
AIRC
Associazione Italiana
per la Ricerca sul Cancro



Metastatic disease: the key unmet need in oncology

Second edition

5 per Mille – Guide to Pre-submission enquiry

Table of contents

Guide to Pre-submission enquiry	3
Access to our website	3
General features of our online system	3
How to apply	4
1. Principal Investigator/Group Leader	4
2. Title Page	5
3. Legal Representative and Scientific Director	5
4. Program Keywords	6
5. Letter of Intent	6
6. Education and Training	6
7. Research and Professional Experience	6
8. Publications	7
9. Online Submission	9

Guide to Pre-submission enquiry

Access to our website

For researchers who already have an AIRC account: login your AIRC account with your username and password at: <https://www.direzionescientifica.airc.it/Default.aspx>

This website can also be reached clicking on the “Area ricercatori” of the website www.airc.it

First-time applicants: click on “Register (for applicants only)” at: <https://www.direzionescientifica.airc.it/Default.aspx>

Provide the requested information, including your tax code (“codice fiscale”) and ORCID (Open Researcher and Contributor ID - <https://orcid.org>) identifier. Applicants without a tax code can select the corresponding box. The registration will be confirmed by e-mail and a username and password will be provided.

Login your AIRC account with your username and password.

General features of our online system

- All forms that must be filled out are listed on the left side of the page. Click on each one of them and fill in all the mandatory fields (in bold). **Make sure to click on “SAVE” after completing each form;**
- the forms can be filled out in different sessions and the work can be interrupted/resumed at any time;
- each form can only be saved when it has been filled out in all its parts;
- a number of forms must be submitted as PDF files. Each file cannot exceed 2Mb. Any file exceeding such a limit will be automatically rejected by the system. **Secure PDF files cannot be uploaded.** Documents submitted as PDF files must be written using an A4 format, single spaced, with margins not less than 2 cm and **a font not smaller than 12 point** (preferably Palatino, Times, Arial). **Do not exceed the page limit indicated for each section:** the system will not allow the upload of a number of pages beyond the limit;
- the status of each form is shown on the left: red cross for mandatory forms that are incomplete; yellow circle for not mandatory forms; green mark for completed forms. These same symbols are used in the “Check and Submit” section;
- the “Check and Submit” section (last title in the list of forms on the left) allows applicants to:
 - a) check and see whether each form has been correctly filled out; for mandatory forms that are incomplete, the information that must be provided is listed;
 - b) view and print the application in its incomplete/complete state. By clicking on “Create draft” and then on “Open submission draft” you can download the PDF draft generated by the system;
 - c) submit the application. Once all mandatory forms are complete, please click on “Submit”. Be aware that after clicking on “Submit” it will not be possible to make any further modifications.

Please note that the “**Check and Submit**” section can be accessed at any time, as it displays the status (complete/to be complete) of any single section in the application form.

- the complete proposal is automatically assembled as a single PDF file at the end of the online procedure;
- applicants may designate a Grant Officer from the Hosting Institution to assist in the preparation and submission of the application. However, the PI is fully responsible of the entire proposal content. See the “Title page” section for further details.

The application must be written entirely in English.

Applications that do not conform to all the requirements in these instructions will be rejected.

How to apply

Because this is a multi-unit grant, the application form comprises a dedicated section for the PI and individual sections for each GL. The PI is the researcher who is primarily responsible for the proposed research plan and who coordinates the work of all GLs.

► **To apply:** after logging in their AIRC account PIs must click on “Calls”, select “Multi-unit Grants” and then “Metastatic disease: the key unmet need in oncology – Second edition”, then click on “Apply”. In the next window, click on “Access application management section”.

► **Once in the “Application management section”, the PI must:**

- Fill out the **PI application form:** complete the information regarding the PI’s own research unit;
- Fill out the **Units form:** the PI can add the Group Leaders who will direct each participating research unit, and manage the corresponding sections. To add a new unit: click on the blue “+ Add new unit” button and provide the name and affiliation of the new GL. In case the affiliation is not among those listed, please send an e-mail to administrative.office@airc.it. AIRC will verify that the GLs have an account on the AIRC portal (or invite them to set one up), and that the institution they are affiliated with is eligible. After each research unit has been authorized by AIRC, the corresponding GL online form will be available and the GL will be included in the Units list.

The PI has two options:

- a) personally complete the Units form of each GL: to do so, the PI must click on the “Access the application form” button relating to each GL and fill out all mandatory fields; with the button “Back to units list” it is possible to go back to the main menu of the “Application Management Section”;
- b) allow the GLs to fill out their own sections: to do so, the PI must click on the “Allow Group Leader” button. This option automatically opens the application form in the GL’s own AIRC account. This action is reversible: by clicking on “Do not allow Group Leader” the GLs will no longer have access to the application form from their own personal areas in the AIRC portal.

