



## **Pancreatic Cancer Action Network-AACR Innovative Grants**

### **2011 Program Guidelines and Letter of Intent Instructions**

**American Association for Cancer Research**

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## **PROGRAM GUIDELINES**

### **PROGRAM SUMMARY**

The Pancreatic Cancer Action Network-AACR Innovative Grants represent a joint effort to promote and support **innovative** pancreatic cancer research. They aim to spur creative and cutting edge ideas and approaches in pancreatic cancer research, including those successful in other areas of cancer that have justifiable promise for pancreatic cancer. The research proposed for funding may be basic, translational, clinical or epidemiological in nature and must have direct applicability and relevance to pancreatic cancer.

These grants are available to independent junior and senior investigators. Submissions will be accepted from pancreatic cancer researchers as well as researchers with experience in other areas of cancer research.

The Grants provide \$200,000 over two years (\$100,000 per year) for direct research expenses, which may include salary and benefits of postdoctoral or clinical research fellows, and/or research assistants; research/laboratory supplies; and equipment.

It is anticipated that multiple Innovative Grants will be funded for 2011.

### **LETTER OF INTENT DEADLINE**

October 4, 2010 at 12 noon, Eastern Time

### **APPLICANTS NOTIFIED OF DECISION STATUS OF LETTER OF INTENT**

November 1, 2010

### **APPLICATION DEADLINE** *(for those invited to apply based on the Letter of Intent)*

November 29, 2010 at 12 noon, Eastern Time

### **DECISION DATE**

March 2011

### **RECOGNITION EVENT FOR GRANT RECIPIENTS AT AACR 102nd ANNUAL MEETING 2011**

April 5, 2011 - Grant recipients must attend the recognition event and formally accept the grant. Support for travel and complimentary registration to attend the Annual Meeting will be provided separate from the grant.

### **START OF GRANT TERM**

July 1, 2011

### **APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

Applicants must have a medical and/or doctoral degree (including Ph.D., M.D., D.O., D.C., N.D., D.D.S., D.V.M., Sc.D., D.N.S., Pharm.D., 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.

Submissions will be accepted from independent investigators at all levels who are affiliated with an academic, medical or research institution **within the United States**. There are no citizenship requirements.

Employees or subcontractors of a government entity or for-profit private industry are not eligible. Exceptions include applicants holding full-time positions at a veterans' hospital or national laboratory (e.g., Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory) in the United States. Employees or subcontractors of a government entity or for-profit private industry may serve as Collaborators, but no grant funds may be directed towards these individuals or their respective institutions. Contact AACR before submitting a Letter of Intent to determine your eligibility.

Both AACR members and nonmembers are eligible to apply. However, nonmembers must submit a satisfactory application for AACR active membership by October 6, 2010. The application will be applied to 2010 membership dues. An application may be downloaded from the AACR website at [www.aacr.org](http://www.aacr.org).

Investigators may apply for only one Pancreatic Cancer Action Network-AACR grant per year; that is, investigators may not apply for both a Pancreatic Cancer Action Network-AACR Innovative Grant and a Pancreatic Cancer Action Network-AACR Career Development Award. However, individuals may concurrently apply for other AACR grants; should an applicant apply for multiple AACR grants, he/she is expected to accept the first grant they are awarded.

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

Postdoctoral or clinical research fellows or the equivalent who are working under the auspices of a scientific mentor are not eligible to apply. Fellows are encouraged to apply for the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network-AACR Fellowship or the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network-AACR Pathway to Leadership Grant.

Members of the Scientific Review Committee are not eligible for these grants.

Applicants with a question about their eligibility are encouraged to contact AACR at [grants@aacr.org](mailto:grants@aacr.org) **before** submitting a Letter of Intent.

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

Scientific investigators or health professionals who are funded by the tobacco industry for any research project may not apply and are not eligible for any AACR grant. Grantees who accept funding from the tobacco industry for any research project during the term of an AACR grant must inform AACR of such funding, whereupon the AACR grant will immediately be terminated. 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.

Tobacco industry funding is defined for purposes of AACR grant applicants and recipients 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 don't relate to any particular research projects.

### **RESEARCH PROJECT CRITERIA**

Proposals will be accepted for new ideas and innovative approaches that have direct application and relevance to pancreatic cancer. New ideas and innovative approaches may include, but are not limited to, those that utilize novel theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions. Such concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions may be novel to one field of research or novel in a broad sense, and/or may reflect a refinement, improvement, or new application.

Proposals for innovative projects that will develop preliminary data necessary to prepare and submit a competitive research grant application to a major funding agency will be accepted.

Projects may be in any discipline of basic, clinical, translational 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 [<http://www.cancerportfolio.org/cso.jsp>]).

Special emphasis will be placed on research that is not duplicative of other efforts.

