UC SANTA CRUZ

OFFICE OF RESEARCH

LAUNCHPAD
PROOF-OF-CONCEPT GRANTS

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

RELEASE VERSION 2.0
DECEMBER 15, 2017
WINTER/SPRING 2018 COMPETITION

IATC | INDUSTRY ALLIANCES & TECHNOLOGY COMMERCIALIZATION

OVERVIEW

The Launchpad Program is intended to assist promising UCSC technologies in achieving completion and commercial success. Many innovative ventures fail before initiation due to the lack of funding necessary to develop a proof-of-concept or a prototype needed to demonstrate its market viability to potential customers, investors and partners. Managed by the UC Santa Cruz Office of Research, Launchpad offers competitive $5K, $10K or $15K proof-of-concept grants to support UCSC inventors with innovative technology product ideas. The program purpose is to assist in overcoming challenges standing in the way of those technologies being commercialized. The commercialization and dissemination of UC technology in the marketplace directly furthers UC's scientific, educational and charitable purposes and, in so doing, helps to grow California's economy.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Through State of California Assembly Bill (AB) 2664 funds designed to expand economic development in California by supporting innovation and entrepreneurship at UC, the UC Santa Cruz Office of Research has instituted the Launchpad Proof-of-Concept Grants Program as part of SPLICE, the _Support Program for Long-term Innovation, Commercialization & Entrepreneurship_. The objectives of Launchpad align with the vision of UCSC's Industry Alliances & Technology Commercialization (IATC) Office, namely, to accelerate the commercialization of UCSC research-based innovation and to enhance UCSC linkages with industry to benefit student and faculty opportunities in furtherance of UC's purposes.

The Launchpad Proof-of-Concept Grants Program supports UC Santa Cruz faculty, graduate and undergraduate students who have created innovative technologies that have demonstrable economic, environmental and/or societal impact. Projects receiving funding support will be those that are already on the path for commercialization but which face specific hurdles or challenges standing in the way of progressing further. The funding support will help UCSC innovators overcome specific challenges, thereby increasing the chance of licensing the technology to a for-profit company—including establishing a startup company for the purpose of advancing the technology.

The Office of Research is making available $100,000 for the Launchpad Program overall, with $50,000 being awarded in each of the Fiscal Years 2017-18 and 2018-19. Grants of $5K, $10K or $15K will be awarded to creators of promising innovations that require further testing and/or demonstration of commercial viability. UCSC investment will amount to 50% of the project eligible costs. Launchpad awardees will be required to source private matching funds as required by AB 2664.

UC Santa Cruz is mindful of the unique challenges faced by groups that are typically underrepresented in the technology industry and/or face challenges in accessing funding from traditional sources for technology startups, such as women and minorities. Accordingly, UC Santa Cruz may give special consideration to projects that promote or encourage the inclusion of these groups in the technology industry.

ELIGIBILITY

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

The Launchpad program is limited to technologies that have been formally disclosed and assigned to UCSC at the time of submission of the application. Non-UCSC IP (i.e. IP that has already been assigned to a startup, other company, or other organization) is not eligible for funding. Applicants are required to

complete (or have previously completed) the Invention Disclosure form through the UC Santa Cruz IATC office to be eligible for the program (https://goo.gl/forms/84FyuuI9Nuyncypv1). Any technology currently licensed or held under an option to license to a for-profit company or any technology owned in whole or in part by a for-profit company is not eligible to receive Launchpad funding.

Eligible applicants are: faculty, researchers, staff, postdoctoral scholars, graduate students, and undergraduate students currently employed by or enrolled at UC Santa Cruz. An applicant may be an eligible individual, a group of eligible individuals, or a group including both eligible individuals and outside collaborators. In the last case, the grant will be awarded to the eligible (UCSC-affiliated) individual(s). Interdisciplinary groups or projects will receive special consideration. Technology developed by undergraduate students is typically not owned by UCSC, but if there is interest in qualifying for funding, IATC can provide a recommendation on disclosing/assigning the rights to the invention to the University of California and/or provide information on other programs offered.

PROJECTS THAT PROMOTE DIVERSITY IN THE TECH INDUSTRY

As noted above, the Launchpad Program may give special consideration to projects that promote or encourage participation by groups that are traditionally disadvantaged or otherwise underrepresented in the technology sector. A description of how the project will enhance such participation should be included, if relevant.

ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

Applicants are encouraged to consult with the UCSC IATC office with questions regarding their project suitability for this grant. Successful applications for this opportunity will provide an overview of the goals of the project, a clear description of the specific challenges to commercialization faced, a plan for overcoming those specific challenges (including a timeline), and a description of research progress made to date. Project objectives should be achieved within one year from the disbursement of funds. Applicants will further provide information concerning actual or potential private sources of the 50% matching funds. Such information could include a list of potential private sources, letters of support from potential private sources, or letters from private sources offering to commit funds.

