipment, and publication charges for manuscripts that pertain directly to the funded project. Percent effort of the applicant must be specified for the mentored and independent phases. Applicants must also indicate their salary and, if any part of their salary is requested, the percentage of salary requested may not exceed the percent effort the applicant will dedicate to the project. In addition, identify by name and title any additional personnel, and their specific responsibilities, during each year of the proposed project; research/laboratory supplies, equipment, publication charges for manuscripts that pertain directly to the funded project, and other research expenses. Note if individual is a postdoctoral or clinical research fellow. For positions that are not yet filled, indicate “**TBD**” in the name field. Detailed justification is required for budget request for equipment that exceeds 10% of the total budget.

Career development and training expenses, including tuition and fees, travel to research meetings or training, and professional membership dues are allowable expenses **only** for the mentored phase.

Salary and benefit expenses for individuals other than those noted above, such as postdoctoral or clinical research fellows, graduate students and/or research assistants, are allowable expenses **only** for the independent phase.

**F. Project Milestones.** *Complete Column A of the Milestones Template available from the proposalCENTRAL website. (Refer above to Section 2 of the Application Instructions for downloading template details.)* The Milestones Template is meant to list the various steps necessary to complete your research goals and the estimated time it will take to complete each step. Please list your name and the specific aims for the proposed project at the top of the template. Underneath each time period, identify the steps that will be needed to accomplish the aim(s) in that time period. For each step, note the corresponding aim in parentheses. Rows may be added/deleted to the template as needed. For the purposes of submitting the template with your application, only the information requested above inputted into Column A is needed. Reporting progress towards milestones further utilizing this template will be incorporated into the biannual reporting requirements for the project if funded. (To view an accurately completed Milestones Template please visit <ftp://ftp.aacr.org>, username: programs, password: aacr123.)

**G. Applicant's Curriculum Vitae (CV).** The CV must be in English and include a complete list of publications.

**Note:** The NIH Biographical Sketch Format Page will not be accepted from the applicant.

**H. Statement of Institutional Support.** *(Refer above to Section IV of the Application Document Requirements in the Program Guidelines for content details.)* This statement is from the head or Dean of the institution supporting the mentored phase research.

**I. Mentor's Biographical Sketch(es).** The biographical sketch must be in English. The NIH Biographical Sketch Forms [PHS 398/2590 (Rev. 06/09)] and [OMB No. 0925-0001/0002 (Rev. 08/12)] are both acceptable. However, each mentor must adhere to the page limits and requirements specific to the biographical sketch format used (**four** pages for the Rev. 06/09 format; **five** pages for the Rev. 08/12 format).

**J. Supporting Documentation.** An example of acceptable supporting documentation is a letter of commitment from a collaborating clinician, drug manufacturer, or any collaborator providing data or materials necessary for the proposed research. Supporting Documentation should state a commitment to provide stated data/materials or confirm applicant's access to said data/materials. Supporting Documentation should be included only to provide information on the ability to provide for a research need, and should not comment on the applicant, or research environment. An additional letter of reference for the applicant is **not** considered supporting documentation. Supporting documentation must be presented on the appropriate institutional or company letterhead.

There is no limit to the number of supporting documents that may be provided; however, documents that do not satisfactorily meet the description of supporting documentation provided above, or uploads such as tables, charts, articles, and other inappropriate additional materials will be removed.

**K. Terms and Conditions Document.** In order to ensure that the applicant is informed of the terms

and conditions of the grant should he/she be selected as a recipient, a copy of the Terms and Conditions must be downloaded from the proposalCENTRAL site. Applicants must remove the signature page (page 15) of the Terms and Conditions document and sign and date it, indicating that they have reviewed the document. The terms and conditions of this grant may be modified or amended by AACR prior to execution of the Grant Agreement. In addition, the grant recipient's institution may request revisions to the following sections of the Grant Agreement prior to execution: VII.Reporting Requirements.F.; XI.Study Data.B.; XII.Indemnification; XIII.Term and Termination.F.; and XV.Miscellaneous.A. Only in special circumstances will revisions be considered to sections other than those noted above.

