



2017 ADVANCED CLINICAL RESEARCH AWARD (ACRA) IN BREAST CANCER

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Last Updated: August 30, 2016

Conquer Cancer Foundation

2318 Mill Road, Suite 800

Alexandria, VA 22314

571.366.9552 (Fax)

grants@conquer.org

Supported by (as of August 29, 2016):



Conquer Cancer Foundation

The Conquer Cancer Foundation (CCF) was created by the world's foremost cancer doctors of the American Society of Clinical Oncology to seek dramatic advances in the prevention, treatment and cures of all types of cancer. Toward the vision of a world free from the fear of cancer, CCF works to conquer this disease by funding breakthrough cancer research and sharing cutting-edge knowledge with patients and physicians worldwide, and by improving the quality of care and access to care, enhancing for the lives of all who are touched by cancer. For more information, visit www.conquercancerfoundation.org.

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Purpose

The Advanced Clinical Research Award (ACRA) in Breast Cancer is designed to fund mid-career investigators who are committed to clinical cancer research and who wish to conduct original breast cancer research not currently funded.

Funding Available

The grant is funded at the level of \$450,000, paid in three (3) annual increments of \$150,000 per year on July 1. The grant includes \$137,000 per year to support the research project, \$2,500 per year for travel related to the project (including the ASCO Annual Meeting), and \$10,500 per year (or 7% of the yearly total award amount) for overhead or indirect costs. Grant funds may not be applied to patient care costs that are reimbursable by a third party payor. Grantees must spend 80% of budgeted grant funds each year to receive the next year's installment.

Eligibility Criteria

The Advanced Clinical Research Award in Breast Cancer is intended to support proposals with a patient-oriented focus, including a clinical research study and/or translational research involving human subjects. ASCO's definition of clinical research is "hypothesis-driven research that employs measurements in whole patients or normal human subjects, in conjunction with laboratory measurements as appropriate; on the subjects of clinical biology, natural history, prevention, screening, diagnosis, therapy, or the epidemiology of neoplastic disease" (*Journal of Clinical Oncology*, Vol. 14, No. 2, 1996, pp. 666-670). Proposals with a predominant focus on *in vitro* or animal studies (even if clinically relevant) are not allowed.

Applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Be a physician (MD, DO, or international equivalent) who is in the fourth to ninth year of a full-time, primary faculty appointment in a clinical department at an academic medical institution at the time of grant submission.
- Have completed productive post doctoral/post fellowship research and demonstrated the ability to undertake independent investigator-initiated clinical research.
- Be a Full Member of ASCO or have submitted a membership application with the grant application. Applicants can join or renew their membership here: <http://www.asco.org/membership>.
- Be able to commit 75% of full-time effort in research (applies to total research, not just the proposed project) during the award period.
- Be up-to-date and in compliance with all requirements (e.g. progress reports, final reports, budget summaries, IRB approvals, etc.) of any past grants received from Conquer Cancer Foundation.

The Advanced Clinical Research Award is open to international applicants.

The Conquer Cancer Foundation reserves the right to evaluate and determine applicants' eligibility based on the information and justifications included in the application materials.

Selection Process

The recipient will be selected by the 2017 ACRA in Breast Cancer Subcommittee, using a peer review process based on the following:

- Focus on patient-oriented research, including a clinical research study and/or translational research involving human subjects
- Significance and originality of the proposed study and hypothesis
- Appropriateness, feasibility, and adequacy of the proposed experimental design and methodology
- Availability of environmental and institutional resources to support the proposed project
- Prior research experience and accomplishments of the applicant
- Potential favorable impact on career development of the applicant

Key Dates

Letter of Intent Opens:	September 1, 2016
Letter of Intent Due:	September 30, 2016 by 11:59 pm EDT
LOI Notifications:	October 10, 2016
Full Application Due:	November 16, 2016 by 11:59 pm EDT
Award Notification Date:	April 3, 2017
Award Term:	July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2020

Application Process

The Advanced Clinical Research Award (ACRA) in Breast Cancer contains two phases: a Letter of Intent (LOI) phase and a Full Application phase. Completion of the Full Application is by invitation only based on the submitted LOI.

