Q&A KAW Proof of Concept Grants in AI, Quantum technologies or ICT

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If there is an international team, e.g. Sweden-US, would that result in a lower score due to the international nature?
Not per se, however, the link and the benefit to Sweden shall be clear.

Can an individual researcher from outside Sweden apply?
The main applicant has to be employed in Sweden at an academic institution. The co-PIs can be international, but not recipients of the funding/salary support. In the case of international situations, please always explain the benefit to Sweden and the protection/preservation of the IP in Sweden.

Is it OK if a co-applicant, i.e. not the main PI/applicant, lacks grants from a Wallenberg Foundation or a relevant KAW-programme connection?
Yes, this is OK. The main applicant must fulfil the eligibility criteria, co-applicants need not to.

We are a constellation of 3 people applying for the project. Shall the other 2 participants be listed as co-applicants in the online submission form? If yes, should their CV be attached and where?
Yes, include the other two persons as co-applicants. Include their CV in a combined single pdf file. PI should be the main applicant, i.e. not post-doc or assistant.

How important is the track record of the applicant vs the project proposal?
The focus is on the innovation and not on the academic track record of the applying scientist. You just need to be able to describe a credible science-based innovation. New entrepreneurs are most welcome to apply, so entrepreneurial experience is not required.

Can a postdoctoral fellow or PhD-student apply for the grant?
No, the applicant has to be more senior than a postdoctoral fellow.

Can we submit a proposal around a product which was already supported by an ERC proof of-concept grant?
Yes, you can apply even though you already have an ERC PoC grant but the differences should be clear and distinguished.

Is it an advantage to have funding from other sources, e.g. VR?
Funding from additional sources is not part of the evaluation process, however, it is important to clarify how the PoC grant contribute compared to other funding streams.

What TRL stage should the project address?
Project at TRL stage of 2-4, i.e. they should not be too early

Will submitted applications be public documents like in VR?
No. The applications will be handled by KAW and will not be public documents. Applications will be protected by confidentiality. The reviewers will have to sign a confidentiality agreement before receiving the applications.

Will WASP, WACQT or KAW provide template confidentiality agreements?
WASP, WACQT or KAW will not provide confidentiality agreements. Please contact your university's innovation office for support.

What IP form is expected for a technology implemented in a software?

You should describe this in the very same way as any innovation, including the market, unique positioning and opportunity of your product, the IP etc. Usually IP is the code itself, so indicate how the software was developed, means of protection and who owns it.

Can the PoC funding be used to fund application for IP protection/patent application.
No, the grant cannot finance IP protection/patent applications.

Could you please specify in detail how the grant may be used (salary, new team member, reagents, equipment, local cost, overhead, travel costs, and software licences) and therefore what can be included in the budget?
KAW allows for 20% of granted amount to be used for indirect costs and rent. Yes, you can use the grant for what is mentioned above, however, if you use the grant for salary, it must be in line with the rules and regulations at your university.

Can an academic researcher apply if the IP already has been transferred to a startup company?
Yes, it can be possible unless the IP is already being exploited /commercialized or the startup has attracted external funding

Can an academic lab apply even if a spin-off company around the proposed product has been created recently even though the final product is not fully defined/validated/commercialized?
The academic lab can apply even though they have a company, however there should be a clear scientific question. The grant is purely academic so there needs to be a distinguished line between the academic work that is connected to the project in the application, and the ongoing work in the company.

If a researcher is already involved in a start-up, can he/she still participate with an early phase project if this will be conducted in their labs?
Yes. The grant is purely academic, however, a researcher already involved in a startup can still apply. In this case, the researcher should clearly state the scientific question and the link to academia.

If a start-up company have the methodology, can the PoC be used for a case study developing a product using this methodology?
The grant shall not overlap with something that is clearly product development in a company setting. It is important to describe both the content and the context of the PoC and if there is already commercial activity associated with the innovation.

