



ConTex Call for 2018-2019 Proposals
UT System-CONACYT Collaborative Research
Grants Call Deadline for Receipt of Proposals:
February 16, 2018

Background

On June 21, 2016, the University of Texas System and Mexico's National Council for Science and Technology (CONACYT) signed a Cooperation Agreement to establish the ConTex Program to administer cooperative bi-national academic and research activities for the mutual benefit of the United States and Mexico as neighbors and partners. In November 2016, ConTex launched its first call for proposals for Collaborative Research Grants, and in July 2017, ConTex announced the first awardees of ConTex Collaborative Research Grants.

Objectives and Scope

We are pleased to announce the 2017 Collaborative Research Grant Call. Its primary objective is to provide seed funding for internationally competitive and innovative collaborative projects between researchers from UT System and Mexican institutions that will allow the pursuit of shared research interests and have the potential for creating permanent ties between UT System and Mexican institutions that will grow and continue with the support of extramural funds.

Proposals related to the themes listed below are welcome from across UT System and Mexican institutions. Interdisciplinary collaborations are encouraged.

Environmental sciences – water management, exploitation of the oceans, mitigation and adaptation to climate change, resilience related to natural and man-made disasters, exploitation and protection of ecosystems and biodiversity

Science – astronomy, physics, mathematics, chemistry (applied), geosciences (applied)

Sustainable development – food production, consolidation of institutions, cities and urban development, public policy

Technology development – automation and robotics, biotechnology, genetics, advanced materials, nanomaterials and nanotechnology, information technology, value added engineering, manufacturing

Energy – sustainable energy consumption; development of renewable and clean energies; oil exploration, extraction and use

Health – human behavior and addiction prevention; emerging diseases and impact; preventative medicine and health care, bioengineering; chronic diseases and conditions

Social science – poverty reduction and food security; public communication about science; economics; social and digital/virtual economics; humanities; migration and communities; risk prevention; security

Funding Available

This call funds partnerships of UT System and Mexico based researchers, and proposals **must** contribute to the economic development and welfare of Mexico and Texas.

- Grants up to \$100,000 for twelve months are available for research teams, with the possibility of extending the length of the project for six additional months (18 months maximum). The amount of the grant award will vary depending on the needs of each project and must be fully justified. Starting date must be no later than January 1, 2019, though most collaborations will begin on or around September 1, 2018. Teams should submit only one proposal. UT System and CONACYT will jointly fund projects through the ConTex office. See Budget section for guidance.

Eligibility

- Each proposal must be co-directed by an eligible Principal Investigator from a UT System campus and an eligible Principal Investigator from a Mexican institution.
- UT System Principal Investigators must be tenured or tenure track faculty or research scientists with principal investigator responsibilities at the home institution.
- Principal Investigators from Mexican institutions must meet eligibility criteria set forth by CONACYT, which specify that they must hold full-time academic/research appointments in a Mexican institution of higher education and/or research that is part of the *Registro Nacional de Instituciones y Empresas Científicas y Tecnológicas* (RENIECYT), referred to in article 25- section II of the Law of Science and Technology(LCYT).

- Additional academic participants from other UT system and/or Mexican institutions can be considered Principal Investigators, although ConTex will transfer funds to the two lead institutions only. Postdoctoral fellows and students are **not** eligible to submit proposals.
- The project may be connected to the ConTex Postdoctoral Fellowship Program. However, the grant proposal must be unique, i.e., it may not be a copy of the proposal submitted to the fellowship program.
- Projects currently operating or supported by other CONACYT Calls or Programs shall not be considered.

Budgets

Awards of up to \$100,000 will be provided for a 12-month period, with the possibility of extending the length of the project for 6 additional months (18 months total). The budget must specify the planned distribution of funds at both institutions and should clearly state amounts to be expended at each institution using the budget format provided [here](#). Budget proposal must also be accompanied by a budget justification in narrative form.*

All proposals must be submitted to the appropriate internal review process to provide institutional research administration oversight (e.g. Office of Sponsored Projects, Office of Sponsored Research). Proposals which have not been reviewed in this way will not be considered by ConTex.

Allowable expenses:

- Undergraduate research assistants' salary or stipend (not tuition)
- Master's students' salary or stipend (not tuition)
- UT System based Ph.D. students: salary or stipends; not tuition (funds **cannot** be used for Mexican Ph.D. students already receiving CONACYT funding).
- Graduate students' health insurance.

* If awarded, collaborations with UT Austin may see a re-allocation of expenses to conform with UT System policies and procedures.

- Domestic and international travel—including transportation, lodging, and meals—for the purpose of project planning; collaborative research and training; field, laboratory and archival research; and data collection. Keep in mind that the program is intended to support the seed research phase of a project.
- Equipment purchases not to exceed twenty-five percent of the project budget.
- Supplies and services, including laboratory analyses and computing.
- Consultants' fees for specialized analyses or studies, when necessary.

