



UC Proof of Concept Program: Commercialization Gap Grants 2012-13 Request for Proposals August 28, 2012

2012-13 Proof of Concept: Commercialization Gap Grant Deadlines

PI Letter of Intent & Project Eligibility and Commercial Assessment Form Submission Deadline*	Tuesday, October 9 , 2012 (12:00 Noon PT/ 3 PM ET)
Notification of LOI & Eligibility Review (anticipated)	Friday, October 19, 2012
Proposal Submission Deadline	Thursday, December 6, 2012 (12:00 Noon PT/ 3 PM ET)
Expected Notification of Review Outcome	Friday, April 5, 2013
Research Commences	June 1, 2013

*NOTE: Initial determination of project eligibility will be determined at LOI stage. Both LOI and completed and signed Technology Licensing Office Form are due by the LOI deadline.

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Questions regarding this funding opportunity may be directed to the Research Grants Program Office. E-mail RGPOGrants@ucop.edu or call 510-987-9386

Downloadable copies of this RFP, LOI, Application Instructions, and Program Updates can be found at <http://www.ucop.edu/PoC/call.html>

I. UC Proof of Concept: Commercialization Gap Grant Overview

The goal of the UC Proof of Concept: Commercialization Gap Grant (PoC) is to accelerate the commercialization of technology developed at and assigned to UC by providing funding to bridge the gap between research and commercialization in the absence of an industry sponsor or investment partner. Projects appropriate for this opportunity have already demonstrated successful results in the research environment and are poised for commercialization pending a specific, targeted demonstration, test result, or prototype. Projects at the appropriate stage of development are those which have progressed beyond the stage where research funding opportunities (e.g., NIH, NSF, among others) are typically available, but capital from industry or an investment partner has not yet been secured. Additional information on whether the project is at the appropriate stage of development is available in [Appendix A: "Is this opportunity right for me?"](#) Applicants must demonstrate that successful completion of the project would likely result in either a technology being licensed to an existing company or spur the development of a start-up company within 1-2 years, and that the innovation has potential to benefit California and its economy.

II. Scope of Activities

PoC projects must propose research and development activities for technologies or products on the brink of commercialization or licensing that must *overcome a specific identified hurdle*. The successful outcome of the proposed activities should result in technology being licensed or spur the development of a startup company within 1-2 years. Applicants must describe a clear path to commercial development, market potential, and the significant impact of funding on advancement to commercialization for their projects.

Projects solicited under this program may include:

1. Building of a prototype or second iteration prototype to prepare for commercialization.
2. Commercial feasibility tests.
3. Research to demonstrate mitigation of risk for potential licensees.
4. Research to address a specific gap identified by industry that impairs the ability to attract capital.

A PoC Grant provides funding for:

- Projects where IP related to the proposal has already been disclosed to the campus technology transfer office.
- Up to one year, and is awarded on a one-time basis only. Renewals for projects funded in previous cycles are not eligible.
- Innovations that do not have other sources of funding, and have progressed beyond the stage where research funding opportunities (e.g., NIH, NSF, among others) are typically available.

Requests will be considered for amounts up to \$125,000 in direct costs. Campuses may charge indirect costs at 25% of the modified total direct cost. Allowable costs are those directly related to the specific scope of work in the proposal. Funds may not be used for the purchase of laptops, to attend conferences, for travel (except when it directly supports project completion), for publications, or to cover costs of securing or protecting the intellectual property (IP).

III. Eligibility Criteria

PoC Grants are ***open to all fields of research*** in which the proposed project fulfills the goals and funding priorities of the program outlined above. Applicants are required to consult with their campus technology licensing office about the project's appropriateness and eligibility for this opportunity. Proposals must meet both applicant and IP eligibility criteria outlined below.

