

Shenzhen Bay Laboratory Proof-of-Concept Grants

Introduction

Shenzhen Bay Laboratory (SZBL) focuses on cutting-edge innovations in life information, biomedicine and medical equipment. Centered on the dual core of basic research and industrial translation, SZBL has built a dedicated platform bridging academic research and commercialization. SZBL Center for New Drug Research & Development Proof-of-Concept administers the PoC Grants, designed to help breakthrough early-stage innovations cross the "valley of death". Combining targeted funding and dedicated professional services, we accelerate the translation of SZBL-originated technologies into clinical applications and industrial launch.

The PoC Fund supports core translational workflows including target validation, drug discovery, molecular optimization and prototype development, alongside end-to-end full-cycle translational empowerment services.

We invite outstanding researchers to turn your translational-ready original technologies into viable, fundable, commercially scalable products.

Eligible Applicants & Projects

We support high-impact research projects and principal investigators

featuring original innovation, clear clinical value and tangible industrialization potential.

1. Project Sources

- Internal PoC projects originating from SZBL or Shenzhen Medical Academy of Research and Translation (SMART) with significant industrial translation prospects
- External projects from universities, research institutes and enterprises that collaborate with research institutes/centers under SZBL or SMART

2. Principal Investigator Profile

- Hold a doctoral degree or intermediate-level professional title or above
- Core inventor or key contributor of the original innovative research output
- Possess clear intentions and actionable plans for industrial translation

3. Disqualified Application Scenarios

- Applicants or core team members listed on scientific integrity blacklists or subject to formal administrative penalties
- Multiple submissions of the identical project under different titles
- Other circumstances that render applications ineligible

Available Support

Individual projects can secure maximum funding of RMB 3 million.

Grants may cover target validation, drug discovery & molecular optimization, prototype fabrication, performance & demonstration testing, market assessment, IP landscaping, and other critical research and professional services.

Based on project requirements, our specialized team provides dedicated project management and translational empowerment support when needed.

Project Selection Framework

Application Mechanism

We accept applications year-round, with quarterly review cycles. We follow a dynamic “Review & Launch Upon Maturity” approach—so you can apply whenever you are ready.

Core Selection Principles

1. Unmet clinical needs that matter

Your project must address a real clinical pain point, backed by solid evidence of disease burden and defined patient populations. Successful PoC validation should fill a critical gap or outperform current standard-of-care therapies.

2. A clear edge over the competition

Benchmark your technology against global R&D pipelines. We expect strong IP protection, defensible technical barriers, and verifiable advantages—whether in efficacy, safety, delivery route, diagnostic convenience, manufacturing cost, ease of use, or device compatibility.

3. Market traction and a viable path to commercialization

Define your clinical use case clearly. After PoC, we want to see a predictable market, commercial value, and return potential—plus a realistic plan to attract industrial partners or investment.

4. Any additional requirements we deem essential

We reserve the right to apply other criteria that we consider important for project success.

Application Process & Timeline

Online Submission (Open Year-round)

- SZBL Internal Staff: Single sign-on via OA to access the PoC System
- External Applicants: Register an account first via the registration portal <http://pocregister.szbl.ac.cn>, then log in to submit applications through the official project application system <https://poc.szbl.ac.cn>.

Reminder: We will verify your external account within **24 hours** and send you an email confirmation.

Review & Approval Procedure

1. Pre-Application

Log in, fill in the basic project info, and submit

2. Acceptance

Within **5 working days**, the PoC Working team will assign a coordinator to contact you.

3. Preliminary Expert Review

In parallel, the Working team will convene expert panels for initial screening.

4. Formal Application

Teams whose projects demonstrate competitive strengths and clear translational potential will receive tailored guidance to refine materials for formal application.

5. Final Evaluation

For fully submitted formal applications, the PoC Working team will organize expert review committees on a regular or ad-hoc basis to assess against our core criteria.

Note: Formal applications submitted before the end of the second month of each quarter will be scheduled for final evaluation in the same quarter.

6. Final Approval

Proposed funded projects shall be reviewed and approved by the Joint Party-Government Committee of SZBL, followed by a 5-working-day public notice period. Official project approval will be granted only if no objections are raised during the public notice period.

