



OVERVIEW & APPLICATION PROCESS, 2024 FUNDING CYCLE

First deadline: Friday, November 3, 2023

OBJECTIVES

The goal of the Harvard Grid Accelerator is to accelerate projects towards one of the following outcomes:

- (1) formation of a start-up company,
- (2) licensing the technology to an established company, or
- (3) securing follow-on industrial funding for continued R&D.

While all developmental goals will be considered, strong consideration is given to **projects with high potential to launch a start-up company**. Such projects, while faculty-led, **will benefit from** having a postdoc or final-year PhD student who is interested in being a member of the founding startup team.

PROJECT TYPES

- The Grid Accelerator Awards are designed to support translational research aimed at extending preliminary results, establishing proof-of-concept, scaling-up a product or process, and generating (or enhancing) intellectual property positions.
- Optionally, a portion of the budgeted activities may be outsourced to one or more external organizations, such as a software programmer or an engineering testing facility.

PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY

- Principal Investigators whose employer is Harvard University.
- Proposals focused in the applied sciences, physical sciences, computer sciences, or engineering.

FUNDING

- Awards are up to \$100,000 per project.
- In certain circumstances, a higher amount will be considered, not to exceed \$200,000.
- Funding will not be subject to Harvard indirect expense charges.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THE AWARD

- The Principal Investigator will commit their time and effort, as appropriate, to lead and oversee the project.
- The project team will consist solely of the PI, Harvard postdocs and grad students.
- All intellectual property, including background patents, must be assigned to Harvard, and teams should acknowledge Harvard's intent to license any resulting and/or background IP.
- Budget items may not include PI salary or capital equipment. Certain other types of expenses are also excluded.
- Regular updates, either in person, via phone, or by email, shall be provided both to the faculty member's lead contact at OTD and to Alan Gordon. The updates shall be at a minimum upon the earlier of i) the date that each milestone included in the full proposal is met, or ii) the date the milestone was intended to be met. The update shall explain how the milestone was met (or why it was not), and shall include updates on plans for achievement of the next milestone. Projects should include at least 3 milestones over the course of the grant year.
- Project teams aiming to launch startups are expected to have regular meetings with OTD to discuss startup formation and that include, where appropriate, entrepreneurs-in-residence and other external mentors. The frequency and attendees at these meetings may vary amongst project teams.
- A final report will be due within thirty (30) days of completion of the project.



PROJECT DURATION

- Projects should last up to 12 months.

APPLICATION TIMING AND PROCESS

- 2-page pre-proposals with preliminary budgets are due on Friday, November 5, 2023.
- Pre-proposals will be reviewed, and a subset of applicants will be invited by November 17, 2023, to submit full proposals.
- Full proposals with detailed budgets will be due on Friday, December 15, 2023. Applicants will be asked to present to the Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee, tasked with selecting those projects to be funded, is comprised of Harvard faculty and local venture capitalists with relevant backgrounds and expertise.
- The Advisory Committee meeting to select the projects to be funded will be held in February 2024. The meeting date will be set by early January.
- Awardees will be announced soon after the Advisory Committee meeting.
- All submissions must be received no later than 6:00 pm on the respective due date, in Microsoft Word (.doc/.docx) or Adobe Reader (.pdf) format. Pre- and full proposals should be submitted by email to alan_gordon@harvard.edu. The subject line should read "Grid Accelerator Proposal."

SELECTION CRITERIA

- The review criteria will consider:
 - the commercial potential of the proposed project;
 - the existence of (or possibility of filing) intellectual property;
 - the delineation of a clear R&D roadmap detailing how Accelerator funding will lead to a value-creation inflection point; and
 - those projects that could result in a start-up company.

IMPORTANT DATES

Friday, November 3, 2023	Deadline to submit pre-proposals
Friday, November 17, 2023	Announce decisions / solicit full proposals
Friday, December 15, 2023	Deadline to submit full proposals
February 2024	Funded projects selected and notified

Please find, on the following pages, details of the required format for pre-proposals and full proposals.