The following are **not** eligible for funding under this program:

- Proposals to fund pharmaceutical/drug clinical trials are **not** eligible. Medical device/technology testing, if it can be completed in one year, and is feasible within program funding limits and other guidelines, may be proposed.
- Proposals to fund basic research or theoretical development, or to generate models, new data, or assess the feasibility of a research project.
- Projects for which the proposed activities require more than one year to complete.
- Projects with industry sponsorship, an investment partner, or research grant support.
- Renewals for projects funded in the previous cycles.

Applicant Eligibility

Applicants must have Principal Investigator (PI) status at the University of California or at the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory (LBNL) to be eligible to apply. Principal Investigators at LBNL who hold PI status at both a UC campus and LBNL may choose to submit proposals through either institution.

Intellectual Property Eligibility

All intellectual property (IP) related to the proposal **must** have been disclosed to the appropriate UC technology licensing office as of **August 31, 2012** and **must** be identified in the proposal by UC Case Number and title.

All IP related to the proposal must be assigned to UC and be available for licensing (i.e., not encumbered by any prior obligations, such as existing license, sponsored research agreement, ongoing collaboration with industrial partner, ongoing licensing negotiation, or consulting agreement). Existing IP cannot be jointly owned with a commercial entity. If IP is jointly owned with an academic institution or non-profit, there must be an inter-institutional agreement in place and UC must have the lead role in commercializing the technology. Any new Intellectual Property developed as a part of the funded PoC project must be assignable to UC.

IV. How to Apply

The PoC program uses an electronic application system called proposalCENTRAL (pC). All application instructions and forms are available online through pC (<http://proposalcentral.altum.com/>).

The application process consists of two steps:

1. Submission of a Letter of Intent (LOI): Submission and approval of an LOI is required in order to submit a full proposal. LOIs must be submitted by **Tuesday, October 9, 2012 at 12:00 Noon PT/ 3 PM ET**, and will be used to evaluate eligibility for this opportunity.

The campus technology licensing office (TLO) must submit a Project Eligibility and Commercial Assessment Form as part of the LOI submission. The TLO must provide information on the status of the IP, describe any marketing efforts undertaken to date, and indicate whether the proposed project activities would overcome an identified commercialization barrier. The form will be used to determine initial project eligibility. Projects determined eligible at the LOI stage will be given access to the full application materials. Information in the TLO form will also be considered, along with the rest of the application materials, in the review and evaluation of eligible proposals. LOIs found to be ineligible will be declined and may not apply for the PoC Grant this cycle.

2. Proposal Submission: Upon approval of the LOI, applicants gain access to the full application materials on proposalCENTRAL. Complete applications must be submitted by the deadline **Thursday, December 6, 2012 at 12:00 Noon PT/ 3 PM ET**, as posted on proposalCENTRAL). Applicants must adhere to the Application Instructions and guidelines. By submitting a proposal the PI is attesting that both applicant and IP eligibility criteria have been met.

NOTE: The PoC Program does not require the signature of a campus official to submit a proposal. However, local UC campus Offices of Research (C&G or SPO) may require review and sign off prior to submission. It is the PI's responsibility to follow local rules for submitting a proposal and confirm that all project participants have obtained local approval, if required, in advance of submission.

V. Review Criteria for PoC Grants

PoC proposals are peer-reviewed and ranked on a competitive basis in multidisciplinary panels that evaluate projects' intellectual and commercial merit, and relevance to program goals and funding priorities.

The main review criterion for proposals is the commercialization potential as described below:

- Commercialization Potential: Projects must have demonstrated research success and be ready for commercialization pending a specific, targeted demonstration, test result, or prototype that can be completed in one year, *and* must demonstrate that successful completion of the proposed activities will likely result in a technology being licensed to an existing company or serve as the foundation for a start-up company. Successful proposals will demonstrate that the product or service has a high likelihood of being adopted and successful as a commercially viable or public benefit technology.