7. Project Launch & Implementation

SZBL will sign a project task agreement/contract with the project team, clarifying rights and obligations of all parties including but not limited to milestones, objectives and budgets.

Reminder: Co-funded projects (SZBL + enterprise) undergo joint review and approval.

Special Reminders

1. Applicants shall provide comprehensive information covering commercialization potential. However, all protected or proprietary confidential information must be excluded from all submitted documents and presentation materials.
2. Excluding personal privacy data, application materials may be shared with designated SZBL experts and partner organizations under executed non-disclosure agreements.
3. If applicants withhold material information (including but not limited to ambiguous IP ownership, substantial FTO risks) that distorts project evaluation or impairs downstream translation prospects, the project may be terminated with immediate effect—even after formal approval.

Key Terms & Rules

Intellectual Property Management

- All Fund-supported outputs (patents, papers, monographs, etc.) must formally acknowledge SZBL.
- IP ownership, allocation, and licensing will be negotiated on market terms and set in a written agreement.

Research Ethics, Biosafety & Cybersecurity

- If your project involves biosafety, cybersecurity, or other ethical/safety issues, you must fully comply with national laws and standards. Submit institutional ethics review certificates before the defense evaluation.

Rules for Enterprise Co-Applicants

- If an enterprise leads or co-sponsors the project, it must provide matching funds of at least 50% of the total budget.

Fund Utilization

- All grant funds are centrally managed by SZBL and cannot be externally transferred off-site. All spending must comply with SZBL's internal financial regulations. The PoC Working Group must be notified immediately if the project secures any additional third-party funding.
- Budget Restrictions: Funding may only be allocated to approved research activities. Prohibited expenditures include: PI salaries, consumer laptops or large capital equipment purchases, academic exchanges and training unrelated to the project, publication fees, and IP service fees irrelevant to the scope of work.

Project Administration Requirements

- Submit progress reports and deliverables against agreed milestones.
- All revisions to research roadmaps or allocated budgets require prior written approval from SZBL before implementation.
- All team members must commit time and resources proportional to their defined roles and responsibilities.
- Multi-institutional collaborative projects must clearly outline work division, budget allocation, output ownership and IP terms in writing.

Appendix: POC System User Guide:

1. System Login & Account Registration

(A) Internal Staff of SZBL (OA Single Sign-On)

- Click the “POC System” icon under the OA “Quick Link” (Figure 1).

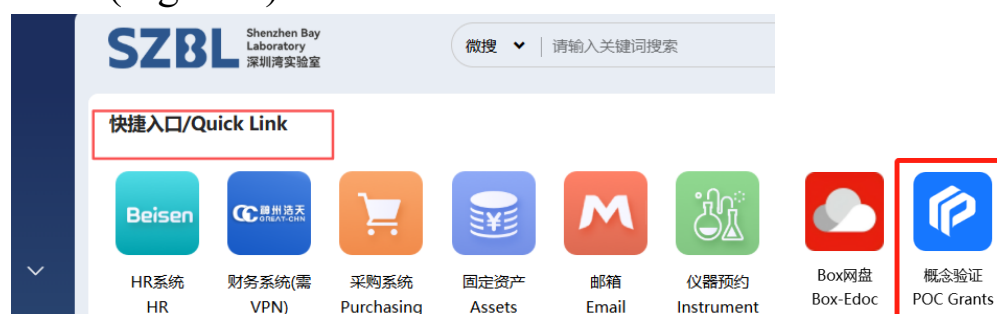


Figure 1. OA Quick Link location

(B) External Applicants (Registration + Approval)

- Register at: <http://pocregister.szbl.ac.cn> (Figure 2).
- Wait for an approval notification email (Figure 3).
- Log in to <https://poc.szbl.ac.cn> with your registered username and password (Figure 4).

