



UROLOGY CARE FOUNDATION PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENT

FOR THE

2024 Research Scholar Award

Sponsored by:

Partnering AUA Sections and Urology Societies

IMPORTANT DATES

Letter of Intent Deadline: 5:00 p.m. Eastern time, November 9, 2023

Proposal Submission Deadline: 5:00 p.m. Eastern time, December 14, 2023

Peer Review: January - March 2024

Funding Notification: May 2024

Award Period: July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025 (one-year)
July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2026 (two-year)

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I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. UROLOGY CARE FOUNDATION MENTORED RESEARCH AWARDS

The mission of the Urology Care Foundation, the official foundation of the American Urological Association (AUA), is to support and improve urological care by funding research, developing patient education, and pursuing philanthropic support. Having recognized a major need to support the future of the urologic research workforce, the Urology Care Foundation offers a portfolio of mentored research training awards designed to recruit promising young physicians and investigators into urologic research and foster their career success.

These awards are administered by the AUA Office of Research, with funding provided by the Urology Care Foundation and partner organizations and sponsors. The AUA Office of Research was created in 2001 with a mission to increase and maintain the workforce of urology physician-scientists and researchers to catalyze the advancement of clinical practice and reduce the burden of urologic disease through impactful research. All proposals are evaluated by an independent peer review panel of expert physician-scientists and researchers who evaluate the scientific merit of each project as well as the applicant's potential to become a future research leader.

The AUA and its Urology Care Foundation are committed to promoting diversity in its many forms to promote excellence in research and leadership within the urologic research workforce. The AUA and its Urology Care Foundation are supportive of efforts to analyze and address the ways in which social and economic inequalities impact the urology community, and the ability to achieve health equity for patients with urologic conditions. Information related to the applicant's race/ethnicity and gender is collected during the proposal process to assess these efforts but is de-identified for all reporting purposes. In the event that an available research award is restricted to applicants of a particular race/ethnicity or sex, this information may be taken into consideration during the award selection process.

B. AWARD INFORMATION

Urology Care Foundation Research Scholar Awards support future research leaders and ensure they receive the necessary training and guidance for a successful research career. Initiated in 1975, these awards provide funding for one- and two-year mentored research training for clinical and postdoctoral fellows or early-career faculty. The program has invested over \$29 million to support over 650 Research Scholars, most of whom have remained in committed research career tracks and now serve as leaders in urologic research and clinical practice. Urology physician scientists (MD or equivalent degree) and researchers (PhD or equivalent degree) are invited to apply.

Research Scholar Awards provide \$40,000 per year for one or two years of support and require intensive involvement of one or more mentors committed to advancing the development of the award recipient. Cost-sharing and/or matching funds from the sponsoring institution is required.

C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

1. APPLICANT

To be eligible to compete for a 2024 Urology Care Foundation Research Scholar Award, applicants must, by July 1, 2024, be either:

Track 1: Clinical or Post-doctoral Fellows

- Urologist in accredited clinical fellowship (available for research year starting July 1, 2024).
- Post-doctoral fellow no more than five years beyond completion of a PhD.

Track 2: Early-Career Faculty

- Early-career urology MD or PhD investigator within the first five years after beginning a faculty position.

In addition, applicants must be able to commit to no less than one year of performance on the award and no less than 50 percent (MD applicants) or 70 percent (PhD applicants) level of effort on their Research Scholar Award-funded research. Clinical fellows are permitted to request only one year of funding unless the applicant's fellowship includes two years of appropriately protected time for research. Deviation from percent effort requirements will result in disqualification for award consideration or discontinuation of funding.

One proposal per applicant is allowed during a competition year. Former recipients of a Research Scholar Award may not apply for a subsequent Research Scholar Award. If the research is being conducted in the United States, applicants are not required to be U.S. citizens but must have valid Social Security numbers for Internal Revenue Service purposes.

Eligibility Exceptions Due to Extenuating Circumstances

Although the Research Scholar Award is intended to provide support during a pivotal period in the research career, the AUA also understands that extenuating circumstances, such as a leave of absence, may occur and impact eligibility for this award. Applicants seeking an exception to eligibility criteria related to time following first faculty position or degree completion should contact the AUA Office of Research at grantsmanager@auanet.org before submitting a letter of intent.

2. MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

AUA Membership

All applicants who are not AUA members at the time of proposal must apply for AUA membership if selected to receive a Research Scholar Award. Proof of AUA membership must be provided to the AUA Office of Research prior to funds being dispersed. Additional information about AUA membership can be found at <https://www.auanet.org/membership>.

Award Sponsor Membership

Should an applicant be selected to receive a Research Scholar Award sponsored by an AUA Section or partner Society, and the applicant is not already a member of that organization, the applicant is required to apply for membership provided that an appropriate membership category exists. Information about AUA Sections can be found at <https://www.auanet.org/membership/who-we-are/aua-sections-and-demographics>.

3. MENTOR

Each applicant must have a primary mentor for the proposed research project. The proposal must be prepared by the applicant under the supervision and guidance of, but with minimal assistance provided by, the mentor(s). More than one mentor per project is both permitted and recommended if the project is highly translational or multidisciplinary. Listing of collaborators and/or consultants on the project is acceptable, and it is recommended that applicants upload a letter of support from them if applicable (see *Section II, Subsection L: Letters from Collaborators*).

3. HOST INSTITUTION

To be eligible as a host institution, the institution must reside within the boundaries of the AUA Sections and provide appropriate laboratory or medical facilities. Research Scholar Awards that support international investigators, when available, allow the research training to be conducted in appropriate laboratory or medical facilities outside of the United States (see *Section I, Subsection D, 1. Awards Available*). Applicants whose institutions are located outside the boundaries of the AUA Sections should contact the AUA Office of Research at grantsmanager@auanet.org for information about applying for a Research Scholar Award.

