




PATHWAY TO STOP DIABETES®

Accelerator Award Application Instructions


American Diabetes Association
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diabetes.org
@AmDiabetesAssn

Accelerator Application Instructions

Applications must be submitted online via SmartSimple, ADA's grant management system. Emails and word processing files submitted outside the site will not be accepted.

Applicants must complete the online application form and upload the complete Body of the Application as an attachment in Portable Document Format (PDF). Applicants must convert the necessary components of the application into a single PDF document; multiple attachments and other formats will not be accepted. All award guidelines and stipulations for preparing applications must be followed (e.g., supporting documents, page limits, font sizes).

Follow the steps below to create a new application in SmartSimple. If you have any difficulties accessing the site, contact grantquestions@diabetes.org for assistance.

1. To apply for an ADA funding opportunity, you need to have an account in SmartSimple, ADA's new grant management system.
2. If you have previously applied to or worked with ADA, you are likely already in our system. Please enter your email address and click 'Forgot Password' to proceed.
3. If you have never applied for a grant, received an award, or reviewed proposals for ADA, click the 'Register Here' button to start and complete the required fields to create your account.
4. Complete the eligibility quiz to confirm your eligibility status. Be sure to respond candidly for accurate results. Submitted applications that do not meet the eligibility criteria will be administratively disapproved.
5. After successful completion of the quiz, the application process will begin.
6. Save your work by clicking the '**Save Draft**' button located towards the bottom of each application tab. You can log out and complete your application at a later time.
7. To resume an in-progress application, please log-in to your SmartSimple user account using this link: https://diabetes.us-2.smartsimple.com/s_Login.jsp

Required details for each section of the online application form are outlined below:

Principal Investigator

Contact Information

The applicant must share updated contact details from their user profile so that up-to-date information is reflected in the application. For a detailed guide on how to update contact details and important information related to the Principal Investigator, see the *Pre-Award FAQ: Application Process in SmartSimple document*, available on the ADA website.

For administrative purposes, a current copy of the applicant's biosketch must be uploaded on their contact profile as a separate PDF file. The Association accepts the NIH Biographical Sketch Format.

ORCID Identifier

[ORCID](#) (Open Researcher and Contributor ID) provides a unique, persistent identifier for researchers that supports automated linkages to the investigator's digital research output. PIs are required to have

an ORCID identifier at the time of application. [Registration](#) is available free of charge.

Association Membership

All funded investigators will be required to be current professional members of the Association during the grant period. Professional membership is not required at the time of application. Information on professional membership may be found at <https://professional.diabetes.org/membership>.

Work Permission

All investigators must be able to legally work in the United States. Institutional confirmation of work permission will be required for all applicants.

Project Contacts

Project Collaborators

Project Collaborators can be added to the application. Collaborators are affiliated with your institution, such as Key Personnel.

Project Contacts

All applications must be submitted by a Research Officer from institution of the Principal Investigator. For detailed instructions on how to add key personnel to the application, review the *Pre-Award FAQ: Application Process in SmartSimple* document, available on the ADA website.

Nomination

Nomination Certification

The applicant must attest to being the official nominee of the Sponsoring Institution and upload the signed Nomination Form.

Nomination Form

A signed copy of the completed Nomination Form must be uploaded here as a pdf.

Project Details

Title of Proposal

Only the first letter of the title's first word should be capitalized. The title of the application should not have symbols, such as "β." Instead of the symbol, type the full name. For example, instead of "β," type "beta." The database system will convert all unfamiliar characters into illegible symbols.

Research Type

Indicate whether the proposed research basic, clinical, or translational. For this award, clinical research is defined as research directly involving humans, and includes educational, psychosocial, behavioral, epidemiologic, and health services research as well as clinical studies of normal physiology and mechanisms of disease. Translational research is defined as research that accelerates the transition of

scientific discoveries into clinical applications, by efficiently advancing knowledge of efficacy to the next level of clinical application.

Starting in 2024, ADA will accept up to two (2) nominations per institution with one (1) nomination spanning basic through preclinical research and one (1) nomination spanning clinical through public health research.

