

# 2023 Uplifting Athletes Young Investigator Draft Grant Request For Applications

Last Updated: August 23, 2022

Application Deadline: October 14, 2022, 11:59 p.m. EST

Uplifting Athletes  
8 Atkinson Drive  
P.O. Box 574  
Doylestown, PA 18901  
[grants@upliftingathletes.org](mailto:grants@upliftingathletes.org)

Please visit [upliftingathletes.org/RFA](https://upliftingathletes.org/RFA) for the most recent version of the Request for Applications.



## Abstract

Uplifting Athletes (UAI) is seeking rare disease patient advocacy organizations who A) have identified a promising young investigator to be nominated for the 2023 Young Investigator Draft and B) are willing and able to provide a match of \$10,000, or greater, so that the nominated researcher will receive an unrestricted grant of at least \$20,000.

## Project Overview

The Young Investigator Draft is the result of Uplifting Athletes' ongoing commitment to cultivating resources that accelerate scientific advancements for rare disease treatments and potential cures while facilitating the next generation of rare disease researchers. The Young Investigator Draft grants fund research that is collaborative and translational to positively impact treatments and potential cures for the entire Rare Disease Community. The Young Investigator Draft stage provides a platform to celebrate these scientists, spread awareness of their efforts, and highlight the importance of their research, along with its impact on the Rare Disease Community.

## Project Goals & Target Audience

Researchers spend upwards of 40 percent of their time chasing money through grants to support their research. That is valuable time wasted that could be spent conducting life-saving research. At Uplifting Athletes, we aim to be a part of the solution by working through reputable patient advocacy organizations that emphasize supporting research within the disease state of their patient community. We work with these organizations to recognize investigative researchers who are conducting research to identify, advance, and improve treatments and, one day, develop cures for those patients.

Organizations that apply should meet the following criteria:

- Nonprofit 501(c)(3) with a specific focus on rare disease(s) and an emphasis on research within that disease state
- Located in the U.S. or Canada
- Patient advocacy organization that is willing and able to match Uplifting Athletes \$10,000 grant to the nominated Young Investigator
- Has an established Medical and/or Scientific Advisory Board with advanced knowledge of the disease(s) that are the focus of the advocacy organization

# The Goals of the Young Investigator Draft

We have two goals.

1. To fund aspiring rare disease researchers.
2. To share the unique platform we have developed with patient advocacy organizations and researchers. Furthermore, the Young Investigator Draft hopes to engage with patient-focused advocacy organizations that emphasize research within their disease state. Uplifting Athletes wants to work with advocacy organizations that place a priority on research and support researchers that have an understanding of the needs of the patient community and are working to resolve those unmet and underserved needs. Uplifting Athletes will provide the Young Investigator Draft stage as a platform to celebrate and elevate these investigative rare disease researchers.

## Underrepresented Researchers in Medicine

We will be continuing the Underrepresented Researchers in Medicine (URM) Initiative this year. Uplifting Athletes is inspired to play a role in diversity, equity, and inclusion in medicine. The URM Initiative will guarantee that at least one (1) underrepresented researcher will be selected through the Young Investigator Draft. The URM initiative includes broadened outreach through partnerships with organizations that work with underrepresented researchers to expand the pool of underrepresented researchers who are nominated.

## Important Dates

Application Open Date	August 1, 2022, 12:00 PM EST
Application Close Date	October 14, 2022, 11:59 PM EST
Award Notice	November 2022
Award Execution	January 2023
Project Start/End Dates (estimated)	February 2023 - February 2024

# The Uplifting Athletes Young Investigator Grant

The Young Investigator Grant is a 1-year award designed to support scientists in the early stages of a rare disease research career, such as postdoctoral or clinical fellows. Outstanding mentorship and demonstration of a career plan that shows commitment to rare disease investigation are critical components of a successful applicant.

The grant will be for a minimum of \$20,000 USD (\$10,000 USD from UAI and matching \$10,000 USD from nominating advocacy organization) and will be issued to the institution of the young investigative researcher with the caveat that the funds are to be used at the sole discretion of the identified young investigator to move their research forward.

## Restrictions:

- Funds from UAI may not be used for indirect costs (including tuition remission).
- The grant may not be renewed
- No-cost extensions are strongly encouraged
- Funds must be granted to nonprofit institutions/organizations or federal government labs operating in the U.S. or Canada. Researchers need not be United States citizens.
- It is expected that Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval will be sought when studies in humans are planned. Animal care committee approval is required for animal studies.