D. FUNDING INFORMATION

1. AWARDS AVAILABLE

Twelve awards are anticipated to be available for the 2024 Research Scholar Award competition. Availability of all Urology Care Foundation awards is contingent on market trends and subject to change. Final determinations regarding award funding will be made at the time of awardee selection. Funding is available for research training in all urologic disease areas and across all research types: basic, translational, clinical, and health services/outcomes.

All AUA Sections have established one or more endowments to support Research Scholar Awards conducted within their respective geographical boundaries. The following Section-supported awards are available for the 2024 competition:

- North Central Section
- Northeastern Section
- Southeastern Section
- Western Section

In addition, urology specialty societies and other organizations have provided support to the Research Scholar Award Program. The following awards with their respective restrictions are available for the 2024 competition:

- Chesapeake Urology Associates Sanford J. Siegel, MD Prostate Cancer Research Scholar Award
Supports prostate cancer research.
- Endourological Society Award
Supports minimally invasive endourology research (e.g., stone disease, laparoscopy, robotics).
- Indian American Urological Association Anupam Ted Kedia Award
Supports a urology researcher of Indian descent.
- Indian American Urological Association Sakti Das, MD, Award
Supports a urology researcher of Indian descent.
- Sexual Medicine Society of North America Award
Supports research on surgical techniques, medical management approaches and psycho-social aspects of sexual health in men, including erectile dysfunction, Peyronie's disease, ejaculatory dysfunction, regenerative therapy and testosterone deficiency.
- Societies for Pediatric Urology Sushil Lacy, MD, Award
Supports pediatric urology research.
- Society of Urodynamics, Female Pelvic Medicine and Urogenital Reconstruction Hari Badlani Award
Supports research in urodynamics and neurourology, voiding function and dysfunction, female urology and pelvic floor dysfunction.
- Society of Urologic Oncology Award
Supports urologic oncology research.

The Urology Care Foundation continuously seeks additional sponsors for Research Scholar Awards; thus, the portfolio of awards available is ever evolving both within and between funding years. The entities listed above may not represent the complete list of sponsors that will support awards for this competition cycle, nor do these sponsors or the Urology Care Foundation make any guarantees that any/all awards will be filled. Research Scholar Awards are granted based on the objective evaluation of all aspects of eligibility criteria, scientific review, and the financial portfolio available at the time the awards are finalized by the Urology Care Foundation. The Urology Care Foundation reserves the right for final approval for any/all awards provided through the program.

Other than proposing a one-year or two-year award, applicants cannot designate the award for which they are applying (e.g., AUA Section Award). Applicants that choose to apply for a two-year award may be asked to accept one year of funding, depending on the awards available in that award year.

While applicants may propose any type of research on any urologic disease or condition, the Urology Care Foundation encourages consideration of key gaps in research that have been identified in the AUA clinical guidelines and, if addressed, could ultimately have a significant impact on improving urology patient care. While the certain below areas of research are encouraged, they will not automatically confer any competitive advantage in the peer review of proposals. Additionally, research projects addressing factors relevant to the understanding and promotion of minority health and to the understanding and reduction of health disparities are encouraged to apply.

Kidney Diseases and Conditions

- Medical Management of Kidney Stones: comparative effectiveness of dietary manipulation, preventative medications, genetic basis for disease development
- Surgical Management of Stones: enhanced imaging for optimization of treatment selection, outcomes research, improvements in stent morbidity
- Clinically Localized Renal Neoplasms: identification of well-defined diagnostic and prognostic indicators for follow-up care
- Renal Mass and Localized Renal Cancer: molecular analysis of biopsy specimens toward improved clinical management, active surveillance, survival-dependent outcomes research

Bladder Diseases and Conditions

- Asymptomatic Microhematuria: risk stratification
- Interstitial Cystitis: patient phenotyping and molecular correlates
- Overactive Bladder: pathophysiology and risk factors, patient phenotyping, outcomes research in vulnerable populations
- Surgical Management of Female Stress Urinary Incontinence: prevention, patient phenotyping and etiology, innovations in treatment
- Urinary Retention: understanding of the natural history and risk factors to support the development of biomarkers and new pharmacological and neurological interventions
- Male Urethral Strictures: prevention and non-trauma etiology
- Bladder Cancer: risk assessment to improve therapeutic targeting, personalization and optimization of combinatorial and sequential treatment
- Urothelial Cancer: improvements in risk stratification and targeted therapies to increase efficacy and minimize toxicity, large-scale outcomes research
- Upper Tract Urothelial Cancer: outcomes research to improve clinical management

Prostate Diseases and Conditions

- Benign Prostatic Hyperplasia (BPH): comparative effectiveness of lifestyle changes on the clinical symptoms of BPH
- Early Detection of Prostate Cancer: comparative effectiveness of screening and risk assessment tools, improvements in biopsy and biopsy-driven prognostics
- Castrate Resistant Prostate Cancer: molecular and phenotypic profiling, personalization and optimization of combinatorial and sequential treatment
- Radiation after Prostatectomy: improvements in imaging-guided RT, biomarkers of prognosis

Sexual Medicine

- Erectile Dysfunction: improvements in indicators for testosterone therapy
- Premature Ejaculation: disease etiology and comparative effectiveness of mono- and combinatorial therapeutic interventions
- Peyronie's Disease: pathophysiology and mechanistic basis of disease
- Priapism: pathogenesis and outcomes research
- Vasectomy: outcomes research to diminish complications

Developmental/Congenital Conditions

- Cryptorchidism: etiology and clinical correlates of disease, outcomes research
- Vesicoureteral Reflux: scientific basis for treatment selection

2. OVERLAP IN FUNDING

Applicants are not eligible to hold a Research Scholar Award if they currently possess or accept a career development award (e.g., NIH K12, T32, or comparable) for salary support that has a level of effort requirement in conflict with the level of effort required for the Research Scholar Award. In addition, accepting, actively possessing, or previously receiving a large independent investigator award(s) including or comparable to a NIH R01 is incompatible with applying to or accepting a Research Scholar Award. If a conflict exists or arises, applicants must notify the AUA Office of Research immediately.

