



## *Artificial Intelligence Journal:* FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES for PROMOTING AI RESEARCH

Deadline for proposals: **July 30th, 2020**

### **Background**

The Artificial Intelligence Journal (AIJ) is one of the longest established and most respected journals in AI, and since it was founded in 1970, it has published many of the key papers in the field. The operation of the Editorial Board is supported financially through an arrangement with AIJ's publisher, Elsevier. Through this arrangement, the AIJ editorial board is able to make available substantial funds, (of the order of 230,000 Euros per year), to support the promotion and dissemination of AI research. Most of these funds are made available through a series of competitive open calls (the remaining part of the budget is reserved for sponsorship of studentships for the annual IJCAI conference). This document relates to the 22nd call for funding, with a deadline of July 30th, 2020 and a budget of 120,000 Euros.

### **What are the goals of this funding?**

In providing this funding, AIJ aims to:

- promote & raise awareness of AI research & practice;
- encourage the timely and widespread dissemination of AI research results, techniques, and tools;
- promote interaction and exchange of ideas between AI researchers, practitioners, and students;
- promote the exploitation of AI research results, techniques, and tools.

We strongly encourage the submission of proposals for activities that are fundamentally new, and likely to lead to the establishment of a new direction for AI research. Up to 20% of the budget available for this call will be reserved to fund new activities.

### **What activities will AIJ prefer funding?**

Broadly speaking, any activity that achieves the goals described above. For example:

- student travel or registration scholarships for a conference or workshop (preferred to funding for invited speakers);
- funds to support a web site to disseminate proceedings of an AI related conference or workshop;
- start up funds for a workshop in a promising new area of AI research;
- interdisciplinary activities that connect AI researchers/students with those of other areas, as well as new ways to promote AI research, education and applications.

This list is absolutely *not* intended to be exhaustive, and we strongly encourage you to consider innovative ways in which the goals set out above can be achieved.

### **What activities does AIJ prefer not to fund?**

- *We prefer not to fund individuals.* Requests should come from organisations such as a foundation, charitable body, or the organising committee of an event. AIJ does not exclude the possibility of funding individuals, but this is likely to be exceptional. Note that AIJ will *not* support individual requests for travel funds or personal research grants.
- *We prefer not to fund research projects.* Research projects involving staffing costs would probably not, in our view, be a cost effective use of the funds.
- *We won't fund duplicate activities.* For example, if there is already an established, successful, and well-

regarded conference in the area of  $X$ , then in all likelihood we would not provide seed funds to set up a duplicate, competitor conference.

- *We prefer not to fund activities where alternative sources of funding are readily available.*
- *AIJ will not fund activities that lead directly to profit for the organisation or individuals involved.* However, we recognise that with some events, (e.g., large conferences) it is necessary to budget for a surplus; in this case, proposals should describe what will happen to the surplus.

Proposals which request AIJ underwriting an activity (to an agreed limit) in the event of a loss are encouraged. We also urge you to investigate whether it is possible to “leverage” AIJ funding, for example by obtaining matched funding from elsewhere. In this case, the value of every Euro spent by AIJ is effectively doubled, which makes for a compelling funding case.

## COVID-19 situation

This call will take into account that the COVID-19 situation has forced many event organizers to replace in-person events with virtual ones. Therefore, we welcome requests for innovative online activities related to this major event transformation.

## How can I bid for funds?

A proposal should contain the following sections:

- *New or recurrent?* Label your activity as either new or recurrent. If it is new, explain why it is needed and what its potential impact on AI and society is.
- *What?* Describe exactly what activity funding is requested for. Please note that AIJ funds *specific* activities. For example, “we request funds to support a conference on  $X$ ” is *not* a specific request, while “we request travel funds to bring  $X$  students to conference  $Y$ ” *is* a specific request. Provide also the approximate number of attendees of the last edition of the event, if applicable.
- *How Much?* A (high level) budget, **in Euros**, which: clearly states the amount requested; provides details of the use of requested funds; describes how the requested amount fits into an overall budget for the activity/event; and clearly states what will happen to funds in the event of a surplus.
- *Why?* Brief justification for funding; note that priority will be given to activities for which no alternative

funds are available. If AIJ funding was received for the same activity, please provide a short explanation on how funds were used.

- *Who?* Describe who will benefit from the proposed activity.
- *When?* Dates of the proposed activity, and date by which funding would be needed. Applicants should apply at least 3 months before the event’s dates.
- *Where?* Location of the proposed activity.
- *Contact details* Name, affiliation, contact details for the responsible party (postal address, email, telephone number, fax), web address of event if available.

Proposals should under no circumstances exceed **two** pages. Proposals should be submitted in PDF via the EasyChair web review system at the following URL: <http://www.easychair.org/conferences/?conf=aij22> Please choose one of the two tracks (new or recurrent activity), in a way which is consistent with the label you gave to your application.

## How will proposals be evaluated?

We have been usually issuing calls for proposals two times per year, with **July 30th, 2020** being the deadline for this call. Further calls will be issued later – see the AIJ web site for details (<http://aij.ijcai.org/>). The sponsorship committee will assess proposals on the basis of:

- scientific quality of proposed activities;
- level of impact on the international AI community;
- cost effectiveness/value for money.

All bidders will be informed by email of the outcome of their proposal as soon as an outcome is known. If a proposal is approved for funding, then please be aware it may take time to transfer funds.

Where a proposal is felt to have merit but is not fundable in its submitted form, we may return to bidders to discuss possible modifications; where this is felt to be necessary, we will try to do this practicably and expeditiously. A summary of successful proposals will be made publicly available on the AIJ website.

## My proposal was rejected – can I appeal?

The decision of the AIJ sponsorship committee with respect to funding decisions is final, and we will not enter into any correspondence with respect to unsuccessful proposals.