# TRANSLATIONAL OPPORTUNITY FUND

# OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT FOR RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

## OVERVIEW & PROGRAM GOALS

The Vice President for Research and Innovation is expanding the internal grant mechanisms supporting commercialization and translational research at UO with the launch of *Translational Opportunity Fund*. The new grant program aligns with UO’s Innovation and Entrepreneurship Initiative and is funded by generous donations from donors interested in accelerating the impact of innovations resulting from UO research. The program offers three funding tiers that provide support for resources needed to successfully translate UO innovators’ research and to launch new UO research-based startup companies. The three tracks align with different stages in the innovation and company spinout trajectory.

In order to support economic development that is more fully equitable, the *Translational Opportunity Fund* particularly seeks applications from individuals that come from populations that are historically underrepresented in translational research and research-based entrepreneurship.

The following guideline apply to all three tiers of funding for the *Translational Opportunity Fund*. Click below to access specific details on each award mechanism.

[Details on TIER ONE](#one)

[Details on TIER TWO](#two)

[*Details on TIER THREE*](#three)

## TIMELINE

**Deadline:** Rolling

**Award:** Applications will be reviewed as they are received.

**Reports:** Final Reports due one month after project end.

## ELIGIBILITY

Awards can be made to a UO faculty/ research group, or to a UO research-based spinout no older than five years.Applicants may receive more than one Tier One or Tier Two award for different aspects of their commercialization effort.

***Requirements to engage with Innovation Partners*:** Please see details within each program tier.

1. All applicants who are employees of the university and proposing work that involves the formation of or coordination with an outside company must have an up-to-date [Conflict of Interest/Conflict of Commitment disclosure](https://research.uoregon.edu/manage/integrity-compliance/conflict-interest-commitment) filed with the Office of the Vice President for Research and Innovation at the time of submission. If the project does not include company formation or collaboration, the applicant must confirm that a COI/COC plan is not required by emailing coi@uoregon.edu.
2. Applications are allowed from the following:
* *UO tenure-track faculty:* All tenure-track faculty members are eligible to apply.
* *UO research faculty:* Research faculty who hold a full-time appointment (.75+ FTE) that includes substantial research responsibilities, have been employed by the university for at least one year at the time of application (but a waiver may be requested based on circumstances, such as the timeline for technology already disclosed to Innovation Partners and under management), and will hold a UO appointment during the academic year of the research award may also apply.
* *UO spinout company*: Companies must be in good standing (e.g., corporate records and taxes are in good order, payments to UO, research collaborations with UO, any UO employees are current with COC/COI management plan), no older than five years, and the project must be related to UO IP optioned or licensed to the company.
* *In addition to the above, for Tier Two applications (only)*: **Prospective** (internal) UO research-based spinout concepts/projects.

Note that students are not eligible to lead research groups but may be members of research groups. Students working on a Tier Three project are expected to prioritize their FTE to the project.

## REVIEW PROCESS

Applications will be reviewed by Industry Innovation and Translation who will make recommendations to the Vice President for Research and Innovation for approval.

## REPORTING

A final report is required via our [online final report form](https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/f06152a8cda2406e802bc19e4eb167eb) due no later than one month (30 days) after the conclusion of the project period. Reports should include a description of the impact of the investment. Eligibility for the next Tier or any other UO internal funding awards is contingent upon the timely and successful submission of such reports. IIT will contact awardees upon completion of the project with a report reminder.

## INQUIRIES

Before applying to any tiers in this program, proposers should have an established relationship with [Innovation Partners](https://research.uoregon.edu/about/administrative-units/innovation-partnership-services) either through prior consultation, an innovation disclosure, or the incorporation of a UO-based spinout company after pre-approval through a Conflict of Commitment-Conflict of Interest Management Plan. Questions about the grant program should be directed to Jim Deane, Associate Director of Innovation Partners jdeane@uoregon.edu.

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# TIER ONE

## GOALS & OBJECTIVES

This tier of funding addresses an immediate and well-defined need in support of developing an idea or company with high-growth potential. This tier supports delivery of rapid resources to fill the gap for ongoing internal UO research commercialization projects or provide key services to support UO research-based spinout launch. This opportunity is designed to enable quick turnaround to support and facilitate innovation activities that are highly time dependent.

***Requirements to engage with Innovation Partners*:** Funding in this track for internal projects may be pre-IP disclosure but requires communication with Innovation Partners in advance of any application and establishment of a Project Management Plan through Innovation Partners. Spinout proposals must be in support of UO IP optioned or licensed to the company.