In addition, applicants are not eligible to hold a Research Scholar Award if they are awarded a grant for salary support that results in support or compensation in excess of institutional salary limitations. However, exceptions will be considered on a case-by-case basis to allow for a reduced payment from the Research Scholar Award to enable recipients to keep the award and not exceed institutional salary limitations. All decisions will be final and at the discretion of the AUA Office of Research.

Applicants are permitted to hold simultaneous intramural grants provided they do not result in salary support in excess of institutional salary limitations. Applicants are required to report previously received and active funding within their biosketch. Applicants must detail applications submitted to other funding sources in their proposal and must provide the AUA Office of Research notice for funding secured after submitting a Research Scholar Award application or during the award period.

Applicants are not eligible to hold to a Research Scholar Award if they are awarded other grants supported by the AUA or its Urology Care Foundation for the same research project. Previous Research Scholar Award recipients are not eligible to apply.

3. INSTITUTIONAL MATCHING FUNDS AND COST-SHARING

MD Awardees – Matching Funds

The sponsoring institution for MD awardees must provide \$40,000 per year in matching support for salary and/or requisite supplies and equipment to complete the research. No funds, whether those from the Urology Care Foundation or those representing an institution's matching funds, may be used to support salary for personnel other than the Research Scholar Award recipient, nor to support institutional indirect costs. Details of the sponsoring institution's plan for financial support should be provided in the Budget Justification of Other Funding (see *Section II, Subsection E: Budget Justification of Other Funding*).

PhD Awardees – Cost-Sharing

The sponsoring institution for PhD awardees must cost share for salary and/or requisite supplies and equipment to complete the research. While there are no specific expectations for amounts of cost-sharing, details of the sponsoring institution's plan for financial support of the awardee beyond the \$40,000 per year provided by this award should be provided in the Budget Justification of Other Funding (see *Section II, Subsection E: Budget Justification of Other Funding*).

Provision of Travel Costs by Institutions

Institutions are strongly encouraged to include travel costs as a part of their proposed support for Research Scholar Award applicants. Any travel support should be detailed in the Budget Justification of Other Funding.

4. DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS

Urology Care Foundation funds will be paid directly to the awardee's sponsoring institution via wire transfer in two annual installments in July and January of each funding year, pending timely receipt of all information required for grant onboarding, annual reporting, and confirmation of an institution financial representative able to receive and allocate award funds. The Urology Care Foundation does not withhold taxes from awards (federal withholding, social security, local or state taxes, etc.). It is the responsibility of the host institution and/or awardee to ensure that appropriate federal and local taxes are accounted for.

II. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

A. GENERAL INFORMATION

The Research Scholar Award application process consists of a letter of intent followed by a full proposal. Applicants should review this Program Announcement in its entirety to understand and begin preparing the required components. Questions on eligibility, application materials, etc. should be directed to the AUA Office of Research via email to grantsmanager@auanet.org.

Applicants are responsible for composing, compiling, and submitting complete materials. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that all required items are submitted electronically via the proposal submission system, including those requested from the mentor(s), additional letters of support, and letters from collaborators if applicable, prior to the proposal deadline. Applicants assume all responsibility for the accuracy and completeness of materials, and that materials are received in full in advance of submission deadlines.

A letter of intent is required, and must be received by **November 9, 2023, at 5:00 p.m. Eastern time**. Information in the letter of intent is not peer reviewed. However, it does undergo administrative compliance review and is used by the AUA Office of Research to gauge applicant eligibility, document compliance, and to prepare for peer review of proposals. Only one letter of intent can be submitted per applicant and applicants are not bound to complete a full proposal upon submitting a letter of intent. Following administrative review by the AUA Office of Research, letter of intent submissions found to be compliant and eligible will receive access to the full proposal submission portal. The deadline to complete the full proposal is **December 14, 2023, at 5:00 p.m. Eastern time**.

Institutions should encourage the submission of proposals from all eligible and highly qualified urologic research trainees and early-career faculty in need of support. Within any given funding year, however, the Urology Care Foundation prefers to provide support to as many institutions as possible, provided each institution has submitted a highly meritorious proposal. Therefore, funding decisions will be impacted by not only the merit of the proposal and the alignment with awards available, but also may be impacted by the intent to distribute Urology Care Foundation funds to qualified proposals from as diverse a distribution of institutions as possible.

Formatting Guidelines:

The following guidelines are applicable to all documents submitted for the letter of intent and proposal. Applications that do not abide the formatting guidelines will be deemed noncompliant and will not advance to review or receive consideration for an award.

Documents should use Times New Roman font in 12-point format with 1 to ½ inch margins. Paragraphs should be single-spaced, and figure/image legends/axes must be present and clearly visible. Documents from letter of reference writers, institution administrators, etc. must be submitted on official institution letterhead, include full credential lines, signed and dated.

Electronic Registration

Applicants must submit a letter of intent, proposal, and all required documents electronically via ProposalCentral at <https://proposalcentral.com/>. Submission of materials via email, fax, or postal mail will not be accepted.

