



**PANCREATIC CANCER  
ACTION NETWORK®**



American Association  
for Cancer Research

**FINDING CURES TOGETHER™**

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

### **2015 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 have started their postdoctoral or clinical research fellowship on or after July 2, 2010; i.e., the grant recipient must be in the first 5 years of their fellowship at the start of the grant term, and not already have a full-time tenure track assistant professor position (or equivalent).

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

It is anticipated that one Pathway to Leadership Grant will be funded.

*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 grantee's salary and benefits, expenses related to the research project, which include technical/statistical personnel, research/laboratory supplies and 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 for up to two years during their postdoctoral or clinical research fellowship.

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, research/laboratory supplies, equipment and publication charges for manuscripts that pertain directly to the funded project. 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.

#### **APPLICATION DEADLINE**

October 29, 2014 at **noon**, Eastern Time

#### **DECISION DATE**

March 2015

#### **ANNUAL GRANTS RECEPTION AND DINNER AT AACR ANNUAL MEETING 2015**

April 21, 2015 - 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, 2015

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

August 27-30, 2015 in San Diego, CA and 2016 (date and location to be determined) - Grant recipients will be required to attend if invited. The weekend includes scientific sessions in which grantees report on their funded projects and receive input from senior advisors, and engage with the organization's Board of Directors, donors and the broader pancreatic cancer community. Support for travel to attend the grantee weekend 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, 2015, applicants must:

- Be in the first five years of a postdoctoral or clinical research fellowship (i.e., must have started fellowship no earlier than July 2, 2010 and no later than July 1, 2015)
- 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
- Be affiliated with an academic, medical or research institution **within the United States** and work **under the auspices of a primary mentor** who is affiliated with the same institution. (There are no citizenship requirements; however, an applicant who is not a U.S. citizen or permanent resident, by submitting an application for this grant, assures that his/her visa status will provide sufficient time to complete the project and grant term within the United States.)

When calculating the experience of an applicant with two doctoral degrees, AACR includes all days of mentored cancer research experience from the date of the applicant's most recently obtained doctoral degree or first date the mentored position began, whichever is first. All days of cancer-related mentored experience will be combined to determine an applicant's eligibility, including research conducted in separate laboratories and research that is not consecutive.

For applicants possessing an MD, clinical training time with **no** research involvement (e.g., residency training) is not included against the eligibility limit. Parental leave or other well justified leave from mentored research training for pressing personal or family situations of generally less than 12 months duration is also not included against the eligibility limit for all applicants.

Applicants whose experience exceeds the maximum but who believe they are eligible (e.g., residency training, some of their mentored research experience was in a field other than cancer research or there was a break in their career as described above) 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 October 29, 2014. The application will be applied to 2014 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 grantees may apply if they complied with all progress and financial report requirements.

Postdoctoral or clinical research fellows may submit only **one** application for a Pancreatic Cancer Action Network–AACR Pathway to Leadership Grant; however, they may be included as part of a project team, though not as a co-PI, for a Pancreatic Cancer Action Network–AACR Research Acceleration Network Grant. Individuals may apply for the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network - NCI, Frederick National Laboratory for Cancer Research KRAS Fellowship. Applicants interested in applying for both the Pathway to Leadership Grant and the KRAS Fellowship should first contact AACR at [grants@aacr.org](mailto:grants@aacr.org).

Applicants may also concurrently apply for other AACR grants. Should an applicant apply for multiple AACR grants, he/she is expected to accept the first grant 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 for a Pancreatic Cancer Action Network–AACR Pathway to Leadership Grant. These researchers are invited to consider applying for a Pancreatic Cancer Action Network-AACR Career Development Award and/or Pancreatic Cancer Action Network-AACR Research Acceleration Network Grant.

**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 discuss your eligibility.

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

#### **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

## RESEARCH PROJECT CRITERIA

Research projects must have direct applicability and relevance to pancreatic cancer. They 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; or Cancer Control, Survivorship, and Outcomes Research

[\[https://www.icrpartnership.org/CSO.cfm\]](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. Provide specific details on oversight, proposed frequency and form(s) of communication. For mentor(s) not at the applicant's sponsoring institution/organization, further describe how their input will be communicated to the primary mentor and how the applicant will incorporate/revise research and career development accordingly.
- d. **Training in the Responsible Conduct of Research.** Document prior instruction in, or propose plans to receive instruction in, the responsible conduct of research in terms of subject matter and duration. Applications not providing documentation of prior instruction in the responsible conduct of research must include a description of a program to receive formal or informal instruction in scientific integrity or the responsible conduct of research. Although AACR does not establish specific curricula or formal requirements, all applicants are encouraged to consider instruction in the following areas: conflict of interest, responsible authorship, policies for handling misconduct, policies regarding the use of human and animal subjects, and data management. Applications that do not demonstrate sufficient prior instruction or plans for future



training in the responsible conduct of research will be considered incomplete and may be returned to the applicant without review.

