

UPF INNOValora

The UPF Proof-of-Concept Programme

(Call full text)

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1. Programme Overview

UPF INNOVALORA is the first UPF programme to support translational research and proof of concept projects linked to the university's overall research activity.

Widely known as "valley of death", there is a very significant shortage in funding available to take promising research results to a stage where they can be evaluated by the private sector and eventually reach society. Proof-of-concept funding helps demonstrate the value of the technology by the construction of prototypes, the evaluation of commercial potential, determining the best IP strategy and identifying a route to market (further co-development, license to existing company or spin-out); establishing the viability of the research outputs is therefore the main objective for these kinds of projects, although they can also help in deciding not to pursue a technology or research result development, which often saves resources and time later on.

UPF INNOVALORA is fully in line with UPF Strategic Plan 2016-2021 and UPF VALORA - Horizon 2025 which aim to promote innovation and social transformation by creating synergies' with society and thus contributing to social welfare and creation of value.

2. Project eligibility

2.1. Beneficiaries

Beneficiaries of the grant will be UPF researchers.

2.2. Project requirements

In order to be eligible for funding, proof of concept projects will have to comply with the following requirements:

- The existing, background IP is owned or co-owned by UPF. In case ownership is shared with other institutions, a co-ownership agreement must be in place.
- The research results arising from the Project shall be the property of Universitat Pompeu Fabra.
- Research has been conducted to experimental testing with successful results (pre-demonstration stage) but need further development, setting up of a prototype, targeted demonstration, etc.
- Potential commercial or societal opportunities have been identified.

The project must be focused on commercial product development or testing. INNOVALORA funding cannot be used for basic exploratory studies or as general funding for the PI's lab.

Project proposals should address how achieving identified project milestones will move the invention towards commercialization.

All scientific and technical areas are included.

3. Funding

3.1. Call budget

The total budget for the first INNOValora call (*pilot programme*) is 150.000 euros.

UPF INNOValora is funded by Universitat Pompeu Fabra and ERDF (FEDER) funds.

Projects from the Department of Experimental and Health Sciences (DCEXS) may be additionally funded by the Spanish Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness through the María de Maeztu Programme (Project 2014-0370). Please see special conditions in point 3.2.

3.2. Project budget and expenditure

The programme will fund projects of up to 30.000 Euros, duly justified under a **predetermined action plan**, and eligible expenditure will fall under the following categories:

- Services subcontracting (such as IP or business/market consultancy, technical services...)
- Travel
- Material and equipment

Personnel and internal invoices are not eligible under this call

Only necessary expenses linked to technology transfer activities will be funded, according to the objectives and milestones described in the project proposal.

*Special conditions for DCEXS projects:
Project proposals presented by DCEXS researchers may also include Personnel expenditure, to be funded with charge to their Maria de Maeztu programme. Maximum personnel budget per project is of 30.000 euros.*

4. Application procedure

4.1. Proposal submission

Proposals shall be prepared using the standard INNOValora form.

Completed and signed forms shall be sent via email to innovacio@upf.edu (digital and scanned signatures are accepted)

UI-BS (Tech Transfer team) will assist researchers on preparation of proposals when needed (assessing whether a given idea fits into the call objectives, giving orientation and guidance on how to present proposals, answering questions that may arise on the program functioning, etc.).

4.2. Deadlines & calendar

INNOValora call will be open from November 27th 2017 to January 15th 2018, 23:59h

The call calendar is envisaged as follows:

Cut-off date	Proposal evaluation	Panel presentation	Project execution
January 15th 2018	January-February 2018	February 2018	As from March 2018

In case the total budget is not assigned after this first call, a second cut-off date may be called in the Spring 2018.

5. Proposal evaluation

5.1. Evaluation criteria

Project proposals will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

a) Novelty / IP (20 points)

The technology is new, progresses beyond state-of-the-art in the field, and ideally is properly protected or registered, or an IP strategy is to be planned and executed during the course of the proof of concept project.

b) Market and impact (25 points)

There is an unmet need or unsolved problem clearly identified (commercial or societal opportunity). Potential beneficiaries or users have been acknowledged and quantified. Stakeholders have expressed interest in the technology.

c) Project soundness (35 points)

The project is focused on a commercial product or service development or testing and sets clear objectives and milestones to be achieved during the project period, reducing the commercialization risk by boosting the development of the technology (e.g. by advancing

levels of technology readiness - TRL¹). Budget is duly justified and clearly devoted to the proof of concept project's objectives. Project seems therefore technically and economically viable.

d) Team (20 points)

The project team is identified, holds the necessary experience and is clearly committed to the proof of concept project and beyond, for cases where the results obtained are positive and the technology is transferrable.

5.2. Evaluation process

Project proposals will be assessed and evaluated by external experts in the project's scientific & industry field, in technology transfer and in seed investment/entrepreneurship. A final pitch to an evaluation panel might be called in order to make the final decision on approval and funding of projects.

The evaluation process will take place within one month after the proposal submission's deadline. External reviewers will sign a non-disclosure agreement (NDA) with UPF.

6. Project management and reporting

6.1. Project management

Once a proposal is approved, the responsible researcher will sign a Letter of Intent (LoI) stating his commitment to INNOValora call's objectives.

Allocated funds will be released in total at the beginning of the project.

Projects shall be executed during a period of six to nine (6-9) months. Under justified circumstances, extensions might be allowed, for a maximum period of three (3) extra months.

The UPF INNOValora Call will be managed by the Unitat d'Innovació - UPF Business Shuttle, who will assign a reference person from the Technology Transfer team to each of the funded projects. Any communication regarding the INNOValora call or project will be addressed via this person.

6.2. Reporting

¹ Please see Technology Readiness Levels according to European Commission Horizon 2020 (European Commission Decision C(2017)2468 of 24 April 2017 - http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/other/wp/2016_2017/annexes/h2020-wp1617-annex-g-trl_en.pdf)

A midterm review -3 months after beginning of project - is envisaged, consisting of an update meeting with UI-BS tech transfer manager and an external advisor if suitable, which will assess the project's progress.

A full final technical and financial² report on the outcome of the project will be delivered to UI-BS within one calendar month after the project is finished. This final report will include the next steps to be undertaken with the project's technology or knowledge.

² Please note that expenditure will be subject to general public finance principles, including those specific from INNOVALORA call funding sources (ERDF (FEDER) / MARÍA de MAEZTU) as may be the case.