For nomination #1, examples of basic through preclinical research studies include:

- Innovative mechanistic studies on fundamental or new aspects of biology
- Novel insights derived from data science using AI/Machine Learning
- Development of new technologies, devices, and/or experimental approaches
- Identification and validation of novel and unique therapeutic targets

For nomination #2, examples of clinical through public health research include:

- Clinical experimental medicine studies
- Identification and validation of novel biomarkers
- Health services research
- Behavioral research
- Population epidemiology
- Health economics research
- Patient preference / Quality of Life
- Dissemination and implementation science
- Health Care system-based interventions

Nominations are welcomed from all areas of diabetes and span prevention, management, and cure of all diabetes types (i.e. type 1, type 2 and gestational), diabetes-related disease states (obesity, prediabetes, and other insulin resistant states) and complications. The program intends to attract a broad range of expertise to the field of diabetes from various fields of science and technology, including medicine, biology, chemistry, engineering, mathematics, and physics.

Diabetes Type of Proposed Research

Select the diabetes category relevant to the proposed research:

- Both Type 1 and Type 2 Diabetes
- Type 1 Diabetes
- Type 2 Diabetes
- Gestational Diabetes
- Obesity
- Pre-diabetes/insulin resistance
- Monogenic

Therapeutic Goal

Select the therapeutic goal most relevant to the proposed research:

- Cure Diabetes
- Manage Diabetes
- Prevent Diabetes

- N/A

Research Program Area

Select up to three program areas that describe the type of research being proposed. Program areas may be used as a general guide to help match grant applications to appropriate reviewers; however, selecting any given area does not limit the proposal to a specific reviewer pool.

Research Overview

Scientific Abstract (250 Word Maximum)

Proposal abstracts must be included only in the online portion of the application; abstracts must *not* be included as separate attachments or in the Body of the Application. The scientific abstract must not exceed 250 words. The scientific abstract must be a technical description of the proposed work that includes a background, hypothesis, supporting rationale, specific aims, research design, and relevance to a cure, prevention, and/or treatment of diabetes. The abstract should be written in the third person. Abstracts should not include symbols, such as “ α .” The Grant Management Site cannot support special characters, and any non-ASCII symbols will be converted to question marks (“?”) upon submission. Use the full term instead of the symbol, e.g., used the term “alpha” instead of “ α ”.

Lay Abstract (250 Word Limit)

The abstract must not exceed 250 words. The abstract must be a description of the research strategy(ies), including scientific question(s) and approach(es) and should specifically highlight the relevance to a cure, prevention, and/or treatment of diabetes. The abstract should be written in the third person. Abstracts should not include symbols, such as α . Use the full term instead of the symbol.

For example, instead of “ α ,” use the term “alpha.” Abstracts should *not* be included as separate attachments or in the Body of the Application. The abstract should be included in the online portion of the application only.

Move the Needle (150-word maximum)

ADA’s funding emphasis is on transforming the field of diabetes. We are prioritizing exceptional investigators that aim to advance existing knowledge and discovery gained from the basic sciences to its eventual translation into patient and population benefit. The ideal applicant will propose innovative translational research that will be an important step towards the eventual goal of improving the lives of people at risk of diabetes or living with the disease and, the pathway to this impact is clear. In no more the 150 words, applicants must describe how their proposed research has the potential to significantly improve the lives of people at risk of diabetes or living with the disease.

Animal and/or Human Experimentation

IRB/IACUC Approval is required for all applicants using human and/or animal subjects.

Indicate the type of IRB and/or IACUC approval that corresponds with the proposed research being conducted. If applicants already have an IACUC and/or approval for the project, it should be included in the body of the application and a copy of the IRB/IACUC approval letter should be uploaded to the final PDF copy, if available. If approval is not obtained by the application deadline, a just-in-time submission by the funding start date of the award is acceptable.

The Association requires IRB and IACUC assurances for human and animal subjects, respectively, if these are utilized in the funded research experiments/protocols. Funded applicants must obtain institutional IRB and/or IACUC approval and must submit documentation of this approval at one of the following times: 1) at the time of application or by the start date of the award. The Association requires IRB and/or IACUC approval within ninety (90) days of the award letter being sent. Award payments will be

held until necessary approvals are received.

