

## **PROOF OF CONCEPT GRANT PROGRAM**

### **National Center of Competence in Research for Bio-Inspired Materials**

The **Proof of Concept Grant** program of the **National Center of Competence in Research (NCCR) Bio-Inspired Materials** provides support for the demonstration of technological feasibility and economic viability of ideas and inventions emanating from the NCCR Bio-Inspired Materials.

The **Proof of Concept Grants** provide funds for short-term (approximately 1-3 months) projects with an application nature, for example prototyping, developing advanced proof-of-concept, benchmarking of inventions with existing technologies, demonstrating specific applications, assessment of pre-industrial feasibility and/or identification of market opportunities. The grant must be used to provide added value to an existing NCCR project and may normally not be used for research, salaries of existing personnel, nor for the purchase of equipment. Personnel may be hired temporarily to accomplish the project. Explicit links to economic valorization (links to industrial partners or startup development) are desirable. Proposals must specify at least one deliverable.

#### **Funding**

Requests should normally be in the range of CHF 5'000 – 20'000. In extraordinary circumstances, larger grants may be awarded with approval required of the NCCR Executive Board. The budget for the grant request must be divided into costs for additional personnel, external services, consumables and travel. Please note that NCCR/SNSF-funded PhD students cannot be hired within the framework of this grant (e.g., as an addition / top-up to their PhD NCCR/SNSF income).

The financial support is provided in the form of a reimbursement of expenses to the responsible PI. Funds can be requested either as a single reimbursement request at the end of the project or at regular periods (monthly) during the course of the project. The conditions for expenditure of the granted funds follow the SNSF financial rules for NCCRs. Expenditures made which do not follow SNSF guidelines will not be reimbursed and must be covered by the research group with own funds.

#### **Proposals**

Requests will be accepted as long as allocated program funds are available. Proposals cannot be submitted retroactively (i.e. after the activity has taken place). Proposals will be evaluated individually by the NCCR KTT manager and the NCCR Directors. If one of the NCCR Directors has a conflict of interest, another member of the NCCR Executive Board will be asked to evaluate the proposal. Grants are awarded based on eligibility, economic valorization potential and the anticipated impact of the grant towards the development of a technology. Evaluation summaries will be provided with the decision.

#### **Who can apply?**

The Proof of Concept Grant is open to all PhD students, postdocs, senior scientists and professors contributing to the NCCR Bio-Inspired Materials. PhD students and postdoctoral researchers must contribute to the NCCR Bio-Inspired Materials at an activity rate of 50% or higher for a minimum duration of 12 months (reference is date of submission of application), but the source of funding of the participant is not relevant. NCCR Members and Associated Members who do not meet this 50%-funding criterion may co-apply with an NCCR Professor. The responsible NCCR Professor's approval is required for submission and proposals from PhD students and postdocs.

#### **How to apply?**

The application form for the Proof of Concept Grant may be downloaded at <http://bioinspired-materials.ch/innovation/> and requests should be submitted to the KTT manager. Applicants are encouraged to discuss their application with the KTT manager before submission. The applications may be submitted anytime.

## **Reporting**

The grantees must submit a short project report indicating the work accomplished and results obtained to the KTT manager no later than 6 weeks after the end of their grant.

## **Mentoring**

Awardees of **Proof of Concept Grants** will normally receive mentoring by the KTT manager and are expected to meet regularly with the KTT manager during the duration of the grant.

For more information, please contact Eliav Haskal, NCCR KTT manager, at 026/300-9137 or [eliav.haskal@unifr.ch](mailto:eliav.haskal@unifr.ch).