



# ASPIRE GRANTS

*A Supplement to Promote Inclusion for  
Research Excellence*

**2022-2023 Application Instructions**



Susan G. Komen®  
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Dallas, TX 75380  
Questions: [www.komen.org/researchhelpdesk](http://www.komen.org/researchhelpdesk)  
Website: [www.komen.org](http://www.komen.org)

## KEY DATES

|                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| Application System Opens: | September 1, 2022                                   |
| Applications Due:         | November 01, 2022, by 1 p.m., Eastern Standard Time |
| Award Notification:       | On or around April 15, 2023                         |

## PURPOSE OF AWARD:

This new Susan G. Komen grant is intended to enhance the diversity of the breast cancer research workforce by providing established breast cancer scientists with supplemental funding to support research trainees from communities historically minoritized and marginalized in research. By supporting these promising trainees early in their research careers, Komen seeks to ensure that a diverse group of highly trained scientists who reflect the communities we serve will emerge as the next generation of leaders in breast cancer research and end breast cancer forever.

## ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS/DESIGNATED RECIPIENTS

Applicants/PIs/Lead Mentors, Trainees and Institutions must conform to the following eligibility criteria to apply for a Grant Supplement. **Eligibility requirements must be met at the time of Application submission (November 01, 2022).**

### Applicant/PI/Lead Mentor

The Applicant/PI will serve as the Lead Mentor for the Trainee supported by this grant supplement. The primary purpose of the Lead Mentor is to provide the research, scientific, clinical, management, and leadership guidance necessary to foster the Trainee's career advancement and the successful development of the proposed research project. The Lead Mentor should be active in the field of breast cancer and committed both to the training and career development of the trainee and to the direct supervision of the Trainee's research.

- Must have a currently funded breast cancer research project that has undergone a rigorous peer review by Susan G. Komen, the Department of Defense, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) or the National Science Foundation (NSF).
- Funded project must have at least one year of grant funds remaining at the time of announcement of award (on or around April 15, 2023)
- Must hold a tenure-track faculty position at an institution in the United States with adequate spacing for an additional trainee
- Is not required to be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident
- May only submit ONE Application per funding cycle
- Must ensure that all past and current Komen-funded Grants are up to date and in compliance with all Komen requirements, e.g., progress report submissions, IRB approvals, etc. by the Application due date (November 01, 2022).

### Trainee supported by supplement grant

- Trainees supported with this supplement are from the following racial and ethnic groups that have been shown to be underrepresented in biomedical research from National Science Foundation data: Blacks or African Americans, Hispanics or Latinos, American Indians or Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islander. (<https://diversity.nih.gov/about-us/population-underrepresented>)
- Must be at the same institution as the Lead Mentor
- Must be able to devote at least 75% of full-time effort to breast cancer research and activities, i.e., protected research time.

- **Predoctoral and health professional students:**
  - Must be a full-time student working towards their degree and enrolled in a Ph.D., M.D./Ph.D., or any other research-intensive graduate degree.
  - At time of award activation must have completed qualifying exams and be in a research portion of their training programs (Ph.D., M.D./Ph.D., and any other research-intensive graduate degrees are eligible) where they can devote full-time effort to research activities and development as a breast cancer researcher.
- **Postdoctoral Fellows:**
  - Must have a doctoral degree, such as M.D., Ph.D., Dr.P.H., D.O., or equivalent.
  - Must have no more than 4 years of research training or experience since obtaining their doctoral degree (excluding clinical training or leaves of absence, e.g., maternity/paternity/sick leave) and the intention of pursuing an independent research career.
  - May not hold a faculty appointment
  - Medical Fellows must be on a research track with protected research time.

#### **Institution**

- Must be a non-profit institution in the United States
- May not be a governmental agency (e.g., NIH, NCI, etc.)
- Must agree to adhere to Komen’s Policies and Procedures for Research and Training Grants.