Open Data and Resource Sharing (1-page maximum)

All data resulting from ADA-funded research that can be shared without compromising human subject protections must be shared to an approved open data repository within 6 months of publication or within 18 months of the conclusion of the funding period, if the study remains unpublished.

A listing of repositories recommended by NIH is available on the ADA [website](#) within the Pathway application materials. Awardees are encouraged to use the repository most appropriate for the subject matter of the research conducted.

Resources developed with ADA grant funding are required to be made available to the broader scientific community. ADA-funded projects expected to generate unique model organism resources or genomic data must include specific plans for sharing and distributing. If sharing is not possible, the application must include an acceptable explanation and request for waiver.

In general, to the extent possible, ADA grantees are expected to share all scientific resources upon request for the advancement of research progress. While the data and resource sharing plan will not impact the application score, it is a requirement for submission.

The data and resource sharing plan must not exceed one page. It must address (1) a brief summary of data outputs and/or resources that the proposed research will generate; (2) anticipated date when data and resources will be shared (no later than 6 months post-publication or 18 months from the award end date); (3) proposed repository for data sharing (applicants should reference the list of ADA-approved repositories; if use of an unapproved repository is desired, the applicant will be required to request approval before funding commences); and (4) justification for why the data and resource sharing plan is strong.

Applicants should also address whether or not a data-sharing agreement will be required and, if so, provide a brief description of such an agreement (including the criteria for deciding who can receive the data and whether or not any conditions will be placed on their use). References to data and resource sharing may also be appropriate in other sections of the application.

A 1-page maximum request for waiver may be submitted in place of the Open Data and Resource Sharing plan, in *only* one of the following categories:

- Human Subject Protection (privacy regulations or consent of research participants)
- Superseding Regulations (laws or institutional policies)
- Intellectual Property (existing IP rights)

A waiver request form is available for download within the application materials. Upon application review, if a request for waiver is not approved and the grant is approved for funding, the PI will be required to submit a data and resource sharing plan. If a plan is not received, the grant will be declined for funding.

Full Proposal Research Plan: details below

Letters of Recommendation

Three (3) **Letters of Recommendation** assessing the scientific abilities and potential of the applicant must be submitted. The recommendation letters must be uploaded and submitted directly through SmartSimple by the referee.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that all three (3) recommenders have uploaded and submitted their letters prior to the submission deadline. Otherwise, the system will prevent the submission of the application. It is strongly suggested that all **Letters of Recommendation** be uploaded to the online application **at least two (2) weeks** prior to the submission deadline. Due to potential institutional firewall issues, we propose asking your recommenders for a personal email address versus work email address.

For a detailed guide and troubleshooting tips related to uploading Letters of Recommendation to SmartSimple, see the *Pre-Award FAQ: Application Process in SmartSimple* document, available on the ADA website.

Letters should be addressed as “Dear Mentor Advisory Group” and must be provided from each of the following individuals:

Department Chair: The letter from the current Department Chair should specifically address the following points:

- The applicant’s ability to make significant contributions in diabetes research.
- The applicant’s ability to innovate and collaborate.
- How the applicant compares to peers (percentile ranking – i.e. in the top 5% of peers)

Past or Current Collaborator: The letters should specifically address the following points:

- The applicant’s potential to make significant contributions in diabetes research.
- The applicant’s ability to innovate and collaborate.

In the event the Department Chair is also the Nomination Committee authority, **two separate letters must be submitted** outlining the different points required. Letters must be uploaded to SmartSimple, ADA’s grant management system. Individuals providing recommendations **must** submit the letter **directly** to the Association by uploading it to the grant application. **Please note that the application cannot be submitted without all required recommendation letters.**

B. Budget

A categorized budget should be added to the online form and budget justification must be included in the Body of the Application.

The following budget stipulations apply to Accelerator Awards:

Salary for Principal Investigator

Salary allocations should be in accordance with the PI's percent effort on the grant and be within allowable Pathway award salary guidelines. The actual salary provided by the award is based on a full-time, 12-month appointment at the PI's institution, the PI's institutional salary, and the level of effort requested.

The Accelerator Award provides PI salary support for required levels of effort between 25-50% (full-time professional effort). Applicants may request up to a maximum of \$100,000 in PI salary support per year, plus 25% fringe benefits.

