



UCT Pre-Seed Commercialisation Fund

Introduction

The aim of the fund is to provide financial support for early stage technology development and to bridge the funding gap that exists in the innovation chain, before other funding streams can be accessed (such as the Technology Innovation Agency funding, IDC, venture capital, etc.) or a rounded technology package can be licensed or spun-out of the University.

Objectives

- a) To promote research & technology transfer activities that support the commercialisation of IP
- b) To provide opportunities to strengthen the value of IP
- c) To provide the opportunity to assess the potential for commercially viable IP
- d) To improve the business prospects and potential for downstream investment on the IP
- e) To accelerate technology transfer/commercialisation of IP

Eligibility

- a) University of Cape Town's Staff and Students (under supervision of a Staff member)
- b) Intellectual Property must be at least partially owned by the University of Cape Town

Funding Principles & Guidelines

The Pre-Seed Fund is divided into the Explorer Fund and Concept Fund. Both are limited resources at the University of Cape Town. The Explorer fund is allocated R 100 000 per annum and the Concept fund is allocated R 400 000 per annum.



Explorer Pre-Seed Fund

Up to R 20 000 per project

Available to carry out market and IP assessments, plan marketing strategies, access market reports, obtain consultancy from experts or specialists, etc.

Project duration should be around 4 months.

Projects should be conclusive, are not renewable, although a new Explorer project may be funded if it is sufficiently different from the first.

Concept Pre-Seed Fund

Up to R 100 000 per project

Available to advance promising technologies in order to attract external investment (such as the Technology Innovation Agency funding, , IDC, venture capital, etc) and/or to build the intellectual property (e.g. broadening/strengthening patent claims or strengthening licensing opportunities).

Project duration will be 12 months from the date of received. This is not automatically renewed.

Projects should be conclusive, are not renewable, although a new Concept project may be funded if it is sufficiently different in scope from the first.

Applicants should meet with the Technology Commercialisation Manager, Research Contracts & Innovation (RC&I) to discuss their proposal prior to preparation and submission. Contact details below.

There are no specific deadlines for applications. Applicants can apply at any stage using the template available online, and RC&I will review the applications and award funds on an ongoing basis.

Calls for applications will be made throughout the year depending on the availability of funding.

Application templates are available on the RC&I website.

Calls for applications will be conducted via the Research Funding List server.

Activities eligible for funding:

- i. Building prototypes, Prototype development, or production of market samples.
- ii. Refining and implementing designs
- iii. Verifying applications/ use



- iv. Conducting validation field studies
- v. Preparing technology demonstrations, pilot plants
- vi. Applying for certification.
- vii. Scaling-up production, proof-of-concept
- viii. Technology development (development of a comprehensive technology package demonstrating aspects such as reproducibility, use of commercially available feedstock, raw materials or parts)

Application for awards will be reviewed by RC&I. Proposals fulfilling all requirements and recommended meritorious, will be reviewed by an Advisory Committee. The Committee is comprised of university leaders/experts who are not directly involved with the technology. The Committee may request an interview with the applicant before deciding on the proposal.

Application for awards will be reviewed by the Director of RC&I, who will make awards in consultation with their staff.

Awards will be made on a competitive basis with consideration of the quality of the application, technical merit, commercial potential & business viability

Awards will be made on a competitive basis. The Advisory Committee evaluation will include, as a minimum, the following:

- i. Scientific/Technical Merit
 - a) Scientific & technical basis for the expected commercial application
 - b) Merit of project to reach measurable outcomes
 - c) Novelty, technical complexity, technical risk and feasibility
 - d) Potential for IP protection
- ii. Potential to further Technology Transfer & Commercial process and associated benefits
- iii. Team Expertise, Project Management and commitment

Funds may not be used for the following:

- i. Faculty salaries
- ii. License or patent prosecution fees
- iii. Travel will be considered in exceptional circumstances
- iv. Student tuition or fees
- v. Student Scholarships
- vi. Research not identified in the proposal

Funds may not be used for the following:

- i. Faculty salaries (short-term labour costs, e.g. paying a student to produce a batch of material as a market sample **may be considered**)
- ii. License or patent prosecution fees
- iii. Travel will be considered in exceptional circumstances



The successful awardee is responsible for any project expenditures and commitments in excess of the amount awarded.

On completion, a written report summarising the results and achievements of the project, along with a financial statement, must be submitted to RCIPS no later than one month after completion of the project.

Unspent funds must be returned to RCIPS.

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- v. Student Scholarships
- vi. Research not identified in the proposal

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Quarterly reports indicating the results and achievements of the project must be submitted to RC&I for consideration of the Advisory Committee.

The Advisory Committee has the right to terminate a project if insufficient progress has been made or in their opinion the project proof not be viable.

A final report, along with a financial statement, must be submitted to RC&I no later than one month after completion of the project.

Unspent funds must be returned to RCIPS.

For More information and clarity on the UCT Pre-Seed Fund, please contact

Mr Saberi Marais

021 650 1746

Saberi.marais@uct.ac.za

Visit: www.rci.uct.ac.za