



2024

# Grants Program for Penn Investigators

## Application Instructions

**Letter of Intent Deadline: January 16, 2024**

**Grant Submission Deadline: February 16, 2024**

1. Request for Applications for Basser Faculty Research Awards:  
up to \$200,000 yearly x 2 years
2. Request for Applications for Basser Early Career (Postdocs, Fellows, Instructors) Research Awards:  
up to \$100,000 x 1 year

**Release Date: December 15, 2023**

**Due Date:**

**Letter of Intent- January 16, 2024 by 5:00pm ET**

**Full Application- February 16, 2024 by 5:00pm ET**

**PLEASE NOTE – THERE WILL BE NO EXCEPTIONS**

**Funding begins: July 1, 2024**

## **Background and Purpose**

The Bassett Center for BRCA has the unique opportunity to catalyze research to change the paradigm of discovery, innovation, and care for issues related to *BRCA1* and *BRCA2* mutations. Germline mutations in *BRCA1* and *BRCA2* significantly increase the risk of breast and ovarian cancer and also are associated with prostate cancer and pancreatic cancer. Towards this end, the Bassett Center is seeking applications that propose innovative approaches to the study of BRCA-related cancers.

Research grant applications in basic science, prevention, disease interception, and early detection that are **relevant to the study of BRCA1/2** will be considered. The Bassett Cancer Interception Institute focuses on funding new endeavors in emerging, orthogonal fields beyond DNA damage (e.g. mechanisms of haploinsufficiency, cancer evolution and tissue tropism). Grants focused on the following are of particular interest:

- cancer interception and the pre-cancer disease state
- Issues relevant to men (including but not limited to prostate cancer, pancreatic cancer, male breast cancer)
- Potential for translation into clinical practice

Grants that demonstrate a potential for translation into clinical practice will be prioritized for funding.

**There are two types of awards in this RFA:**

1. **Faculty awards are for two years with a funding level up to \$200,000 per year**
2. **Early career awards for Fellows, Postdocs and Instructors up to \$100,000 for one year. Grants are eligible for competitive renewal upon reapplication and are contingent on progress the first year.**

## **Submission Guidelines**

### **Eligibility:**

- Faculty applicants must be at the Research Assistant Professor level or above.
- Early career applicants include Fellows, Postdocs and Instructors
- Only one application will be accepted per investigator. Investigators may not be Co-PI on more than one application.

**Phase I: A mandatory letter of intent (LOI) is due by January 16, 2024.**

The LOI must be submitted here: [https://www.med.upenn.edu/apps/pgacc/users/sign\\_in](https://www.med.upenn.edu/apps/pgacc/users/sign_in)

- Search for program “2024 Bassett Center for BRCA Grants for Penn Investigators”
- Under the “Basic Info” tab, please provide the information requested. Standard NIH formatted Biosketches are sufficient.
- In the “Proposal Participants” tab, please provide the name of your Co-PI(s), if applicable. ***Each PI needs to be registered in the online submission system, or you will not be able to enter them into the data field.***
- Please designate in the LOI to which of the two types of awards you are applying.
- In the “Documents” tab under “Abstract”, please submit a one page letter of intent including:

- Title of proposed project
- PI/Co-PI (if applicable) names, degree(s) and position
- Description of the project including specific aims and relevance to *BRCA1/2*

**The purpose of the LOI is to allow the Bassett Center time to assemble appropriate reviewers - not to invite grants for full submission. There will be no feedback provided to applicants regarding the LOI and anyone submitting an LOI is welcome to follow through with a full grant application.**

