

1. Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide proposal guidelines for potential applicants regarding application to the ARIES Proof-of-Concept fund.

2. Aims

The ARIES PoC Fund is intended to provide financial support at the very early or pre-seed stage of turning research outputs into a proposition that has impact, innovation and technology transfer potential. The idea or concept must have a clear potential for commercial application and sometimes a background patent will have been filed, although this is not a requirement and may not always be applicable. Applicants should include an explanation of how they plan to manage IP in the project.

The PoC model foresees to work on an idea that will make the innovation and technology transfer potential evident to the market and so secure, for example, a spin-out (seed or venture finance) or licensing opportunity or provide the necessary information to bid for other support. This often takes small amounts of funds to enable activities essential for preparing a robust business plan.

PoC funding will support a range of relevant activities to enable the development and examination of a novel concept or a product to establish its commercial feasibility and scientific and technical merit. The ARIES project considers that proposals requesting a contribution of about 50 K€ would allow PoC activities to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of proposals requesting different amounts.

The PoC funding can be used for:

- Undertaking further scientific and technical development of an idea.
- Improving an intellectual property (IP) position, through for example, supporting further work to exemplify or broaden patent claims. All intellectual property arising from a Proof of Concept award will rest with the institution to which the grant is awarded.
- Gaining further information about the market for the new products or process.
- Identifying potential licensees or opportunities for joint ventures.
- Whilst other funding* is not a prerequisite, PoC applications which have secured funding from elsewhere e.g. host institution, will be looked upon favorably. N.B. *Funding from third parties must be additional to the funds requested.

Proof of Concept funding will specifically not support:

- 'Blue sky' research.
- Associated intellectual property costs e.g. patent costs.
- The purchase of larger equipment and capital (larger fraction of 25% of the requested funds).

3. Proposal template

The proposals MUST include information under the headings below, otherwise the applications WILL BE REJECTED for non-compliance. The total maximum number of pages for project proposal shall not exceed 8.

- **Background and Aim**

What is the funded research that will form the basis of this project? What is the aim of this application? Who will benefit from this project and subsequent commercialisation?

- **Technical Summary**

Provide a detailed account of the current status of the technology you are proposing and the plan for development. The summary should provide sufficient detail for the Evaluation Panel to assess fully the technical aspects of the proposed project.

- **Business Plan**

Describe how you will investigate the development of a business plan, which will include a route to market. Describe the commercial opportunity, supported by market data, and the predicted investment and mechanism required post-project to take forward commercialisation. This should also include a summary of the current IP position.

- **Work Plan and Risk Analysis**

Detail specific work packages, assigning responsibility between partners if appropriate. Applicants should show that they have identified risks and developed alternative strategies to mitigate these. The applicants should consider both technical, programmatic and, where relevant, commercial risks.

- **Resources (budget)**

State the resources requested by the applicants and provide justification for them. The Panel can reduce resource requests if they feel there is insufficient justification.

- **Project Deliverables and Milestones to verify implementation**

Identify what the direct outputs will be at the end of this grant (please be specific).

Letters of Support

Letters of support can be included from other relevant parties not directly involved in the project but who support the objectives, for example, potential end users. Letters will not count towards the page limit. Letters should:

- Be on headed paper and signed by a senior member of staff or director (the capacity in which the supporter is signing the letter should be stated) or an email with full contact details.
- Be dated within six months of submission
- Detail their interest and involvement in the project in terms of specific objectives and desired outcomes together
- Provide some evidence (making reference to the Business Plan) of the projected market size, customers and sales (for industries)
- Describe (making reference to the Business Plan) how the company could commercialise the technology beyond the project (for industries)

The proposals must be submitted via the submission form [here](#).

4. Collaboration Agreements

After the project is selected for funding, the leading organization will be asked to sign a Collaboration Agreement with CERN. The Collaboration Agreement will be prepared by the ARIES Coordination Office and will define the project schedule, the deliverables and the payment calendar of the approved project.

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