Pathway to Stop Diabetes Nomination Guide

Purpose and Intent

With 29.1 million Americans living with diabetes and nearly 86 million more at increased risk of developing the disease, diabetes is a tremendous physical and financial burden for the nation. Despite the disease’s epidemic proportions, diabetes research is still critically underfunded. Although researchers have made significant strides against the disease, funding is vital to making continued and accelerated progress.

To accelerate the research needed to discover solutions and ultimately cure this deadly epidemic, the American Diabetes Association has launched a bold initiative, Pathway to Stop Diabetes, to inspire a new generation of diabetes researchers. Pathway will provide crucial support to individuals focusing on innovative ideas and transformational approaches that will lead to ground-breaking discoveries in diabetes prevention, treatment and cures.

Pathway will support creative scientists early in their diabetes research careers, or investigators who are established in other disciplines but would like to expand their focus to diabetes research. Through awards of $1.625 million over the course of up to seven years, the program will provide researchers the freedom, autonomy, time and focus needed to explore new ideas.

Pathway will consider applications directed toward topics relevant to the prevention, treatment and cure of all diabetes types (type 1, type 2 and gestational), diabetes-related disease states (obesity, pre-diabetes, and other insulin resistant states) and diabetes complications. The program intends to attract individuals with a broad range of expertise in various science and technology disciplines, including medicine, biology, chemistry, engineering, mathematics and physics to the field of diabetes research.

Pathway award competitions will be held on an annual basis, with grant submissions accepted through institutional nominations only. The Association intends to support between four and six grants from the 2017 competition.

Pathway seeks to bring new investigators and new perspectives to diabetes research. Supporting scientists with different backgrounds and experience is critical to achieving that objective. Pathway accepts nominations for exceptional investigators with medical and scientific backgrounds who propose innovative basic, clinical, translational, behavioral, epidemiological and health services research relevant to any type of diabetes, diabetes-related disease state or complication. Pathway solicits nominations for candidates in all disciplines as applied to diabetes. In addition, nomination of scientists from diverse backgrounds, including minority groups that are underrepresented in biomedical research, is strongly encouraged. The challenges of comparing
different research approaches and investigators across a broad spectrum are met by assembling a diverse group of reviewers with content expertise that give careful consideration to all types of proposals during the review process.

The Pathway program is highly competitive. Over the first four years of the program, the overall success rate for applications to the program has been approximately 6%. Success rates vary significantly depending on award mechanism, with Visionary being the most competitive with only a 3% success rate, Accelerator with a 5% success rate and Initiator with a 12% success rate.

Nomination Guidelines

- Nominations must be made on behalf of the institution by an authorized institutional representative (e.g., Nominating Committee Chair, Division Chair, Dean of Research, or President).

- Each institution is allowed a maximum of one nomination. The nomination can be in one of the three available Pathway award types:
  - Initiator
  - Accelerator
  - Visionary

- Nominations are accepted from U.S. accredited academic and non-profit research institutions. For the purpose of this award, an institution generally includes all associated departments, medical schools and graduate schools.

- Individual components of multi-component institutions (e.g., University of California Los Angeles and University of California Berkeley within the University of California system, or Harvard University and Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center within the Harvard system) are sufficiently independent to be considered individual institutions. Institutions must have a unique (DUNS) and/or (IPF) number to be considered independent.

- Nomination of more than the one allowable nominee may result in the administrative disapproval of all nominations from the institution.

- Any applications received without the appropriate institutional nomination will be administratively disapproved.

- The Association encourages nomination of individuals from diverse backgrounds, including minority groups that are underrepresented in biomedical research. For the purpose of this program, underrepresented racial and ethnic minority groups are defined as American Indians or Alaska Natives, African Americans, Hispanics or Latinos, and Native Hawaiians or Other Pacific Islanders.

- Nominees must have the appropriate full-time position to be eligible for the award at the sponsoring institution (postdoctoral fellow for Initiator, independent faculty appointment for Accelerator and Visionary).
- Nominees are required to devote at least 75% of their total time and effort to research during the funding period.

Institutional Nomination Requirements

- **Nomination Form:** The Association’s Nomination Form must be signed by an authorized institution official, certifying that the nomination is acknowledged by the institution and that the grant application has been routed through, and approved by, the sponsoring institution.

- **Institutional Nomination Letter:** An institutional representative (Dean of Research, Nominating Committee Chair, Division Chair, etc.) must submit a letter of nomination on behalf of the institution, co-signed by the nominee’s Division or Department Head, outlining the commitment of the institution to the nominee. The letter of nomination from the sponsoring institution must:
  - Provide rationale for institution’s nomination of candidate, including why candidate is uniquely suited for the 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 the nominee’s 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 the research proposal.
  - Outline the institution’s plans to support the long-term development of the candidate, including specific expectations for the individual’s career course.

- The signed Nomination Form and Institutional Letter of Support must be submitted through the Grant Management site located at [http://professional.diabetes.org/grants-pathway](http://professional.diabetes.org/grants-pathway) at the time of application.

Review Criteria

Scientific excellence is the primary benchmark to be evaluated for all Pathway applications, with an emphasis on the investigator’s potential to significantly impact the field of diabetes research. The proposed research strategy serves as a reflection of the individual’s capacity for innovation, creativity and collaboration. The review will include the following components:

- Principal Investigator
  - Strong potential/proven ability to establish independent diabetes research program
  - Strong potential/proven ability for creativity, collaboration and innovation
  - Institutional commitment
• Research Strategy
  – Clarity of thought and approach
  – Innovation and creativity
  – Potential impact for understanding/treatment of diabetes

Support

Pathway awards provide up to $1.625 million per award in combined salary and project support.

The Association expects to support between four and six applicants from the 2017 award competition, with grants commencing in January 2018.

Materials and Questions

• Nomination and application materials are available online at: http://professional.diabetes.org/grants-pathway

• Questions regarding nominations/applications should be directed to Pathway administration staff at: pathway@diabetes.org.