All applications must be submitted in accordance with the requirements and instructions of this Request for Proposal (RFP). All application materials must be in English and must be submitted on the grants portal at <https://grants.conquercancerfoundation.org>.

No paper applications will be accepted. Applicants will have until September 30, 2016, 11:59 PM EST to submit all required LOI components through the grants portal.

Please note: technical assistance will not be available after 5 PM EDT on the deadline. Therefore, applicants are encouraged to start their application early.

Technical Requirements

- **Pop-Ups.** The grants portal uses pop-up windows to display some files. The web browser should be configured to allow pop-up windows from <https://grants.conquercancerfoundation.org>.
- **Cookies.** The grants portal uses cookies to maintain the session information. Please make sure that the web browser and computer can accept cookies from <https://grants.conquercancerfoundation.org>. For more information, [view system requirements](#).

Important Instructions about Uploads – The application process requires applicants to upload some documents in the “Uploads” section of the online application. Acceptable formats for these uploads include PDF or MS Word, although PDF is the preferred format in order to ensure proper conversion.

PHASE 1: LETTER OF INTENT SUBMISSION

Letter of Intent Deadline

The online application will open on **September 1, 2016**. A Letter of Intent must be submitted online on or before **September 30, 2016 by 11:59 PM EDT**. Please note that technical assistance will not be available after 5 PM EDT on the deadline. The following components are required:

Letter of Intent Components

Section 1. Contact Information

- Name
- Contact Information
- Institution
- Degree
- ASCO Member ID (Choose "Pending" if submitting a membership application with the grant application)
- Subspecialty Training Completion Date
- Initial Full-time Faculty Appointment Start Date

Section 2. Project Information

- Project Title
- Abstract - a brief abstract of the research proposal must be entered (<350 words)
- Subject Area
- Focus Area(s)
- Human Subject and Animal Use Assurances

Section 3. Uploads

- Applicant's Biosketch – Applicants can upload their current NIH biosketch if one available. If they do not have an NIH biosketch, they can use the template provided in the online application. The biosketch must not exceed five pages.

Section 4. Review and Submit Page

- The applicant may view the LOI on the Review and Submit Page by clicking the **View PDF** button. This will generate a PDF file of the LOI that may be saved and/or printed. Applicants are encouraged to save and/or print a copy of their submitted LOI for their records.
- Once the LOI has been viewed or downloaded, click the "Submit" button to officially submit the LOI. The Submit button will not appear until all sections are completed. Once submitted, no changes may be made to the LOI.

Letter of Intent Review Criteria and Notification

The LOI will be reviewed internally by the Conquer Cancer Foundation based on the following criteria:

- (1) Completeness of information and adherence to instructions for submission;
- (2) Eligibility, and;
- (3) Appropriateness of scientific topic.

After review, applicants will be notified about the status of their LOI on **October 10, 2016**. Only applicants who have received an approval for their LOI will be eligible to submit a full application. Applicants will not receive feedback on the LOI submitted.

PHASE 2: FULL APPLICATION

The full application must be submitted online on or before **November 16, 2016 by 11:59 PM EST**. Please note: technical assistance will not be available after 5 PM EST on the deadline.

