

SIO Seed Funding Policy Effective 1 December 2016 (revised 6/24/20)

Background

The UC Academic Senate offers seed funding through their annual call for individual research grants with two deadline opportunities (mid October and January). The eligibility for the Marine Sciences Academic Senate grants is limited to Academic Senate members and Researchers, and is for relatively small grants (< \$15K). Project Scientists are eligible only for Travel grants to attend scholarly meetings.

In the past, SIO has provided seed funding to PI's on a case-by-case basis when funding permitted and when other sources of seed funding could not be used. In order to make this process more transparent and accessible, there will now be one or two calls for proposals per year, timed to provide opportunities when Academic Senate funds are not available. There is no specified limit to the amount that can be requested, but it would be very unusual for the funding provided to exceed \$25K. It is anticipated that three or four awards will be made every year.

This policy outlines the procedure to follow when submitting a request for SIO seed funding.

Purpose

While this program is flexible, the primary purpose of SIO seed funding is to provide resources to help an investigator develop and strengthen proof of concept for a new research idea with significant scientific merit. The focus is on new projects or new collaborative partnerships.

Types of proposals that would receive preference include:

- Proposals from junior or recently arrived eligible applicants, or from a group of SIO PIs.
- Proposals to start or try new research directions, to conduct preliminary work, or to acquire instrumentation that will directly lead to new proposals for extramural funding.
- Proposals that strengthen a project's viability for commercial funding.
- Proposals that support new collaborative research activities, especially those that build or strengthen cross-disciplinary research. Proposals for joint conferences, workshops, or symposia should show how these will lead to such new activities.
- Proposals to acquire instruments that will be used to train students.

Evaluation Criteria

Evaluation will be based on scientific merit and potential for attracting future funding.

Eligibility

Members of the professorial, researcher, project scientist and specialist series at SIO are eligible. Those that have received seed funding from SIO will not be eligible again for two years, unless there is a compelling project warranting funding and it is considered to be in the best interest of SIO. Members of the Research and Academic Committee are not eligible.

Use of Funds

Seed funds are not discretionary; justification of all items requested is essential.

Use of SIO seed funding shall conform to the approved proposal budget, both in purpose and expenditure allocations. Savings in any category cannot be redirected without SIO approval.

The PI is responsible for the administration of the funds and any overdrafts. All funds must be spent before the expiration date. Funds not expended by the end date will automatically revert to SIO Director's Office, unless an extension in time is requested and approved.

Any equipment purchased from seed funding becomes the property of the University upon acquisition and remains with the University upon completion of the project.

All expenditures are subject to applicable University regulations referenced below:

- [General Policy: 150-75 through 150-79](#)
- [Human Subjects: 100-5](#)
- [Animal Subjects: 100-6](#)
- [Accounting: 300-60](#)
- [Travel Policy: G-28](#)

Funding Restrictions

1. Salary support for eligible applicants, graduate students, and post-docs will not be provided except in extremely exceptional circumstances.
2. Funds may not be used for: books; curricular, administrative and teaching aid studies; individual subscriptions or professional society dues; publication costs, or open access charges or reprints; telephone charges; postage or couriers; office furniture; minor office and computer supplies (paper, pens, pencils); maintenance and repair of equipment.
3. Human and Animal Subjects
 - a. Research involving the use of human subjects (including the use of questionnaires, body fluids, and tissues) must be approved by the Human Subjects Committee before being initiated. Protocol number and date of approval should be indicated on the research grant application. Application forms are available in the [Human Subjects Committee Office](#).
 - b. Research involving the use of animals must be approved by the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC). A copy of the approval or protocol

number should be indicated on the application. Animal Use Protocol forms are available from the [Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee](#) website.

Application Process

Submit a short (less than 5 pages) research proposal to the Deputy Director for Research (<mailto:ddr@sio.ucsd.edu>). The R+A Committee will review all proposals for scientific merit and assess the likelihood of the seed money generating further funding.

- Proposals should include: research concept, description of work proposed, collaborators, marketability/commercial potential (if applicable), other funding options explored, budget and period of performance.
- Include a letter of support from the Section Head.

Reporting

A one page final report is required from award recipients describing the research supported under this program. If applicable, include information towards strengthening a project's viability for commercial funding. The report is due within 60 days after the completion of the performance period.

Other opportunities

- Divisional Directors and Section Heads have limited resources, but they may be able to assist or connect you to other resources available. This makes particular sense when the request is for instrumentation or other resources that are targeted within one particular section and will benefit several members of that section.
- As noted above the Marine Sciences Academic Senate Call for Proposals accepts requests from Academic Senate members and Researchers. This opportunity can be found at <http://senate.ucsd.edu/grants-awards/grant-funding/marine-sciences-research/>.