In any case, **it is the PI’s responsibility to check that the information present in each GL application is correct;** once all sections have been filled out and submitted, the PI must formally approve each GL section by clicking on “Approve unit”. Only when all GL sections have been filled out and approved by the PI, and when the PI’s own section form has been completed, the PI can submit the “all-inclusive”, complete application.

The PI and GLs can access the application form anytime by clicking on “Submissions” and then on “Access the application form”.

The guidelines provided below are valid for the PI section and GL sections as well.

1. Principal Investigator/Group Leader

► Section to be filled out by PI and GLs.

Please provide or update (if necessary) the PI/GL position in the Hosting Institution (examples: associate professor, staff scientist, etc.) and their ORCID (Open Researcher and Contributor ID - <https://orcid.org>) identifier. All other fields are automatically filled out with information provided during the registration into the AIRC website; to modify the information in any of these fields, please click on the link “My personal data” at the bottom of the page and edit the information in the pop-up window.

Please note: to successfully complete this form, it is mandatory to provide the tax code (“codice fiscale”) of the PI/GL through the “My personal data” section.

2. Title Page

► Section to be filled out by PIs and GLs.

Please fill in the requested fields, entering:

- **the title of the proposal (present only in the PI’s section).** The title must not exceed 120 characters, small cases, spaces included. It should be neither too specific (with abbreviations of molecules names such as “Role of PGCI in tumor progression”), nor too vague (such as “Analysis of tumor metastatization”);
- **the Hosting Institution** (*i.e.* the research center(s) where the PI and GLs will carry out their research activity. The system automatically lists the institution(s) indicated by the PI and GLs in previous applications to AIRC, if any. In case it corresponds to the institution where the research supported with this grant will be carried out, please check the corresponding box, otherwise check the box “Other” and select the correct Hosting Institution from the drop-down menu. The “Address” field is automatically filled in by the system once the Hosting Institution and Department have been selected. If the Hosting Institution is not listed in the menu, please contact our offices administrative.office@airc.it;
- **the Department:** In case the Hosting Institution is organized in research departments (Departments, in the case of universities; Institutes, for Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche), please select the department where the research project is carried out from the drop-down menu. In case the specific department is not listed, please contact our offices administrative.office@airc.it;
- **the Laboratory (optional):** please indicate the Laboratory, if applicable;
- **Grant Officer (optional):** applicants may designate a Grant Officer from the Hosting Institution to assist in the preparation and submission of the application. The name of the Grant Officer, if not already present in the form and selectable from the drop-down menu, must be communicated to AIRC by e-mail airc.direzione-scientifica@airc.it. AIRC will create an account for the Grant Officer and send him/her the access codes to it. The name of the Grant Officer will then appear in the drop-down menu of the application form, allowing the PI/GL to select the name. From their Personal Area the authorized Grant Officers will have access to the PI/GL’s application form and will have the possibility of completing and submitting it on behalf of the PI/GL.

3. Legal Representative and Scientific Director

► Section to be filled out by PIs and GLs.

The Legal Representative (Legale Rappresentante) of each Hosting Institution(s) will be responsible, along with the PI and/or the GLs, of all the legal and administrative duties of the grant. The information regarding the Legal Representative(s) and/or the Scientific Director(s), are provided automatically by the system based on the Hosting Institution(s) selected in the “Title page” section. In case the Director of a Department within the Hosting Institution is duly authorized to sign as Legal representative of the Department, check the box “By flagging this check box you are declaring that the Director of the Department is duly authorized to sign on behalf of the Legal Representative of the Institution”. Please note that by flagging this box the PI certifies that the Director of the Department has power of attorney.

Please make sure that all data are correct and up-to-date, and then click on “Save”. If they are not, please notify AIRC by e-mail (administrative.office@airc.it) and provide an official record (*e.g.* copy of Appointment Decree) as supporting documentation.

4. Program Keywords

► Section to be filled out by the PI only.

Program keywords will be used by the AIRC Peer Review Office to assign each application to the most appropriate reviewers. Therefore, **a good choice of keywords is extremely important to ensure that reviewers with the most adequate expertise will evaluate the application.** Avoid keywords that are too generic or too similar with each other; pick a set of keywords that clearly define the key aspects of the research plan.

Keywords are listed <https://www.direzionescientifica.airc.it/Calls/Default.aspx>

To enter the program keywords (at least one, maximum five) please click on the button “Enter/Edit Keywords”. In the “Manage Program Keywords” pop-up window, keywords are grouped by their first letter: for example, by clicking on the letter “C” in the menu it is possible to visualize all keywords beginning with the letter C, and to select one. Alternatively, type in a specific keyword in the “Search a specific keyword” box and click on “Search”. To select a keyword, click on it (the keyword box will turn from grey to blue) and then click on “Save”. You will be automatically redirected in the main keywords page: click on “Save” at the bottom of this page to save the record. Repeat this process for each keyword. To exit the window, click on “Close”.