The following are components of the application (each section is described in more detail below):

- Contact Information (Required) – including ASCO Member ID number
- Project Information (Required) – including Abstract (< 350 words), IRB, and Animal Use Assurances
- Specific Aims (Required)
- Uploads
 - Applicant's Biosketch (Required)
 - Personal Statement (Required)
 - Research Strategy (Required)
 - Cited References (Required)
 - Institutional Letter of Support (Required, from Department Chair or Dean)
 - Prior Publications (Optional)
 - Clinical Protocol (Optional, Strongly encouraged)
 - Additional Letter of Support (Optional)
 - Supporting Documentation (Optional, Additional Uploads)
 - One-page introduction (Required for Resubmissions)
- Project Timeline (Required)
- Budget and Justification (Required)
- Prior Publications (Optional, 2 maximum)
- Institutional Approval Face Sheet Signed by Institutional Approver (Required)

Section 1. Contact Information. This section includes the following information about the applicant:

- Name
- Contact Information
- Institution
- Degree
- ASCO Member ID (Choose "Pending" if submitting a membership application with the grant application)
- Subspecialty Training Completion Date
- Initial Full-time Faculty Appointment Start Date

Section 2. Project Information. This section includes the following information about the proposed project:

- Project Title
- Abstract - a brief abstract of the research proposal must be entered (<350 words)
- Subject Area
- Research Focus Area(s)
- Assurances for use of human and/or animal subjects in the research proposal

Section 3. Specific Aims. List succinctly the specific objectives of the research proposed, e.g., to test a stated hypothesis, create a novel design, solve a specific problem, challenge an existing paradigm or clinical practice, address a critical barrier to progress in the field, or develop new technology. The specific aims should state concisely and realistically what the research intends to accomplish and/or what hypothesis is to be tested, and should list measurable objectives for the proposed project.

Section 4. Uploads

a. Applicant's Biosketch (Required). Please note that biosketches do not carry forward from the Letter of Intent and will need to be re-uploaded.

b. Personal Statement (Required). Applicants are required to upload a personal statement describing their career plans and explaining how receiving the ACRA in Breast Cancer would positively impact their career trajectory. **The personal statement is limited to one page, therefore, it is highly encouraged to be succinct in the information provided.**

c. Research Plan/Strategy (Required). The research plan/strategy is limited to six (6) typewritten, single-spaced pages, with one-inch margins and 11 point Arial font type. ALL pertinent tables, pictures, and graphs MUST be included within the 6-page limit.

The research strategy must contain the following information:

- Significance and Background:
 - Explain the importance of the problem or critical barrier to progress in the field that the proposed project addresses.
 - Explain how the proposed project will improve scientific knowledge, technical capability, and/or critical practice in one or more broad fields.
 - Describe how the concepts, methods, technologies, treatments, services, or preventative interventions that drive this field will change if the proposed aims are achieved.
- Innovation:
 - Explain how the application challenges and seeks to shift current research or clinical practice paradigms.
 - Describe any novel theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation or interventions to be developed or used, and any advantage over existing methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions.
 - Explain any refinements, improvements, or new applications of theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions.
- Approach:
 - Describe the overall strategy, methodology, and analyses to be used to accomplish the specific aims of the project. Include how the data will be collected, analyzed, and interpreted as well as any resource sharing plans as appropriate.
 - Include appropriate methodology for statistical analysis. Applications will be reviewed by a biostatistician and it is highly recommended that applicants consult with a biostatistician before submission of the application.
 - Discuss potential problems, alternative strategies, and benchmarks for success anticipated to achieve the aims.
 - If the project is in the early stages of development, describe any strategy to establish feasibility, and address the management of any high risk aspects of the proposed work.
 - Point out any procedures, situations, or materials that may be hazardous to personnel and precautions to be exercised.

- Clearly state the applicant's role in the project (i.e. writing of protocol, performing the assays, etc.). When human subjects are involved, the precautions to ensure patient safety and confidentiality and the relevance or implications for patient care should be explained.
- List and describe the facilities and resources available to conduct the study, including a description of industry support for any clinical trials.
- **Statistical Analysis.** A statistical consideration section is required for all applications. For clinical and *in-vivo* studies this section should include the primary objective/hypothesis and primary endpoint of the study, justification of the proposed study sample size, procedures for data analysis, and appropriate statistical considerations. Any laboratory-based *in vitro* research aims should also include the primary objective/hypothesis and primary endpoint of the study, procedures for data analysis, and appropriate statistical details that describe the summary measures that will be used to meet the objectives of the study. **Applications will be reviewed by a biostatistician and it is highly recommended that applicants consult with a biostatistician before submission of the application.**

d. Cited References (Required). A list of cited references in the Research Strategy should be uploaded as a separate document in the Uploads section.