To prevent emails from ProposalCentral from being identified as spam, it is strongly recommended that applicants, individuals providing letters of support for the proposal, and institutional representatives add pcsupport@altum.com to their address books or safe sender lists. Applicants requiring technical support related to the grant submission portal should contact ProposalCentral directly.

B. CONFIDENTIAL LETTERS OF SUPPORT

Confidential letters of support are required from each of the applicant's project mentor(s) and two additional letters of support from other professionals (letter writers). Applicants are responsible for assigning letter writers to their proposals immediately after access is granted to the full proposal. It is critical for applicants to assign their letter writers as soon as possible to allow them ample time to submit their required letters by the proposal deadline (see *Section III, Subsection B: Full Proposal*).

Once the applicants assign a letter writer to their proposal, ProposalCentral will send an automated email to the letter writer with an upload link that will enable them to submit their letter confidentially. Applicants can log into their proposals at any time to check the submission status of their letters of support and may resend notification emails as needed.

Applicants are highly encouraged to contact their respective letter writers prior to the letter of intent deadline and should instruct them to add pcsupport@altum.com to their address books or safe sender lists.

1. PRIMARY MENTOR LETTER OF SUPPORT

The proposal must contain one letter of support from the project primary mentor, limited to two pages. Letters that exceed the page limitations will be deemed noncompliant and will not advance to review or receive consideration for an award. If the primary mentor letter of support is not received by the proposal deadline, the proposal be deemed noncompliant and will not advance to review or receive consideration for an award. In instances where two individuals are equally sharing primary mentorship responsibilities, a jointly written and co-signed letter may be provided.

Primary mentor letters should describe the applicant's training program and the mentor's specific involvement in and commitment to providing training, career development, and mentorship in urologic research. Specifically, the letter should address the following:

- The applicant's characteristics, track record of productivity, accomplishments to date, potential for an independent career in urologic research.
- The mentor's history of training clinical and postdoctoral fellows.
- The training environment, including how the training environment and ongoing urologic disease research will promote the development of the applicant.
- The mentor's financial resources, specifically financial and other resources available to support the applicant specific to their project. Mentors must have sufficient independent research support to cover the costs of the proposed research project in excess of the allowable costs.
- The mentor's plan to support the research project and guide the applicant, including a description of the frequency and how they will provide mentoring to the applicant as well as details on mentors' specific role in the research training and project.

2. ADDITIONAL LETTERS OF SUPPORT

Two letters of support from individuals other than the primary mentor(s) are required and are limited to one page each. Proposals that do not include the additional letters, and/or letters that exceed the page limitations will be deemed noncompliant and will not advance to review or receive consideration for an award.

These individuals can be from the same or a different institution as the applicant. Suggested content for these letters includes the following:

- In what context (e.g., colleague, supervisor, personal associate) the letter writer has known the applicant.
- How the applicant's characteristics and accomplishments have prepared the applicant to undertake the proposed research and training.
- How the applicant's skills, knowledge, and abilities have prepared the applicant for the proposed research and training.
- The applicant's potential for an independent career in urologic research.
- How the applicant will benefit from the proposed research and training environment, including the mentor(s).

C. APPLICANT BIOSKETCH

Applicants must submit an NIH-style biosketch, strictly limited to five pages, with the letter of intent and full proposal. A template is provided in the Download Templates and Instructions section in ProposalCentral. Submissions that do not include the applicant's biosketch, and/or biosketches that exceed the page limitations will be deemed noncompliant and will not advance to review or receive consideration for an award.

D. APPLICANT CAREER PLAN

The Applicant Career Plan is strictly limited to one page. Applications that exceed the page limitation will be deemed noncompliant and will not advance to review or receive consideration for an award. Applicants should describe and provide a timeline of career goals and plans including description of any coursework, conferences, seminars, teaching or clinical responsibilities, grant writing training, plans to apply or future funding, or other activities that the applicant plans to participate in during their career development. In addition, applicants should describe longer-term career goals (10-15 years post-award).

E. BUDGET JUSTIFICATION OF OTHER FUNDING

Budget Justifications are strictly limited to two pages and must be on institution letterhead, prepared by the Department Chair / Division Chief, department administrator, or a representative of the institution's Sponsored Programs Officer or similar. Budget Justifications should be signed by the Department Chair or Division Chief at the institution where the proposed research will occur. Documents that exceed the page limitation, are not on letterhead, are not signed, or otherwise deviate from these guidelines without prior approval from the AUA Office of Research will be deemed noncompliant and will not advance to review or receive consideration for an award. The Budget Justification of Other Funding should describe the allocation of matching funds or cost-sharing provided by the institution where the proposed research project would occur. Budget Justifications should demonstrate where institution funds will be applied by budget line as applicable, referencing the budget line items submitted in the Budget section for expending UCF funds.

F. INSTITUTIONAL PLAN

This Institutional Plan is strictly limited to two pages and should be completed by the mentor(s). Applications that exceed the page limitation will be deemed noncompliant and will not advance to review or receive consideration for an award.

The plan should describe the institution's facilities, any technical assistance available to the applicant, specific duties of the applicant, protected time for the proposed research project (MD applicants must commit at least 50% of their time, PhD applicants must commit at least 70% of their time), clinical activities, teaching duties, relationship to the primary mentor's ongoing research program, and immediate supervisor (if other than the primary mentor). MD applicants are strongly recommended to obtain written confirmation from their department chairpersons for their allowable level of effort for the proposed research project. For MD applicants, the plan should clearly state how the applicant will balance research and clinical time for the duration of the award.