Additional review criteria include:

- Excellence, as demonstrated by an innovative, well-conceived, high quality and feasible project.
- Qualifications of Personnel, as demonstrated by the leadership and meaningful engagement of well-qualified personnel.
- Resources and Facilities, as demonstrated by an appropriate, well-defined and justified budget, and sufficient access to adequate facilities, infrastructure, and other resources necessary for the conduct of the proposed activities.
- Benefit to California, as demonstrated by:
 - Accelerating innovation and creating a path to commercialization of new technologies and products; or
 - Increasing competitiveness of California companies, by attracting greater investments and retaining jobs in California; or
 - Establishing the basis for founding new California companies; or
 - Identifying new solutions to problems critical to California.

VI. Review of Proposals and Funding Decisions

Proposals will be reviewed in multidisciplinary panels composed of scientists from both within and outside the UC system, as well as business experts and members of the investment community. Applicants are encouraged to avoid jargon and to prepare proposals in a manner comprehensible to a general audience. Reviewers are required to sign a confidentiality agreement prior to the review. Protected or proprietary information should not be included in proposals, but applicants must provide sufficient information for reviewers to make a determination regarding commercialization potential.

Applicants may submit the names of potential reviewers who are not affiliated with the applicant's campus or laboratory. Applicants may request the exclusion of certain reviewers, and such requests must include a brief explanation/justification for such exclusion. The Research Grants Program Office in the UCOP Office of Research and Graduate Studies will constitute the panels, assign reviewers, and make final determinations regarding panel composition. Reviewers are asked to protect the confidentiality of proposals and are expected to disqualify themselves in cases of potential conflict of interest.

Review panels will evaluate proposals based on the scoring criteria and generate a rank-ordered list of applications that are recommended for funding.

Awards are subject to final approval by the Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies, and are contingent on availability of funding. Applicants can expect to receive notification of review outcome on or around April 5, 2013. The award start date is June 1, 2013.

Funded proposals will be archived as part of the award record and will be subject to release under the California Public Records Act.

Awards are contingent on availability of funding.

Appendix A. Is This Opportunity Right for Me?

The PoC Commercialization Gap Grant is a targeted funding opportunity intended to accelerate commercialization of technology that has progressed beyond the research phase.

Commercialization refers to a license to an existing business or to a start-up company.

Proposals are reviewed on a competitive basis, and in prior cycles only 10-20% of submissions have been funded. To assess whether your project is appropriate for this opportunity, please determine whether you can answer “yes” to all the following questions:

- Will successful completion of the proposed activities address a specific barrier to commercialization *identified by industry or investors*?
- Is the development of the innovation sufficiently advanced that it is no longer eligible for funding opportunities targeting research?
- Are other potential funding sources, such as an industry sponsor, unwilling to fund the project?
- Will UC support for the proposed activities likely lead to commercialization of the innovation within 1-2 years?
- Has a market assessment for this innovation already been undertaken and demonstrated a strong market need for the product?
- Does the innovation provide a demonstrable advantage over other existing technologies that address a similar market or social need?
- Will the project have a positive, tangible impact on California and the state’s economy?

Appendix B. Application Instructions and Electronic Submission

Detailed LOI and Application Instructions are available at <http://www.ucop.edu/PoC/call.html> and on proposalCENTRAL (<http://proposalcentral.altum.com/>). The instructions provide detailed guidance on the application process, as well as required materials, their format, and allowable costs. All LOI and application materials must be electronically submitted through proposalCENTRAL.

For technical help with proposalCENTRAL, please email pcsupport@altum.com or call 800-875-2562 (Toll-free U.S. and Canada) or +1-703-964-5840 (Direct Dial International). Technical support for online submission is available through proposalCENTRAL (Monday – Friday 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM Eastern Time. Please note that from California you must call between 5:00 AM and 2:00 PM).

Required elements of the full application (available after LOI approval) include:

- **Abstract** – should include a brief description of the commercial benefit of the project.
- **Proposed Activities and Commercialization Plan** (5 pages maximum)
- **Budget Request and Justification**
- **Project Eligibility and Commercial Assessment Form** – This form must be submitted with the LOI. If information changes after the LOI submission, it must be updated prior to final submission of the full application.
- **IP related to the project** - identified by UC Case Number and title.
- **Biosketches and Current and Pending Support**