CooperVision Science and Technology Award Program, FY2017

Introduction

CooperVision brings a refreshing perspective to vision care with a commitment to crafting a wide range of high quality contact lens products and providing focused practitioner support. The Company has a strong heritage of solving the toughest vision challenges, such as astigmatism and presbyopia, and offers the most complete collection of spherical, toric and multifocal products available.

Program Overview

Seeing things in a different light is just the beginning at CooperVision. We put ideas into action, raise the bar on product excellence and create the next generation of contact lenses. To accomplish this, we maintain a strong commitment to advanced research and development.

The goal of the CooperVision Science and Technology (S&T) Award Program is to bring award recipients and CooperVision together to explore new areas of technology advancement. We recognize and highly value the need to find the best ideas that have the potential to deliver benefits to people across the globe. To this end, these awards will bring the best ideas forward to enable the transition of concepts into real-world solutions. Proposed research should demonstrate significant potential for research discoveries and the rapid commercialization of technological advancements within the CooperVision key focus areas for FY2017.

Program Goals

A key component of the S&T Award Program is the promotion of mutually beneficial relationships between CooperVision scientists and award recipients. Funding to recipients is intended to serve a variety of possible outcomes:

- Exploring the feasibility of a new technology concept;
- Maturing a particular technology or concept sufficiently to enable further development;
- Engaging skills, capabilities, or technologies which partner synergistically with skills, capabilities, or technologies at CooperVision within the context of a larger program; and
- Collaborative work on a mutual topic of interest so as to build relationships that can be leveraged to develop new technologies and products.

Focus Areas for FY2017

The key focus areas for FY2017 are:

- Strategies for reducing contact lens discomfort; emphasis on devices and non-pharmaceutical approaches with novel modes of action (ocular or non-ocular) to retain, manage or enhance moisture at the ocular and/or lens surface;
- Insights into the retinal response from optical defocus; and
- Technologies to expand the functionality of contact lenses as a wearable device for application beyond conventional vision correction.
Award Types

Research proposals may span proof-of-concept through translational stages. For this purpose, two types of awards are offered: the CooperVision Seedling and the CooperVision Translational Research Award.

1. CooperVision Seedling Award

CooperVision Seedling Awards are intended to incentivize collaborations in a new research area for a one year period. The award enables investigators to generate preliminary data that could be used toward a future CooperVision Translational Research Award. The maximum total cash amount for a CooperVision seedling is $100,000, including indirect costs.

2. CooperVision Translational Research Award

Translational research is defined as the application of already established fundamental scientific discovery or technologies to the development and testing of solutions for clinically relevant problems.

Translational research
- Is not hypothesis-driven;
- Applies already-established technologies, models, and/or approaches;
- Advances a clinical solution or product concept; and
- Can involve knowledge transfer among various scientific fields.

A CooperVision Translational Research Award is a multi-year award for a substantive translational research project. Research under this award is milestone-driven in order to remain focused on a well-defined goal. Translational research is inherently high-risk and the use of milestones provides a clear indicator of a project’s continued success or emergent difficulties. A CooperVision Translational Research Award provides funding for up to two years, totaling up to $400,000, including indirect costs. A maximum of $250,000 can be requested for any one year. A CooperVision Translational Research Award may be considered for renewal at the end of the initial research period.

Applicant and Research Project Eligibility

All applicants must hold appointment at a nonprofit academic, medical, or research institution. Any researcher with Principal Investigator (PI) status holding a MD, OD, or PhD is eligible to apply. Applicants, such as postdoctoral fellows, with a waiver of PI status must submit appropriate documentation authorized by their institution before funding can be awarded. Preference will be given to originality of ideas, regardless of faculty seniority.

Eligibility is not limited to those investigators currently working in the area of vision research. However, the proposal must clearly state how the proposed research will lead to new knowledge, technologies or products within the CooperVision focus area. United States citizenship is not required.
How to Apply

The application process for the CooperVision S&T Award consists of two steps:

1. Submission of a Letter of Intent (LOI)

Submission and approval of a LOI is required prior to submission of a full proposal. LOIs are non-binding and used to determine suitability of research projects for funding at a stage preceding the submission and review of full proposal applications. The LOI will be evaluated by members of the Scientific Review Committee. Evaluation of the LOI will be based primarily on the relevance of the research proposal to the focus area. LOIs will be accepted until May 30, 2016. Applicants will be notified of acceptance on or about June 15, 2016. Applicants may submit a maximum of three LOIs per funding cycle.

2. Proposal Submission

Upon approval of the LOI, applicants may submit a full proposal. Applicants may submit only one proposal per funding cycle regardless of number of LOIs accepted or award type. The complete proposal must be submitted by the deadline of August 29, 2016. Applicants must adhere to the proposal instructions and guidelines for consideration.

CooperVision will make an effort to limit access to the LOIs and full proposals to CooperVision employees involved in implementing the S&T Award. However, due to the numbers received, CooperVision will not enter into a confidentiality agreement as a condition for receipt of a LOI or full proposal. Therefore, applicants should take care to exclude confidential information from their submissions.