G. LIST OF MENTORS' PREVIOUS TRAINEES

The list of the mentors' previous trainees is strictly limited to one page per mentor. Applications that exceed the page limitation will be deemed noncompliant and will not advance to review or receive consideration for an award.

Proposals must include a list of each mentor's previous trainees and their current positions (please indicate if there are none). Ideally, all trainees should be included; however, for mentors that have extensive records of previous trainees that may exceed one page in length, it is acceptable to list only the most notable trainees by name and position, and then annotate the remaining trainees numerically.

H. MENTOR BIOSKETCH

An NIH-style biosketch is required for each mentor, limited to five pages each. Biosketches that exceed the page limitation will be deemed noncompliant and will not advance to review or receive consideration for an award. Failure to include a biosketch for the indicated primary mentor(s) will result in automatic noncompliant status, and s will not advance to review or receive consideration for an award.

I. PROPOSAL AGREEMENT FORM

The Proposal Agreement Form may be downloaded from the Download Templates & Instructions section in ProposalCentral. All information should be typed into the Proposal Agreement Form: illegible information will not be accepted. This form must be completed in its entirety, including all necessary signatures from key personnel and the institutional representative, and submitted prior to the proposal deadline: inclusion of a fully executed form at the letter of intent submission deadline is preferred. Proposals omitting the Proposal Agreement Form and/or forms not fully executed will be deemed noncompliant and will not advance to review or receive consideration for an award. Primary mentors are required to describe their involvement in the development of the proposal. Applicants must provide contact information for a grant administrator who is responsible for receiving award payments.

J. RESEARCH PROJECT ABSTRACT

The Research Project Abstract document is strictly limited to one page. Applications that exceed the page limitation will be deemed noncompliant and will not advance to review or receive consideration for an award. Abstract documents should summarize the following elements of the proposed research project and training under the following headings:

- Problem to Be Addressed
- Specific Aims and Experimental Design
- Mentoring Plan
- Potential Impact of Project on Urologic Research and on the Applicant's Career Development

The Research Project Abstract submitted as a proposal attachment is not synonymous with the project abstract required in the online application form: the latter is meant to capture an abbreviated abstract (i.e., 1,500-character limit at the Letter of Intent stage, 3,000-character limit at the proposal stage). While not synonymous, the Research Project Abstract document should be closely aligned with the abstract submitted in the online form.

K. RESEARCH PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Research Project Description is strictly limited to eight pages, inclusive of figures and tables. References cited page(s) and abbreviation/acronyms lists do not count against the page limit and are uploaded as a separate document in ProposalCentral. Applications that exceed the page limitation will be deemed noncompliant and will not advance to review or receive consideration for an award.

Section 1: Specific Aims (suggested length: one page)

Briefly introduce the problem to be addressed, providing the major reasons why this is an important problem to study. Define the major hypothesis to be tested and list the specific aims proposed to test the hypothesis. Summarize the experiments proposed and explain how they will address the aims of the proposal.

Section 2: Background (suggested length: two pages)

Describe the background of the problem to be addressed, citing the appropriate literature. Introduce the subject area of the research, including sufficient background material to place the project in scientific perspective. Ensure that the significance of the scientific problem to be addressed and the potential impact of the research are clearly described.

Section 3: Supporting Data (suggested length: two and a half pages)

Provide any preliminary data pertinent to the proposed experiments. Present either research data that the applicant has generated or data that has been generated by the laboratory of the mentor(s) and is related to the proposal. Unpublished data or published data (with references) may be included. It is recommended that no more than three to four figures be used. The data in this section should support the major hypothesis of the proposed work.

Section 4: Experimental Plan (suggested length: two and a half pages)

Describe each proposed experiment in enough detail that reviewers can determine the feasibility of the methods and how they will address the hypothesis. For each experiment, outline the rationale for doing the experiment, possible anticipated results, and the approaches that will be used for data analysis and statistical interpretation, as appropriate. Briefly describe alternative experimental approaches should the initial approaches prove unsuccessful.

L. LETTERS FROM COLLABORATORS

Collaborator letters of support (e.g., for promised materials or other research support) are not required for this award; however, if applicable, they are permitted. These letters are not confidential, and the applicant is responsible for uploading them into ProposalCentral by the proposal deadline.

M. DIVERSITY, EQUITY, & INCLUSION STATEMENT

The applicant Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (DEI) Statement is limited to one paragraph. Please briefly share your views on diversifying the field of urologic research, and the field of urology more broadly. Describe your interests in contributing to this effort. What are some of the ways you have considered or worked toward greater diversity, equity, inclusion as it relates to your research? If you have not had direct experience in this area, please share your aspirations." If applicable to your proposed research plan, describe how your project addresses issues related to DEI in urology or inequity in urologic healthcare delivery.

III. LETTER OF INTENT AND FULL PROPOSAL SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

A. LETTER OF INTENT

After creating a ProposalCentral account and logging into the system, the applicant can locate the Research Scholar Award program by clicking on the "Grant Opportunities" tab and searching for the American Urological Association as the Grant Maker. The letter of intent can be accessed by clicking the "Apply Now" button. Letter of intent sections are

listed below with additional guidance on how to complete each section. Applicants are responsible for ensuring the accuracy and completeness of all materials, and that materials are received in full before the letter of intent deadline.

1. Title Page

- Provide a title for your proposal (do not use all capital letters).
- Indicate number of years the award is intended to support.

2. Download Templates & Instructions

- Proposal Agreement Form – This form must be completed in its entirety, including all necessary signatures and contact information. Submitting a fully executed form at the letter of intent deadline is preferred, however it must be submitted with the full proposal.
- Biosketch Template – This is a reference document to assist applicants in completing a biosketch.

