



2019 ConTex Call for Proposals
UT System-CONACYT Collaborative Research Grants
Deadline to Submit Proposals: February 15, 2019

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. ConTex launched its first call for proposals for Collaborative Research Grants in November 2016, and continues offering this program on an annual basis.

Objectives and Scope

We are pleased to announce the 2019 Collaborative Research Grants Call for Proposals. Its primary objective is to provide seed funding for internationally competitive and innovative collaborative projects between researchers from UT System and Mexican institutions. The projects should allow the pursuit of shared research interests and show the potential to leverage additional extramural funding in order to create permanent ties between UT System and Mexican institutions.

ConTex welcomes proposals related to the themes listed below from across UT System and Mexican institutions. Interdisciplinary and multi-institutional collaborations are encouraged. Student involvement and capacity building is also 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.

Sciences – astronomy, physics, mathematics, chemistry, geosciences.

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

Technology development – automation and robotics, biotechnology, genetics, advanced materials, nanomaterials and nanotechnology, information technology, cyber security, cloud computing, data analytics, 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 sciences – poverty reduction and food security, economics, social and digital/virtual economics, migration and communities, risk prevention, security, sociology, psychology.

Humanities – anthropology, archeology, classics, communications, cultural, ethnic, and gender studies, history, law and politics, linguistics and languages, literature, philosophy, religion, performing arts, visual arts.

Education – instruction and pedagogy in all subject areas, special education, education administration.

Funding

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

Grants of up to \$100,000 for twelve months are available for research teams. The amount of the grant award will vary depending on the needs of each project. The proposed budget must be fully justified. UT System and CONACYT will jointly fund projects through the ConTex office (see budget section for guidance). Most projects should begin on or around September 1, 2019; please provide justification if a later start date is required.

Eligibility

- Each proposal must be led by at least one eligible Principal Investigator (PI) from a UT System institution and at least one eligible Principal Investigator from a Mexican institution.
- Academic participants from other UT System or Mexican institutions can serve as additional Principal Investigators, with the corresponding programmatic and financial responsibilities.
- UT System Principal Investigators must be tenured or tenure track-faculty or research scientists with principal investigator responsibilities at their home institution.
- Principal Investigators from Mexican institutions must meet eligibility criteria established by CONACYT. Applicants must hold full-time academic/research appointments in a Mexican institution of higher education and/or be involved in research that is part of the *Registro Nacional de Instituciones y Empresas Científicas y Tecnológicas* (RENIECYT) [article 25- section II of the Law of Science and Technology (LCYT)].

- Postdoctoral fellows and students are not eligible to submit proposals.
- The project may be connected to the ConTex Postdoctoral Fellowship Program. However, the collaborative grant proposal must be unique and distinct enough from 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. The budget must specify the planned distribution of funds and should clearly state amounts to be expended at each institution using the budget format provided [here](#). Proposed budget **must** be accompanied by a budget justification in narrative form.

Allowable expenses

- Undergraduate and/or graduate research assistants' salary or stipend (not tuition).
- Ph.D. students' salary or stipend (not tuition). Funds cannot be used for Mexican Ph.D. students already receiving CONACYT funding.
- Students' health insurance (individual only).
- 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. Budgeted amounts must be calculated using the appropriate institutional per diem and travel rates.
- Equipment purchases not to exceed twenty-five percent of proposed budget. If equipment expenditures must exceed twenty-five percent of budget, a strong rationale should be provided in the budget justification.
- Supplies and services, including laboratory analyses and computing.
- Consultants' fees for specialized analyses or studies, when required.

Unallowable expenses:

- Salary payments to Principal Investigators or any other academic salaries (e.g. professors, 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.
- Sub-contracts/Sub-awards.
- Indirect costs or institutional overhead assessments.

Proposal Content and Submission

- Proposals must be submitted through the ConTex online platform at <http://contex.utsystem.edu>
- Applications must use the ConTex budget template provided at <http://contex.utsystem.edu/funding>
- Application must be submitted by **February 15, 2019**. Any proposal received after this deadline will not be considered for funding.
- A researcher may serve as PI on one proposal only.
- All proposals must be certified by the proper institutional research administration oversight (e.g. Office of Vice President for Research at UT Austin, Office of Sponsored Projects for all other UT Institutions).
- Applications must be written in English. CVs, letters of support, and other supporting materials may be in English or Spanish. Budgets should be in US Dollars.

The following documents must be included in a single PDF document in the order indicated below. Applications that exceed the allowable page limits will not be evaluated.

1. Cover page:
 - Project title, PI names and titles, departments and institutions, emails and other contact information, 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, Times New Roman or equivalent font):
 - Anticipated timeline.
 - Objectives –description of the project's research program and scientific objectives. Indicate 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 expertise related 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.
- Relevant bibliography – brief list of works cited in the description of the state-of-the-art, research objectives, and work program.
 - Composition of core project group: list individuals who will work directly and regularly on the project, but will not be paid with project funds. Include names, academic titles, employment status, and type of funding—list any individuals paid by your respective institutions and those paid using other funding types (e.g. 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 support for each institution from the appropriate academic leadership (e.g. Center Director, Department Chair, Dean, etc.) addressed to ConTex Review Committee.
 6. Memo certifying that the proposal has been reviewed by the proper institutional research administration oversight (for UT System institutions only).
 7. Institutional Review Board approval for human or animal subjects, if applicable (or plan for submission according to project's timeline).
 8. Proposed Budget (use ConTex budget template).
 9. Budget Justification – specify the cost to support activities at each institution and justification for all requested items. Amounts in US dollars.
 10. Abbreviated CVs (in English or Spanish). Must include a list of the most current/relevant publications (up to three pages for each PI).

Note: ConTex does not offer pre-review of proposals. Only complete proposals will be reviewed. Reviewer comments will be provided upon request by PIs after awards are announced.

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 Principal Investigator will be transferred directly to her/his respective institution under terms previously determined and agreed upon by ConTex and the institution. All Principal Investigators are responsible for accurate and appropriate administration of funds, accounting of expenditures, and completion of precise and timely narrative and financial reports. Award recipients are required to acknowledge UT System and CONACYT support through ConTex programs in products resulting from the grant. Final reports and accounting of funds are to be submitted by all Principal Investigators within the established deadlines to ConTex as the Office of Record for the program.

Review Process and Criteria

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 according to the following main criteria for intellectual merit and impact:

- Quality of proposal
- Contribution to current body of knowledge
- Experience and expertise of each PI
- 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 and 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 from other funding agencies

Contacts

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