What is the composition of the evaluation committee?
The evaluation committee has been selected within the WASP, WACQT and KAW community. All reviewers must sign a confidentiality agreement.

What happens during the coaching step?
During the coaching step, the WALP team at KAW will discuss the suggested actions and budget and support the framing of the idea, in order to create the best case for the pitch session and the final WALP selection. Not all projects entering the coaching process necessarily get funded.

Is it OK to use the funds for engaging services or recruiting staff in a different European country?
The grant can be used for paying for required commercial or academic services from national or international sources, including companies and universities. However, the grant should not be used to recruit or employ staff abroad. In all cases, the connection and benefit to Sweden shall be clearly explained.

Is it possible to apply if the start-up has been formally initiated?

Yes, but that the grant can't be used for product development. It shall be used to answer remaining scientific questions related to e.g. scalability or robustness.

Is a Letter of Intent from the industry required to demonstrate the industry interest?
No, an informal expression of the interest is sufficient. E.g. an e-mail showing the interest from a company.

Does an industrial participant need to provide in-kind contribution?
The grant is a purely scientific grant to a university and cannot go directly to an industry partner. The participation by an industrial partner must be an in-kind contribution, unless the university has a collaboration agreement and can pay for consultancy services.

Can a university who is not part of WASP or WACQT but in KAW umbrella apply for the grant?
Yes, researchers that are employed at a Swedish University and have or have had grants from any of the Wallenberg Foundations can apply. The researcher however must be more senior than a postdoctoral fellow or a PhD student and the application need to be in the field of AI, Quantum Technologies or ICT.

If you are applying together with someone, do you need certificates from both heads of department?
No, only the university that will receive the grant needs to provide the certificate.

Can the industry interest come from a company outside Sweden?
Yes.

Can external services be used for carrying out the project?
Yes, if the service is necessary for answering the scientific hypothesis and the supplier of the service is procured by the university.

Can an initial idea be funded by this grant?
The idea needs to have a certain maturity and good research results have been shown.

I am a WASP/WACQT Fellow, how much salary support can I put for myself through a PoC grant?
Since you are a WASP or WACQT Fellow and 100% funded by KAW, you cannot add more funding for your own salary. The PoC-budget can for example contain salary for other team members, consumables or other costs necessary for performing the project, as described in the call text.

Can the project time be extended to 3 years for covering depreciation costs for equipment purchases?
No, the grant can cover costs up to maximum two years project time.

I am a researcher within WACQT. Am I eligible to apply in this call?
Those in WACQT that may apply are:
- Centre PIs (often just referred to as PIs): Partially salaried by WACQT senior researchers that comprise the management group.
- project PIs (PPIs): supervise PhD students or postdocs in WACQT but are themselves not salaried via WACQT.
- Senior advisor: partially salaried by WACQT.
- WACQT Fellows i.e. tenure-track positions, often 4 year (in Lund 6 years) that receive start-up grant from WACQT.
- Specialist (only in what we call the "core project"). Might have permanent positions, but without an official role as supervisor of PhD students or postdocs.

Would it be possible to get some feedback on project ideas to see whether they are within scope prior to submission?
Yes. Please contact sandor.albrecht@kaw.se for more information.

What is the policy on making changes in the budget once the project has started? E.g., hiring a resource that was not included in the budget proposal.
It is very important to carefully plan the resources (staff, equipment, etc.) needed for the project. The foundation may allow you to make some changes in the budget and reallocate funding. However, expanding the budget is not possible. If you would like to reallocate funding, it is important to have a dialogue with WALP team at KAW. The budget will be scrutinized during the coaching session.

What commitment is needed by an industry partner involved in the project?
No commitment, neither commercially nor legally, is needed by the external parties. What we need from them is a very clear interest in the project.

Can you apply with the same application for more than one KAW PoC call during the same year?
No. If you are uncertain about which KAW PoC call you should submit your application to, please contact sandor.albrecht@kaw.se.