3. Enable Other Users to Access this Proposal

- This section enables applicants to give other users access to the letter of intent: it is not required to do so. Please note that key personnel given access will be able to access any provided peer review summary critiques.

4. Applicant/PI

- Applicants will need to toggle between their “Professional Profile” in ProposalCentral and sections of the letter of intent to reference and complete the required information.
- ORCID Identifier – In accordance with the NIH policy requiring ORCID iDs from all applicants beginning October 2020 “to simplify applicant reporting and improve the tracking of career outcomes”, all Urology Care Foundation award mechanisms will also require applicants to provide ORCID iDs. Applicants can register for ORCID iDs at <https://orcid.org/>.

5. Eligibility

- AUA Section Information – Applicants should select the AUA Section in which the proposed research will be conducted.
 - i. Applicants who intend to conduct their research at an institution within the state of New York, New Jersey, or Pennsylvania should reference the institution’s zip code to select the appropriate Section (see <https://www.AUAnet.org/membership/who-we-are/aua-sections-and-demographics>).
- Award Track Information – Applicants are required to complete the requested information relevant to award track eligibility. Please contact the AUA Office of Research to confirm your eligibility and application track.

6. Institution & Contacts

- Applicants should confirm that the Lead Institution is correct and are required to indicate an Institutional Representative or Signing Official for their proposal.

7. Key Personnel

- Applicants are required to identify their mentor(s) and additional letter of support writers for the proposed project. These individuals should be the same as those who will be writing the required confidential letters of support; however, this section does not prompt them to submit their required letters of support (see *Section III, Subsection B: Full Proposal*).
- Applicants also have the option to identify any collaborators on the proposed project.

8. Project Information

- Applicants are required to provide a brief description of the proposed project. This information is used to assist AUA Office of Research staff in peer review planning. It will not enter into the review of a subsequent full proposal.

9. Upload Attachments Here

- Applicants are required to upload their biosketch as a portable document file (PDF).

10. Validate

- This section will check for any required information or files missing from the letter of intent.

11. Preview Letter of Intent

- Signature of the generated title page is not required. Please disregard this guidance.

12. Submit

B. FULL PROPOSAL

After administrative review of the letter of intent, the AUA Office of Research will grant applicants access to the full proposal submission portal. Much of the full proposal submission will be populated with information provided in the letter of intent. The proposal sections are listed below with additional guidance on how to complete each section. Applicants are responsible for ensuring the accuracy and completeness of all materials, and that materials are received in full before the proposal deadline.

1-6. Title Page, Download Templates, Enable Other Users to Access this Proposal, Applicant/PI, Eligibility

7. Key Personnel

- Applicants have the option of adding/removing key personnel who were previously included in the letter of intent.

8. Confidential Letters of Support

- This section enables the applicants to invite their mentor(s) and additional letter of support writers (letter writers) to complete and submit their required letters of support through ProposalCentral. Applicants should complete this immediately upon gaining access to the full proposal.
- Applicants may resend the invitation to individual letter writers and track whether the letters have been received. All letters of support must be received before the proposal deadline for the proposal to be considered for funding.

9. Project Information

- Applicants are required to provide a lay and technical abstract for the proposed project. By submitting the full proposal, the applicant gives consent for the use of the abstracts in Urology Care Foundation or AUA publications, advertising, fundraising, or other media activities.

10. Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Statement

- Applicants are required to provide a one-paragraph Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Statement.

11. Budget Detail

- Applicants are required to provide an annual, itemized budget for the one- or two-year research award, not to exceed a total of \$40,000 per year in Urology Care Foundation funds. Do not exceed the funding totals per year.
- Institutional matching funds or cost-sharing is reported separately through the Budget Justification of Other Funding upload document.

12. Budget Summary

- Applicants are required to provide a budget justification narrative for each line-item expense.

13. Other Research Support

- Applicants are required to report any other pending or awarded grants for the proposed research project and describe how those funds will be allocated differently than the funding provided by the Research Scholar Award.

14. Upload Attachments Here

- The applicant must upload all proposal components as portable document files (PDFs) with each component adhering to its specific page limitation.

15. Validate

- This section will check for any required information or files missing from the full proposal.

16. Print Full Application with Uploads

- No action is required in this section.

17. Submit

IV. PROPOSAL REVIEW INFORMATION

A. PROPOSAL REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

Proposals are evaluated by an independent peer review panel of expert physician-scientists and researchers. Each proposal is considered according to established criteria for determining merit as described below.

All review processes are conducted confidentially to maintain the integrity of the selection process. Peer reviewers agree to a nondisclosure statement that all proposal and evaluation information will not be disclosed outside the peer review panel. Violations of confidentiality can result in the voiding of peer review results and other corrective actions. In addition, the applicant, mentor(s), and other individuals involved in or otherwise standing to benefit from the proposal's funding are prohibited from contacting persons involved in the review process to gain protected evaluation information or to influence the evaluation process. Violations of these prohibitions will result in the disqualification of the proposal.

Following the completion of peer review and from the pool of proposals deemed fundable, the most highly meritorious proposals will be matched to available awards. Given the complexity of this process and the various stipulations of each award, along with programmatic considerations, it must be understood that the highest scoring proposals may not be automatically funded; however, every effort is made to support all proposals with the highest merit. All funding decisions are at the sole discretion of the AUA Office of Research and approved by the AUA Research Council Chair.

B. REVIEW CRITERIA

All proposals will be evaluated against the following review criteria:

Applicant

- To what degree the applicant's achievements (e.g., awards, honors, publications) indicate the applicant's potential for a successful career in urologic research.
- To what degree the applicant's stated career goals and letters of support indicate a strong commitment to pursuing urologic research throughout the applicant's career.
- Whether the applicant's proposed level of effort is appropriate for successful training and completion of the proposed work.

