ConTex Information for UT Austin Applicants
Collaborative Research Grants and Postdoctoral Fellowships

Collaborative Research Grants

ConTex Collaborative Research Grants aim to provide seed funding for internationally competitive and innovative collaborations between researchers from The University of Texas (UT) System and Mexican research centers and institutions of higher education. Each project must include at least one Principal Investigator from the UT System and one from Mexico. Research must contribute to the economic development and welfare of Mexico and Texas. ConTex awards grants of up to $100,000 USD for twelve months to projects that show potential to leverage additional extramural funding to foster permanent ties between the UT System and Mexican institutions.

Eligibility
Following submission, ConTex conducts an administrative and academic review and ranking of proposals. Each project is evaluated and rated by faculty members and/or researchers from Mexico and the United States with expertise in the relevant topics.

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

- Quality of proposal
- Experience and expertise of each Principal Investigator (PI)
- Balance and efficiency of proposed budget
- Potential impact of research on the economic development and welfare of Texas and Mexico

Visa issues might apply; please visit the International Office website or send an email message to intlfinaid@austin.utexas.edu for immigration related questions.

Budget

- Splitting costs among the lead PIs has been the norm and the preferred method. Due to the nature of funding UT Austin receives (AUF), transferring funds to Mexico from the U.S. is prohibited. PIs are advised to seek clarification from OSP and the ConTex team before submitting their budget.

- For a full list of allowable and unallowable expenses, visit the Call for Proposals page.

- Postdoctoral stipends or salaries are eligible expenses. However, faculty applying for a collaborative research grant may also support postdocs who submit a separate application for a ConTex Postdoctoral Research Fellowship,
naming the PI as a sponsor/mentor. Bear in mind that proposal topics must be different.

**Application submission and award process**

- Historically, award announcements are disseminated in late Fall, with a submission deadline of early Spring of the following year.

- Proposals must include institutional endorsement by OSP: PIs must create and submit a PRF (proposal review form) for their proposals in order to receive certification from OSP.

- Once the certification is received, PIs must submit applications electronically, via the ConTex portal.

- ConTex sends award notifications to PIs via email, with copy to the UT Austin Coordinator, and the OVPR.

- The UT Austin Coordinator submits a blanket request to the Office of Accounting, for 20-accounts for all awardees, in their respective unit codes. Instructions can be found on the Financial and Administrative Services website. The award letter must be submitted as backup to this request.
  - Form type: Education and General
  - Type of account: 20 AUF
  - Instructions can be found on the Financial and Administrative Services website.

- The Office of Accounting will grant ‘view’ access to OSP of all award account numbers.

- A memorandum of understanding is initiated by ConTex, and sent to the UT Austin Coordinator for OSP institutional endorsement. After UT System finally executes the agreement, funds are disbursed to the Office of Accounting for distribution to PI accounts.

- Guidance on personnel appointments may be directed to departmental Human Resources Representatives.

- ConTex will pay all pooled fringe benefits as an allowable expense negotiated for UT Austin fellowships. The supervising department and mentor may choose either of the following options as applicable and in compliance with visa restrictions:
  - Process postdoctoral fellow appointments as a stipend using the University Affiliate Postdoctoral Fellow title (job code A010).
• The stipend is then processed from the 70-subaccount as a scholarship/fellowship payment.
• The Postdoc's health benefit can be reimbursed separately. Health insurance expenses may be covered from the 73-subaccount (postdoc must provide proof of payment). The postdoc may purchase insurance from the open market or from UT. Information about UT's health insurance benefits can be found on the Human Resources website.
• Procedures for Research Titles can be found on the Office of the VP for Research Policy website.

Process postdoctoral fellow as an employee (job code 0712).
• Pooled fringe benefits are an allowable expense.

Proposal feedback
• Reviewer comments will be provided to PIs upon request to ConTex after awards are announced. ConTex does not release this information to UT Austin unless expressly authorized by the PI.

Final report
PIs must submit a financial mid-term report and a final report to ConTex. Reports require institutional endorsement by OSP.

Postdoctoral Fellowships

Postdoctoral scholars seeking to pursue research at Mexican or UT System institutions receive annual salary and health insurance for up to a 12-month period. Fellowships are open to all areas of study. High priority areas may be defined in the call. Applicants must have completed a PhD and must be either a Mexican citizen (for research fellowship at a UT institution) or have graduated from a UT institution (for research fellowship at a Mexican institution).

Eligibility
• Mexican nationals with a PhD are eligible.

• Visit ConTex to review the most recent call for nominations and deadlines, and for a full description of study areas covered.

Application submission
• Postdocs must contact a prospective faculty member or researcher at UT Austin to request permission to work in his/her lab or area.

• A list of faculty members and research staff can be found under each respective area of study: https://www.utexas.edu/academics/areas-of-study.
• For additional information and the call for proposals, visit the ConTex website.

Award process
• At the time of award, the ConTex Office will work with OSP to request approval of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

• ConTex will submit a copy of the award notifications to the UT Austin Coordinator, with complete details of the award including the supervisor’s contact information.

• The MOU authorizes the transfer of award funds to UT Austin.

• The UT Austin Coordinator submits a blanket request to the Office of Accounting, for 20-accounts for all awardees, in their respective unit codes. Instructions can be found on the Financial and Administrative Services website. The award letter must be submitted as backup to this request.
  o Form type: Education and General
  o Type of account: 20 AUF
  o Instructions can be found on the Financial and Administrative Services website.

• The Office of Accounting will grant ‘view’ access to OSP of all award account numbers.

• A memorandum of understanding is initiated by ConTex, and sent to the UT Austin Coordinator for OSP institutional endorsement. After UT System finally executes the agreement, funds are disbursed to the Office of Accounting for distribution to PI accounts.

• Guidance on personnel appointments may be directed to departmental Human Resources Representatives.

• ConTex will pay all pooled fringe benefits as an allowable expense negotiated for UT Austin fellowships. The supervising department and mentor may choose either of the following options as applicable and in compliance with visa restrictions:
  a. Process the postdoctoral fellow appointment as a stipend using the University Affiliate Postdoctoral Fellow title (job code A010).
    • The stipend is then processed from the 70-subaccount as a scholarship/fellowship payment
    • The Postdoc’s health benefit can be reimbursed separately. Health insurance expenses may be covered from the 73-subaccount (postdoc must provide proof of payment). The postdoc may purchase insurance
from the open market or from UT. Information about UT’s health insurance benefits can be found on the Human Resources website.

- Procedures for Research Titles can be found on the Office of the VP for Research Policy website.

b. Process the postdoctoral fellow as an employee (job code 0712).
- Pooled fringe benefits are an allowable expense.

**Final report**
Postdoc fellows’ supervisors must submit a financial mid-term report and a final report to ConTex. Reports require institutional endorsement by OSP.