Technical Personnel

Technical personnel may receive salary and fringe benefits support in accordance with the percent effort on the grant, within allowable institutional salary guidelines. Technical personnel include any individuals working on the research project in a scientific or technical capacity. For example, collaborating investigators, postdoctoral fellows, lab technicians, nurses, statisticians and patient recruiters are all considered technical personnel. Administrative, secretarial and/or custodial personnel are **not** considered technical personnel and are ineligible to receive salary from this award. If technical personnel have not yet been hired or identified, simply note the position and indicate the individual is "TBD" (to be determined).

Subcontracts

Subcontracts should be indicated with the total amount included on the main budget form, with the itemized subcontract budget outlined on a subsequent budget form. **Any indirect costs associated with a subcontract must be incorporated into the yearly maximum indirect costs allowed for the entire award (i.e., 30% of total direct costs).** The combined indirect costs for the grant and any subcontracts cannot exceed the maximum indirect rate allowed for the award.

Supplies

There is no limit on the amount of budget funds that can be used for supplies. A categorized supply list must be included on the required annual financial reports. Office supplies are not permitted to be categorized as a direct cost.

Equipment

Purchases of equipment greater than \$25,000 must be justified by the applicant and approved in advance by Pathway administration staff. The Association defines equipment as any item costing more than \$5,000 with a lifespan of two or more years.

Computer Equipment and Software

Computer equipment and software purchases are allowable. Any purchase greater than \$3,000 must be directly related to the research strategy and must be justified by the applicant and approved in advance by Pathway administration staff.

Other Expenses

Some examples of additional expenses eligible to be included in this category are as follows:

- Travel to diabetes-related scientific meetings
- Publication costs (page charges, reprint costs)
- Books
- Animal housing and acquisition costs

Direct Costs

Direct costs include any direct expenses toward performing and completing the research. The following items **cannot** be purchased with direct cost funds:

- Rent for office or lab space
- Telephone service or support, or internet service
- Non-technical (e.g., custodial or administrative) support
- Tuition
- Relocation costs
- Memberships and subscriptions (including American Diabetes Association Professional Section membership)
- Institutional Review Board (IRB) or Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) administration fees
- Grantsmanship consultant fees
- Visa or Legal fees
- Office supplies
- Liability insurance

This list is not exhaustive. Any questions about whether a particular item or service may be purchased with direct costs should be referred to the Association's Research Program Office. **The Association reserves the right to refuse to pay for items or services with direct costs.** Unsanctioned purchases will be deducted from the recipient's grant account.

Indirect Costs

For Accelerator Awards, indirect costs are limited to an additional 30% of the direct costs of the award. For example, those applying for an Accelerator Award are eligible to include indirect costs up to \$75,000 (30% of \$250,000) for a total of \$325,000 per year.

Budget Revisions

Once an award is activated, **revisions greater than 25% in any budget category (i.e., PI salary, Technical Personnel, Supplies, Equipment, Other) require written approval from Association staff.** Under no circumstances will the total budget for a project be increased beyond the original terms.

Body of the Application

File Format

Applicants must combine all requisite components of the application into **one (1) PDF document**, ordered and named in accordance with application instructions.

Hard copies, multiple attachments, or other formats will not be accepted and will result in administrative disapproval of application.

The Association advises that the applicants complete and acquire all required documents before creating the PDF. Hardcopy materials must be converted into electronic format before combining into the single PDF file. Applicants must scan hardcopy materials in order to create the required electronic file.

PDF-creation software is necessary to create a single merged PDF document. There are many options for PDF generator software, many of which are free or can be purchased at a nominal cost. Refer to www.grants.gov for a list of suggested PDF conversion programs. The Adobe® Acrobat® Reader free version will **not** create a PDF. Adobe Acrobat version 6.0 or later can merge electronic files into a PDF document by following these steps:

1. Click the **Create PDF** button from the toolbar.
2. Select **From Multiple Files**.
3. Browse for all of the required files that should go in your application.
4. Arrange the files in order by selecting the **Move Up** and **Move Down** options. Use the Table of Contents to determine page order.
5. Select **OK** after all the documents are in order.
6. The Body of the Application PDF document is created.
7. Save the combined file according to the following naming convention: **Last Name, First Name - Project Title**. If Project Title is too long for the file name, use just the first five words.