Mentor(s)

- To what degree the mentor or mentoring team demonstrates strong for both the research project and the applicant.
- To what degree the letter of support from each mentor includes a realistic time frame for the applicant's research project.
- To what degree the mentor or mentoring team has the require expertise and track record, especially in relation to urologic disease research, to provide sufficient scientific guidance and oversight for the research project and training.

- To what degree the preparation of the proposal demonstrates appropriate guidance from the mentor(s).

Institution

- To what degree the institution provides a training environment with ongoing urologic disease research that will promote the development of the applicant.

Research Project

- To what degree the research project is appropriately designed and will provide the applicant with a research experience and training to promote the development of a successful career in urologic research.
- To what degree the experimental plan is appropriately designed to achieve the aims of the project and achieve them within the proposed time frame. Expected results, potential obstacles and alternative strategies should be discussed.
- Whether there is evidence that the applicant is contributing intellectually to the proposed project, either technically or conceptually, as opposed to simple inclusion in ongoing projects of the mentor(s).
- To what degree the proposed project is likely to help the applicant transition into a more advanced academic position.
- To what degree the proposal is well organized, clearly presented, and suggests the applicant's ability to think clearly and to present an argument in a logical, compelling way.
- To what degree the research project has an appropriate budget to support the applicant and his or her proposed studies.

Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Statement

- Reviewers will be asked to evaluate the extent to which the applicant's DEI statement adequately reflects the intent of the AUA's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- This review criterion will not affect the overall impact score of an application but may be considered when determining appropriate alignment of the grant portfolio with DEI goals as outlined by the AUA and Urology Care Foundation.

C. NOTIFICATION OF PROPOSAL REVIEW RESULTS

Research Scholar Award applicants will be notified of funding decisions through ProposalCentral and/or in writing via email. To prevent emails from the proposal submission system from being identified as spam, it is strongly recommended to add pcsupport@altum.com to your address book or safe sender list. Please note that results will not be given over the phone.

Applicants selected for funding must:

- Send an email to grantsmanager@AUAnet.org to confirm or decline the award within 48 hours.
- Submit a high-quality headshot (file size typically ≥ 1 MB) in professional dress or laboratory/white coat via ProposalCentral within a week of accepting the award. With the submission of this photo, the applicant thus gives consent for its use in Urology Care Foundation or AUA publications, advertising, fundraising, or other media activities.
- Confirm AUA membership and provide proof of membership (where applicable) to any award sponsor organization within a week of accepting the award.

D. NOTICE OF AWARD

For applicants selected for funding, a Notice of Award letter will be issued prior to the first payment to notify the awardee, primary mentor, and institutional representatives that an award has been made and to specify the terms and conditions of the award.

The Urology Care Foundation and the sponsors for their award programs do not assume responsibility for the conduct of the activities that the award supports, or for the acts of the award recipient, because both are under the direction and control of the award recipient's institution and subject to its medical and scientific policies.

V. AWARD REQUIREMENTS

A. REGULATORY APPROVALS AND EXEMPTIONS

1. INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (IRB)

Awardees must provide a letter of approval or exemption from the local IRB if activities involving human subjects are planned during the proposed research. IRB letters of approval or exemption are not required at the time of proposal submission. Should the proposal be selected for funding, the award will be contingent upon receipt of a copy of the current IRB approval or exemption letter by the AUA Office of Research. Documentation should be submitted through the proposal submission system. If IRB approval or exemption for the project is not obtained within 90 days of the award performance period start date, the Urology Care Foundation reserves the right to terminate the award.

2. INSTITUTIONAL ANIMAL CARE AND USE COMMITTEE (IACUC)

Awardees must submit a letter of approval or exemption by the IACUC if activities involving vertebrate animals are planned during the research. IACUC letters of approval or exemption are not required at the time of proposal submission. Should the proposal be selected for funding, the award will be contingent upon receipt of a copy of the current IACUC approval or exemption letter by the AUA Office of Research. Documentation should be submitted through the proposal submission system. If IACUC approval or exemption for the project is not obtained within 90 days of the award performance period start date, the Urology Care Foundation reserves the right to terminate the award.

B. REPORTING

Failure to adhere to reporting requirements and/or provide appropriate documentation may result in a delay in payments of other awards to the institution or suspension of the awardee, mentor(s), or institution from eligibility for subsequent Urology Care Foundation funding opportunities. Unless approved by the Urology Care Foundation, failure to complete the duration of the research period will result in repayment of unspent funds to the Urology Care Foundation.

1. PUBLIC ACCESS PUBLISHING AND SHARING OF GRANT INFORMATION

All Urology Care Foundation awardees are subject to a public access policy. In addition, the AUA is a member of the Health Research Alliance (HRA)—a national consortium of non-governmental, nonprofit funders of biomedical research and training—and has agreed to deposit grant information in the HRA database of privately funded grants, HRA Reporter.

The AUA and its Urology Care Foundation reserve the right to include information relating to the grant (such as the grantee name and project title) in materials issued by or on behalf of the AUA and Urology Care Foundation, including periodic reports, newsletters or news releases, the website, or in any other materials issued by or on behalf of the AUA and the Urology Care Foundation. The following award information will be provided to the HRA Reporter database and may be shared with the public: investigator name, degrees, clinical specialty if applicable, institution, project title, abstract, grant start date and duration, grant amount and ORCID iD of the investigator if applicable. HRA aggregates these data for its member organizations and for periodic publication.

