

South Texas Technology Management offers grants to bring promising University of Texas technologies to market

Proposals for Spring 2009 *POCsparc* grants must be submitted by April 17

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SAN ANTONIO (March 13, 2009) – South Texas Technology Management (STTM), which works to stimulate invention at four University of Texas System institutions and then help bring those new technologies to market, today announced that it is seeking proposals for its Spring 2009 *Proof of Concept: Short Proposals to Accelerate Commercialization (POCsparc)* grant program.

The grants provide an important source of funding to help UT inventions achieve their commercial potential. Proposals should be based on a UT technology that, once the proposed work is completed, will be ready for commercial application.

Prior to applying, an Invention Disclosure Form must have been filed with STTM. Principal investigators must be on the faculty of one of the four UT institutions served by STTM: the University of Texas at Brownsville (UTB), the University of Texas-Pan American (UTPA), the University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA) and the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio.

Applications are judged on the value proposition for the use of the funds, and favorable characteristics of the invention include:

- Inventions that have the potential to become novel "core" or "platform" technologies for multiple products;
- Inventions for which a likely commercial partner has been identified;
- Inventions with the potential for significant financial return;
- Inventions that command a strong proprietary position;
- Projects likely to benefit significantly from an investment;
- Projects with specific objectives that can be completed within six months;
- Projects that are likely candidates for follow-on funding.

STTM awarded more than \$313,000 during the first year of *POCsparc*. An additional \$50,000 was awarded to fund two projects through Proof of Concept Roadrunner grants, which are available to UTSA faculty through a supplement to the Emerging Technology Fund award that established the UTSA Institute for Cyber Security.

STTM encourages faculty to publish *POCsparc* project results. However, the results of the project should lead to commercialization. Two previous *POCsparc* award recipients have received additional rounds of funding upon completion of *POCsparc* projects.

- Leonid Bunegin, B.S., Associate Professor in the UT Health Science Center Department of Anesthesiology, was awarded a \$25,000 *POCsparc* grant in April 2008 to support the development of a fluidics technology device for improved transplant organ preservation. Based on progress demonstrated during the *POCsparc* project, Professor Bunegin received an additional \$50,000 grant from the UT System Office of Research and Technology Transfer Texas Ignition Fund. He is continuing development of the technology while STTM explores licensing the invention to an established company or a start-up company formed specifically to commercialize the invention.
- Daniel DeArmond, M.D., assistant professor in the UT Health Science Center Department of Surgery/Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery, was awarded a \$5,000 *POCsparc* grant in April 2008 to advance development of a device to detect gastrointestinal leakage after GI surgery. Based on successful proof of concept experimentation, Dr. DeArmond applied for and was awarded a \$15,000 Morrison Trust grant to continue work on the device. Dr. DeArmond stated that the *POCsparc* grant was “invaluable in kick-starting experimental work for (the) device and in providing proof-of-concept data in a low cost experimental model” that led to the Morrison Trust grant.

Additional *POCsparc* award recipients have successfully applied STTM grant funds toward achievement of significant milestones to advance UT inventions:

- Kyumin Whang, Ph.D., and H. Ralph Rawls, Ph.D., of the UT Health Science Center Department of Restorative Dentistry/Division of Biomaterials, were awarded a \$19,750 grant in April 2008 to support the development of a color-stable dual-cure resin for use in restorative dental procedures. The *POCsparc* funds were used to successfully confirm the feasibility of the resin curing system, a milestone that serves to position the technology for licensing and commercialization.
- Gopinath Mani, Ph.D., Assistant Professor in the UTSA Department of Biomedical Engineering, was awarded a \$10,000 grant in April 2008 to advance development of a unique process for monolayer coating of therapeutic agents on drug delivery stents. The *POCsparc* funds were used to successfully characterize the surface bonding properties of the monolayer coating and demonstrate the stability of the coating process, a milestone that supports feasibility of the system for use in drug-eluting stents. This technology holds promise for reducing the incidence of restenosis, which is a serious complication caused by the formation of a new blockage at the site of the stent placement.

Principal investigators wishing to apply for a *POCsparc* grant should refer to the STTM website, www.utsttm.org, for the *POCsparc* Application and Application Instructions. Grant proposals are due Friday, April 17, 2009.

For more information about *POCsparc*, including a complete list of award recipients, please visit the STTM website, www.utsttm.org, or contact Claude Longoria at longoriacc@uthscsa.edu or (210) 567-2147.

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South Texas Technology Management is the regional technology transfer office serving the UT Health Science Center at San Antonio, UT San Antonio, UT Pan American and UT Brownsville. STTM provides comprehensive intellectual property services for technologies developed by faculty, staff and students. STTM is dedicated to the protection and licensing of these technologies in order to further research and development, protect the interests of the faculty and the University, enhance economic development and provide humanitarian value to the community. By facilitating the development and commercialization of UT inventions, STTM is fostering and encouraging the creation of new and cutting-edge technologies.