## Who Qualifies as a Young Investigator?

Applicants must meet the following criteria to qualify for the Uplifting Athletes Young Investigator Grant:

**Note: Please contact Uplifting Athletes before applying if eligibility questions remain after reviewing these guidelines.**

- A clinical or basic researcher (MD, DO, Ph.D., or international equivalent) working in the U.S. or Canada, who is currently in postdoctoral training at an academic medical institution AND
  - (1) within 10 years of obtaining their doctoral degree at the time of grant submission OR
  - (2) within 5 years of initiating rare disease research.
- Be planning, or actively engaged in, an investigative career in rare disease research. An institutional commitment for a faculty appointment at the time of grant submission is not required, but the applicant should be working in a rare disease laboratory or clinical research setting.
- Have a mentor in the proposed research field from the sponsoring institution. The mentor must assume responsibility and guide the research.
- Eligible applicants are allowed to hold only one grant from Uplifting Athletes at a time.

## Principal Point of Contact

For questions or concerns about any aspect of the Request For Application, please email [grants@upliftingathletes.org](mailto:grants@upliftingathletes.org).

## How To Apply

Please follow the “Application” section of the RFA and please submit one PDF file containing the requested information to [grants@upliftingathletes.org](mailto:grants@upliftingathletes.org) before the application deadline of October 14, 2022, at 11:59 PM EST.

## Review Process

All proposals submitted to [grants@upliftingathletes.org](mailto:grants@upliftingathletes.org) will be reviewed by the Uplifting Athletes Scientific Advisory Council. The committee will determine a minimum of ten (10) young investigators to be honored at the 2023 Young Investigator Draft. The grant awardees will be notified ahead of the 2023 Young Investigator Draft.

## Reporting Requirements

We ask that a report be issued to Uplifting Athletes one year following the grant award to detail progress made with the research and ultimately how the grant impacted the researcher and their work.

## About Uplifting Athletes

Founded in 2007, Uplifting Athletes harnesses the power of sport to build a community that invests in the lives of people impacted by rare diseases. Uplifting Athletes fulfills its mission through engaging student and professional athletes to fully realize the impact of using their own powerful platforms to give voice to the 30 million Americans diagnosed with rare diseases.

## FAQ's

### **How does the grant matching work? What will qualify as a match?**

*For the 2023 Young Investigator Draft, we are requiring that all Advocacy Organizations selected provide the funds to Uplifting Athletes for the matching gift amount and Uplifting Athletes will process the grant at no cost. We are doing this in an effort to streamline the grant award process and to ensure that the entirety of the grant award is received and utilized at the sole discretion of the nominated researcher.*

### **What happens if your organization and researcher are selected?**

*If your organization and young investigator are selected, you will be notified by phone or email in November 2022. You will be asked to verify all information provided in the application.*

### **What expectations do we have of the Advocacy organization concerning the promotion leading up to and on the day of the event?**

*We will ask that you share the information about the Uplifting Athletes Young Investigator Draft with your network and we will provide social graphics and content to distribute.*

### **Who will review the grant application?**

*The grant submissions will be reviewed by the Uplifting Athletes Scientific Advisory Council (SAC) and they will use an established rubric to assess each application. The rubric will be released alongside the RFA so that patient advocacy organizations and researchers will know what the SAC is looking for.*

### **Where does the money go?**

*Each Uplifting Athletes Young Investigator Draft recipient will receive access to the full \$20,000 grant award through their research institution. At this time, we do not pay indirect expenses on the grants given to researchers, and the money is earmarked to be used at the sole discretion of the grant recipient to move their rare disease research forward.*

### **Can an advocacy organization submit more than one application?**

*Yes. We ask that you submit one application per researcher nomination. All applications will be reviewed independently.*

### **Does my organization need a scientific or medical advisory board?**

*Yes. We ask that all organizations have their scientific or medical advisory board review the details of the research project and sign off on the project before submitting the application.*

# Application

Uplifting Athletes intends that this application is completed by a representative of a Patient Advocacy Organization in collaboration with the researcher being nominated for the grant award.