### **LETTERS OF INTENT DESCRIPTION**

A Letter of Intent is an application tool designed to identify the projects with the greatest scientific potential and alignment with the Program Guidelines without requiring applicants to first submit a full application. A Letter of Intent is not written as *correspondence* to the Scientific Review Committee, but instead follows a prescribed template which gathers information summarizing the proposed research project. Letters of Intent may also be called "pre-applications," "concept paper applications," or "letters of inquiry," by other funding organizations.

The Letter of Intent for an Innovative Grant is limited to 3 pages, and must describe the proposed pancreatic research project, including the Specific Aims; Rationale, Methodology and Approach; Statement of Innovation (describing how the proposed study employs a new idea or innovative

approach to pancreatic cancer research); and Statement of Significance and Relevance to Pancreatic Cancer. Relevant references must be attached and are limited to 1 page.

Letters of Intent must be accompanied by:

- Scientific abstract, limited to 3,000 characters, providing a clear, concise and comprehensive overview of the proposed pancreatic cancer research project
- Applicant's biographical sketch.

A limited number of applicants whose Letters of Intent are deemed most meritorious, typically 25% of the total submitted, will be invited by the Scientific Review Committee to submit full research proposals and compete for the available grants.

### **EVALUATION OF LETTERS OF INTENT**

Letters of Intent are reviewed by a Scientific Review Committee comprised of senior scientists respected for their own accomplishments in pancreatic cancer research and as leaders in the field. The President of AACR will annually appoint the members of the Scientific Review Committee.

The Committee will consider the following criteria when reviewing Letters of Intent and determining funding decisions:

- **Investigator.** Is the applicant well suited to the project? Does the applicant have an ongoing record of accomplishment that has advanced their field?
- **Innovation.** Does the proposal utilize novel theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions? Are the concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions novel to one field of research or novel in a broad sense? Is a refinement or improvement proposed of existing theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions?
- **Significance.** Does the project address an important issue, problem or critical barrier to progress in the field of pancreatic cancer research? If the aims of the project are achieved, how will scientific knowledge, technical capability, and/or clinical practice be improved? How will successful completion of the aims change the concepts, methods, technologies, treatments, services, or preventative interventions that drive pancreatic cancer research?
- **Approach.** Are the overall strategy, methodology, and analyses well-reasoned and appropriate to accomplish the specific aims of the project within the grant term? Is the project feasible given the time frame?
- **Originality.** Is this research project unique and non-duplicative of other efforts currently in the field?

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

## LETTER OF INTENT INSTRUCTIONS

### LETTER OF INTENT PROCEDURES

AACR requires applicants to submit both an online and a paper Letter of Intent.

#### Online

Letters of Intent must be submitted by 12:00 noon (United States Eastern Time) on October 4, 2010, using the proposalCENTRAL website at <https://proposalcentral.altum.com>.

#### Paper copy

One copy with all required documents must be postmarked and sent no later than October 5, 2010, to:

Pancreatic Cancer Action Network-AACR Innovative Grants  
Attn: Ms. Julia Laurence  
American Association for Cancer Research  
17th Floor, 615 Chestnut Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19106-4404

The materials to be submitted are:

- Scientific Abstract (Printed from proposalCENTRAL)
- Letter of Intent (template provided)
- Applicant's Biographical Sketch
- Terms and Conditions signature page with the **original** signature of the applicant

### **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 (second tab from the left) before starting the Letter of Intent submission process.

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 a Letter of Intent, select the "Grant Opportunities" tab (gray tab furthest to the right). A list of grant mechanisms will be displayed. Find the AACR grant program for which you wish to apply and click the "Apply Now" link (second to last column) to create your Letter of Intent.

Complete all fields in the Letter of Intent and the template that is 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 Letter of Intent, contact proposalCENTRAL Customer Support immediately:

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

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

## LETTER OF INTENT FORMAT

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

- 1. TITLE PAGE.** Enter the title of the research project directly into 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 TEMPLATE & INSTRUCTIONS.** The Program Guidelines and Letter of Intent Instructions document, the Terms and Conditions document, and Letter of Intent template can be downloaded from this page.

You must download the Terms and Conditions document. The final page of the Terms and Conditions document must be detached, signed and dated. A scanned copy of the signed final page must be uploaded to your online Letter of Intent in the section for attaching files and the original must be returned to AACR with the paper copy of the Letter of Intent.

To download and complete the Letter of Intent Template:

- Click the "Download" link to save the Letter of Intent Template to your computer.
- Use your word processing software (e.g., MS Word, WordPerfect) to complete the template on your computer and then convert the template to PDF format. You do not need to be connected to the internet or proposalCENTRAL while working on the template.
- Upload the completed template file to your online Letter of Intent.

See below in Section 7 for instructions on how to complete and upload the template. This Letter of Intent also requires an additional attachment for which a template is not provided (applicant's biographical sketch).