*A scanned copy of the signed page must be uploaded to your online Letter of Intent in the section for attaching files.*

- L. Signed Signature Page.** In order to ensure that the applicant, mentor, and institution have approved the application, applicants must print the signature pages, as described in Section 13 below, and obtain all required signatures. The **signed signature page** (with original signatures from the applicant, mentor, and institution's signing official) must then be *scanned and uploaded* into the online application in the Application Documents section. These signatures transmitted by electronic means shall have the same force and effect as original signatures.

**Uploading the attachments into your application.** Once you have converted your attachments to PDF files, the next step is to upload the files to your online application.

- Make certain that the converted PDF files are closed on your computer.
- Open your application and go to the section for attaching files.
- Enter your own description of the file in the "Describe Attachment" field.
- Select the appropriate type of attachment from the drop-down list. *NOTE: After selecting attachment type, the screen will show the file types (e.g., PDF, .doc) that are allowed for that type of attachment. Only PDF attachments are permitted for this application submission.*
- Click on the "Browse" button to select the file from your computer.
  - ◆ A "choose file" dialog box opens for you to search for the template file on your computer's hard disk or local area network.
  - ◆ Select the file and click "Open."
  - ◆ The file location and name will display in the window adjacent to the "Browse" button.
- Click on the "Upload Attachment" button. You will get a confirmation message on your screen that the file was uploaded successfully. You will also see that your file is now listed in the "Uploaded Attachment" section of the screen. Two links are available in each row of an uploaded attachment: DEL and SHOW. "DEL" allows you to delete the file, if necessary, and "SHOW" opens the uploaded file. **It is strongly recommended that you open and review your uploaded file.**

In the section for attachments, all the required attachments are listed in the middle of the screen, just below where you upload your files. This list of required attachments helps you track completion and uploading of your required attachments. Once you upload a required attachment, that attachment type will be removed from the required list and will be displayed in the "Current list of uploaded attachments."

If you wish to modify the attached file, make the revisions to your **original** file on your computer (off-line), convert the file to PDF, and use the same process above to attach the newly revised file. **Delete any previously submitted versions of the file before submitting your application.**

## SUBMITTING COMPLETE APPLICATION

- 11. PI DATA SHEET.** This is an automatically populated data sheet based on the applicant's proposalCENTRAL profile. Information for gender, race, and ethnicity must be provided to AACR. If fields are not populated, go to Section 4, "Applicant", and select the "Edit Professional Profile" tab in the center of the screen. The applicant must then go to the column on the left side of the screen, select "4) Personal Data for Application," and enter his or her gender, race, and ethnicity. The Scientific Review Committee does not receive this information.
- 12. VALIDATE.** Validate the application on proposalCENTRAL. This is an essential step. An application that has not been validated cannot be submitted. "Validate" checks for required data and attachments. You will not be able to submit if all the required data and attachments have not been provided.
- 13. SIGNATURE PAGE(S).** After completing sections 1, 4, 5, and 7-9 of the online application (these sections also correspond to the sections of the Application Instructions), you may print the signature pages. Use the "Print Signature Pages" button to print the signature pages for signature.

**Note:** Data that you entered in the sections 1, 4, 5, and 7-9 of the online application are automatically included in the signature pages. If information is missing in the signature pages, it could be because you have not entered the information in one of the online application sections OR the information is not required for this grant program. If the institution's Employer Identification Number (EIN) is not completed on the signature page, please request your institution to provide that information in their proposalCENTRAL profile.

While the print option "Print Signature Pages" prints the Signature Page, Application Contacts, Scientific Abstract, and Budget; the AACR **strongly encourages** applicants to also utilize the "Print Signature Pages and Attached PDF Files" option. This option can be used if your institution wishes to review the full application but also should be utilized by the applicant to ensure that the Scientific Abstract does not cut-off in this view and that your attachments loaded properly. The following application materials will **not** be present when utilizing this option: Pending Other Support, Letter(s) of Reference, Terms and Conditions Signature Page, and the Signature page containing the required signatures. Absence of these materials should **not** be considered an error. If your institution requires all components of the application to review, the above documents need to be printed individually by the applicant and added; however, as the Letter(s) of Reference are uploaded directly from the mentor and endorser (if necessary), the applicant will be unable to access these letters.