Figure 2. External registration form



Figure 3. Approval email notification

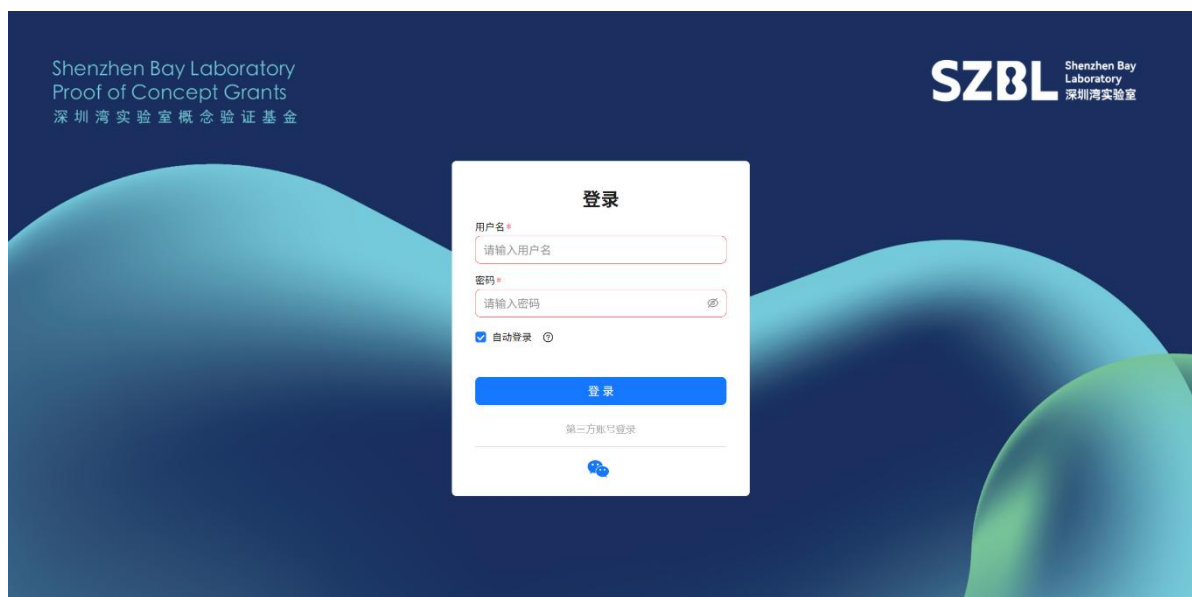


Figure 4. Login credentials entry

2. System Operation Instructions

2.1. Initiate an Application

Log into the system → navigate to **Workflow** (top-left)→+ **New Workflow** (top-right) → Select **海选项目 Project Screening** → **概念验证基金项目申请 POC Grants** (Figure 5).