ELIGIBLE COSTS

Only activities involving prototyping and/or testing costs (*e.g.* parts, labor and services) are eligible for Launchpad funding. Ineligible costs include capital equipment, market research reports, consulting expenses, and operational costs, including legal and accounting services (other than lab fees). Funded activities will be limited to those specifically proposed in the application. Research already performed or expenses incurred prior to grant application or grant award are not eligible for funding.

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

The UC Santa Cruz Office of Research is responsible for the administration and implementation of the Launchpad Program. This includes the application process, Grant Review Committee selection and process, award administration and reporting process.

GRANT TERMS AND AMOUNTS

- Funding awards: $5K, $10K, or $15K; the Grant Review Committee has the authority to determine funding amounts, which may be different from the amount requested in the application

- Funding period: one year from the date of award
- Total number and amount of awards are contingent on availability of funds

MATCHING FUNDS

- Matching funds must be at least equivalent to (but can exceed) the award amount
- Matching funds must originate from private sources such as companies or private groups or individuals in the form of a gift purposed for this project. Government funds are not eligible. Matching funds may include contributions from multiple sources.
- An additional 6% campus gift processing fee is required and will be included in the amount paid by the matching funds contributor
- A commitment letter from the source(s) of matching funds will be required after the award is made, but prior to the receipt of Launchpad funds
  Note: the commitment letter is only required if application is awarded (see ELIGIBLE PROJECTS section above)
- Matching funds must be received by UCSC before Launchpad funds are dispersed for the project
- Administrative details pertaining to the receipt of the matching funds will be communicated to the successful awardees in the award letter. In the meantime, for any questions on the matching funds, please contact (or direct donors to contact) Michele Chamberlin at 831-459-4229 or michambe@ucsc.edu.

AWARD PROCESS AND POST-AWARD ADMINISTRATION

- Awardees will be required to sign a funding agreement
- Awarded funds (Launchpad funds + matching funds) are to be used within 12 months
- Awardees will submit quarterly progress reports. The reporting process and content will be established at the time of funding. Awardees will have the opportunity to participate in entrepreneurship-related events through the IATC Office
- Awardees will be required to submit a final report with the results of the project at the completion of the grant year

APPLICATION REVIEW

REVIEW COMMITTEE

The Launchpad Grant Review Committee will consist of:

- Senior UCSC Office of Research staff
- UCSC faculty and campus subject matter experts
- IATC Office representatives
- External entrepreneurs and investors as needed

Reviewers will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement and will be cleared from any potential conflict of interest on an application-by-application basis.

REVIEW PROCESS

Applications will be reviewed and ranked on a competitive basis by the Launchpad Grant Review Committee. The committee will evaluate applications based on the criteria listed in the application form and will determine by a rank-ordered list those applications recommended for funding. The

Grant Review Committee will have full discretion in selecting projects for awards and their decision will be final. Reviewer comments will be provided to all applicants.

REVIEW CRITERIA

Proposals will be rated in the following areas: technical merit, commercialization potential, budget, milestones, proof-of-concept development plan, adherence to the purposes of AB 2664, and benefit to the University. Special consideration may be given to projects that encourage the inclusion in the tech industry of traditionally unrepresented or otherwise disadvantaged groups, and also to interdisciplinary groups or projects. Successful proposals will demonstrate a technology with the promise of public benefit or commercial viability.

HOW TO APPLY

Applicants are required to submit the Launchpad Application Form. Only applications submitted using the prescribed application form will be considered. Applications should describe the project and provide detailed description of the challenge faced, the proposed plan for meeting that challenge, a justification of the benefits of the overall technology, and a description of how the funds will be used during the course of the project are also required.

Launchpad program information, including complete application instructions and required forms can be accessed at: https://officeofresearch.ucsc.edu/iatc/commercialization-/services/launchpad-poc-grant-prog.html.

Q&A WORKSHOP

Those interested in applying for Launchpad funding or with questions on the program or application process are encouraged to attend the Q&A workshop (*see date listed in Program Timeline*).

2017-18 PROGRAM TIMELINE

Announcement Release	December 15, 2017	
Launchpad Q&A Session	Wed Jan 17, 2018 (10am - 11am Kerr Hall, Rm. 278)	
Application Deadline	Monday, March 5, 2018 (11:59 pm Pacific)	
Grant Award Committee Review	March 6-15, 2018	
Notice of Award	March 16, 2018 *on or around*	
Award Start Date	March 26, 2018	
Quarterly Reports Due	July 15, 2018	(reporting through June 30, 2018)
	Oct. 15, 2018	(reporting through Sept. 30, 2018)
	Jan 15, 2019	(reporting through Dec. 31, 2018)
Final Report Due	April 15, 2019	(reporting through March 26, 2019)

CONTACT INFORMATION

For any questions related to the Launchpad Grant process, please email IATCprograms@ucsc.edu, or contact Michele Chamberlin at 831-459-4229