Unallowable expenses:

- Salary payments to Co-Principal Investigators or any other academic salaries (e.g. professors, post-docs, research scientists, including Summer salaries), except student research assistants.
- Fringe benefits other than health insurance
- Students' tuition and academic fees for research assistants, graduate or undergraduate.
- Indirect costs or institutional overhead assessments.

Submitting and Content of Proposal

- Proposals will be submitted through the ConTex online platform: <http://context.utsystem.edu>. Budget must be submitted in the template provided.
- Application must be submitted by **February 16, 2018**. Any proposal received after this deadline will not be considered for funding.
- Research teams must submit only one proposal.
- Applications must use Budget Proposal Template found on website: context.utsystem.edu/funding
- Applications must be written in English. CVs, letters of support, and other supporting materials may be in Spanish. Budgets should be in US Dollars.

The following documents must be included in one, single proposal document (PDF), in the order indicated below. Applications that exceed the limits given below will not be evaluated beyond that limit.

1. Cover page:
 - Project title; Co-PIs names and institutions; key words; brief, non-technical summary
2. Project description (no more than one page):
 - State-of-the-art and preliminary work – Explain briefly the state-of-the-art in your field as it relates to your project. This description should make clear the context in which you situate your research and in what areas you intend to make a unique, innovative, and promising contribution. Description should be clear and concise.
3. Objectives and work plan (may not exceed 7 pages; font size 11 using Times New Roman or equivalent font):
 - Anticipated timeline – project duration and how long funds will be necessary.
 - Objectives –description of the project’s research program and scientific objectives. Indicate if you have anticipated results that may be relevant to other fields.
 - Work plan including research methods – provide detailed account of steps planned during proposed funding period; a clear description of the joint research plan (distribution of activities and methods of implementation); responsibilities of both partners; description of:
 - expected results, as well as social impact, as appropriate to your field;
 - relevance of researchers’ respective training to the project ;
 - the project’s contribution to the field, and
 - how the project is expected to strengthen research/academic cooperation between Texas and Mexico.
 - Select, relevant bibliography – should be a brief list of only works cited in the description of the state-of-the-art, research objectives, and work program.
 - Composition of core project group: list only individuals who will work directly and regularly on the project, but will not be paid out of the project funds. Include name, academic titles, employment status, and type of funding—list any individuals paid by your respective institutions and those paid using other funding types, i.e. fellowships.
 - Cooperation with researchers outside the project team:
 - List researchers from other institutions with whom you have agreed to cooperate on this project;
 - Researchers from the UT System and Mexico with whom you have collaborated scientifically within the past three years – this information is to avoid potential conflict of interest during the review process;
 - Conflicts of interest with commercial enterprises or other entities

4. List any other pending funding proposals for this project.
5. Letter of institutional commitment for each institution from the appropriate leadership
6. Proposed Budget – specify the cost to support activities at each institution and justification for all requested items. Indicate amounts in US currency. Use format provided.
7. Abbreviated CVs and publications (may not exceed three pages for each Co-PI); in English or Spanish; list only current and/or most relevant publications.

Note: ConTex does not offer any pre-review of proposals nor will reviewer comments be provided following the competition.

Administration of Awards

All funds will be administered by ConTex in accordance with UT System policies and procedures and in observance of CONACYT's institutional requirements. The portion of the grant awarded to each Co-Principal Investigator will be transferred directly to his/her respective institution under terms previously determined and agreed upon by ConTex and the institution.

Each Co-Principal Investigator is responsible for accurate and appropriate administration of funds, accounting of expenditures, and completion of accurate and timely financial reports. Principal Investigators are equally responsible for preparation of the required narrative reports and for acknowledgment of UT System and CONACYT support in products resulting from the grant. Final reports and accounting of funds are to be submitted jointly by both Co-Principal Investigators within the established deadlines to ConTex as the Office of Record for the program.

Assessment criteria and decision making process

Following submission, ConTex will conduct academic and administrative review and ranking of proposals. Each proposal will be reviewed, evaluated, and rated by a committee of faculty members and/or researchers from Mexican and UT System institutions representing expertise in relevant topics. **Proposals should be written for a committee of broadly based expertise and interests.**

Proposals will be assessed against the following primary criteria:

- Quality of proposal
- Contribution to current body of knowledge
- Experience and expertise of Co-PIs
- Coherence and clarity of work plan
- Reasonableness and efficiency of budget
- Likelihood of completing all research goals
- Impact of proposed research on economic development and welfare of Texas/Mexico
- Contribution to the development of the US–Mexico network of scientists and scholars
- Ability to leverage current resources and infrastructure for increased impact and visibility
- Probability to attract future support of other funding agencies

Key dates

Opening of call for proposals	Monday, October 16, 2017
Deadline for proposal submission	Friday, February 16 2018
Administrative review	Last two weeks of February 2018
Academic evaluation assessment	Between March 1 and June 1 2018
Communication of results	After June 1, 2018
Project formalization	Before July 2, 2018
Funds available for disbursement	Wednesday, August 1, 2018

Contacts

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