The document header must include the applicant's name (Last Name, First Name) and type of application submitted (Accelerator). The footer must contain the page number. The header and footer should be added to the PDF file *after* all sections have been merged and collated.

Formatting Requirements

Applications must abide by the following format specifications:

- **Font:** Use an Arial, Helvetica, Palatino Linotype, or Georgia typeface, a black font color, and a font size of 11 points or larger. (A Symbol font may be used to insert Greek letters or special characters; the font size requirement still applies.) Type density, including characters and spaces, must be no more than 15 characters per inch. Type may be no more than six lines per inch. Because font size can appear larger on a computer screen, applicants are responsible for printing the PDF and measuring the font size. Applications that do not adhere to these formatting requirements will not be reviewed.
- **Font for Figures, Graphs, Diagrams, Charts, Tables, Figure Legends, and Footnotes:** Font may be a smaller point size, but it must be in a black font color, readily legible, and follow the font typeface requirement. Color can be used in figures; however, all text must be in a black font color, clear and legible.

- **Margins:** Margins must be at least one-half inch.
- **Spacing:** Single-spacing is acceptable.
- **Legibility:** The PDF document should be easy to read. The Association's Mentor Advisory Group members review many applications and respond favorably to organized, well-written proposals.

Header

Applicant name and award type must be in the header of the Body of the Application. Please format as last name, first name. For example: Smith, John.

Applicants can use Adobe Acrobat 6.0 or later to create the header across the entire combined PDF. Follow the steps below:

1. Select **Document**, followed by **Add Headers and Footers**.
2. Select the **Headers** tab.
3. Select right justification.
4. Type the applicant's last name and then the first name in the **Insert Custom Text** section.
5. Select **Insert**.
6. Select **OK** to see the header that was created.

Footer

Number the pages sequentially in the footer of the Body of the Application. The Table of Contents must be numbered as page 1 of the application, in order to correspond to the PDF file page. Applicants can use Adobe Acrobat 6.0 to create page numbers across the entire combined PDF. Follow the steps below:

1. Select **Document**, followed by **Add Headers and Footers**.
2. Select the **Footers** tab.
3. Select **Insert** in the **Insert Page Number** section.
4. Select **Insert**.
5. Select **OK** to see the page numbers that were created.

Table of Contents

The completed Body of the Application **must** include a Table of Contents so reviewers can easily locate application contents. Each section of the Table of Contents must include the page number according to the final Body of the Application PDF file. If a section does not apply to the proposal, the applicant should enter "N/A" rather than leaving the page number blank. The Table of Contents must be numbered as page 1 of the application, in order to correspond to its position within the final Body of the Application PDF file.

The Table of Contents Template specific for the Accelerator Award is available for download on the online, within the Accelerator Application Materials section. An example of the Table of Contents is available on the following page. **Applications that do not include a Table of Contents will be administratively disapproved.**

EXAMPLE

Accelerator Award

Last name, First name

Project Title

Table of Contents (Sample)

	Page #
1. PI Biographical Sketch (5-page maximum).....	
2. Annotated Publications (1-page maximum, 5 references).....	
3. Essay Question Responses (1-page maximum).....	
4. Research Strategy (4-page maximum).....	
a. References (1-page maximum).....	
5. Budget Justification (1-page maximum)	
6. Nomination Letter from Institutional Representative.....	
7. Collaborator(s) Biographical Sketch(es) (Optional).....	
8. IRB and/or IACUC Approval.....	
<i>(Only required if obtained by application submission deadline)</i>	

B. Body of the Application Contents

Specifications for Body of the Application contents are described below. Begin each text section in the PDF file with the section label (e.g., Biographical Sketch, Annotated Publications, etc).

Please note that the Association will not accept other materials that are not listed in the Table of Contents. Inclusion of any additional materials will result in administrative disapproval of application.

1) PI Biographical Sketch (5-page maximum)

The Association accepts the [NIH Biographical Sketch Format](#). Applicants and/or technical personnel who do not have an NIH Biosketch should use the automated NIH SciENCv utility to create one. The SciENCv tool is available through myNCBI at ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sciencv.