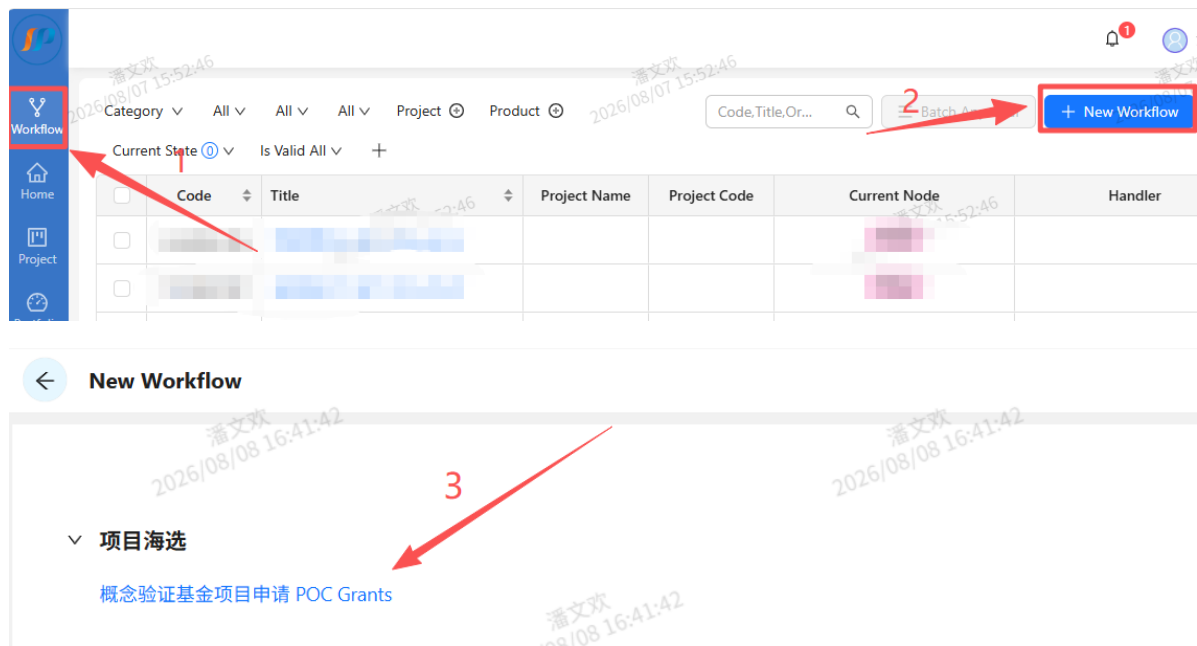


Figure 5. Application initiation workflow

2.2 Changing the Interface Language (Figure 6)

- Click your profile icon or avatar (top-right)
- Select “Language”.
- Choose your preferred language (e.g., English or Chinese).

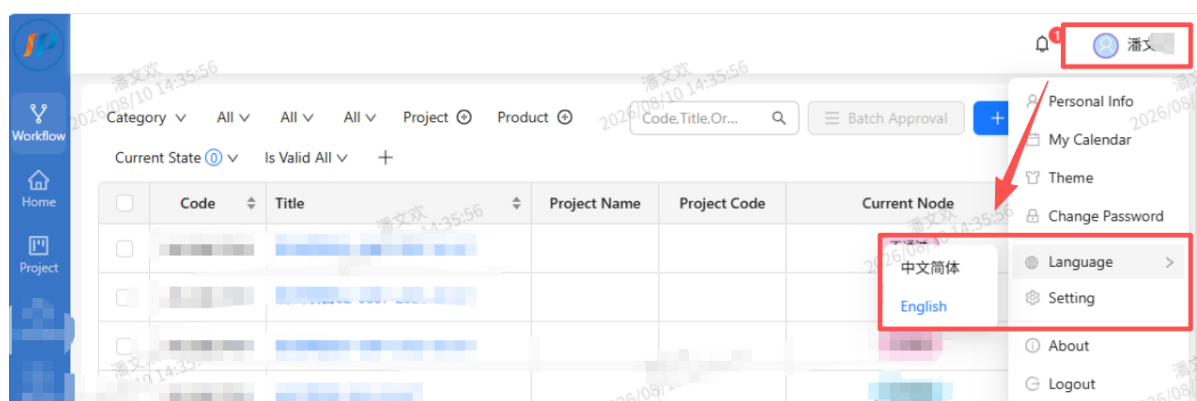


Figure 6. Language selection

2.3 Filling Guidelines & Reminders(Figure 7)

The screenshot shows a web-based application form for a project. At the top, there is a navigation bar with a back arrow, the text 'Start 概念验证基金项目申请', and three buttons: 'Flowchart', '下一步' (Next Step), and 'Save'. The 'Save' button is highlighted with a red dashed box. Below the navigation bar, the form contains several input fields. Callouts provide the following information:

- Fields marked with a red asterisk* are mandatory and must be fully completed.** This callout points to the 'Project Title *' field.
- Click the **Save Draft** button to store unfinished application information at any time.** This callout points to the 'Save' button.
- Fields with a blue question mark? contain filling prompts; please follow the instructions to fill in relevant content.** This callout points to the 'Project Lead's Affiliation ?' field.

The form fields include:

- Project Title *
- Project Field *
- Category *
- Project Lead *
- Phone Number *
- Email *
- Project Lead's Affiliation ? *
- Partner Affiliation ?
- Project Lead of Partner Affiliation 1
- Phone Number
- Email
- Project Lead of Partner Affiliation 2
- Planned Implementation Period (Years) ?
- 10,000 RMB

Figure 7. Filling Guidelines & Reminders

Technical Support Contact

For any technical issues with system operation, please contact our staff at: 0755-26849272, 0755-26411039