



Request for Applications

2024 ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPLEMENT TO PROMOTE DIVERSITY IN LUPUS RESEARCH

up to \$30,000 over 2 years

CONTENTS

Background.....	1
Program Description.....	1
Eligibility.....	1
Award Amount and Period of Support.....	2
Key Dates.....	2
Application Instructions.....	2
Evaluation Criteria.....	5
LRA Mentorship Resources.....	5
Inquiries.....	6

BACKGROUND

The Lupus Research Alliance (LRA) is the largest private funder of lupus research worldwide. The organization aims to transform lupus treatment while advancing towards a cure by funding cutting-edge, innovative research and fostering diverse scientific talent. Addressing the challenges of lupus requires a talented and tenacious workforce capable of decoding the inherent complexity of the disease and devising innovative medicines. To harness the collective power of diverse minds and address the underrepresentation of specific groups in lupus research, the LRA has developed the Diversity in Lupus Research (DLR) Program to promote an outstanding diverse scientific pool of lupus research professionals.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The LRA Administrative Supplement to Promote Diversity in Lupus Research (“Diversity Supplement”) provides up to \$30,000 for up to two years to promising trainees working with LRA-funded researchers or lupus investigators supported by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), Department of Defense (DOD), or equivalent grants in good standing.

ELIGIBILITY

A **principal investigator (PI)** or “**sponsor**” must have an active LRA grant or currently hold an NIH, DOD, or equivalent grant in good standing that addresses major challenges in lupus research, including genetic causes of lupus and disease mechanisms, novel

targets and pathways, or novel treatment approaches and technologies. There must be at least one year of grant funding remaining at the time of application to be eligible to apply. The principal investigator should be committed to the goal of advancing ethnic and racial equity in lupus research by providing mentored research experiences for eligible trainees. There is no citizenship requirement; however, the proposed research must be performed in a US- or Canada-based institution.

An eligible **trainee** is defined as a person who self-identifies as a member of a racial or ethnic group underrepresented in the science and engineering fields compared to their representation in the US population. For the purposes of this grant mechanism, these racial and ethnic groups are Blacks or African Americans, Hispanics or Latinos, Indigenous American Indians or Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians, and other Pacific Islanders. Trainees should either be 1) currently enrolled in a science-focused bachelor's, master's, or other advanced degree program at an accredited institution or 2) be within two years of having completed a bachelor's, master's, or other advanced degree (PhD, MD). Prior research experience is not required, but the trainee should have an interest in lupus.

No more than two Diversity Supplements can be awarded for each Parent Grant.

AWARD AMOUNT AND PERIOD OF SUPPORT

Eligible PIs can request a maximum of \$30,000 (up to \$15,000 for pre-doctoral trainees or up to \$30,000 for post-doctoral trainees) over one or two years, as long as the parent grant is active.

KEY DATES

RFA Release: January 29, 2024

Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis until October 10, 2024.

Applicants will be notified of the approval timeline after application submission.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis until 11:59pm US ET on the stated deadline. Applications must be submitted electronically, via [ProposalCentral](#). Applications will not be accepted via any other means.

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 proposed project. If the PI has an active LRA grant, select the proposal for that grant from the dropdown menu. If the PI does not have an

active LRA grant, please provide the grant title, the funding agency, the grant number, and the funding period. Indicate whether the application for the supplement is a resubmission.

2. **Download Templates & Instructions:** The Request for Applications and Research Plan Template can be downloaded from this page.
3. **Enable Other Users to Access this Proposal:** Enter the information for any other users who will need to work on the application.
4. **Applicant/PI:** The PI's information is pre-loaded with the contact information from their ProposalCentral profile. Click the Edit Professional Profile button if any changes need to be made. Upload a standard [NIH Biosketch](#).
5. **Institution & Contacts:** The lead institution will be pre-loaded with the PI's institution. Enter the requested information for the Signing Official and Financial Officer.
6. **Trainee:** Provide the requested information for the PI's trainee and upload a standard [NIH Biosketch](#) for the trainee.
7. **Letter of Reference:** Enter an e-mail address for the referee submitting a letter of reference. One letter of reference is required. The letter should describe the scientific abilities and potential of the trainee. This letter is confidential and will not be released to the PI or the trainee. The letter of reference is uploaded directly by the referee to ProposalCentral. Please be aware that an application cannot be submitted without the letter of reference.
8. **Parent Grant Abstract:** LRA-funded PIs should provide a half-page summary that includes the specific aims of the funded parent grant. PIs holding an NIH, DOD, or equivalent grant should provide a two-page synopsis detailing grant aims, significance, innovation, approach, and how the results of the parent grant research are expected to impact the lupus patient community.
9. **Budget Period Details:** Enter the budget periods for each year of the grant and complete the budget information for each budget period. Please keep the following in mind:
 - The Diversity Supplement will be supported for up to US\$15,000 for pre-doctoral trainees or up to \$30,000 for post-doctoral trainees over one or two years.
 - Funds may be used for the salary and fringe benefits of the trainee and appropriate research costs.
 - Funds may not be used for tuition, personal computers, or major laboratory equipment.
 - The LRA follows the NIH salary limitation guidelines for post-doctoral fellows and graduate students.

