



2025 AMLCI Seed Grant Program Call for Proposals

OVERVIEW

To promote innovative collaborative research in **materials science / soft matter** that ultimately culminates in the submissions of **new**[‡], external grant applications, the Advanced Materials and Liquid Crystal Institute is pleased to announce the **2025 AMLCI Seed Grant Program**.

[‡]The goal of this call for proposals is to support new (early) collaborative research that will allow the proposer teams to tap into new funding avenues not currently pursued by these teams. These include, for example, new programs at NSF or NIH, more use-inspired translational research such as funded by NSF-TIP, or new funding agencies or companies not currently (or traditionally) funding the research by the applicants.

This seed grant program will provide 3 (three) AMLCI Seed Awards; one BLUE AWARD up to \$10K and two GOLD AWARDS up to \$5K each. The top-ranked proposal will secure the BLUE AWARD.

The framework of this program is centered around the following key requirements:

- At least one PI needs to be a member of the AMLCI,
- Duration of up to 1 year,
- The collaborative research should result in joint extramural grant applications that tap into new funding avenues not currently pursued by any of the PIs or co-PIs, and
- Peer-reviewed journal publications, patent applications, or prototypes.

Funding can be flexibly used to support activities most beneficial to conducting the study but should primarily support graduate and/or undergraduate students that will actively participate in the research efforts in each of the PI's (co-PI's) laboratories.

IMPORTANT DATES

- Submission deadline: **December 19th, 2025**
- Awardees notified: **February 15th, 2026**
- Start of 1-year award period: **March 1st, 2026**; (end of award: **February 28th, 2027**)

EVALUATION PROCESS

Reviews will focus on the merits of the proposed study, collaborative nature of the project, and the potential for future funding that tap into new funding sources.

An external joint application to an outside funding agency is required by or after the end of the one-year program (latest: **Fall 2027**), and proposals should include a timeline describing anticipated dates of grant submissions as well as intended new funding agency and/or mechanism.

SUBMISSION

Please submit your full proposal **as a single, combined .pdf file** via the following link: [Online Submission](#)

PROPOSALS SHOULD INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING ELEMENTS:

Cover Page (see below)

Title, Investigator name(s) with departmental and School/Institute affiliations, etc.

Project Description

- A **.pdf file** no longer than *three single spaced pages* (margins: 1" inch, font type/size: no smaller than 10-point Arial or 11-point Times New Roman) and organized into the following sections:
 - **Specific Aim(s)**: The project aim(s) should be delineated in this section, including plans for extramural grant submission (about half a page)
 - **Research Strategy** in three sections: *Significance*, *Innovation*, and *New Collaborative Approach* (about 1.5 pages)
 - **How this project will lead to new extramural funding (new program, new agency, etc.)** (about half a page)
 - **Description of joint collaborative training of graduate student(s)** (about half a page)

References

- Should be included in a separate section and do not count against the page limit.

Biosketches

- NIH, NSF (preferred), or other relevant agency format for each named PI and Co-PI on the proposal.

Budget and Budget Justification (use attached template)

- A budget that details costs with Budget Justification (up to 1 page, does not count against page limit). While salary of key personnel (graduate/undergraduate student) may be included in the budget, PI or co-PI salaries and fringe are excluded.

Chair/Director Memo (as needed)

- Proposals requesting personnel, effort or physical resources not currently available to the investigator are required to include an approval memo from their Chair, Director, or Dean.

REVIEW CRITERIA

The following criteria will be most heavily weighted in the evaluation of proposals:

- Innovation, feasibility, and timeliness of the proposed project, and its integration into a programmatic collaborative research plan.
- Likelihood/pathway/demonstration of **new** extramural funding avenues, including availability of suitable opportunities for future funding and plans for submission.

USE OF STUDY FUNDS

Funds are available for use when they are disbursed into award accounts (anticipated by February 2026). Disposition of the funds should follow the budget outlined in the application. Funds must be used within 12 months of receipt, or they will be returned to AMLCI.

POST-AWARD REQUIREMENTS

- No awards will be made prior to institutional approval for use of Human or Animal subjects. Award recipients will be required to submit a **Project Summary** consisting of full **Financial Reporting** for the funds disbursed, and a .pdf file no longer than two single spaced pages (margins at least 1" in type no smaller than 10-point Arial or 11-point Times New Roman font) in three sections summarizing: **(1) Progress Made, (2) Future Directions, (3) the next new Grant Mechanisms that will be pursued**. The Project Summary must be submitted within 4 weeks of the end of the project period via another online link (to be provided at that time). Awardees that do not submit a Project Summary or do not pursue grant funding beyond the award will not be considered for any future seed funding.

- Publications, presentations, future awards and other recognitions resulting from this work should cite the AMLCI Seed Grant Funding as a source of support and acknowledge AMLCI support on internal documentation as part of any linked grant submission.

We are looking forward to your submissions.

Best,
Torsten Hegmann, Director
Advanced Materials and Liquid Crystal Institute

2025 AMLCI SEED GRANT PROGRAM

COVER PAGE

If funded, would you like to be considered for supplemental funding via the University Research Council's RESEARCH/SCHOLARLY ACTIVITY SUPPORT REQUEST program?

Supplement requests can be for a maximum of \$3,500 or \$4,500 if projects involve undergraduate students

Yes: ____ No: ____

Amount Requested: \$ _____ Date: _____

Name PI: _____ Rank: _____ Dept./School/College: _____

Name co-PI(s): (1) _____ (2) _____

Ranks: (1) _____ (2) _____

Depts./Schools/Colleges: (1) _____ (2) _____

Proposal Title: _____

Institute Affiliations: _____

Signatures: (PI) _____ (co-PI 1) _____ (co-PI 2) _____

Have you submitted proposals to external agencies in the last two years? Yes: ____ No: ____

Please list agencies: _____

Grants received last three years: Yes: ____ No: ____ List agency / year: _____ / _____

If you have not submitted any proposals during the last 2 years, please describe your reasons for not doing so:

Are you presently on an external grant or fellowship? Yes: ____ No: ____

[Please list source and describe how this current proposal differs from previous or other current funding]:

BUDGET / BUDGET JUSTIFICATION

Project Budget by Item and Amount: Please provide costs and sources for the entire project. If you are applying for URC supplemental funding, please separate those costs, so it is clear what will be achieved with the base \$10K or \$5K funding* and the proposed supplemental amount.

ITEM	COST	Basis for estimate:	Portion from other sources needed/used (please identify) and indicate % adjustment for lower \$5K AMLCI award portion
	\$		
	\$		
	\$		
	\$		
	\$		
	\$		
	\$		
	\$		
	\$		
TOTAL	\$		
Adjusted TOTAL*	\$		
SUPPLEMENTAL URC FUNDING**			
	\$		
	\$		
	\$		
	\$		
	\$		
TOTAL	\$		

* Indicate which budget items can be reduced in value (provide % value) without compromising project success if only a \$5K AMLCI seed grant award is provided.

** If you wish to be considered for \$4,500 instead of \$3,500, please describe how the undergraduate will be involved in the research project. The student must play a more substantive role than simply being an assistant. In addition, as per URC, **you must include a 1-page statement of objectives from each undergraduate student involved, including expected outcomes of his/her participation in the research.**

Statement of objectives for each undergraduate student involved (if needed): {1-page limit}