- 3. ENABLE OTHER USERS TO ACCESS THIS PROPOSAL.** Optional.
- 4. APPLICANT.** Enter contact information for the applicant directly into proposalCENTRAL system.
- 5. INSTITUTION & CONTACTS.** Enter information regarding the lead institution and signing official directly into proposalCENTRAL system.
- 6. SCIENTIFIC ABSTRACT.** Enter the abstract directly into proposalCENTRAL system. The abstract should be limited to 3,000 characters (including spaces) and must provide a clear, concise and comprehensive overview of the proposed work, including the background; how the project qualifies as being innovative; objective or hypothesis and its supporting rationale; specific aims of the study; study design; and relevance of the proposed work to pancreatic cancer.

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

## 7. LETTER OF INTENT DOCUMENTS.

*Formatting Instructions.* Applicants must adhere to the following instructions in completing the sections in this template. Failure to observe type size specifications and/or page limits may result in the return of the Letter of Intent 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 .75 inches on each side.
- Page numbering. The Letter of Intent 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 a JPG or GIF file. 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 that 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 images itself in a graphics program.

**Using the template provided, prepare and upload the following documents into your application in portable document format (PDF):**

- A. Letter of Intent.** *Complete on the template available from the proposalCENTRAL website. (Refer above on page 8, Section 2 for details.) The information must be presented in this order:*
- I. Letter of Intent Narrative.** Limited to 3 pages. Must describe the proposed pancreatic cancer research project including the Specific Aims; Rationale, Methodology and Approach; Statement of Innovation (describing how the proposed study employs a new idea or innovative approach to pancreatic cancer research); and Significance and Statement of Relevance to Pancreatic Cancer.
  - II. References.** Limited to 1 page. References must be listed as FULL CITATIONS. Each citation must include names of all authors, publication title, book or journal title, volume number, page numbers, and year of publication.
- B. Applicant's Biographical Sketch.** The biographical sketch must be in English. The NIH Biographical Sketch Form and the NCI Short Form are both acceptable formats.
- C. 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 final page of the Terms and Conditions document and sign and date it, indicating that they have

reviewed the document. A scanned copy of the signed final page must be uploaded to your online Letter of Intent in the section for attaching files and the original must be returned to AACR with the paper copy of the Letter of Intent. Only original signatures will be accepted.

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

- Make certain that the converted PDF files are closed on your computer.
- Open your Letter of Intent 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. **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 Letter of Intent.**

## SUBMITTING COMPLETE LETTER OF INTENT

**8. 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. This information is for demographic purposes only. The Scientific Review Committee does not receive this information.

**9. VALIDATE.** Validate the Letter of Intent on proposalCENTRAL. This is an essential step. A Letter of Intent that has not been validated cannot be submitted. ‘Validate’ checks for required data and

required attachments. You will not be able to submit if all the required data and attachments have not been provided.

**PRINT COMPLETE LETTER OF INTENT.** After successfully passing the validate check you are ready to print the Scientific Abstract and the attached PDF files.

Attachments can be printed in one of the following ways: Print the files that you attached directly from your computer; or, in your online Letter of Intent, click on the "Show" link for each attached file. The file will open in a separate window. Use browser print option to print the file. Use your browser print option to print the Scientific Abstract for inclusion in the hard-copy submission.

Assemble the Scientific Abstract and the printed attachments in the order listed above on page 7.

If you are not a current AACR Member, you must apply for membership online at [www.aacr.org](http://www.aacr.org) or include a completed membership application and curriculum vitae with the hard copy of your Letter of Intent.

**10. SUBMIT.** After successfully passing the validate check and printing your documents, click the 'Submit' link. An e-mail will be sent to you confirming your submission.

Once your complete Letter of Intent 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 Letter of Intent to see the updated status.

## CHANGES TO YOUR LETTER OF INTENT

**Withdrawal of Letter of Intent.** Please advise AACR promptly, in writing, should you decide to withdraw your Letter of Intent for any reason. Your letter (or e-mail) should include your name, the title of the proposal, and the reason for withdrawal.

**Change of Address.** Notify AACR in writing of any changes of address, e-mail or phone number, following the submission of a Letter of Intent. Include your name and the Letter of Intent submission number.

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

## INQUIRIES

Inquiries or technical issues regarding proposalCENTRAL and the online Letter of Intent process should be directed to customer support at:

Phone: 1 (800) 875-2562 (toll-free) or (703) 964-5840 E-mail: [pcsupport@altum.com](mailto:pcsupport@altum.com)

Inquiries about the program guidelines, eligibility requirements, and Letter of Intent materials can be directed to Ms. Julia Laurence at AACR:

Phone: (267) 646-0655

E-mail: [grants@aacr.org](mailto:grants@aacr.org)