Call for Exploratory Research Grants Proposals

The Ariel Cyber Innovation Center has set its main goals to be the promotion of world-class cyber security research and academic excellence at Ariel University and the development and promotion of world-wide leading cyber security researchers. With these goals at hand, the Ariel Cyber Innovation Center is soliciting proposals for funding research projects in cyber security. The emphasis will be on innovative and forward-looking research that may assist in establishing the Ariel Cyber Innovation Center as a world leader in cyber security research.

Possible research topics include (but are not limited to):

✓ System security (including network security, mobile system security, web system security, cloud security, OS security, storage security, and firmware security)
✓ Hardware and embedded systems security
✓ Cybersecurity oriented cryptography and cryptanalysis
✓ Applied cryptography and applied multiparty computation
✓ Applications of artificial intelligence and related fields (such as machine learning, natural language processing, or decision making) to cyber security (including applications such as vulnerability testing, detection of anomalous behavior or of malware, adversarial machine learning, privacy, etc.)
✓ Security analysis and security measurements (such as measurement of fraud, malware, spam, resiliency, or human behavior)
✓ Security of cyber-physical systems, national infrastructures, and the Internet of Things
✓ Human interaction and usability aspects of cyber security
✓ Privacy and personal data in cyberspace

The call is open to all the active academic staff at Ariel University as well as to external researchers who wish to be part of the Ariel Cyber Innovation Center.

Funding will be based on the regulations of the Center and can be used for supporting graduate students, post-doctoral fellows, academic visitors and research assistants. Funding can also be used for travel, literature, and equipment.
There are three types of research grants: regular, exploratory and travel. This call is aimed only at exploratory proposals. Other types will be handled in separate calls by the center.

**Exploratory Research Grants (ERG):** These proposals should identify a relevant subtopic and define a short term program (for up to one year and up to 50,000 NIS) for obtaining the required knowledge and personnel for designing a research program in this subtopic. The proposals should contain:

- **Letter of Intent** – Up to two pages describing the proposed research and its relevance to the current call. Additional supporting material can be submitted and will be read at the discretion of the referees.
- **CV(s) and list of relevant publications of the principal investigator(s).**
- **A declaration of current support for the PIs from other sources (including existing funding by the Ariel Cyber Innovation Center).**
- **A short review of the required budget.**

**A remark about the center’s software team and administrative staff:** The center intends to form a professional software team that will be of service to all members of the center. If you wish to utilize the services of this team for the purpose of the proposed project, then you should target an appropriate amount of the requested funding in your proposal for this purpose. In addition, research proposals should take into account the cost of the center’s administrative facilities and the proposed budget should account to that.

**Budget requirements:** Proposals should include a detailed list of possible expenditure items. The following percentage caps must be fulfilled (for exploratory and regular research proposals):

- **Fellowships for graduate students and postdocs:** up to 100% of proposal
- **Travel:** up to 10%
- **Equipment and literature:** Up to 10%
- **General expenses:** Up to 5%

**Grant Limitations:** An individual researcher can be a PI in at most two proposals (not including travel proposals).

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**Important dates:**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feb</td>
<td>10, 2020</td>
<td>Submission deadline at 23:59</td>
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<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>10, 2020</td>
<td>Final notification (ERG)</td>
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**Additional information:**

The grant application process, and the usage of the grants, are subject to the regulations of the cyber center. Note that funding by the cyber center does not qualify for “Tosefet
Bet” from the university. The regulations document can be obtained upon request by writing to acic@ariel.ac.il (and will be posted online as soon as the center website goes up). The academic committee reserves its discretion as to awarding the grants, their internal division, including the option of not awarding any grant in one or more of the above types. The committee’s decisions will be final. At the end of every year, project progress will be reviewed. If unsatisfactory progress has been made, then the scientific committee may recommend that the funding be halted for the second year.

**PI responsibilities:** PIs of winning proposals will be required to provide a short written report on the results of the funded research at the end of every six-month period of the funding term and a final report at the end of the term. Each report shall include the publications supported by the center.

In addition, PIs will be required to take an active role in the Center (Principal Research Associate). In particular, they will be required to give public presentations of their research, they will be expected to attend seminars and events, and be present in the center for a reasonable portion of their time. The Cyber center should be acknowledged in all public presentations and publications related to the funded research with the following acknowledgement “This work was supported by the Ariel Cyber Innovation Center in conjunction with the Israel National Cyber directorate in the Prime Minister's Office.”

**For any additional information** or inquiries regarding this call for proposals, please send a message to acic@ariel.ac.il.