

**Proof of Concept Research**  
**NEBRASKA RESEARCH INITIATIVE**  
Request for Applications (RFA)

**Introduction:** The primary purpose of a Nebraska Research Initiative (NRI) Proof of Concept (POC) grant is to fund targeted research that helps demonstrate the value of University of Nebraska Intellectual Property (IP) and facilitates its license and commercialization.

**General Eligibility:** Assistant, Associate or Full Professors and equivalent-rank researchers employed by any University of Nebraska campus (who have disclosed IP associated with their grant application to NUtech Ventures or UNeMed) are eligible to submit POC funding proposals. In addition, the IP must have been fully vetted by NUtech Ventures or UNeMed as to its licensing potential. It is highly recommended that potential licensing partners (or industry consultants) clearly articulate the milestones that must be achieved to obtain partner investment(s) and/or licensing.

**Application Process:** Applications are to be developed in conjunction with NUtech or UNeMed representatives. The researcher (PI) initiates the application process by signing into NuRamp.nebraska.edu. Once an application is started, the PI can request that a NUtech or UNeMed representative and/or other NU faculty/staff to be granted edit rights to the documents. Applicants should consult with their licensing representative to ensure that confidential information, not already protected, is not disclosed during the application process.

**Application Format and Content:** The application consists of five components.

First, applicants complete an online data-entry form with the following fields:

- Proposal Title
- PI Contact Information
- Co-PI List (if applicable)
- Abstract/Summary (not to exceed 300 words)

*The abstract shall briefly describe the IP, how the IP overcomes (or is superior to) existing solutions, and what additional steps (prototypes developed, protocols tested, etc.) must be taken to make the IP licensable and/or to increase the value of an IP license. Briefly summarize the approach being taken to complete the additional steps noted earlier in the abstract.*

Second, applicants upload the project narrative (described on page two).

Third, applicants complete an online budget and upload a budget justification.

- *Funding, up to \$200,000, shall not exceed one-year. Sub-awards to non-NU faculty are not allowed; businesses or non-NU faculty can only be funded if they are able to invoice for billable services.*
- *The budget justification document should be in PDF format.*

Fourth, applicants complete an online form that is designed to succinctly capture the project's primary aims/goals objectives.

- *Up to five aims/objectives are to be outlined, and they must match those outlined in the proposal narrative.*
- *If the project is funded, the PI will be asked to report progress on each of the outlined objectives.*

## **Project Narrative**

The project narrative should be uploaded as a single PDF file, and should not exceed eight pages (including references, tables, and figures). Font size must be 12 points or larger and margins must be at least one inch on all four sides. Do not include title or signature pages in the project narrative PDF file. Letters of Support and CV's do not count towards the page limit.

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The project narrative must have the following components:

### **Market Opportunity**

Provide an overview of the “problem” you propose to solve (or market opportunity that is available). What is the potential societal and market impact? What is the market doing now to address the problem? What are the alternative or competing technologies? Elaborate on the benefits of the proposed approach over current or competitive approaches (even if the competitive approaches are not technically similar). Why will your approach be compelling? Concrete market data and testimonials are encouraged. This section should be understandable and compelling by someone not skilled in the art.

### **Intellectual Property (IP)**

Describe the proposed innovation and how it addresses the problem. How will it work? How do you envision the technology being used in a product or service? What is the current status of the idea and any related intellectual property? Emphasize novelty of the proposed work.

### **Commercialization Pathway**

What are the key next financial steps to making impact with this innovation (e.g., sponsored research support, licensing, venture financing)? Describe the guidance you have obtained (who, what) regarding the specific milestones/accomplishments (experiments to be conducted, prototypes developed, etc. – see section below) that must be demonstrated in order to obtain future support (license, venture financing, etc.). What will happen next if the proposed work plan is successfully accomplished?

### **Proposed Work Plan / Specific Aims and Approach**

Describe the work to be accomplished using POC funding and how the proposed work addresses/matches the guidance obtained regarding milestones/accomplishments (Commercialization Pathway, above). Clearly outline the research question(s) and the goals/approach/experiments to be conducted. [These goals/approaches also are to be listed in an online form; there is room to list up to five.] If a prototype is to be developed, describe what needs to be constructed and what a successful prototype must demonstrate. Outline a timeline (not to exceed one year) for the proposed work.

### **Collaborative Roles**

If applicable, clearly indicate the role(s), unique expertise, and expectations for the PI and each collaborator (Co-PI).

### **NUTech/UNeMed**

Provide name and contact information for the NUTech or UNeMed licensing manager assigned to the project.

**Letters of Support**

Include (within the PDF) letters of support from NUtech/UNeMed, market and technical consultants, potential licensees, and/or others.

**Curriculum Vitae (CV)**

Include a CV for the PI, and (if applicable) any Co-PI. Follow a recognized format from a federal grant agency or foundation. The same format must be used for all CVs.

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**Additional Guidance:****Budget**

Personnel expenses aggregated on the budget form must be justified individually.

- F&A costs are not allowable expenses.
- Academic year salary for PIs and Co-PIs are not allowable expenses. Summer salary expenses (0.5 month maximum) are only allowed for a PI without summer support (no summer salary is allowed for any Co-PI); no salary savings can be accrued.
- Outline what budget resources (dollars) would be made available to each PI/Co-PI and what resources will be managed “centrally” by the PI. Provide a clear rationale linking budgetary resources and collaborative role(s).

**Post Award Management, Obligations, and Reporting Requirements**

PIs will be required to submit a brief project initiation report three months after an award. A final report will be due 90 days after the award’s termination date. Satisfactory progress and adherence to award conditions will be required for access to current and future award funds from the University of Nebraska. This program is administered by the University of Nebraska’s Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost.<sup>1</sup>

**Conflict of Interest**

Researchers are reminded of their obligations relative to University of Nebraska Board of Regents Policy 3.2.8 (<http://nebraska.edu/docs/board/RegentPolicies.pdf>) and the relevant campus conflict of interest policy. PIs and Co-PIs must be diligent to avoid conflict(s) of interest related to POC funding, research, or project collaborators.

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<sup>1</sup> RFA and award management questions should be directed to Vice Provost Dr. David Jackson ([djackson@nebraska.edu](mailto:djackson@nebraska.edu)).