Excessive spacing in your Scientific Abstract (e.g., line breaks between paragraphs) can cause the abstract to not fully appear in the Signature Page view, even if under the 3,000 character limit. You may want to further edit your Scientific Abstract prior to submission if it does not fully appear. In addition, errors may occur when the uploaded PDF files are assembled by the system. Please check to ensure that all pages of every document included appear in the "Print Signature Pages and Attached PDF Files" option. If you are having any issues with this print option, please contact proposalCENTRAL customer support at 703-964-5840, or toll free at 1-800-875-2562, or by e-mail to [pcsupport@altum.com](mailto:pcsupport@altum.com).

***Obtain required signatures and upload the signed signature page into the application*** in the Application Documents section. These signatures transmitted by electronic means shall have the same force and effect as original signatures. Do not upload the Application Contacts, Scientific Abstract, and Budget pages with the Signature Page.

If you are not a current AACR Associate Member, you must apply for membership using the Official Application for Membership [online](#) or [downloaded as a PDF](#). The application must be submitted to the AACR office with the required documents before Tuesday, October 27, 2015, the grant application deadline. Should you be deemed ineligible for AACR Associate Membership, which is required to apply for this grant, your grant application will be withdrawn from consideration.

**14. SUBMIT.** After successfully passing the validate check, click the “**Submit**” link. An e-mail will be sent to you confirming your submission.

Once your application is submitted you may view it by accessing the ‘Submitted’ link under the Manage Proposals tab. The status column will show “Submitted” and the date submitted. You may need to refresh your browser screen after submitting the application to see the updated status.

#### **CHANGES TO YOUR APPLICATION**

**Withdrawal of Application.** Please advise AACR promptly, in writing, should you decide to withdraw your application for any reason. Your email (or letter) should include your name, the grant opportunity to which you applied, the project title, and the reason for withdrawal.

**Change of Address.** Notify AACR of any changes of address, e-mail, or phone number, following the submission of an application. Include your name and the application number. The e-mail address provided with your application will be utilized for all official communication about your submission including the recipient selection results, this e-mail address must be kept up to date.

**Change of Institution or Position.** If you change your institution or professional position, contact AACR to determine whether your application is still eligible for review.

#### **INQUIRIES**

Inquiries or technical issues regarding proposalCENTRAL and the online application process should be directed to customer support at: 703-964-5840, or toll free at 1-800-875-2562, or by e-mail to [pcsupport@altum.com](mailto:pcsupport@altum.com).

Inquiries about the program guidelines, eligibility requirements, and application materials can be directed to Ms. Ashley S. Jones at AACR at 215-446-7280, or by e-mail at [grants@aacr.org](mailto:grants@aacr.org).

## MORE ABOUT THE PARTNERS



The Pancreatic Cancer Action Network is the national organization creating hope in a comprehensive way through research, patient support, community outreach and advocacy for a cure. The organization is leading the way to increase survival for people diagnosed with this devastating disease through a bold initiative — The Vision of Progress: Double Pancreatic Cancer Survival by 2020. Together, we can Wage Hope in the fight against pancreatic cancer by intensifying our efforts to heighten awareness, raise funds for comprehensive private research, and advocate for dedicated federal research to advance early diagnostics and better treatments and increase chances of survival.



Founded in 1907, the American Association for Cancer Research (AACR) is the world's oldest and largest professional organization dedicated to advancing cancer research and its mission to prevent and cure cancer. AACR membership includes more than 35,000 laboratory, translational, and clinical researchers; population scientists; other health care professionals; and cancer advocates residing in 101 countries. The AACR marshals the full spectrum of expertise of the cancer community to accelerate progress in the prevention, biology, diagnosis, and treatment of cancer by annually convening more than 25 conferences and educational workshops, the largest of which is the AACR Annual Meeting with over 18,500 attendees. In addition, the AACR publishes eight prestigious, peer-reviewed scientific journals and a magazine for cancer survivors, patients, and their caregivers. The AACR funds meritorious research directly as well as in cooperation with numerous cancer organizations. As the Scientific Partner of Stand Up To Cancer, the AACR provides expert peer review, grants administration, and scientific oversight of team science and individual investigator grants in cancer research that have the potential for near-term patient benefit. The AACR actively communicates with legislators and other policymakers about the value of cancer research and related biomedical science in saving lives from cancer. For more information about the AACR, visit [www.AACR.org](http://www.AACR.org).