

UC Davis STAIR and DIAL Grant Programs (2016-17)
Executive Summary

The **Science Translation and Innovative Research (STAIR)** and **Data, Informatics & Application Launch (DIAL)** grant programs, managed by Venture Catalyst, are designed to provide funding to support translational science and innovative research performed by UC Davis researchers. The goal of the programs is to demonstrate early proof-of-concept and commercial potential or feasibility for technologies being developed with the intent of commercial translation. Examples of outcomes that might be realized from research results enabled by this funding include development of research or early commercial prototypes, generation of translational data from experiments typically not fundable by traditional research grants, enablement of patent claims, promotion of more competitive licensing opportunities, SBIR/STTR grant applications by subsequent startups benefiting from license rights to the underlying technologies, or development of user interfaces that enhance the commercialization potential of algorithms, software or analytical tools. These programs are one element of a suite of Venture Catalyst programs designed to stimulate translational research and facilitate early engagement by entrepreneurial researchers with campus programs that support technology commercialization, including those co-sponsored with the UC Davis Mike & Renee Child Institute for Innovation & Entrepreneurship, as well as external partners.

The STAIR and DIAL Grant programs for 2016-17 were announced on Friday, January 27, 2017 through the solicitation of a completed application form and submission of a 3-page research proposal (not including biographical sketches, budget justification, milestones, citations and references). Briefings and information sessions were organized by the Office of Research to raise awareness of the programs and answer questions regarding objectives, eligibility, and process. A total of 30 STAIR and 5 DIAL applications were received by the application deadline—of which 27 of the 30 STAIR, and all 5 of the DIAL proposals, met eligibility requirements.

Following a rigorous review process involving external industry reviewers (investors, company professionals and entrepreneurs) and internal domain experts, 14 of the STAIR proposals were selected as finalists during the initial review process. Of these 14, after further in-person reviewer deliberation, evaluation and ranking, 6 were selected for award based on their potential for future high-impact discoveries and innovation, as judged by their technical merit, commercial potential, and alignment of budget and milestones with translational enablement. A total of \$272,240 was allocated by Office of Research to the STAIR program, with maximum allowable funding of \$50,000 per successful STAIR grant recipient, and \$60,000, via AB2664, was allocated with a cap of \$20,000 per successful DIAL grant recipient. The funding period for both STAIR and DIAL is one year. Over \$1,464,036 million in total support was requested by principal investigators from over 25 different departments, representing a broad range of schools and colleges, including CA&ES (1), COE (9), CBS (1), L&S (9) and SOM (15). The budget requests from the 6 STAIR and 3 DIAL award recipients totaled \$328,697.

A proactive mentor engagement plan has been developed, which involves assignment of industry mentors to each of the 14 STAIR finalists and 5 DIAL applicants (which includes mentoring award recipients on commercialization milestones and timelines), and follow-up with all applicants to provide summarized reviewer comments and facilitate access to innovation resources. The mentor engagement process will be facilitated by Venture Catalyst, in collaboration with InnovationAccess and the Office of Corporate Relations, as necessary.

The objectives of the STAIR and DIAL programs align with major goals of the University to foster a vibrant community of learning and scholarship, drive innovation at the frontiers of knowledge, and nurture a sustainable future and propel economic vitality.