Review of Proposals and Award Selection Criteria

The Scientific Review Committee consists of representatives from CooperVision Executive Management, Research and Development. The Scientific Review Committee will use the following criteria to evaluate applications:

- The proposed research addresses a significant problem related to the CooperVision key focus area;
- The quality and originality of the proposed research;
- The research objectives are well thought out, realistic, and technically feasible as demonstrated by achievable milestones and timelines for the proposed scope of work;
- If milestones of the proposed research are achieved, scientific knowledge or clinical practice will be significantly advanced;
- Proposed research is clearly stated, based on sound precedents as supported by relevant literature, and reference to state of the field;
- Research methodology, data collection, and data analyses that are feasible and appropriate to the proposal’s aims;
- The proposal acknowledges potential problem areas and considers alternative tactics;
- Qualifications of the applicant and prior experience in conducting innovative research;
- Well-defined budget and sufficient access to adequate facilities and other resources necessary for the conduct of the proposed research.
Reporting Requirements

Requirements for a selected award will include, at a minimum, a Kick-off, Mid-year, and Year-End or Final Review. Reviews may be delivered by web/video conference, at the performance site, or on-site at the CooperVision Advanced Development Center (ADC), with the year-end and final reviews taking place at CooperVision ADC. Recipients must allow periodic site visits at CooperVision’s discretion. Deliverables will include, at a minimum, the presentation material from the three reviews and a written year-end Scientific Progress Report on the activities of the project. Presentation materials for each review must be delivered to CooperVision by no later than one (1) week after the corresponding review has occurred. The Scientific Progress Report must be submitted 30 days prior to the end of each award period. For multi-year awards, funding for each subsequent year will be contingent upon submission of a satisfactory Scientific Progress Report.

Award Use and Limitations

The awards from CooperVision are given for specific projects, not for general funding. The awards may be used to support salary of the recipient, postdoctoral fellows, technicians or graduate students; laboratory and data processing supplies; travel to CooperVision; and other direct costs; in each case only to the extent directly associated with the research project for which the award is provided. Supported salaries must be in proportion to the percent effort on the research project; faculty percent effort may not exceed 10%.

Awards may not be used for construction of new facilities; renovation of existing facilities; general operating costs; capital equipment in excess of $2500; general educational and training activities; to establish new clinical programs or to support ongoing clinical programs; as seed money for new venture companies; publication of scientific data and travel to scientific meetings (except where prior written approval is obtained from CooperVision). Awards may not be used as additional support for mixed funding projects.

Award Notification

Multiple awards are anticipated. The amount of resources made available will depend on the quality of the proposals received and the availability of funds. CooperVision’s target date for decisions and notifications is October 3, 2016.

Not all proposals can be funded. If the proposal is not accepted, the applicant will be notified. However, we will not be providing critiques of unsuccessful proposals.
Conditions of Award

Should a proposal be awarded, the applicant and the applicant’s institution will be required to execute a contract with CooperVision (“Letter of Agreement” or “LOA”). The LOA with the terms and conditions of the funding will be sent to the institution where the award funds will be administered. The LOA must be agreed to and signed by the authorized signer of the institution, and signed by the applicant (i.e. investigator) to acknowledge that applicant has read and agrees to the terms and conditions of the LOA, which shall include the following (in addition to other terms and conditions):

- The award will be used only for the proposed research;
- The investigator will submit an annual Scientific Progress Report to CooperVision;
- The investigator will participate in an annual year-end on-site review at CooperVision ADC;
- The investigator/institution will promptly disclose to CooperVision any inventions resulting from the awarded research;
- CooperVision will have an exclusive option to negotiate a patent license to inventions resulting from the awarded research;
- The investigator will provide proposed publications (including publishable abstracts) or presentations to CooperVision prior to submission;
- The investigator/institution will obtain CooperVision’s prior written approval for any publicity associated with the awarded research;
- Any use of personnel and/or facilities of an entity other than that of the signing institution must be governed by a separate agreement between the institution and the other entity that is not inconsistent with the investigator’s and institution’s obligations to CooperVision under the terms and conditions of the LOA.

Once the LOA is signed by all applicable parties, CooperVision will choose a Program Manager and/or Technical Lead to act as the liaison with the investigator. The Program Manager will facilitate interactions between CooperVision and the investigator, with the intent of ensuring that the investigator complies with the terms and conditions of the award.

CooperVision’s Discretion and Obligations

All decisions are based on and subject to CooperVision’s sole and absolute discretion. All requirements, limitations, deadlines, terms and conditions of this document are solely for CooperVision’s benefit and convenience and CooperVision may waive or add any such requirement, limitation, deadline, term or condition (in general or for a particular applicant) at any time in its absolute discretion.

Unless and until an LOA is signed and delivered by all applicable parties (including CooperVision), CooperVision has no obligations whatsoever in connection with any subject matter of document and, thereafter, CooperVision’s obligations will be only those expressly state in such LOA.