## BUDGET & USE OF FUNDS

**Amount:** Up to $10,000

**Length of project:** Up to6 months

**Allowable costs:**

* Research and activities to confirm if spinning out is the appropriate next step. Examples include: pilots, prototyping, regulatory analysis, pitch documents, market analysis and validation
* Business services to support spinout launch. Examples include: business research, legal services, accounting, SBIR development support, coaching, web design, branding

**Ineligible costs:**

* Replacing or fund tenure-line faculty salary during the academic year
* Graduate student employee (GE) costs (salary, tuition, fees)
* Instructional release/course buyouts
* Construction or facility renovation
* Curriculum development or career development
* Dissertation research costs

## APPLICATION COMPONENTS

1. [***Application Form***](https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/e8685aa9e5634a1cae74324ebd6f1d86)**:**
	1. Basic Information: Please complete the form’s text boxes. (Note: the form cannot be saved part way through).
	2. Unit Head Approval: For UO Faculty PI applicants, the form will route an approval to your department/unit head for their approval of your application. Approval is based on applicant’s good standing and the feasibility of the project based on applicant workload.
2. ***Proposal Documents*:**
	1. Project Narrative: Brief, 1-page proposal. **Please use the** [**template**](#TemplateOne) **provided at the end of this document**.
	2. CV/Resume/ Biographical Sketch for applicant and any Key Personnel: Limited to no more than five pages.
3. [***Optional demographic survey (online)***](https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/b6eda4d487654b5794adfa2e0d0054dd)**:** The OVPRI is committed to creating an environment that fosters sensitivity to and understanding of the diverse academic, socioeconomic, cultural, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation, and racial and ethnic backgrounds present in our community. The application form includes a section to disclose demographic information aimed at assessing the success of our activities towards this goal. Response to these questions is entirely optional and is not considered in award decisions. This information will not be seen by the review committee but used by OVPRI leadership to ensure our internal granting programs are inclusive and equitable and serve diverse populations at UO. We welcome submission of this information from all PIs on the project.

**Submission Instructions:**

1. Complete components of the application and combine into a single PDF. Save with the naming convention *[Contact PI Last Name] FY 23 Tier One TOF application*.
2. Fill out the basic information on the online application form.
3. Upload PDF to the form.
4. Submit form.
5. Complete the demographic survey (optional).

## REVIEW CRITERIA

**Proposals will be reviewed based on:**

1. Clarity of the time-dependent need for the proposed work and how it relates to developing an idea or the launch of a company with high-growth potential.
2. Quality of the project plan as it relates to meeting stated need.
3. Suitability of project team (including contracted service providers who will conduct the proposed work for the spinout company for a quoted price point).
4. A well-identified, feasible timeline and budget.
5. Likelihood of funding to significantly advance the developing idea or company goals in measurable ways. Clarity and feasibility of key research and business outcomes, including metrics for success if awarded the grant.

# TIER TWO

## GOALS & OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this award is to support activities to advance UO research-based spinouts with high growth potential that are in a later stage of development or require more funding than is available in Tier One.

***Requirements to engage with Innovation Partners*:** Funding in this track requires an IP disclosure and active IP management under Innovation Partners prior to any application.

## BUDGET & USE OF FUNDS

**Amount:** Up to$25,000

**Length of project:** Up to 12 months

**Allowable costs:**

* Activities to confirm if spinning out is the appropriate next step. Examples include: pilots, prototyping, regulatory analysis, pitch documents, market analysis and validation.
* Business services to support spinout launch. Examples include: business research, legal services, accounting, SBIR development support, coaching, web design, or branding.

**Ineligible costs:**

* Replacing or fund tenure-line faculty salary during the academic year
* Graduate student employee (GE) costs (salary, tuition, fees)
* Instructional release/course buyouts
* Construction or facility renovation
* Curriculum development or career development
* Dissertation research costs