**Phase II: Full grant applications (due February 16, 2024)**

- Applicants must use the Bassett Center for BRCA Application Form (located at the bottom of this announcement).
  - Only one application will be accepted per investigator. Investigators may not be Co-PI on more than one application.
  - Applications must be submitted using this website:  
[https://www.med.upenn.edu/apps/pgacc/users/sign\\_in](https://www.med.upenn.edu/apps/pgacc/users/sign_in)
    - Search for program “2024 Bassett Center for BRCA Grants for Penn Investigators”
    - Under the “Basic Info” tab, please provide the information requested. Standard NIH formatted Biosketches are sufficient.
    - Please provide the name of your Co-PI(s), if applicable. ***Each PI needs to be registered in the online submission system, or you will not be able to enter them into the data field.***
    - Under the “Documents” tab, please upload your Research Proposal ***as one single PDF file***, using the Bassett Center for BRCA Application Form. Application Forms must include:
      - Abstract
      - Specific aims, not to exceed one page
      - Significance\*
      - Background\*
      - Research Plan\*
      - References
      - Budget with justification
- \*Note: Significance, Background and Research Plan must not exceed five total pages***
- Formatting requirements: Arial 11 font, single spaced, no less than ½ inch margins all around.
  - Page numbering is recommended, and should use sequential numbers, e.g., do not use 2a and 2b, etc.
  - Supplemental/Appendix material is limited to letters of support/collaboration and PDFs of papers in press and not yet publically available. Any other additional material will be discarded.

**Preparation of Budgets:** No specific budget format is required, but be sure to include adequate details and corresponding justification. Faculty awards will be funded for a period of 2 years for up to \$200,000/year contingent on significant progress year to year. Early career awards will be funded up to \$100,000 for one year. Early career grants are eligible for competitive renewal upon reapplication and are contingent on progress the first year.

Awards are also contingent on the availability of funds.

**Allowable expenditures include:**

- Salary support for investigator
- Research supplies and animal maintenance
- Travel when necessary to carry out the proposed research program
- Publication costs, including reprints
- Costs of computer time
- Special fees (pathology, photography, etc.)
- Equipment costing less than \$5,000. Special justification is necessary for items exceeding this amount, and permission must be obtained from the Bassett Center for the purchase of such equipment
- Registration fees at scientific meetings
- Technician/laboratory personnel support

**Non-allowable expenditures include:**

- Secretarial/administrative personnel
- Honoraria and travel expenses for visiting lecturers
- Per diem charges for hospital beds
- Non-medical services to patients
- Construction or building maintenance
- Major alterations
- Purchasing and binding of periodicals and books
- Office and laboratory furniture
- Office equipment and supplies
- Rental of office or laboratory space
- Recruiting and relocation expenses
- Dues and membership fees in scientific societies

**Review Process**

The review process will be completed by a committee of outside scientists, which is expected to include a subset of members of the Bassett Center External Scientific Advisory Board. Successful applicants will be announced in May 2024. Funding will have a start date of July 1, 2024. Review Criteria will include:

1. **Impact:** What is the likelihood that the proposed research will have a transformative impact on science with a goal toward an impact on clinical care pertaining to BRCA?
2. **Innovation:** Is the proposed application creative and original? If successful, will the work produce dramatic paradigm shifts in research and clinical practice by using novel concepts, methodologies, and/or interventions?
3. **Investigative Team:** Does the proposed PI have a strong track record of leadership of innovative science?

4. Approach: Are the general strategies and translational approaches sufficiently rigorous to ensure generation of important data? Is the proposed research BRCA1/2 specific? Are metrics of success and plans for sustainability presented and reasonable?

#### **Ongoing Review and Evaluation**

Funded awardees will be expected to submit semi-annual progress reports, which will be evaluated by the Bassett Center leadership and Internal Advisory Board and possibly by outside advisors. Metrics of success and progress toward achieving scientific goals will be considered. Continuation of funding will depend on progress.

**Link to application form:** [2024 Grants Program for Penn Investigators Application Form](#)

**Link to online submission:** [https://www.med.upenn.edu/apps/pgacc/users/sign\\_in](https://www.med.upenn.edu/apps/pgacc/users/sign_in)

For questions relating to this RFA, please contact:

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