e. Institutional Letter of Support (Required). A letter from the Department Chair or Dean at the sponsoring institution where the applicant's research project will be conducted must be provided. This letter must include a statement of institutional support that will enable the applicant to perform the proposed research.

f. Additional Letter of Support (Optional). Applicants may upload one additional letter of support from a collaborator or fellow colleague. It does not need to be from someone within the applicant's sponsoring institution.

g. Prior Publications (Optional). Applicants may include up to two prior publications that are relevant to the research proposal. The applicant must be one of the authors.

h. Supporting Documentation (Additional Uploads, Optional). This section may be used to upload any necessary additional information required to properly review the application (i.e. letter from a drug company that they will provide the investigational drug, a letter of collaboration from another laboratory providing expertise for this project, etc.). Due to the limited time given to the reviewers, upload of any documents that are not critical to the review of the proposal or any additional publications is not allowable.

i. Clinical Protocol (Optional). It is **strongly encouraged** to attach this document if the proposed research involves a clinical protocol.

j. Resubmission Documentation (Required for Resubmissions Only). Past applicants who plan to resubmit their application are strongly encouraged to upload a one-page introduction to address the feedback and critiques provided during a prior application cycle including a discussion on how the application has changed or respond to previous reviews. It is advised that applicants ensure that the reviewers' critiques have been addressed in a way that is informative and constructive. The introduction is limited to one (1) typewritten, single-spaced page with one-inch margins and 11-point Arial font type.

Section 5. Project Timeline. Enter major milestones for the project, the expected completion date, and any associated deliverable. A deliverable is something that can be included in a progress report, such as a publication or an approval letter. Applicants are not required to have deliverables. However, the timeline should make it clear what outcomes will be achieved during the grant award period.

Section 6. Budget and Justification. The award funds will be directed to the sponsoring institution and should be used towards salary support, supplies, equipment, travel, etc. necessary for the pursuit of the recipient's research project. Award funds may not be applied to patient care costs that are reimbursable by a third-party payor. The budget must be directly entered into the online application. Budget justification for the entire project period must be included for each line item requested under the "Notes" section. **Please note that 80% of the budget for each project year must be expended during that year of the grant period in order for the following year's funds to be disbursed.**

The budget guidelines are as follows:

- **Total Award:** The total award amount is \$450,000 payable on July 1 in annual increments of \$150,000 over three years. The total cost requested per year should not exceed \$150,000.
- **Research support:** \$137,000 per year should support costs directly related to the research project such as personnel salary, supplies, equipment, and other expenses. Salary limits will be equivalent to the NIH applicable limit.
- **Travel:** Up to \$2,500 per year should be allotted specifically for the applicant's travel to the ASCO Annual Meeting and for any other travel essential to conducting the study. Attendance is mandatory at the ASCO Annual Meeting upon acceptance of the grant.
- **Indirect costs:** Up to \$10,500 per year (or 7% of the yearly total award amount) can be applied to overhead or facilities and administrative costs of the recipient's institution in administering the recipient's research project.

Section 7. Publications (Optional)

Up to two prior publications relevant to the research proposal may be included. The Principal Investigator and/or the Applicant Organization must be a co-author on these publications. Please upload a copy of each publication.

Section 8. Institutional Approval (Required). The Authorized Official representing the applicant's institution must approve the completed application (both the project proposal and the budget) before submission. This official is normally from the institution's Office of Sponsored Research.

In this section, the name and contact information of the Institutional Approver must be entered in the online application. Once the application is complete, the "Notify" button should be clicked to send the Institutional Approver an email with instructions for accessing the grants portal to review and approve the application. If any section of the application is still incomplete, the Institutional Approver should not be notified.