## APPLICATION COMPONENTS

1. [***Application Form***](https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/e8685aa9e5634a1cae74324ebd6f1d86)**:**
	1. Basic Information: Please complete the form’s text boxes. (Note: the form cannot be saved part way through).
	2. Unit Head Approval: The form will route an approval to your department/unit head for their approval of your application. Approval is based on applicant’s good standing and the feasibility of the project based on applicant workload.
2. ***Proposal Documents*:**
	1. Project Narrative: Brief, 1-page proposal. **Please use the** [**template**](#TemplateOne) **provided at the end of this document**.
	2. CV/Resume/ Biographical Sketch for applicant and any Key Personnel: Limited to no more than five pages.
3. [***Optional demographic survey (online)***](https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/b6eda4d487654b5794adfa2e0d0054dd)**:** The OVPRI is committed to creating an environment that fosters sensitivity to and understanding of the diverse academic, socioeconomic, cultural, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation, and racial and ethnic backgrounds present in our community. The application form includes a section to disclose demographic information aimed at assessing the success of our activities towards this goal. Response to these questions is entirely optional and is not considered in award decisions. This information will not be seen by the review committee but used by OVPRI leadership to ensure our internal granting programs are inclusive and equitable and serve diverse populations at UO. We welcome submission of this information from all PIs on the project.

**Submission Instructions:**

1. Complete components of the application and combine into a single PDF. Save with the naming convention [*Contact PI Last Name] FY 23 Tier Two TOF application*.
2. Fill out the basic information on the online application form.
3. Upload PDF to the form.
4. Submit form.
5. Complete the demographic survey (optional).

## REVIEW CRITERIA

**Proposals will be reviewed based on:**

1. Clarity of the need for the proposed work and how it relates to developing an idea or company with high-growth potential. Proposal clearly articulates why it is important to fund multiple activities (in aggregate over $10K) at the same time, rather than sequentially.
2. Quality of the project plan as it relates to meeting stated need.
3. Suitability of project team (including contracted service providers who will conduct the proposed work at a quoted price point).
4. A well-identified, feasible timeline and budget.
5. Likelihood of funding to significantly advance the developing idea or company goals in measurable ways. Clarity and feasibility of key research and business outcomes, including metrics for success if awarded the grant.

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# TIER THREE

## GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Tier Three awards allows established research teams or UO spinouts to take final steps from their basic research discoveries and transform them it into an innovative commercial product or service. Innovations must be far enough along in their development that all basic research is complete. Translational research projects that are ready for a Tier Three application are those where the faculty has been working with an Innovation Partners manager and has disclosed (or is in process of disclosing) an innovation which the faculty and the Innovation Partners manager have determined has potential to be a platform for disruptive innovation. In addition, the project must have a clear and feasible roadmap forward, and that both PI and IPS are on board with the process. Finally, the Mentor Catalyst or Translation Opportunity Program will have been engaged with the design/plan/project as well.

Examples of activities under Tier Three may include: acquiring statistically meaningful proof-of-concept testing data or performance demonstrations; creating a working prototype or a next-generation prototype from an earlier version; creating or extending intellectual property that will be licensed by a startup or by an existing company; and, purchasing or building equipment, or paying for a sub-contract, that is required to demonstrate the utility of the innovation.

Funding must be used to enhance the probability that pre-existing research discoveries will be transformed into new products and services, and awardees are expected to pursue additional funding with UO assistance to accelerate the impact of their research. Translational research activities represent a portal for entry into external sources of funding such as SBIR/STTR, industry funding, angel or other funding of an early stage spinout company to commercialize the work, and state grant programs. Successful TRAs will lead to technologies, works (content, multimedia, etc.) or services that are strong candidates for further market analysis and potentially new venture creation catalyzed by participation in such programs as the West Coast I-Corps Hub, Onward Eugene’s ID8 Pre-accelerator, and other similar programs. In the language of some federal agencies, the application of TRA funds will be expected to increase the Technological Readiness Level (TRL) of the innovation.

***Requirements to engage with Innovation Partners*:** Funding in this track requires an IP disclosure, active IP management under Innovation Partners, and a consultation with UO’s Mentor Catalyst or participation in the Translation Opportunity Program prior to any application.

## BUDGET & USE OF FUNDS

**Amount:** Between $50,000 - $250,000, depending on the type of project proposed.

**Length of project:** 6- to 12-month maximum project period

**Allowable costs**

* Acquiring statistically meaningful proof-of-concept testing data or performance demonstrations
* Creation of a working prototype, or the creation of a next-generation prototype from an earlier version
* Create or extend intellectual property that will be licensed by a start-up or by an existing company
* Purchase or build equipment, or pay for a sub-contract, that is required to demonstrate the utility of the innovation
* Please note that salary support should align with the overall translational goals and long-term entrepreneurship activities. The Tier Three award is not intended to be used for salary-replacement for Tenure-Track Faculty or for indefinite extension of postdoctoral or graduate student presence on campus. Therefore, requested salary support should focus on specific contributions to the translational goals. Those individuals receiving salary support under TOF awards are expected to have a significant post-grant entrepreneurial role in this project (startup entrepreneurial lead, advisory board, etc.) and provide specific information supporting their interest and commitment to doing so.