## **FUNDING INFORMATION AND GRANT TERM**

Applicants/PIs/Lead Mentors may request funding of up to \$80,000 per year (**direct costs only**) for one or two years depending on funds remaining for the PI’s funded breast cancer study and the trainee’s career level.

Applicants/PIs/Lead Mentors should take note of the following budget guidelines for the supplement grant budget.

In all cases:

- Equipment costs **ARE NOT** allowed.
- Professional membership fees **ARE NOT** allowed with this supplement to attend a scientific conference. However, membership fees **ARE** allowed to join a minority society groups, e.g., National Medical Association, Society of Black Academic Surgeons, Society for Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics, Native Americans in Science (SACNAS), etc.
- Publication costs and meeting-related poster printing costs **ARE** allowed for purposes specifically related to the proposed Research Project.
- Visa costs **ARE NOT** allowed.
- Indirect costs **ARE NOT** allowed. Indirect costs include all expenses not directly related to the conduct of the Research Project, including, but not limited to, allocated costs such as facilities, technology support, communication expenses, administrative support, etc.

***Predoctoral and Health Professional Students:*** This supplement grant shall be used to provide support for salary and fringe benefits in addition to other necessary expenses, such as travel, to enable the individual to participate as a graduate research assistant on a funded breast cancer research project. The annual stipend will follow and be in accordance with the Applicant’s institution. Fringe benefits are allowed in addition to salary and should be in accordance with the fringe benefits provided to other predoctoral students at the Applicant’s institution. Additional funds up to \$2,000 per year may be requested to support career development and travel for the trainee. The trainee must attend a national or international scientific conference during the term of the award.

***Individuals in Postdoctoral Training:*** Komen will provide support for salary and fringe benefits in addition to other necessary expenses, such as travel, to enable the candidate to participate as a postdoctoral research associate on the funded research project. The requested annual salary must be in accordance with the salary structure of the Applicant’s institution, consistent with the level of effort. Fringe benefits are allowed in addition to salary and should

be in accordance with the fringe benefits provided to other post-doctorates at the Applicant's institution. Additional funds up to \$3,000 per year may be requested to support career development and travel for the candidate. The trainee must attend a national or international scientific conference during the term of the award.

### **About Susan G. Komen®**

At Susan G. Komen®, we are **committed to saving lives** by meeting the most critical needs in our communities and investing in **breakthrough research to prevent and cure breast cancers**.

Since its founding in 1982, Komen has invested nearly \$1.1 billion in breast cancer research, supporting more than 2,700 research studies and more than 500 clinical trials.

We are determined to change the unacceptable reality that more than 44,000 people in the U.S. will die from breast cancer this year. We know we cannot do it alone and that it will only be accomplished through innovative research to find new ways to treat, detect and prevent metastatic and aggressive breast cancers, combined with a multifaceted approach to address the reasons why certain people and communities are more likely to die from this disease.

## **APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS**

**Required: Narrative that includes the following:**

### **Mentoring and Career Development Plan (1.5 pages)**

The Applicant/PI/Lead Mentor must submit a mentoring and career development plan that illustrates the proposed research training experience and includes the following elements:

A. The plan to develop the Trainee's research capabilities, including training or coursework to develop and master specific technical skills, on the responsible conduct of research and research reproducibility, on grantsmanship and science communication, etc. Please describe how the Trainee will become increasingly independent and include an anticipated timeline for publications, future grant applications, and other career milestones.

B. An assessment of the Trainee and why you have taken a mentorship role for them. Please describe the relationship of the research training plan to the Trainee's career goals and how you will use your knowledge and professional influence to promote the Trainee's technical progress and career advancement.

C. Other individuals who will provide expertise, leadership or support to train/mentor the Trainee including their names, degrees and titles and their contributions to the Trainee's research training and career development. **All Trainees are required to have at least one Patient Advocate Mentor.**

D. The scientific environment and other resources available for training and professional development (e.g., meetings, lecture series, seminars, grant writing workshops, etc.). The Applicant/Lead Mentor should indicate how many other trainees they are currently mentoring and time commitment devoted for mentoring.