2) Annotated Publications (1-page maximum)

Provide a list of your five most impactful publications to date and briefly describe the qualities of these publications that make them notable. Include examples that represent/demonstrate independence, innovative approaches and any other unique characteristics that demonstrate your qualifications for the award.

3) Essay questions (1-page maximum)

- a) Provide answers to each of the following three essay questions, using specific examples. What makes your research strategy particularly innovative and important for people with diabetes? What makes it uniquely suited for this program rather than a traditional research grant program?
- b) Describe your most significant research accomplishments to date and the personal qualities/characteristics that were required for these accomplishments. For example, provide evidence of innovation and creativity, the ability to challenge paradigms, identify opportunities and take intellectual risks, establish collaborations, integrate diverse sources of information, or develop novel alternative approaches when new challenges or opportunities arose.
- c) What are your future career plans and how will this award further those objectives? What is your commitment to diabetes research?

4) Research Strategy (4-page maximum)

The research strategy should provide a high-level description of your scientific question(s) and the strategy(ies) and approach(es) that you will employ to address this question. It should be written with a level of detail appropriate for reviewers who are knowledgeable of the field, but who may not be directly involved in the proposed area of research. The research strategy section is flexible in format and does not require a detailed project plan, description of methods or preliminary data. Figures are allowed but must be included in the 4-page limit. The research strategy should address the following components:

- a) Scientific question(s)/specific problem(s) to be addressed.
- b) Specific approach(es) that will be employed.
- c) Significance and potential impact of the work.
- d) The potential risks and challenges, and how they will be overcome.

5) References (Optional, 1-page maximum)

References may be included but may not exceed 1 page. Applications exceeding any of these limits will be administratively disapproved.

6) Budget Justification

A one-page budget justification must include descriptions for expenses in each budget category, and justification for equipment purchase requests >\$25,000.

Please refer to the **Budget Guidelines** section for specific budget details.

7) Institutional Nomination Letter

The appropriate institutional representative (Chair of Nominating Committee, Dean of Research, Division Head, etc.) must delineate the institution's nomination and commitment to the applicant in an Institutional Nomination Letter. The letter must be included in the Body of the Application PDF file.

Letter should be addressed as "Dear American Diabetes Association Mentor Advisory Group." ***Letter must be signed by the institutional representative and co-signed by the Department or***

Division Head of the applicant, certifying that the department or division is aware of and agrees to the institutional commitment outlined in the letter.

The Letter must specifically address the following points:

- Provide rationale for institution's nomination of candidate, including why candidate is uniquely suited for this award.
- Certify that the candidate has the appropriate full-time position at the sponsoring institution as required by the award.
- Outline the candidate's responsibilities and ensure that at least 75% of their total time and effort will be allocated to research during the term of this award.
- Provide assurance of an academic commitment to the candidate and to his or her research proposal.
- Outline the institution's plans to support the long-term development of the candidate and specific expectations for the individual's career course.

8) Collaborator(s) Biographical Sketch(es) (Optional)

If applicable, the Association accepts biosketches from project collaborators. Collaborator biosketches should follow the [NIH Biographical Sketch Format](#) (5 page maximum). Applicants that do not have an NIH Biographical Sketch should use the automated NIH SciENCv utility to create one. The SciENCv tool is available through myNCBI at ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sciencv.

Application submissions that are incomplete or do not adhere to section page limits will be administratively disapproved.

Application Submission

To complete the online application process, select “**Save Draft**” at any point during the online application process. Saved applications can be accessed via SmartSimple,

ADA’s grant management system:

https://diabetes.us-2.smartsimple.com/s_Login.jsp?lang=1&prole=0

The Principal Investigator must submit the completed application to a Research Officer at their institution prior to full submission to the ADA. The Research Officer is responsible for completing the submission to the ADA in SmartSimple, ADA’s grant management system. Any application related files or other materials submitted outside of SmartSimple will not be accepted. ***Changes cannot be made to submitted applications.***

Electronic applications must be submitted by **5:00 PM Eastern Time** on the deadline date. Any questions about online grant applications should be sent to grantquestions@diabetes.org.