**Ineligible costs:**

* Funding to advance basic research (supplies, personnel, travel, etc.)
* Replacing or funding tenure-line faculty salary during the academic year/ course buyout
* Equipment that is general research equipment
* Travel to meetings, publication charges
* Patent fees (OVPRI supports patent and copyright protection through other operational funds)
* Construction or facility renovation
* Curriculum development or career development
* Dissertation research costs
* Market analysis or business plan creation (these are funded under Tiers 1 and 2)

## APPLICATION COMPONENTS

1. [***Application Form***](https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/e8685aa9e5634a1cae74324ebd6f1d86)**:**
	1. Basic Information: Please complete the form’s text boxes. (Note: the form cannot be saved part way through).
	2. Unit Head Approval: The form will route an approval to your department/unit head for their approval of your application. Approval is based on applicant’s good standing and the feasibility of the project based on applicant workload.
2. **Proposal Documents:** Brief, 3-page proposal. Please use the [**Tier Three Application Template**](#Template3) at the end of this document to address each of the following sections:
	1. Overall Goal of the Proposed Translational Research Project
	2. Specific Goals, Timelines and Expected Outcomes of each specific goal including the end date of this project.
	3. Budget Justification
	4. CV/Resume/ Biographical Sketch for applicant and any Key Personnel: Limited to no more than five pages.
3. **Budget:** Use the [Excel template](https://research.uoregon.edu/sites/research1.uoregon.edu/files/2022-06/Budget%20Template_Catalyst%20Fund.xlsx).
4. [***Optional demographic survey (online)***](https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/b6eda4d487654b5794adfa2e0d0054dd)**:** The OVPRI are committed to creating an environment that fosters sensitivity to and understanding of the diverse academic, socioeconomic, cultural, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation, and racial and ethnic backgrounds present in our community. The application form includes a section to disclose demographic information aimed at assessing the success of our activities towards this goal. Response to these questions is entirely optional and is not considered in award decisions. This information will not be seen by the review committee but used by OVPRI to ensure our internal granting programs are inclusive and equitable and serve diverse populations at UO. We welcome submission of this information from all PIs on the project.

**Submission Instructions:**

1. Complete components of the application and combine into a single PDF. Save with the naming convention *[Contact PI Last Name] FY 23 Tier Three TOF application*.
2. Fill out the basic information on the online application form.
3. Upload PDF to the form.
4. Submit form.
5. Complete the demographic survey (optional).

## REVIEW CRITERIA

**Proposals will be reviewed based on:**

1. Clearly defined reason for developing the innovation (e.g., it fills a gap in existing technology, it vastly improves current methods).
2. Quality of understanding the market-need for the innovation. Proposer clearly understands competitors and articulates how the features/benefits of the proposed innovation differ from current offerings.
3. Innovation is beyond the initial stage of development, and proposal clearly articulates what steps will be required upon completion of Tier Three award in order for the innovation to be ready for the marketplace or early distribution.
4. Proposal presents proof of relationship with collaboration partners needed to fully develop the innovation (as applicable).
5. Clear articulation of how proposer plans to bring their innovation into public use or into a commercial pathway.
6. Proposal reflects proposer’s understanding of target market and/or potential investors.
7. Clarity of project goals and projected outcomes.
8. Feasible timelines and budget.

## TEMPLATE for TIER ONE or TIER TWO APPLICATIONS

**(delete blue text); 1 page**

**[Title of Project]**

**PI Name:**

**Other project members:**

**Please address the following points in your narrative, not to exceed one page.**

**IPS Disclosure Number (if applicable):**

**Innovation Background and Mission Statement**

* Describe the current state of innovation and spin-out development/growth.
* Provide the mission statement of your company (if established).

**Proposed Plan**

* Describe overall project aims or goals.
* Identify how the requested funding would significantly advance innovation and commercialization goals and the time dependent nature of the request.
* **For Tier Two proposals:** Articulate either why it is important to fund multiple activities (in aggregate over $10,000) at the same time, rather than sequentially, or why the cost of a single activity exceeds $10,000.