FORMAT FOR PRE-PROPOSALS

Project pre-proposals should be no more than 2 pages long, excluding any cover page.

The emphasis should be on defining what the next value-creation inflection point is, and articulating how it will be achieved by way of a technical plan with well-defined milestones and a corresponding budget.

PAGE 1: COVER PAGE

Summary Information

- Title of Proposal
- Type of Project
- Requested Period of Performance
- Total Funding Requested
- Existing Intellectual Property (patents, copyrights)

Abstract

Contact Information (to be provided for each Principal Investigator)

- Name and Title Department, Division, Center and/or Laboratory
- Telephone Number
- Email Address

PAGES 2–3: PROJECT PROPOSAL

Technical Background and Commercial Significance

- Briefly describe recent relevant research, including others in the field, and your own prior work, if any.
- Describe any key risks to the success of the project.
- What problem are you addressing, both technically and commercially, and what is its novelty?
- Provide high-level thoughts on the size of the market, such as number of people affected, target users, number of customers, market size, etc.
- Describe what you envision as the commercial product.

Project Plan

- Summarize the experiments you will perform to de-risk the project so that it will attract external investment.

Key Personnel and Collaborators

- List of individuals/organizations required to complete the project.

Budget (funding will not be subject to Harvard indirect expense charges)

- Total amount requested

APPENDIX (OPTIONAL)

Relevant publications / manuscripts



FORMAT FOR FULL PROPOSALS

Full project proposals should be no more than 10 pages long, excluding the cover page.

The emphasis should be on defining what the next value-creation inflection point is, and articulating how it will be achieved by way of a technical plan with well-defined milestones and a corresponding budget.

COVER PAGE: PI NAME AND DEPARTMENT, PROJECT TITLE, TOTAL BUDGET REQUEST

SECTION 1: PROJECT SUMMARY OR ABSTRACT

- A. Describe the commercial need, problem or opportunity, and significance of the technology
- B. Describe the potential benefits of the proposed project with respect to advancing the technology
- C. State major research objectives of the project and how these align with a future commercial product

SECTION 2: DETAILED PROJECT DESCRIPTION

I. Project Plan and Objectives

- A. Provide a brief introduction to the area of investigation
- B. Describe your specific research objectives and summarize the experiments you will perform to achieve each
- C. Estimate the cost and time required for completion of each objective
- D. Describe the anticipated results where possible
- E. Provide a work performance schedule or Gantt chart
- F. Propose a minimum of 3 key milestones or checkpoints for the project

II. Related Research and Research Support

- A. Describe significant recent research related to this proposal including your own work and others in the field.

SECTION 3: INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

- A. Provide a brief description of any inventions you have already made related to the proposed project, and the underlying importance to the project of this or other Harvard IP.

SECTION 4: DETAILED BUDGET

- A. The project may be structured such that some, or even a large portion of the approved, budgeted activities will be outsourced to one or more approved entities (e.g., contract research laboratories/organizations, engineering/design firms).
- B. The budget should not include expenses for PI salary, travel, or significant capital equipment (i.e. equipment should not be a significant portion of the budget).
- C. The budget may include expenses for materials, CNS access, PhD student or postdoc salaries.
- D. The funding is not subject to indirect expense charges.



FORMAT FOR FULL PROPOSALS, continued

SECTION 5: KEY PERSONNEL & COLLABORATORS

- A. Include any personnel at Harvard who will work on the project.
- B. If you would like to work with an external mentor/advisor/expert, please let us know. Through our networks, we can locate an appropriate person who can assist the team as a technology or market (or other) expert. It would be expected that you meet with this individual regularly along with your BD team from OTD and the Executive Director of The Grid.

APPENDIX – MANUSCRIPTS/PUBLICATIONS

- A. References to published manuscripts are sufficient – please do not attach multiple manuscripts to your submission.