5. Letter of Intent

► Section to be filled out by the PI only.

Give an overview of the research program and explain why it has chances to provide a real clinical benefit to patients suffering of metastatic cancer. Make clear how each participating group is essential for the delivery of the proposed aims. Do not exceed the four-page limit, including figures and references; attach the document as PDF file. In case of revised applications, it is possible to briefly describe here how the proposal has been modified based on the reviewers’ comments. A “Revision” section for a detailed point-by-point reply to the reviewers will be available in the full submission phase, if invited to submit a full application.

6. Education and Training

► Section to be filled out by PIs and GLs.

Click on “Add new record” and list degrees of the PI/GL. The form automatically shows the information inserted in previous applications and stored in the “My Profile” section of the PI/GL AIRC account. By selecting some or all of these records, they will be uploaded in the current application; please check that all information is present. At any time a record can be modified or completed by clicking on the “Degree” column and filling in the pop-up window. In order to add a new position, click on “Add new record” and indicate the University/Research center, Country, City, Field of research, time frame, and name of the supervisor/mentor, then click on “Save”.

Do not list post-doctoral positions here, as they should be included in the “PI Research and Professional Experience” section.

7. Research and Professional Experience

► Section to be filled out by PIs and GLs.

Click on “Add new record” and list all main positions held by the PI/GL, including post-doctoral trainings. The form automatically shows the information inserted in previous applications and stored in the “My Profile” section of the PI/GL AIRC account. By selecting some or all of these records, they will be uploaded in the current application; please check that all information is present. At any time a record can be modified or completed by clicking on the “Position” column and filling in the pop-up window. In order to add a new position, click on “Add new record” and indicate the Institution,

City, Country, time frame, position held, and name of supervisor (if applicable), then click on “Save”.

8. Publications

► This section is divided in two parts, both to be filled out by the PI and GLs:

- **Publications in the last five years:** the complete list of papers published by the PI/GL in the last five years. The publications uploaded in this section will not be listed in the PDF of the application.
- **Ten most relevant publications of the last five years:** publications (max 10) that are most relevant to the proposed program. Those publications will be listed in the PDF of the application.

Publications in the last five years

Provide the list of papers published in the last five years. Do not include abstracts, conference papers, book chapters and papers published in journals without Impact Factor (IF), unless they are new journals. To do so, a number of options is available; click on any that applies:

Add PubMed publications

Within this interface the system launches a PubMed search and provides a list of PubMed-recorded publications spanning from 2013 to 2018. Enter the PI/GL’s first and middle initials, and click on “Find”. If the applicant has published with a different last name than that used to register into the AIRC account (e.g. married vs maiden name), check the “Change surname” box, and then click on “Find”. Alternatively, search for a specific article by entering its PubMedID in the corresponding box. Once the list of all PubMed publications has been generated, please follow these steps:

- a) Select papers to be included in the application:
from the list of all PubMed publications, select the papers published by the applicant and that the applicant wants to include in the proposal by clicking on the box at the left side of each article. Pay special attention to potential homonyms.
- b) Indicate acknowledgement to AIRC:
for each publication, please indicate whether it has an acknowledgement to AIRC by checking the box (the default is “NO”).
- c) Certify accuracy of flags, and save records:
once all selected publications have been flagged, scroll down to the bottom of the page and check the certification box (“I, the undersigned, certify that all publications have been carefully checked and correctly flagged for authorship. I am aware that any mistake or inaccuracy may impact the evaluation of my track record”). The system automatically recognizes the position of the applicant in the list of authors in each publication (if not, the box “not assignable” will be checked). It is possible to amend this information, if incorrect, by providing supporting documentation from the main page of the Publications (see below). Click on “Add selected publications” and then on “Close” to complete the process.

Add Web of Science Core Collection publications

From this section it is possible to enter articles that are included in Web of Science Core Collection but not in PubMed (most journals are present in both databases, but there are few exceptions; the drop-down menu does not list PubMed journals). For each record, please provide the title, list of authors, journal, year and month of publication, volume, pages. Select the journal from the drop-down menu, which provides all journals listed in Web of Science Core Collection. Mark each paper for authorship and acknowledgement to AIRC. Please upload as a single PDF file (**max 2 pages**) the first page of the article and, in case the PI is co-first/co-last/co-corresponding/corresponding author, the page of the article where the role of the author in the published work is certified. Make this information clearly visible by **highlighting the name of the applicant**. Finally, check the certification box and click on “Save” to complete the process.

