

## IASLC STARS Program FAQs

STARS aims to train Patient Research Advocates. Research advocates bring the patient voice to research-related efforts. STARS is not intended to help patients or caregivers learn how to become patient advocates or share their personal lung cancer story.

Patient advocacy is different than research advocacy, as shown in the chart below:

	Patient Advocate	Research Advocate
<b>Focus</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support patients and their loved ones</li> <li>Raise awareness and/or funds</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide patient perspective on research to generate better LC outcomes</li> </ul>
<b>Typical Activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Talk with patients about their cancer experience and treatment challenges</li> <li>Create and manage support groups</li> <li>Act as liaison between patients, clinicians and family members</li> <li>Share personal story to raise awareness or funds for research, support, advocacy</li> <li>Educate local groups about cancer experience and care</li> <li>Provide resources and services to patients and family (e.g., rides to treatment)</li> <li>Share, moderate, curate on social media</li> <li>Raise awareness of cancer events, treatment advancements, and the need for funding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learn about lung cancer science and research</li> <li>Interact and communicate effectively and appropriately with researchers, regulators, industry, and government agencies</li> <li>Represent and share patient perspectives for ALL lung cancer patients (not just those with your type or stage of lung cancer or personal characteristics)</li> <li>Participate in grant reviews, Institutional Review Boards, patient advisory boards for pharma</li> <li>Provide feedback on research questions and design</li> <li>Know when it is NOT appropriate to share some or all of your cancer story</li> <li>Facilitate patient access to screening, biomarker testing, treatment, and clinical trials</li> <li>Collaborate with medical institutions, advocacy organizations, government agencies, etc. to drive change that improves outcomes for the entire lung cancer community locally, nationally, or globally</li> </ul>

- Will the STARS Program cover transportation beyond airfare to WCLC?**  
 No. At this time, the Program will not cover personal transportation costs beyond your flight to attend the WCLC
- Will the STARS Program cover any visa or passport charges?**  
 No. At this time, the Program will not be able to provide support to any visa or passport related charges and will not be able to help you with acquiring a passport or any required visas.
- Will the STARS Program cover meal costs during WCLC?**  
 No. At this time, the Program will not be able to provide support for meals outside what is offered during the WCLC program.
- Can I apply to the STARS program if I (or the patient I care for) is experiencing cancer progression?**  
 Yes. The health and safety of the lung cancer community is our top priority. PRAs and Mentors selected for the program who have or had lung cancer will need to provide a letter from their primary lung cancer physician stating that the applicant is in adequate health to travel to Singapore in August 2020 and fully participate in all required STARS activities.

During the six-month STARS program, Patient Research Advocates (PRAs) and Mentors will be expected to participate in online learning modules and several virtual meetings, as well as travel to and participate in the STARS Workshop (August 8) and all days of the World Conference on Lung Cancer (August 9-12) in Singapore. PRAs will also be expected to give a presentation online about their Focus Topic to other PRAs, Mentors, and Staff in September.

- **What if I am accepted into the STARS Program and become ill or have progression that prevents my travel to the WCLC?**

Please contact [Kristin.Ito@iaslc.org](mailto:Kristin.Ito@iaslc.org) if you have concerns about your attendance to the WCLC. Your personal health is our top priority and if you are unable to attend the WCLC, we will provide access to the Virtual Library to review presentations and slides.

- **I was selected as a PRA or Mentor for the STARS Program in the past, can I apply again?**

Yes. If you previously participated in STARS as a PRA or Mentor, you can apply again. You may participate as a PRA for two years; after that, you must apply as a Mentor. If you feel as though you are not ready to apply as a Mentor, you can continue to participate in the STARS Alumni Program.

- **Will I need to upload an example of their advocacy communications?**

Yes. Each STARS applicant (whether PRA or Mentor) must upload a file that shows an advocacy communication they created. An ACCEPTABLE example of advocacy communications that comply with these requirements:

- Contains content YOU created: a video of a presentation, text of a speech, image of a poster, picture of a newspaper article, screencap of a blog post, or something similar that accurately represents the applicant's verbal, written, or graphic communication capabilities.
- Shows ORIGINAL content created by the applicant. DO NOT submit postings you shared of content created by others (e.g., retweets, Instagram images, Facebook shares) -- we want to see how YOU communicate.
- If content is posted online, provide a screen cap image instead of text copied into Word or another application, with the URL visible in the image. DO NOT submit links to online content unless all the content on the page was generated solely to you.
- Includes evidence of when and where the content was published, delivered, or performed -- we have to be able to verify your submission.
- Is in a commonly available file format (pdf, jpg, png, mp4, mov, MS Word) and less than 2 Mb in size.
- Is either in English or accompanied by a faithful English translation.
- DO NOT submit an image of the applicant at an event, meeting, or gathering -- this does not give us a sense of your communications skills.
- DO NOT submit content posted in private groups or websites that require a login, or that reveals identity, medical details, or personal information of others.
- DO NOT submit content that does not publicly identify you as the author -- your advocacy communications must be public.
- DO NOT submit content that does not include educational information about lung cancer. Emotional support content is important but is not part of research advocacy.

- **Do I have to submit a reference as part of my application?**

Yes. STARS applicants (whether PRA or Mentor) must provide a reference from an established lung cancer research advocate, researcher, or clinician familiar with your work. Be sure to request the reference as soon as you know you will apply. An ACCEPTABLE letter of recommendation complies with these requirements:

- IS written by a cancer medical professional, established patient research advocate, or an advocacy organization.
- DOES include the author's credentials, organization, and contact info
- DOES include the author's organizational letterhead at the top of the page (if available)
- DOES describe the author's perception of the applicant's advocacy and/or research advocacy activities
- DOES describe the author's assessment of the applicant's current understanding of lung cancer, science, and research
- DOES describe the author's relationship and interactions with the applicant
- DOES include information that allows us to verify author's credentials
- DOES NOT summarize the applicant's medical condition

- **What if I can't find anyone to write a recommendation for me?**

Some applicants may come from countries that do not yet have active lung cancer advocacy organizations or may not have contact with experienced research advocates or advocacy organizations. These advocates should consider applying for the IASLC Patient Advocate Travel Award rather than STARS. Travel award recipients will receive monetary support to cover airfare and lodging to enable attendance at WCLC, assistance in navigating the conference, and the opportunity to meet experienced patient advocates.