



ConTex Call for FY18 (2017-2018) Proposals
UT System-CONACYT Collaborative Research Grants Call
Deadline for Receipt of Proposals: March 24, 2017

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.

Objectives and Scope

UT System and CONACYT are pleased to announce the Collaborative Research Grant Call.

This initiative will provide seed-funding to teams of UT System and Mexican researchers beginning projects in basic and applied collaborative research, instructional development, and public service and education projects that apply research to public issues. Projects funded are expected to lead to development of major, long-term collaborations and significant advancement of scholarship in the following areas:

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 – automatization and robotics, biotechnology, genetics, advanced materials, nanomaterials and nanotechnology, information technology, engineering to increase added value to industries, 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

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

Priority will be given to projects related to Science, Technology, Environmental Studies, Energy, and Health.

The primary objective is to provide funding for internationally competitive and innovative collaborative projects between researchers from UT System institutions 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 above are welcomed from across UT System and Mexican institutions. Interdisciplinary collaborations are encouraged.

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 \$150,000 are available for research teams. The amount of the grant award will vary depending on the needs of each research project and must be fully justified. Teams should submit one proposal per project.

UT System and CONACYT will jointly fund projects through the ConTex office. See Budget section for guidance on the use of funds.

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 of higher education and/or research center that is part of the *Registro Nacional de Instituciones y Empresas Científicas y Tecnológicas* (RENIECYT).
- Projects currently operating or supported by other Calls, Programs of Funds from CONACYT shall not be supported.
- Postdoctoral fellows and students are **not** eligible to submit proposals.
- Principal Investigators may include additional academic participants from UT System and Mexican institutions other than the submitting organizations.
- Principal Investigators may submit only one proposal to this competition.
- 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.

- UT System Principal Investigators must be tenured or tenure track faculty or research scientists.
- 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).

Budgets

Awards of up to \$150,000 will be provided for up to a 24-month period. The budget must specify the planned distribution of costs and funds at both the UT System and Mexican institutions. All budgets are subject to strict administrative review. The appropriateness of the budget to the project and to the ConTex program is considered within the criteria for the peer review process. No project will be funded until all of the appropriate items have been approved.

Allowable expenses include:

- Domestic and international travel—including transportation, lodging, and meal expenses—for the purpose of meetings for 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. As a result, conference attendance is given lower priority in the review process. If included, it should be limited to one meeting, no more than \$500 per Co-Principal Investigator, and directly be related to the development of the project or the reporting of results.
- Undergraduate research assistance from UT System or Mexican students.
- UT System based Ph.D. students (funds **cannot be** used for Mexican Ph.D. students receiving CONACYT funding).
- Supplies and services, including laboratory analyses and computing.

Items which will **not** be funded include:

- Salary payments to Co-Principal Investigators or any other academic salaries, except student research assistants.
- Student/academic fees or tuition for student undergraduate research assistants.
- Equipment purchases in excess of twenty-five percent of project budget.
- Indirect costs or institutional overhead assessments.

Submitting and Content of Proposal

Proposals will be submitted through the ConTex online platform: <http://contex.utsystem.edu>

Application must be submitted by **6:00 p.m. (CST) 24 March 2017**. Any proposal received after this deadline will not be considered for funding.

Researchers are responsible for developing their own collaborations. Once a research proposal is developed, research teams must submit one proposal through the ConTex online platform.

Applications must be prepared in English.

The following documents must be included in the application:

- Summary (no more than one page) of project information and personnel.
- Project description (no more than one page):
 - State-of-the-art and preliminary work – Explain briefly and precisely the state-of-the-art in your field in its direct relationship to your project. This description should make clear in which context you situate your research and in what areas you intend to make a unique, innovative, promising contribution. Description should be clear and concise without referring to additional literature.
- Objectives and work plan (may not exceed 5 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 program 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 of the project, as well as social impact;
 - Relevance of the project in researchers respective training; as well as contribution to the field, and
 - How the project is expected to help strengthen research/academic cooperation between Texas and Mexico.
 - Data handling/management plan – if research data or information will be systematically produced, describe if and how these will be made available for future reuse by other researchers.
 - Bibliography – list only works cited in description of the state-of-the-art, research objectives, and the work program.
 - Project requirements:
 - Composition of project group – list only individuals who will work 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 other researchers:
 - List researchers with whom you have agreed to cooperate on this project;
 - Researchers with whom you have collaborated scientifically within the past three years – this information is to avoid potential conflict of interest during the review process;
 - Scientific equipment – list larger instruments available to you for this project; to include large computer facilities if computing capacity will be needed, and
 - Project-relevant participation in commercial enterprises – indicate if you are the owner of a commercial enterprise or a stakeholder. If so, please state how your research project is linked to the company’s production branch or activities. Discuss how potential conflict of interest will be managed.
- Additional information – mention any funding proposals for this project and/or major instrumentation previously submitted to a third party.
 - Institutional commitment should be documented in a formal letter from the appropriate institutional leadership for both Principal Investigators.
 - Budget request – specify the cost to support activities at each institution and justification for all requested items. Indicate amounts in U.S. currency.
 - Abbreviated CVs and publications (may not exceed three pages for each PI) – in English or Spanish, for each co-PI; 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.

Key dates

Announce call for proposals	Monday, 28 November 2016
Deadline for proposal submission	Friday, 24 March 2017
Administrative review	Last week of March 2017
Academic evaluation assessment	Between April – June 2017
Communication of results	After 15 June 2017
Project formalization	After 30 June 2017
Funds available for disbursement	Immediately after communication of results

Administration of Awards

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

Each 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 final narrative report 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. No indirect costs or institutional overhead may be charged against funds awarded under this program.

Assessment criteria and decision making process

Following submission, ConTex will jointly 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 criteria:

- Clarity, quality, and feasibility;
- Evidence of meaningful participation among collaborators, including project design that leads to development of new research programs and resources in UT System and Mexican institutions;
- Relevance of the proposal to objective of strengthening and/or creating permanent ties between respective institutions, and
- Project management structure and resources, including value for money.

Contacts

Inquiries related to this call should be directed to:

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