

**From:** "jeffrey E." <jeevacation@gmail.com>

**To:** Melanie Spinella <[REDACTED]>

**Subject:** Fwd: "Intelligent Virtual Animal" research proposal

**Date:** Mon, 22 Dec 2014 10:31:08 +0000

**Attachments:** Goertzel\_Harrigan\_Bach\_Black\_Foundation\_Proposal\_2014.pdf

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this is the last one for this year

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Ben Goertzel** <[REDACTED]>

Date: Mon, Dec 22, 2014 at 6:27 AM

Subject: Re: "Intelligent Virtual Animal" research proposal

To: "jeffrey E." <[jeevacation@gmail.com](mailto:jeevacation@gmail.com)>

Here you go, thanks

-- Ben

On Mon, Dec 22, 2014 at 6:18 PM, jeffrey E. <[jeevacation@gmail.com](mailto:jeevacation@gmail.com)> wrote:

> resend the proposal made out to the Black foundation. thanks asap

>  
> On Mon, Dec 22, 2014 at 3:54 AM, Ben Goertzel <[REDACTED]> wrote:

>>  
>> Hi,

>>  
>> Ah, and one more thing regarding my financial particulars.

>>  
>> As each year, the OpenCog HK project requires a "corporate  
>> contribution" (10% corporate contribution is required to secure the  
>> 90% government funding, under this kind of research grant).

>>  
>> This year the 10% corporate contribution amounts to roughly US\$25K.  
>> It's supposed to be given to them by the end of 2014, but if it's  
>> slightly late that's probably OK. As usual, I don't have the money  
>> and have to dig it up somewhere (which has been from you every year so  
>> far!!)....

>>  
>> If you choose to fund the overall project that Cosmo, Joscha and  
>> myself have suggested, this \$25K could come out of that budget, and we  
>> could allocate one of the OpenCog HK team members to participate in  
>> the project. On the other hand, if you don't choose to fund that  
>> overall project, obviously the \$25K would still be very valuable.

>>  
>> (As you will recall it can be done either as a donation to a  
>> charitable organization, Humanity+, or as a payment to a company ...  
>> your lawyer has done it both ways, in different years..)

>>  
>> The current HK grant funding is for natural language dialogue, and I  
>> believe that by the end of 2015 we can get an interesting NL dialogue  
>> system created using OpenCog -- and connected to David Hanson's  
>> robots, which will be a very effective demo. I don't think this is

>> as scientifically profound as the virtual-animal project, however, it  
>> certainly will be a cool demo of OpenCog actually doing something  
>> (anything with David's robots is cool-looking!), and will be a genuine  
>> advance in NL dialogue systems. As opposed to Siri or Cortana, the  
>> dialogue will not be as broadly practical -- but it will be based on  
>> underlying reasoning and understanding.

>>  
>> ...

>> As you know, since I am associated with the sponsorship of the OpenCog  
>> HK grant at HK Poly U, I can't be funded under that grant. However,  
>> I am very very eager to be able to spend my own time on AGI [REDACTED] once  
>> again (similar to how Joscha is now doing).... Funding of the virtual  
>> animal proposal would allow that, which would be awesome...

>> I understand the progress on OpenCog and my related research has not  
>> been as excitingly visibly demonstrable as you would have liked...  
>> However, a lot of great stuff has been done under the hood, and huge  
>> conceptual progress as well as code progress has been made. I think  
>> the next two years can be a breakthrough period for the project, and  
>> for me. Some things need to percolate for a while, then they come to  
>> a boil !!!

>> If you have more questions, concerns etc. or just want to discuss out  
>> of general interest, let's set a time and have a chat -- I'm generally  
>> available (though I guess you may not be, given the holiday season...)

>> thanks  
>> Ben

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>>

>> On Mon, Dec 22, 2014 at 3:41 PM, Ben Goertzel <[REDACTED]> wrote:

>>> Hi Jeffrey,

>>>  
>>> After a bunch of discussion and collaboration, here is a proposal from  
>>> myself, Cosmo and Joscha, describing some collaborative research work  
>>> we would love to do over the next 18 months.

>>>  
>>> The basic idea is to "start simple" (while building on some of the  
>>> powerful tools that Joscha and I have built over the last years), and  
>>> aim to scientifically validate our approach (a subset of OpenCog,  
>>> including OpenPsi which is modeled on Joscha' Psi/MicroPsi model and  
>>> which Joscha would like to help evolve further) in the context of a  
>>> virtual animal.... Specifically we would like to implement a bunch  
>>> of parrot-oriented animal intelligence tests in a virtual world, and  
>>> have OpenCog control a "virtual psittacene bird" that reasons and  
>>> learns about its virtual environment and (without hacking specifically  
>>> for the tests) performs on these tests similarly to a real parrot like  
>>> Irene Pepperberg's Alex.

>>>  
>>> Due partly to Joscha's influence, this is more science-oriented and

>>> less engineering-oriented than my prior proposals to you, but  
>>> nevertheless, in the course of doing this experimental intelligence  
>>> evaluation, lots of valuable engineering and testing will get done...  
>>>  
>>> We started out talking about doing something involving experiential  
>>> language learning (which would leverage the OpenCog NLP work currently  
>>> going on in Hong Kong). However, on reflection, it seemed that if we  
>>> wanted to do an experiential language learning project in a really  
>>> solid way, it would be best to \*first\* get "parrot level language and  
>>> animal behavior" truly compellingly, demonstratedly solved -- and then  
>>> move on to more sophisticated language. (Of course, human toddler  
>>> language is not evolutionarily descended from parrot language, but if  
>>> one looks at the issues more abstractly one can see a progression  
>>> there.).... So if this project goes forward, I'd say a natural next  
>>> step would be to follow this up with a "virtual toddlers in a virtual  
>>> world learning language" project. But, first things first....

>>> When you have time, perhaps the four of us could do a Skype call (or  
>>> good old telephone conference call) to discuss?

>>> Thanks a lot,

>>> Ben

>>>

>>> --

>>> Ben Goertzel, PhD

>>> <http://goertzel.org>

>>>

>>> "The reasonable man adapts himself to the world: the unreasonable one  
>>> persists in trying to adapt the world to himself. Therefore all  
>>> progress depends on the unreasonable man." -- George Bernard Shaw

>>

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>> --

>> Ben Goertzel, PhD

>> <http://goertzel.org>

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Ben Goertzel, PhD

<http://goertzel.org>

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