### **Research Summary (0.5 page)**

Briefly summarize the funded breast cancer research project, including the research question being addressed and its significance to breast cancer patients that this supplement grant is linked. Provide a clear and concise outline of the hypothesis(es), specific aims, and potential advances in the field and potential impact of the research to breast cancer patients, if successful. Please include the funder and grant term.

### **Trainee Statement of Commitment (1 page)**

A Statement of Commitment written and signed by the Trainee on Institution Letterhead, including:

- Brief overview of Trainee's expertise, prior training and research experience and accomplishments
- Description of Trainee's career goals and how conducting this research with support of the ASPIRE Grant

- will help Trainee achieve those goals and further their career development
- Brief summary of the Trainee's prior experience working with Patient Advocates, if any, and how they will work with the Patient Advocate Mentor(s) in the proposed project.
- Statement about what drives the Trainee's interest in breast cancer.

**Required: Mentor Biosketch - please include mentoring experience**

**Required: Trainee Biosketch**

**Required: Patient Advocate Letter of Support (1 page)**

A signed Letter of Support must be submitted by the named Patient Advocate Mentor(s) describing their role and commitment to the proposed project.

- Describe the Patient Advocate Mentor(s)'s relevant experience and qualifications as a breast cancer patient advocate.
- Explain the active role that the Patient Advocate Mentor will have on the project and in the Trainee's career development
- If applicable, describe any previous experience the Patient Advocate Mentor may have with research or research proposals.

Komen is happy to offer a previously recorded webinar that was hosted by members of [Komen's Advocates in Science](#) on *How Advocates and Researchers can Work Together on Komen Funded Research*. Please [view](#) this webinar for tips on how to involve patient advocates as you develop your research proposal and plan the research objectives.

For assistance in identifying trained advocates for your Application or to discuss including a Patient Advocate Mentor in the proposed Research Project, contact [advocatesinscience@komen.org](mailto:advocatesinscience@komen.org).

**Required: Letter from the Institution confirming commitment to support the Trainee, and statement that Trainee meets eligibility requirement. (1 page)**

- For predoctoral students this letter should come from the chair of the department the student is a PhD candidate in or the director of the training program for students.
- For postdoctoral or medical fellows, this letter should come from the chair of the department where their mentor resides.

**Required: Budget and Budget Justification (1 page)**

**Required: Other sources of funding/other support page (1 page)**

- Please include title, funder, role, amount, and grant terms for other support.

## **APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS**

Each Application will be reviewed by a panel of scientists with appropriate expertise and patient advocates that will assess the strengths and weaknesses of each application based on the defined review criteria, described below.

Applications that are deemed most meritorious will proceed to discussion and final scoring by the Peer Review Committee, facilitated by the Chairperson. Applications that are non-competitive will be triaged and will not be discussed or receive a final score. The Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) reviews the results of peer review and issues a recommendation for funding to Komen Leadership. It is important to note that the SAB does not conduct a re-review of individual Grant Applications, but rather focuses on the most highly ranked applications and their alignment with Komen's strategic objectives. Komen Leadership approves the final slate of research projects to be funded.

## APPLICATION REVIEW CRITERIA

The goal of this grant mechanism is to enhance the diversity of the breast cancer research workforce by providing established breast cancer scientists with supplemental funding to support research trainees from communities historically minoritized and marginalized in research. Komen hopes these supplemental funds allow for the diversification of the STEM field in breast cancer research while also providing training of individuals that emerge as the next generation of leaders in breast cancer research.

