ignite
Innovation Acceleration

Program Overview

One of the three signature programs of Ignite Cornell Research Lab to Market gap fund series. This Ignite program is to **support proof of concept of technologies to reach the next inflection point and attract interests from industry partners, entrepreneurs, and investors to 1) license technologies for commercialization, 2) create new ventures, or 3) establish corporate research collaboration.**

Each project should be designed to reduce technology risks via validation of a prototype, beta-testing, data generation and analysis, and demonstration of feasibilities.

Project funding up to $50,000 is available to Cornell labs to advance existing inventions.   Funding is provided in the form of a project-specific grant with no "pay back" requirement.   Applications are accepted twice per year in 2 cycles from eligible candidates who are invited to present to the Ignite committee. Projects awarded with funding should provide ongoing updates, reports and participate in Ignite events.

Limited number of projects, **Innovation Acceleration Prime,** may be invited by Ignite committee **for a second tranche of funding** after certain milestones are achieved, reaching the total funding up to $100K.

Annually 12-16 projects will be awarded for Ignite Innovation Acceleration under normal circumstances when ample quality technology proof of concept proposals are submitted in the 2 cycles.

Eligibility:
- Applications are welcomed from faculty, research staff and/or graduate students with Cornell innovations from Cornell's Ithaca, Geneva, and Cornell Tech campuses
- Technologies used in the application have been disclosed to the Center for Technology Licensing at Cornell University (CTL).
- Previously funded Ignite Innovation Acceleration projects are not eligible unless in the situation of Prime Innovation Acceleration project described below with permission from the Ignite committee.

- Only one application from an eligible PI or faculty research lab will be considered per Cycle.
- The WCM campus has a separate funding program for technologies originated from the WCM campus; and projects that are eligible for funding under the Daedalus Program are not eligible for Ignite funding (http://weill.cornell.edu/daedalusfund/).
- All proposed projects must comply with university policies.

Applications: Applications are accepted during one of two cycles per year held in the Spring and Fall.   Communications regarding the application cycle are coordinated by the Center for Technology Licensing (CTL) who also offers information sessions throughout the open application period.   Applications may be submitted through the CTL website via the InfoReady software platform.

The simple, online application form requests summaries of the following information:

- A brief overview of the underpinning technology,
- Its scientific/technical merit
- Summary of the target market
- The intellectual property status
- The proposed activities to be funded
- Specific deliverables from such activities
- The project budget and timelines
- Other Cornell funding applied for
- A description of how the project will bridge the translation gap/reach the next inflection point for commercialization and/or venture creation.
- A summary of follow-on funding interest, opportunity, or potential from any of the following – corporate licensing interests, corporate sponsored research, grant-funded research, and research gift or startup investment.

The respective Licensing and Business Development Officer (LBDO) is available as a resource to provide assistance, feedback and suggestions on your application. The LBDO also is a source of perspective and feedback to the Ignite Committee.

Please direct any questions regarding issues with the InfoReady platform or the application submission process to **Lynda Inseque**, Senior Program Manager, Technology Initiatives and Outreach, phone: (607) 254-454, lci2@cornell.edu.

Application Guidelines and Considerations: Funded project activities typically include prototyping, beta-testing, data generation and analysis, validation demonstrations, and tools required. Role of the Principal investigator (PI):

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- Preparing and submitting Ignite Project applications;
- Presenting to the Ignite Committee to support project selection;
- Managing approved funds and their associated budgets;
- Submitting all required project progress and final reports outlining the delivered versus proposed results;
- At the invitation of CTL, presenting the project at meetings or showcase events.

An Ignite grant amount can be used to support salaries. The grant should not be used for tuition purposes.

Project proposals that target significant and specific milestones achievable within 12 months are preferred.

All proposals, unless specified otherwise, will be submitted to external Technology Advisors who will provide feedback to the Ignite committee for Innovation Acceleration. Please note, external Technology Advisors are NOT under any obligation of confidentiality. It is preferred that applications do not contain confidential information. Please consult with your respective LBDO at CTL for assistance identifying any confidential information. If confidential information is necessary, please select "Yes" when prompted "This application contains confidential information" during the application process.

All proposed projects must comply with University Policies.

