Koret-Berkeley-TAU Call for Research Proposals

Background: The Koret-Berkeley-TAU (KBT) Initiative in Computational Biology and Bioinformatics is a new collaborative program between the Center for Computational Biology at UC Berkeley (CCB) and the Edmond J. Safra Center for Bioinformatics at Tel Aviv University (EJSCB). The initiative is supported by a generous donation from the Koret Foundation.

As part of the KBT Initiative, we are soliciting proposals for joint research grants in computational biology and bioinformatics. The emphasis will be on **high quality, groundbreaking research that has a strong innovative computational biology research component**. Projects must involve strong collaborations between researchers at UCB and TAU. This program has awarded over $1.8 million dollars to Berkeley and TAU researchers to date.

In addition to funding research proposals, the KBT Initiative will also sponsor seminars and workshops at Berkeley and TAU, and support short term and extended exchange programs at the Simons Institute. Additional information will become available as activities develop.

2021 Proposal Call

Program Options

We expect to award over $500,000 in full and seed grants in this review cycle. Proposals for full grants that are found of high quality but do not receive funding due to budget constraints may be offered seed grants.

(I) Full grant

A proposed project can last up to two years. The budget is up to $250,000 direct costs, with up to $75,000 at TAU and $50,000 at UCB per year.

(II) Seed grant

A one-year exploratory project. Successful seed projects may develop to full ones later. The budget is up to $25,000 direct costs (up to $12,500 per university), with those $15,000 or smaller receiving significant priority.

Eligibility: The call is open to PIs holding primary appointments at UCB or TAU. Full proposals and seed grants must include at least one PI from each institution. In addition, at

least one of the participating PIs must be a member of EJSCB or CCB. EJSCB and CCB affiliates will be also considered. A researcher cannot be PI on more than one proposal. Researchers who received a seed grant in previous call rounds can apply for full grants.

Proposal Format:

All pages must be in a single PDF with 8.5 x 11" or A4 pages, 0.5" margins, Arial 11pt

(1) Title page, including proposal title, PI names, affiliations and keywords.

(2) Research plan (up to 2 pages, single spaced including figures but excluding references) describing the specific aims, research plan, preliminary results and timetable.

Researchers who received a seed grant in previous call rounds and are now applying for full grants should also provide a summary of the results to date of their seed grant (one page, same format as the research plan).This is required even if the full grant is not a continuation of the seed grant.

(3) Literature cited (up to 1 page).

(4) Collaboration plan (typically up to ½ page) describing how the collaborative research will be performed between the groups, including plans for visits [*].

(5) Itemized budget and brief justification for each University (up to 1 page total). Support for personnel and travel must constitute at least 50% of the budget. Budget for exchange visits should be at least 25% of the total budget [*].

(6) Biosketches for PIs (NIH format).

(7) Current and pending support for each PI (NIH format, with name, funding source, period, amount).

(8) Human subjects, vertebrate animals, clinical trials, and other ethical considerations. As needed, address any ethical considerations including providing details of protocols and institutional approvals.

[*] Due to pandemic restrictions, physical travel plans may not be possible during part or all of the grant duration. Please include in your proposal plans for communication between the teams under such circumstances. The exchange visits will be expected during the grant period, ideally as soon as it is safe and practical to travel between the countries.

Timeline: Proposals deadline is **6 December 2021 at 11:59pm Pacific Time**. We anticipate that the project awards will be announced in March 2022, with funding starting around April 2022 at TAU, and in summer 2022 at UCB. Timeframe is subject to change.

The KBT steering committee reserves its discretion as to awarding the grants and their internal division. The committee's decisions are final.

Reporting Requirements

Funded PIs will be responsible for the following reports. All reports must cover *outcomes* for reporting to the Koret Foundation, including a summary of publications, presentations, software, and resources developed.

***Mid-term Report*:** (1-2 pages) A 9-month progress report for Full Grants summarizing research accomplishments. PIs must address any changes that have been made to the approved scope of research. Second year funding is subject to approval of the progress report.

***Final Report*:** (1-2 pages) A summary report of accomplishments and *outcomes* at the end of the project. Final reports must be submitted by PIs of Full and Seed grants within one month from funding end.

Subsequent outcomes annual updates: Concise reports identifying any additional *outcomes* must be made for an additional 3 years.

Additional Requirements:

Acknowledgements: All public presentations, publications, software, and resources related to the funded research should acknowledge "The Koret-UC Berkeley-Tel Aviv University Initiative in Computational Biology and Bioinformatics," and should include authors' membership/affiliation in CCB or EJSCB.

Workshops: PIs and supported researchers are required to take an active role in the joint activities of the KBT Initiative, including participating in joint workshops. PIs are required to participate in seminar series during exchange trips and to attend joint workshops that will require travel to the other institution. We plan a major program in Berkeley during July 2022 and tentatively plan a workshop in Tel Aviv in May 2022.

Application mechanism: submit by email to safrabio@tauex.tau.ac.il

Evaluation criteria: Proposals will be evaluated holistically. Criteria will include scientific excellence and promise, depth of integrated collaboration, appropriateness of personnel and budget. Innovative projects are welcome. While experimental work may be supported to a significant degree, the evaluation will focus on computational biology and bioinformatics innovation and discovery. Applications that are primarily experimental with minimal or routine computational analysis will be deemed not eligible. Projects require true collaborative efforts and must incorporate substantial mutual visits by the PIs and/or by other group members working directly on the proposed project, to the extent possible given the developments in the COVID-19 pandemic.

Questions - contact safrabio@tauex.tau.ac.il in TAU and kbti@berkeley.edu at UCB.