The Application will be reviewed using the following criteria:

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Mentoring and Career Development Plan and Scientific Environment</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Is the research project breast cancer aligned and appropriate for the Trainee given their academic background, experience, and career interests?</li><li>• Is the mentor capable with the needed experience to direct the proposed research training experience?</li><li>• Is there familiarity with the Trainee’s career and developmental goals and a comprehensive plan to support those goals and the Trainee’s research and career development?</li><li>• Is the training environment present to facilitate the success of the Trainee?</li><li>• Are the resources, including adequate funding and institutional support, available to the Trainee?</li></ul> |
| <b>Trainee Development Potential</b>                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Does the Trainee demonstrate excellent potential for a research career and is there interest in breast cancer research?</li></ul>   |

## APPLICATION SUBMISSION

### Administrative Requirements

Applicants/PIs must follow the Application Submission Instructions, including page limitations, submission of required application materials, and format guidelines such as the prescribed font and margin size. All application materials must be in English and must be submitted online in the proposalCENTRAL system. No paper applications or applications sent by email will be accepted.

**Failure to adhere to these instructions will result in applications being administratively withdrawn from consideration prior to peer review, with no opportunity for appeal.**

### Application Deadline

Applications must be completed by 1 pm EST (U.S.) on **Tuesday, November 01, 2022** using the proposalCENTRAL website at <https://proposalcentral.altum.com>.

Applicants/PIs are strongly encouraged to complete, review, and submit their applications with sufficient time to allow for technical difficulties, varying time zones, human error, loss of power/internet, sickness, travel, etc. Applicants/PIs may review their submissions for accuracy until the application submission deadline.

Extensions to the Application submission deadline will not be granted to allow for lateness, corrections, or submissions of missing information, with the rare exception made for severe extenuating circumstances at the sole discretion of Komen.

### Getting started in proposalCENTRAL

To start an application , go to <https://proposalcentral.altum.com/default.asp>. If you are a new user of proposalCENTRAL, follow the “Need an account?” link under the login section and complete the registration process.

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If you are already registered with proposalCENTRAL, login at <https://proposalcentral.altum.com/default.asp> with your username and password. If you have forgotten your password, click on the “Forgot your password?” link. Provide your email address in the space provided; your username and password will be sent to you by email.

Once you are logged in, please click the “Professional Profile” tab at the top (green tab fourth from left). Please complete steps 1-9 or update with current information. Your name, degrees, title and institution for the LOI will be pulled from this page in proposalCENTRAL.

To start a Application, select the “Grant Opportunities” tab (gray tab second to the right). A list of applications will be displayed. Find “**Susan G. Komen ASPIRE**” and click the “Apply Now” link (second to last column) to create your Application.

## Application Sections

The following information is required to submit a complete Application. Numbers correspond to the application sections found on the left side of the proposalCENTRAL website.

### 1. TITLE PAGE

Enter the title of the research project directly into the proposalCENTRAL system. The title is limited to no more than 81 characters in length (including spaces). Do not use abbreviations or all capital letters. A project title must be entered and saved before additional sections become accessible.

### 2. DOWNLOAD TEMPLATES & INSTRUCTIONS

You must download and complete the following templates for supporting documents:

- I. Application Narrative
- II. Biosketch Template
- III. Budget Justification Template

Use your word processing software (e.g., Microsoft Word) to complete the templates on your computer and then convert the templates to PDF format. You do not need to be connected to the internet or proposalCENTRAL while working on the templates.

Upload the completed template files to your online application. See page 9 for instructions on how to upload the completed templates.

### 3. ENABLE OTHER USERS TO ACCESS THIS PROPOSAL

Optional but if a person is added in this section, they must be a registered user in proposalCENTRAL before you can grant access to your Application.

### 4. ACCEPT PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

### 5. APPLICANT/PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR (PI)

This information will pre-populate from the Professional Profile Page. If any changes need to be made to the Applicant/Principal Investigator (PI) information, click the green Professional Profile tab or the blue Edit Professional Profile button.

The Principal Investigator must include an **ORCID identifier**. ORCID (Open Researcher and Contributor ID) is a non-proprietary alphanumeric code to uniquely identify scientific and other academic authors. You can register for an ORCID at any time: <http://orcid.org/>.