**Project Goals, Expected Outcomes & Timelines:**

* List your goals for the project.
* Describe the expected outcomes of each specific goal--this includes project research *and* business outcomes. Provide targets (e.g. impact on revenues, impact on sales strategies, etc.)Project should not exceed 6 months for Tier One, or 12 months for Tier Two.
* Describe how you will measure success

**Project Team**

* Briefly list the key team members (CVs for all key personnel must be attached) as well as any key vendors if doing development work.
* Please list any participation in the Women’s Innovation Network, ID8, EUG LaunchPad, I-Corps, or other entrepreneurship training programs.

**Budget & Justification**

* Please provide an overview of your budget request and brief justification of the requested funding. Also describe any committed matching funds you can commit to this project if funded.
* For spinouts, please identify any external service provider or consultant with whom you propose to contract to complete the deliverables. (Faculty applicants must follow Purchasing & Contracting Services process and policies for contracting with external service providers).

## TIER THREE: Translational Research Award

\*Instructions in blue. Delete before submission.

**[Title of Project]**

**PI Name**:

**Other project members**:

**Please address the following points in your narrative, not to exceed three pages.**

**Overall Goal of the Project:**

**IPS Disclosure Number (if applicable):**

**Background**

*The Innovation:*

[What is the innovation (e.g., software, plasmid, intervention, prototype, invention) from your research that you want to further develop with TRA funding?]

*Motivating Reasons for Developing this Innovation (e.g., societal problem, key improvement to existing technological barrier, platform from which a number of opportunities present):*

*Others Addressing Same Need/Existing Solutions:*

[Who else anywhere in the world are you aware of that is addressing this same need (or something very close)? Explain how the features and benefits of your innovation make it worthy of investment in light of those other efforts.]

*Stage of Development/Context for TRA activities:*

[What is the stage of development of your innovation? What steps beyond the goals of this TRA do you believe will be required for your innovation to be ready for the marketplace or early distribution?]

*Required/Desired Collaboration Partners:*

[Do you have, or do you need to develop any strategic collaborators or partners to fully develop or validate your innovation? Please be specific.]

*Bringing Innovation into Use/Commercial Pathway:*

[How do you envision your innovation getting utilized and made available to the public? Is your innovation the final product or is it a part of a larger solution? How involved do you personally want to be? Would you want UO to license it to a start-up or to an existing company? Would you want to be involved in any start-up as a consultant or employee? Help us to understand your interest in making this innovation available to the public.]

*Other Interested Parties*

[Who might be interested in marketing and providing products or services based on your innovation?]

*Market or Licensing Validation to Date:*

[Has any commercial entity or investor already expressed interest in licensing the innovation? If yes, who and for what purpose? Would they be willing to write a letter of support?]

**Project Goals, Expected Outcomes & Timelines**

List your goals for the project. Describe the expected outcomes of each specific goal--this includes project research *and* business outcomes. Provide targets (e.g. impact on revenues, impact on sales strategies, etc.). Please include dollar estimates for company returns. We strongly encourage you to work with Innovation Partners and the Mentor Catalyst/Translation Opportunity Program to identify detailed targets. Release of funds may be tranched based on the project meeting mutually agreed upon goals.

(Example of table for detailing project timeline. Project should not exceed one year.)

**Goal #1: A, B, C**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Activities**  | **J** | **F** | **M** | **A** | **M** | **Ju** | **Jy** | **A** | **S** | **O** | **N** | **D** |
| Develop materials for X, Y, Z***Outcome****:*  | X | X | X |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Pilot Test***Outcome****: Identification of problems, and plan to refine a, b, c,* |  | X | X | X |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Alpha testing with key potential users* |  |  |  | X | X |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Beta development* |  |  |  |  | X | X |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Beta test* |  |  |  |  |  |  | X | X |  |  |  |  |
| *MVP launch* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | X |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Write final report***Outcome****: Final report* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | X | X |

**Budget Justification**

[Please describe/ explain each budget line-item listed in your budget template. Include enough detail that reviewers are able to fully understand your request.]

\***Note that the Tier Three award is not intended to be used for salary-replacement for Tenure-Track Faculty or for indefinite extension of postdoctoral or graduate student presence on campus**. Therefore, requested salary support should focus on specific contributions to the translational goals. Those individuals receiving salary support under Tier Three awards are expected to have a significant post-grant entrepreneurial role in this project (startup entrepreneurial lead, advisory board, etc.) and provide specific information supporting their interest and commitment to doing so.