Application Review and Award process:

1) All applications will be reviewed and organized by CTL for compliance with the eligibility criteria identified above and completeness. Noncompliant or incomplete applications will be returned to the submitters.   The presence of any confidential information will be confirmed and complying, non-confidential applications will be submitted for external review.

2) Compliant proposals will be referred by CTL to at least one or more external Technology Advisors who are experienced technology industrialists, early-stage venture investors and/or managers of early-stage ventures. Technology Advisors are comprised of Cornell alumni, active investors, and regional business executives with the proper domain expertise who volunteer their services to the program.

3) Feedback via the external reviews will be collected and provided to the Ignite Committee. This feedback is based on their informed view on the likelihood that

investment, third party licensing, strategic partnership and/or broad public utilization will be enhanced from the proposed activities for Ignite support.

4) Ignite committee for Innovation Acceleration comprises of: Executive Director, CTL; Director, Kevin M. McGovern Family Center for Venture Development in the Life Sciences; Director, Praxis Center for Venture Development; Director, Office of Corporate Engagement; and three to five external committee members. The External Committee Members are not only industry experts or early-stage venture investors, but also familiar with Cornell's broad technology portfolio and ecosystem and long-time supporters of Cornell innovation. CTL will organize a meeting where invited applicants will be allocated a predetermined amount of time for a presentation of the proposed project.

5) Based on the submitted proposal, presentation and feedback from external reviews, Ignite committee for Innovation Acceleration will reach the final funding disposition decision and amount. Assuming no awards pending additional questions from the committee, notifications of the funding decision will be made shortly following the committee meeting to applicants via email and via the InfoReady platform.

Presentation of the Proposed Project: The invited applicants will be allocated a predetermined amount of time (less than 20 minutes) for a presentation that addresses the following:

1: Project Title, Key Team, Amount Requested, Project Period.
2: Brief summary of the technology and proposed project
3: Market needs and current status
4: Anticipated Impact of Proposed Project in the form of follow-on funding for Commercialization/Investment

Funding and Project Launch: After notice of funding approval for funding, CTL will coordinate the distribution the awarded amount (of up to $50,000 per proposal) to the PI's research account. The recipient's finance department will establish a project account for the funded proposal into which the authorized funds for the Project would be disbursed by OVPR's Finance Office.

Please share any significant changes to the project budget or timing with CTL who will either approve or, as necessary, submit to the Ignite Committee for Innovation Acceleration for approval.

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All project accounts will automatically close at the earlier of (i) the exhaustion of the approved project fund; or (ii) the expiration of the proposed project timeframe. Any remaining funds (more than $500) from closed project accounts will be returned to the Ignite account for future deployment.

Innovation Acceleration Prime project: Majority of the Innovation Acceleration awards will be at the level of up to $50K to stimulate wide participation of technology acceleration projects and build innovation pipeline. There are unique cases that higher level of funding up to $100K is necessary to reach the next inflection point, or strong market feedback from potential partners suggested additional validation project that will lead to a successful outcome.

An applicant for Innovation Acceleration Prime project should specify unique reasons to be considered for Prime funding. If selected to be a Prime project, a review session will be scheduled after achievement of milestones and the committee will decide whether a second tranche will be awarded. In another situation, a previously completed project can request permission for a 2nd application to reach Prime funding. It will be at the sole discretion of the Ignite committee for Innovation Acceleration on whether such requests will be considered and granted. Prime Innovation Acceleration projects will be less than 10% of projects funded.

Reporting: As projects are implemented, the PI's are responsible for providing a brief progress report at mid-term period through the InfoReady platform and may be requested for a short presentation to the Ignite committee for Innovation Acceleration.

Within 1 month of the close of the Ignite project, the PI is required to submit a final report to CTL through the InfoReady platform. The report should compare the actual vs. proposed expenditures, achievements relative to expectations, and detail any next opportunities, planned or realized, for follow-on funding including research gifts, grants, corporate sponsored research, investment funding and licensing opportunities.

Funding alumni are also required to provide updates to periodical requests from CTL on the progress of the technology towards commercialization as well as any follow-on funding success. Funding is tracked through the alumni's Series A financing round.

Awarded applicants may be invited to present at a showcase event or similar to highlight the development of the technology under Ignite project funding.

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