Please include any other name you may be known by professionally on the Applicant/PI page. **This information is required to Validate the application.** If not applicable, please enter N/A.

## 6. APPLICANT/PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR (PI) DEMOGRAPHICS

Complete the required fields for Gender, Race, and Ethnicity in proposalCENTRAL. These collected data are for internal reporting purposes.

## 7. INSTITUTION & CONTACTS

Enter information regarding the Primary Institution, Signing Official, and Financial Officer directly into proposalCENTRAL system. If institutional information is incorrect, contact the person listed on the page or proposalCENTRAL.

## 8. KEY PERSONNEL

**Do not list the PI as Key Personnel in this section.**

Please list the Trainee, and Patient Advocate Mentor(s) who are integral to the execution of the research plan.

**Each Key Person must have a level of effort listed in proposalCENTRAL (0-100%).** Patient Advocate Mentors may list 0% effort. Please note: Salary support is only allowed for the Trainee and please indicate if the trainee is a graduate student or postdoctoral fellow.

Add new contacts by entering the email address of the Key Person you wish to add. Click Add Contact button. Add Key Personnel information for the person selected. Select the appropriate Role from the dropdown. Enter the percent effort proposed for this Key Person on this project. When entering contact information, do not use personal addresses for the Key Person.

***Biosketches are required for the Applicant/Lead Mentor and for the Trainee. All Patient Advocate Mentors are considered key personnel but may submit their Letter of Support in place of a biosketch.***

## 9. BUDGET

Budget amounts must be entered online in the Budget Period Detail section in proposalCENTRAL

Applicants/Pis/Lead Mentors may request funding of up to \$80,000 per year (**direct costs only**) for one or two years depending on funds remaining for the Applicant's/PI's/Lead Mentor's funded breast cancer study and the Trainee's career level.

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- Publication costs and meeting-related poster printing costs **ARE** allowed for purposes specifically related to the proposed Research Project.
- Visa costs **ARE NOT** allowed.
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In the Budget Period Detail, click on the appropriate Budget Period button at the top of the page. Please enter a Period 1 (Year 1) start date of 8/1/2023 and ending 7/31/2024 – **this is NOT the official start date, but simply a placeholder to enter your Budget.**



Click the blue Save button located at either the top or bottom of the page to save your entry.

- In the Personnel Cost section, type “Total Stipends and Other Personnel Costs” to add one line for all Stipends and Other Personnel Costs, as applicable. This line item is not required but is an option for Institutions that must report Stipends separate from Salary.
- Follow the above steps for the next period if requesting a second year of funding and the Lead Mentor/PIs funding allows for a second year, i.e., Period 2 (8/1/2024 – 7/31/2025).

### **Budget Justification Instructions**

Sufficient justification of proposed expenditures must be uploaded to the Narrative and Other Attachments section of proposalCENTRAL, using the Budget Justification template provided. Do NOT use the text boxes provided in this section of proposalCENTRAL. Exact amounts should be indicated in the budget justification for each year of the Grant and should match amounts indicated in proposalCENTRAL.

### **10. BUDGET SUMMARY**

Budget entries from Budget Period Detail sections will automatically populate the table in this section

### **11. ORGANIZATION ASSURANCES**

The assurances/certifications on this page are made and verified by the signature of the institutional official signing the application. If funded, IRB, IACUC and/or Institutional Biosafety Committee approvals (as applicable) for the existing research project must be submitted to Komen within six months of Notification of Intent to Fund. Awarded Grants will not be initiated prior to receipt and approval of all required Organizational Assurances.