- Trainees are expected to attend LRA's annual scientific meeting, Forum for Discovery. Travel funds of up to US\$2,000 must be used to pay for all travel expenses related to attending Forum for Discovery meetings.
- Indirect costs are not allowed.

10. **Budget Summary & Justification:** A detailed budget justification, limited to 5,000 characters, must be provided. The justification should outline the proposed expenses and their relevance to the trainee's mentored research experience.

11. **Research Plan & Other Attachments:** Upload the Research Plan, Career Development Plan, and Statement of Career Goals. **Please note that when a template or form is provided, it must be used.** Indicated page limits must be strictly adhered to. Margins must not be less than .5 inches on each side and 12-point Times New Roman or the equivalent should be used for the text. All documents should be uploaded to ProposalCentral as PDFs.

A. **Research Plan:** The PI should describe the trainee's proposed research plan, including *significance*, *innovation*, and *approach*. The research plan must be within the scope of the parent grant and must be appropriate for the candidate's career stage and level of experience. The research plan should detail how the proposed research activities will contribute to the parent grant research project. The research plan must also include an *impact statement* about the potential of the proposed research to improve the standard of care or quality of life of people with lupus. (1 page, excluding references and the resubmission statement, if applicable)

- i. **Resubmission Statement (if applicable):** Revised applications are required to include a resubmission statement, not to exceed a half page. The statement should highlight any major changes and explain how the application has been modified to address the concerns of the original review notification.
- A resubmission is an application that was not funded in one of the previous application cycles.
 - An applicant who is unsuccessful may revise their original application only once.
 - If substantial changes are made to the original application, the application should not be submitted as a resubmission.

B. **Career Development Plan:** The PI should provide a detailed description of the specific goals, activities, resources (i.e., applying for grants, internships, fellowships, etc.) and associated timelines that will be used to assist the trainee in advancing toward career goals expressed in the trainee's Statement of Career Goals. Metrics to evaluate progress towards stated objectives should also be outlined. Provide information about the frequency and nature (i.e., topics to be discussed, preparation for scientific meetings, etc.) of the trainee's interaction with the PI and other supervisory personnel (if the trainee will be mentored by individuals other than the PI). Proposed methods for handling unique challenges

and difficulties that the trainee may face should be included. The plan should also detail the PI's previous mentoring experience and trainee outcomes (i.e., current status of trainees) that would inform how the candidate will be mentored. (1 page)

C. **Statement of Career Goals:** The trainee should describe their current and long-term research and career objectives. (1 page)

12. **PI Data Sheet:** Please verify the PI's gender, race, and ethnicity. This information will not be used in any way during the selection process.
13. **Trainee Data Sheet:** Please provide the trainee's gender, race, and ethnicity. This information will not be used in any way during the selection process.
14. **Validate:** Click the "Validate" button to check for any missing required information or attachments.
15. **Sign:** Click the "Sign" button to electronically sign the application. By signing, the PI certifies that the information contained in the application is true, complete, and accurate to the best of their knowledge.
16. **Submit:** After successfully passing the validate check, click the "Submit" button. An e-mail will be sent confirming submission.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

The following criteria will be used to evaluate applications:

1. PI's commitment to mentoring and research training of URM's.
2. Feasibility and quality of research plan for trainee and alignment with goals of parent grant.
3. Evidence that the proposed experience will expand and foster the research capabilities, knowledge, and skills of the trainee and that a robust mentoring plan is in place.
4. Level of trainee's interest and commitment to a career in biomedical/lupus research.
5. Trainee's qualifications, including record of academic achievement, prior research experience, and assessment by the referee.

LRA MENTORSHIP RESOURCES

Mentors and peer support play a critical role in the development of scientists. The LRA offers a mentoring program for all DLR recipients to provide them with crucial mentoring resources and the support of other members of the program. DLR recipients will meet at least once per year during the LRA annual scientific meeting, Forum for Discovery, to discuss questions or issues related to publications, grant applications, collaborations, etc.

INQUIRIES

Scientific:

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ProposalCentral:

For assistance with the electronic grant application process, please contact ProposalCentral at pcsupport@altum.com or 800-875-2562, extension 227.