Upon logging in of the Institutional Approver, the completed application in PDF format will be available to view. If the application is approved, the Institutional Approver must upload the completed and signed Institutional Approval Face Sheet. However, if the application is not approved, the Institutional Officer should contact the applicant directly to correct any problems prior to approval.

Upon upload of the completed and signed Institutional Approval Face Sheet, an email will be sent to the applicant confirming that this task has been completed. Subsequently, the applicant must login and submit the completed and approved application. No changes should be made to the application upon obtaining institutional approval.

The completed and approved full application must be received on or before 11:59 PM EST on November 16, 2016.

Section 9. Review and Submit Page

The applicant may view the completed full application on the Review and Submit Page by clicking the View PDF button. This will generate a PDF file of the full application that may be saved or printed. Applicants are encouraged to save and/or print a copy of their complete application for their records.

Once the full application has been viewed or downloaded, click the “Submit” button to officially submit the application. The Submit button will not appear until all sections are completed. Once submitted, no changes may be made to the application.

Full Application Submission Deadline

All applications must be submitted no later than 11:59 PM EST on November 16, 2016. Applicants will NOT be able to access the online application after this deadline. Please note: technical assistance will not be available after 5 PM EST on the deadline.

Application Changes

The applicant must notify Conquer Cancer Foundation immediately by sending an email to grants@conquer.org if any of the following condition applies from application submission through award notification:

1. Withdrawal of Application. The email should include the applicant's name, the title of the proposal, and the reason for withdrawing the application.
2. Change of Institution or Position. The applicant has a career plan change or leaves his/her current position in the institution.
3. Change in Proposal. The applicant has significant changes in the submitted proposal affecting aims, research strategy, timeline, and/or budget. If CCF is notified of the change in proposal after the applicant is notified of an award, CCF has the right to withdraw the award.

Award Notification

Applicants can expect to be notified on April 3, 2017, via email to their primary email address on file.

Applicants should ensure that their primary email address on file is updated prior to April 2017. All communication regarding applications, including award notifications, will be sent to the primary email address on file.

Applicants should add grants@conquer.org to their safe senders list to ensure they receive timely notifications such as document submission notifications, application submission confirmations, etc. If applicants are not receiving notifications, they should check their junk/spam folders first, then contact grants@conquer.org for additional assistance.

For questions, please email grants@conquer.org.

LETTER OF INTENT CHECKLIST

- ☐ Contact Information (Required) – including ASCO Member ID number
- ☐ Project Information (Required) – including Abstract (< 350 words), IRB, and Animal Use Assurances
- ☐ Uploads (Required)
 - ☐ Applicant's Biosketch

FULL APPLICATION CHECKLIST

- ☐ Contact Information (Required) – including ASCO Member ID number
- ☐ Project Information (Required) – including Abstract (< 350 words), IRB, and Animal Use Assurances
- ☐ Specific Aims (Required)
- ☐ Uploads
 - ☐ Applicant's Biosketch (Required, 5 pages maximum)
 - ☐ Personal Statement (Required, 1 page maximum)
 - ☐ Research Strategy (Required, 6 pages maximum including tables, pictures, graphs, single spaced, 1 inch margins, Arial, font size 11)
 - ☐ Cited References (Required)
 - ☐ Institutional Letter of Support (Required, from Department Chair or Dean)
 - ☐ Prior Publications (Optional)
 - ☐ Clinical Protocol (Optional, Strongly encouraged)
 - ☐ Additional Letter of Support (Optional)
 - ☐ Supporting Documentation (Optional, Additional Uploads)
 - ☐ One-page introduction (Required for Resubmissions)
- ☐ Project Timeline (Required)
- ☐ Budget and Justification (Required)
- ☐ Prior Publications (Optional, 2 maximum)
- ☐ Institutional Approval Face Sheet Signed by Institutional Approver (Required)