### **12. UPLOAD NARRATIVE AND OTHER ATTACHMENTS**

Completed templates and supporting documents must be converted to PDF prior to upload to the proposalCENTRAL system and must not be password or security protected or they may not convert properly. The following documents need to be uploaded:

- **Narrative template**
- **Mentor Biosketch**
- **Trainee Biosketch**
- **Patient Advocate Letter of Support**
- **Letter from the institution confirming commitment to support the Trainee, and statement that trainee meets eligibility requirement**
- **Budget and Budget Justification**
- **Other sources of funding/other support page**

Once you have converted your documents to PDF files, the next step is to upload the files to your online Application.

- Make certain that the converted PDF files are closed on your computer.
- Select Section 7 Attach Supporting Documents. Select the “Attach Files” button.
- Enter the information below for each of the required documents examples for the narrative, biosketch, and letter of institutional support given below.
  - o Narrative
    - Describe Attachment Field - Enter “*your last name\_Narrative*”, e.g. Smith\_Narrative.
    - Select Appropriate Attachment Type – Narrative
  - o Applicant/Lead Mentor/PI Biosketch
    - Describe Attachment Field – Enter “*your last name\_Biosketch*”, e.g. Smith\_Biosketch.
    - Select Appropriate Attachment Type – Applicant/Lead Mentor/PI Biosketch.
  - o Letter of Institutional Support
    - Describe Attachment Field – Enter “*your last name\_Letter of Institutional Support*”, e.g. Smith\_Letter of Institutional Support.
    - Select Appropriate Attachment Type – Letter of Institutional Support

- Click on the “click here to browse” button to select the file from your computer.
- The “Choose File” dialog box opens for you to search for the template file on your computer’s hard disk or local area network.
- Select the file and click “Open.”
- The file location and name will display in the window.
- Click on the “Upload and Continue” button. You will get a confirmation message on your screen that the file was uploaded successfully. You will also see that your file is now listed in the “Uploaded Attachment” section of the screen. You can view your file by clicking the download button to the left of the File Name Open and review your uploaded file. Click the “Back” Button to take you to the Section 7 Main Screen. To delete the file, click the Delete button to the far right, then click yes. Continue this process until all the needed and required documents for the Application are uploaded into proposalCENTRAL.

### 13. VALIDATE

Validate the application on proposalCENTRAL. This is an essential step. An application that has not been validated cannot be submitted. “Validate” checks for required data and required attachments. You will not be able to submit if all the required data and attachments have not been provided.

### 14. SIGNATURE PAGES

After successfully passing the validate check you are ready to complete the signature page. The Applicant/PI will sign the application from the Signature Page. The Financial Officer and Institution Signing Official will then sign into proposalCENTRAL from their respective accounts and sign the application.

**Note:** Data that you entered in the other sections of the proposal are automatically included in the signature pages. If information is missing in the signature pages, it could be because you have not entered the information in one of the proposal sections OR the information is not required for this Grant program. If the institution’s Employer Identification Number (EIN) is not completed on the signature page, please request your institution to provide that information in their proposalCENTRAL profile.

### 15. SUBMIT

After successfully passing the validate check and completing the signature pages, click the “Submit” link. An email will be sent to you confirming your submission.

Once your application is submitted you may view it by accessing the “Submitted” link under the Manage Proposals tab. You may need to refresh your browser screen after submitting the application to see the updated status.

### QUESTIONS?

Contact information for all inquiries regarding application submission is provided below.

| <b>Type of Inquiry:</b>  | <b>Contacts:</b>   |
|--|--|
| All <b>programmatic</b> inquiries (including questions related to eligibility, program requirements, Komen policies and procedures, etc.)                            | Komen Research Programs Help Desk<br>Questions? <a href="http://www.komen.org/researchhelpdesk">www.komen.org/researchhelpdesk</a>   |
| All technical inquiries related to the online application system, proposalCENTRAL (including questions related to system access, navigation, document uploads, etc.) | Altum/proposalCENTRAL<br>Email: <a href="mailto:pcsupport@altum.com">pcsupport@altum.com</a><br>Phone: 1-800-875-2562 (Toll-free within the United States and Canada), or 1-703-964-5840 (International) |