## **Patient Advocacy Organization Section**

- 1. Name:**
- 2. Website:**
- 3. Point of Contact Name:**
- 4. Point of Contact Email:**
- 5. Point of Contact Phone Number:**
- 6. Disease(s) represented :**
- 7. Has the applying Advocacy Organization provided research funding to this Young Investigator in the past 12 months?**
- 8. Has your Scientific Advisory Board or Medical Advisory Board reviewed the details of the research project specified? If requested, please be prepared to verify your review process.**
- 9. Medical/ Scientific Advisory Board Members (Please Attach List):**

**10. From an Advocacy Organization perspective, why should Uplifting Athletes select this Young Investigator? (Please limit to one-page max)**



**11. Please provide any additional information that you feel may be relevant to the review committee. (Please limit to one-page max)**

## **Young Investigative Researcher Section**

- 1. Project Title:**
- 2. Young Investigator Name:**
- 3. Current Institution:**
- 4. Phone Number**
- 5. Email address:**

6. **Purpose:** Why did you come into Rare Disease research? What are your future plans in the field? **(Please limit to one-page max)**

7. **Patient Community Interaction:** Describe your engagement activities with the patient community, and patient advocacy organization for your disease state? **(Please limit to one-half page max)**

- 8. Summary** Outline the planned research. Please include anticipated timelines for the project, as well as, anticipated pitfalls and alternate strategies (**Please limit to one-page max**)

- 9. Background** Include the problem, its significance, prior or concurrent studies conducted, and any preliminary work the investigator has already completed on this subject. **(Please limit to one-half page max)**

**10. Hypothesis/Statement of Work** A statement outlining the question to be answered or the premise to be investigated. **(Please limit to one-half page max)**

**11. Methods** Include a precise description of the methods of data collection, analysis and research model to be used. Specify the planned number of patients or experiments or observations to be evaluated to prove or disprove the hypothesis with power analysis. (Note: A grant submitted without this information will not be eligible for review.) Methods should be described in sufficient detail to allow peer reviewers to critically appraise their scientific merit. **(Please limit to two-page max)**



**12. References** List scientific references if pertinent.

**13. Funding:** How do you plan to utilize the funding from this grant? **(Please limit to one-half page max)**

**14. Funding:** Will it cost more than the \$20,000 in funding allotted from this grant to fulfill your project? If so, where is additional funding being secured? **(Please limit to one-half page max)**

**15. Project Timeframe:** Is your project a subset of a larger project? How confident are you that it can be completed within the one year timeframe? **(Please limit to one-half page max)**

**16. Mentor Statement:** Please provide a mentor statement

## 17. Biographical Sketch

### BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Provide the following information for the Senior/key personnel and other significant contributors.  
**DO NOT EXCEED TWO PAGES.**

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NAME:

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POSITION TITLE:

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EDUCATION/TRAINING *(Begin with baccalaureate or other initial professional education, such as nursing, include postdoctoral training and residency training if applicable. Add/delete rows as necessary.)*

INSTITUTION AND LOCATION	DEGREE <i>(if applicable)</i>	Completion Date MM/YYYY	FIELD OF STUDY

**A. Personal Statement (Please limit to one-half page max)**

**B. Positions and Honors**

**18. Which disease category/categories would this research impact? Please check ALL that apply.**

- Rare Muscular and Neurological Diseases
- Rare Autoimmune Diseases
- Rare Cancers
- Rare Blood Disorders
- Rare Genetic Disorders
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

**19. The National Institute of Health (NIH) recognizes that there are underrepresented groups in medicine and includes the following groups as underrepresented in biomedical research:**

- Individuals from racial and ethnic groups such as Blacks or African Americans, Hispanics or Latinos, American Indians or Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians, and other Pacific Islanders
- Individuals with disabilities
- Individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds (as defined in the [November 22, 2019 Guide notice](#))
- Women from the above backgrounds at the graduate level and beyond in scientific fields

**Do you identify with one or more of these underrepresented groups as defined by the NIH?**

- Yes
- No

<b>Criteria for Evaluation of the Proposals</b> <b>Refer to RFA for more detailed information.</b>	<b>Points Possible</b>	<b>Points Awarded</b>
<b>Researcher Evaluation</b> Relevant Education & Training - 10 Points Possible  Environment - 5 Points Possible  Related Publications - 5 Points Possible  Comments:	<b>20</b>	
<b>Scientific Approach</b> Feasibility & Assessment of Project Summary - 25 Points Possible  Comments:	<b>25</b>	
<b>Impact and Innovation</b> Significance Of Proposed Project Within:  Specific Disease State - 15 Points Possible  Rare Disease Community - 5 Points Possible  Comments:	<b>20</b>	
<b>Purpose / Patient Engagement</b> Purpose & Future of Pursuing Rare Disease Research - 10 Points Possible  Patient & Family Engagement - 5 Points Possible  Relationship to Patient Advocacy Organization - 10 Points Possible  Comments:	<b>25</b>	
<b>Budget Justification</b> Budget Explanation - 10 Points Possible  Comments:	<b>10</b>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>0</b>