- e. **Applicant Statement.** If the primary mentor has current funding for this project or the applicant has a fellowship for a similar project, the applicant must justify the need for both the mentored phase and the independent scientist phase of the grant. In addition, the applicant must provide a convincing case that the proposed period of support (one to two years as a mentored researcher with the remaining years of the grant term as an independent scientist) will substantially enhance his/her career and allow the pursuit of a novel or promising approach to a particular issue in pancreatic cancer research.

II. **Research Project Proposal.** The Research Project Proposal includes several components, including a detailed proposal narrative. The **Proposal Narrative** is separated into four sections: a) Background and Significance to Pancreatic Cancer Research; b) Preliminary Studies; c) Research Description and Specific Aims; and d) Experimental Design and Methods. The applicant should consult with the mentor(s) regarding the development of these sections. When writing the proposal narrative, the following elements should be addressed in the respective section:

- a. **Background and Significance to Pancreatic Cancer Research.** Includes a brief description of what is currently known about pancreatic cancer as related to the issue(s) addressed in the proposed project, the need for the proposed research, how this project will address important unanswered questions in the field and improve the understanding, detection, diagnosis, treatment or prevention of pancreatic cancer.
- b. **Preliminary Studies.** Describes the applicant's research track record as related to the topic or issue(s) addressed in the proposal. It should help establish the experience and competence of the applicant to successfully pursue the proposed project.
- c. **Research Description and Specific Aims.** Describes the research planned during both the mentored and independent phases of the grant, including specific research aims 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. (Please see below on page 15, Section 6 in 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 Pathway to Leadership Grant applicants independently, without regard to the topics covered in previously funded proposals or to the institutions of the previous grantees.

## APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

### APPLICATION PROCEDURES

AACR requires applicants to submit an electronic application by **noon**, Eastern Time on Wednesday, October 29, 2014, 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 online application.

Information to be Entered Directly into proposalCENTRAL	Instructions/proposalCENTRAL Section
Project Title	1
Applicant Information	4
Institution and Contacts	5
Scientific Abstract	7
Budget	8
Organizational Assurances	9

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

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

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

## 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 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. 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 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 six 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 on page 16, Section 10 in the Application Instructions for how to complete and upload the templates. This application also requires additional attachments for which a template is not provided (applicant’s curriculum vitae and 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 proposalCENTRAL system.

**5. INSTITUTION & CONTACTS.** Enter information regarding the lead 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 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 on page 10, 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 proposalCENTRAL system. The abstract is limited to 4,000 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 4,000 characters have been entered. You may erroneously enter more than the maximum allowed. 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. Under separate headings entitled mentored phase and independent phase, delineate the key personnel and non-personnel support requested. Eligible expenses for both the mentored phase and independent phase include the grantee’s salary and benefits, 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, general office supplies, institutional administrative charges (e.g., telephone, other electronic communication, IT network, etc.), pre-award charges, and any other expenses not directly related to the project are **not** allowable expenses. In addition, no grant funds may be directed to any U.S. government entity or for-profit private industry.

**A detailed budget justification explaining the allocation of the grant funds must accompany the application. See section 10.D. 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 .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 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 templates where provided, prepare and upload the following documents into your application in portable document format (PDF):**

- A. Applicant Information and Career Development Plan.** *Complete on the template available from the proposalCENTRAL website. (Refer above on page 7, Section I of the Application Document Requirements in the Program Guidelines for content details and page 14, Section 2 in the Application Instructions for downloading template details.)* Limited to 4 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.** *Complete on the template available from the proposalCENTRAL website. (Refer to page 14, Section 2 in 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 1 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 15, 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 on page 9, Section II of the Application Document Requirements in the Program Guidelines for content details and page 14, Section 2 in 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 Proposal Narrative must be presented in this order:
    - Background and Significance to Pancreatic Cancer Research
    - Preliminary Studies
    - 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)
  4. **Facilities.** Limited to 2 pages. Please provide a description of the research facilities, resources, and equipment that are available to the applicant and that will allow successful implementation of the proposed research program and career development plan.

- 5. References.** Limited to 3 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 6 authors, the names of the first 6 authors must be listed, followed by "et al." For articles with 6 or fewer authors, all authors should be listed.