Add papers in press

Use this section to submit articles already accepted for publication but not yet available online. For each record, please provide the title, list of authors, journal, year. Select the journal from the drop-down menu, which lists all Web of Science Core Collection indexed journals. Mark each paper for authorship and acknowledgement to AIRC. Please upload as a single PDF file (**max 3 pages**) the letter of acceptance from the journal and the page(s) of the manuscript that report the authorship of the applicant. Make this information clearly visible by highlighting the name of the applicant. **Do not attach the entire manuscript**. Finally, check the certification box and click on “Save” to complete the process.

Add from My Profile - Publications

This interface lists all publications previously entered into the system (either when submitting an application, or when submitting a grant renewal request, or directly into the publication section of the My Profile Area). By selecting some or all of these publications, they will be uploaded in the current application; please make sure the flags are correct.

All publications entered from any of the above sections will be listed in the “Publications” main page. From here, it is possible to edit the information relative to each paper by clicking on the title of the publication. Once in the “Edit publication flags” window, please check the appropriate authorship box and, if different from the default provided by the system, upload the page of the article where the role of the author in the published work is certified (e.g. for a second or third author who is in fact a co-first author, please upload the PDF file of the page where it is stated that the PI/GL “equally contributed to this work”). To complete the process, click on the certification box and click on “Save” to complete the process.

The PI/GL is responsible for uploading the most accurate information regarding publications and authorship. The IF assigned to each article, regardless of the publication date, is the latest provided by the Journal of Citation Reports (JCR) by Clarivate Analytics (previously the Intellectual Property and Science business of Thomson Reuters). For this Call, the 2016 JCR IF list will be used.

► Candidates are required to check all the information and to contact the AIRC Peer Review Office (airc.direzione-scientifica@airc.it) before the deadline of the Call in order to correct any possible inaccuracy or mistake.

In case additional papers **relevant to the program with the PI/GL as leading author** are accepted for publication **after the full submission deadline** (not during the pre-submission phase), the PI/GL may request permission from the AIRC Peer Review Office to add this supplementary information to his/her application. Please prepare a **single PDF file** containing a copy of the acceptance letter and a copy of the manuscript, and e-mail it to: airc.direzione-scientifica@airc.it.

All communications made in this regard **by February 1 2019** (23:59 Central European Time) will be made available to the members of the Study Section, during the plenary session. Any communication received after February 1 2019 (23:59 Central European Time) will not be taken into consideration.

Ten most relevant publications of the last five years (“Top 10 publications”)

► Section to be filled out by PI and GLs.

From all the publications uploaded (published and/or in press), the PI and each GL must select his/her most relevant to the proposed program (max 10). To do so, click on “Add from uploaded publications” or “Add from uploaded papers in press”, then click on “Find” to retrieve the complete list of publications uploaded through the “Publications” section. To select the most relevant publications, check the corresponding box then click on “Add selected publication”, then “Close”. Alternatively, it is possible to enter the top ten publications one by one, entering the details of each paper, then

clicking on “Add selected publication”, then “Close”

9. Online Submission

Applicants are advised to not leave submission to the last minute, as heavy server load might affect system performance.

At any time during the application process a PDF draft file of the pre-submission enquiry can be generated and checked: go to “Check and submit” (on the lower left of the main page), click on “Create draft” and then on “Open submission draft”. It is strongly suggested that after all forms have been correctly filled out, and prior to proceeding with the final submission, the PDF Draft and its content are carefully read, controlled and verified.

Online submission - GLs

Once each GL has completed his/her own section, the GL can go to “Check and Submit” (on the lower left of the main page). All mandatory sections of the application form must be completed and must have the green flags before finalizing the submission and subjecting it to the PI’s approval. After checking all content of that section the PI can either endorse the GL section clicking on “Approve unit”, in which case the status of that section will change from “Submitted to PI approval” to “PI approved”; or “Reject unit”, in which case the status will revert to “Draft” and the GL section will be accessible again for the necessary modifications/amendments.

Online submission - PI

When a GL has completed and submitted his/her own section, the status of that unit in the PI’s application management interface will change from “Draft” to “Submitted to PI approval”. The PI must verify the content of each GL section and then endorse it – or not – using the “Approve unit” or “Reject unit” buttons, respectively. As a result, the status of each unit will either become “PI approved” or revert to “Draft” if the section is not approved.

The PI must also complete his/her section of the application form as well. Only after all GL forms have been approved, and only after the PI’s own form has been filled out, the PI can proceed to the submission of the program application to AIRC by clicking on the “submit” button.

The PI will receive a confirmation of the submission by e-mail.

Two documents will be generated and stored in the “Your submissions archive” section of PI/GL Personal Area:

- **PDF file of the pre-submission:** this is the document that will be sent to the reviewers.
- **Publications addenda:** contains the list of all publications plus supporting documentation for papers in press, Web of Science Core Collection publications and authorship certifications.

A copy of the above documents should be saved for future references.

The application cannot be modified after the electronic submission deadline.

The evaluation of the pre-submission is only based on the information present in the application.