2. AWARDEE PROGRESS REPORTS

Interim Report

Two-year awardees are required to submit an interim progress report and personal statement by June 1 of the first funding year to the AUA Office of Research via ProposalCentral. The second year of funding is contingent upon the receipt of a satisfactory progress report.

Final Report

Within 30 days after the end of the funding period awardees must submit a final report via ProposalCentral and include all information outlined in the Notice of Award.

3. PRIMARY MENTOR REPORTS

Interim Report

Interim mentor reports are applicable to awardees with multiple years of funding. The primary mentor interim report should be approximately one page and evaluate the scholar's performance, progress on the funded research, and any other information outlined in the Notice of Award. For MD awardees only, the mentor should describe how the awardee will allocate the research and clinical time for the remainder of the award period to maintain the required 50% level of effort. The mentor is responsible for uploading this report to ProposalCentral by June 1.

Final Report

The primary mentor final report should be approximately one page and evaluate the awardee's performance as well as detail the future career plan for the awardee. The mentor is responsible for uploading this report to ProposalCentral within 30 days after the funding period.

4. INSTITUTIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT (IAR)

Interim Report

Interim IAR requirements are applicable to awardees with multiple years of funding. An interim IAR must be submitted by institutional grant administrators no later than December 31 of each funding year via ProposalCentral. This report re-affirms that the institution is adhering to all terms of the award, especially the provisions of institutional support and level of effort requirements. Continued funding is contingent upon receipt of a satisfactory report.

Final Report

A final IAR must be submitted by institutional grant administrators via ProposalCentral no later 30 days of the end of the award funding period.

5. OUTCOMES REPORTING

Following the completion of the project period, the AUA Office of Research may contact previous awardees to collect additional award outcomes information including, but not limited to, publications, funding, invited speakerships and presentations, mentorship, and leadership positions within the AUA or affiliated organizations.

C. CHANGES TO CONTACT INFORMATION, PROJECT, PERSONNEL, INSTITUTION, OR FUNDING

Any changes impacting the research project (i.e., primary mentor, key personnel, host institution, available facilities, applicant contact information, etc.) that occur after the proposal submission deadline MUST be reported to the AUA Office of Research. The AUA Office of Research will review the situation and determine whether the submitted proposal may continue to peer review or must be withdrawn.

Urology Care Foundation mentored research awards are intended to support individual early-career urologic researchers showing significant promise. Requests to change the award applicant will result in automatic application withdrawal and/or award ineligibility. Requests for exemption will not be considered. All decisions made by the AUA Office of Research are final.

If the applicant accepts funding after applying to a Research Scholar Award, the awardee MUST contact the AUA Office of Research to discuss appropriate courses of action. The AUA Office of Research will review the competing funding and determine whether the submitted proposal may continue to peer review or must be withdrawn. If the awardee does not meet this requirement, applicants may be ineligible to apply for future Urology Care Foundation funding opportunities.

If the awardee is selected for any additional funding from organizations other than the Urology Care Foundation after being selected for a Research Scholar Award, the awardee MUST immediately contact the AUA Office of Research to discuss appropriate courses of action. If the awardee does not meet this requirement, return of any used or unused funds may be required.

E. PUBLICATION ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Awardees are required to send electronic copies of articles published based on Research Scholar Award-funded research to the AUA Office of Research at grantsmanager@AUAnet.org. Any publication or presentation arising from work supported in whole or in part by this award must include the following acknowledgment:

“This work was supported in part by the Urology Care Foundation Research Scholar Award Program and [SPONSOR NAME].”

F. AUA AND UROLOGY CARE FOUNDATION RESEARCH-RELATED ACTIVITIES

Each year, the AUA and the Urology Care Foundation host events designed to advance urologic research, especially for early-career investigators. These events are held during the AUA Annual Meeting and at AUA Headquarters in Linthicum, Maryland.

Research Scholar Award recipients are required to attend the Urology Care Foundation Research Honors Program & Reception held at the AUA Annual Meeting, where they will present the results of their research projects. The event will also provide opportunities to network with AUA and Urology Care Foundation leadership, other Foundation-supported research teams, and leaders in the field of urologic research. To off-set costs associated with attending this required event, Research Scholar Award recipients can apply for travel awards (see *Section VI: Scholar Travel Support Program*). Research Scholar Award recipients are highly encouraged to attend the following events and should refer to the Notice of Award and/or contact the Office of Research at research@auanet.org for additional information.

AUA Annual Meeting

- Basic Sciences Symposium
- Challenges for Urologic Research Symposium
- Early-Career Investigators Showcase
- Urologic Oncology Research Symposium

AUA Headquarters

- Early-Career Investigators Workshop
- Co-sponsored Research Symposia

G. SPONSORING ORGANIZATION EVENTS

Awardees may be asked to attend or present their research at events hosted by the sponsoring organization (e.g., AUA Section or sub-specialty). When possible, awardees are encouraged to make arrangements to do so.

VI. SCHOLAR TRAVEL SUPPORT PROGRAM

The Urology Care Foundation Scholar Travel Support Program is administered by the AUA Office of Research and is intended to provide opportunities for Urology Care Foundation-funded investigators to attend scientific or professional meetings relevant to urologic research. This program provides up to \$1,500 of travel support per award year for Research Scholar Award recipients to help cover costs associated with travel, food, lodging, registration fees, and childcare. Awardees should refer to the Notice of Award for information regarding travel support applications and limitations.

VII. CONTACT INFORMATION

Questions related to this Program Announcement or submission requirements should be directed to the AUA Office of Research. The preferred method of communication is email at grantsmanager@auanet.org. Phone calls, when necessary, may be directed to 410-689-3762. Assistance is typically available Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Eastern time. Please allow two business days for response time.