**Reference examples:**

**Journal article**

Warrell RP Jr, Frankel SR, Miller WH Jr, Scheinberg DA, Itri LM, Hittelman 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.** In the table provided, list all **existing** support (institutional, federal, etc.) that has been secured and will be used by the applicant during the term of this grant (07/01/2015 – 06/30/2020). 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

- D. Pending Other Support.** In the table provided, list all support that has been applied for (institutional, federal, etc.), but has not yet been secured or awarded, that will be used by the applicant during the term of this grant (07/01/2015 – 06/30/2020). List all potential support for the applicant, including those grants for which the applicant is not the Principal Investigator. This may include support for projects with different aims. For each potential 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

**NOTE:** If at any time prior to selection and notification an applicant is awarded any funding that may overlap with the 2015 Pancreatic Cancer Action Network-AACR Pathway to Leadership Grant, the applicant must notify AACR immediately.

- E. Budget Justification.** *Complete on the template available from the proposalCENTRAL website. (Refer to page 14, Section 2 in the Application Instructions for details.)* Limited to 3 pages. Under 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 grantee's salary and benefits, 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. Applicant 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. Detailed justification is required for budget request for equipment that exceeds 10% of the total budget.

For the mentored phase, grantee salary and benefits should reflect the minimum **75%** time commitment. In addition, career development and training expenses, including tuition and fees, travel to research meetings or training, and professional membership dues can be included.

For the independent 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. Identify by name and title any additional personnel, and their specific responsibilities, during each year of the proposed project. Note if individual is a postdoctoral or clinical research fellow. For positions that are not yet filled, indicate "**TBD**" in the name field.

**Note:** A mentor is required only for the initial mentored phase and not for the independent phase. Indirect support and salary for mentors, secretaries, and administrators are not allowed on this grant.

Indirect costs, general office supplies, institutional administrative charges (e.g., telephone, other electronic communication, IT network, etc.), pre-award charges, and any other expenses not directly related to the project are **not** allowable expenses. In addition, no grant funds may be directed to any U.S. government entity or for-profit private industry.

- F. Project Milestones.** *Complete Column A of the Milestones Template available from the proposalCENTRAL website. (Refer to page 14, Section 2 in the Application Instructions for 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 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 this template as 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 on page 10, 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(es) must be in English. The NIH Biographical Sketch Format Page is an acceptable format. The mentor(s) biographical sketch(es) may not exceed **four** pages. A biographical sketch is **required** for the primary mentor and any additional mentors (up to three). Biographical sketches **will not be accepted** from the well-established scientists that submit letters of reference.
- J. Supporting Documentation.** A letter of commitment from a collaborating clinician, drug manufacturer, or any collaborator providing data or materials necessary for the proposed research, may be uploaded as a Supporting Document. Letters of commitment should state a commitment to provide stated data/materials. Letters of commitment should comment only on the ability to provide for a research need, and should not comment on the applicant, or research environment. Supporting documentation must be requested directly from the source, presented on institutional or company letterhead, and be uploaded in PDF format.
- There is no limit to the number of supporting documents that may be provided, however, documents that do not satisfactorily meet the description of appropriate supporting documents above, or 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 final page 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. *A scanned copy of the signed final page must be uploaded to your online application in the Application Documents section.*
- L. Signed Signature Page.** In order to ensure that the applicant, primary 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, primary 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. **Open and review your uploaded files.**

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/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 required 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, 7, 8, and 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, 7, 8, and 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.

The print option “Print Signature Pages” prints the Signature Page, Application Contacts, Scientific Abstract, and Budget. If your institution wishes to review the application in its entirety, select the “Print Signature Pages and Attached PDF Files” option.

**Obtain required signatures and 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 Wednesday, October 29, 2014, 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 and printing your documents, 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 letter (or e-mail) should include your name, the grant opportunity to which you applied, the project title, 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 an application. Include your name and the application number.

**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 at [pcsupport@altum.com](mailto:pcsupport@altum.com).

Inquiries about the program guidelines, eligibility requirements, and application materials can be directed to Ms. Ashley 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 the survival rate for people diagnosed with this devastating disease through a bold initiative—*The Vision of Progress: Double Pancreatic Cancer Survival by 2020*. Together, we can know, fight and end 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, better treatments and increase chances of survival. For more information, go to [www.pancan.org](http://www.pancan.org).



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 34,000 laboratory, translational, and clinical researchers; population scientists; other health care professionals; and cancer advocates residing in more than 90 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 20 conferences and educational workshops, the largest of which is the AACR Annual Meeting with more than 18,000 attendees. In addition, the AACR publishes eight 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 grants in cancer research that have the potential for near-term patient benefit. The AACR actively communicates with legislators and 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).