

# 2026 New Year

## SEASON'S GREETINGS FROM BILKENT TTO

We're excited to share some of the highlights from 2025 that showcase the strength of our community. Thank you for being part of this journey. Wishing you a joyful New Year filled with new opportunities!

Warm wishes,  
The Bilkent TTO Team

## MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

### Shaping the Future, Together

As we welcome the New Year, I am proud to reflect on a year that has once again demonstrated the strength, ambition, and global competitiveness of Bilkent University's research and innovation ecosystem. The achievements showcased in this newsletter: from prestigious ERC and Horizon Europe grants to impactful national funding, awards, and industry collaborations are a testament to our researchers' excellence and our shared commitment to generating knowledge with real societal and economic value. Because true progress is not merely measured by what we discover, but by how responsibly, courageously and collectively we choose to turn knowledge into lasting impact.

At Bilkent TTO, we remain dedicated to empowering our academic community, strengthening strategic partnerships, and transforming cutting-edge research into sustainable impact. As we step into the new year, we look forward to building on this momentum together, fostering bold ideas, deeper collaborations, and new successes that will continue to position Bilkent University at the forefront of research, innovation, and technology transfer.

Warmest wishes for a healthy, inspiring, and impactful New Year.

Ebru Başak Aköz  
Director, Bilkent Technology Transfer Office



# GRANTS

## Assoc. Prof. Efe Tokdemir has been awarded the ERC Consolidator Grant for the COUNSTER Project

Assoc. Prof. Efe Tokdemir has received the prestigious **ERC-2025 Consolidator Grant** for his project **COUNSTER**, which studies why, how, and when governments target the constituents of non-state armed actors (NSAAs) and what determines the effectiveness of these strategies. The project highlights alternatives to purely military responses by examining both coercive and persuasive strategies toward NSAA constituencies. Using a mixed-methods approach, it seeks to explain government-armed group-constituency interactions and uncover what drives success or failure in counterinsurgency, offering evidence-based guidance for more effective conflict resolution.



## Assoc. Prof. Luca Zavagno from Bilkent University to Lead the Turkish Component of the ERC Advanced Grant Project



**Assoc. Prof. Luca Zavagno**, Associate Professor of History at Bilkent University, will coordinate the Turkish research component of the **ERC Advanced Grant 2024 project "Byz-GOVAG - Agents of Cohesion in the Governance of an Empire"**, which examines how the Byzantine Empire (7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> centuries) maintained cohesion through individuals, institutions, and infrastructure. His expertise in Byzantine urbanism and Mediterranean connectivity contributes to this international, interdisciplinary collaboration.

## Two Bilkent Faculty Awarded Horizon Europe Funding

**Bilkent University** researchers received prestigious **Marie Skłodowska-Curie Postdoctoral Fellowships**. **Asst. Prof. Dr. Onur Tümtürk (LAUD)** secured funding from the ERA Fellowship to study how urban form affects public open space (POS) accessibility in Ankara, linking objective measures with residents' perceptions to inform socially equitable urban planning. **Dr. Selma Mayda (UNAM)** received funding from the European Postdoctoral Fellowship to investigate pigment degradation in 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> century paintings, creating a database to guide conservation efforts and extend the lifespan of historical artworks.



Onur Tümtürk



Selma Mayda

## Asst. Prof. Fulya Türker Awarded the ICGEB-CRP Early Career Return Grant 2025



Asst. Prof. Fulya Türker has received the ICGEB-CRP Early Career Return Grant 2025 to support her research on neurodegenerative diseases. Her project investigates the neuronal membrane proteasome (NMP) and its role in Huntington's disease, aiming to uncover molecular pathways behind toxic protein aggregation and identify potential biomarkers and therapeutic targets.





# GRANTS

## TÜBİTAK 1001 and 3501 Grants for Bilkent Researchers

The TÜBİTAK 1001 2025 First Call results announced on August 13, 2025, awarded funding to 17 researchers from Bilkent University and Bilkent UNAM. With a 55% success rate, well above the national average, the results highlight Bilkent University's strong research performance and academic excellence.

Selected **1001** grant recipients include: **Amine Gizem Tiniç (IE)**, **Ayça Arslan Ergül (UNAM)**, **Eray Tüzün (CS)**, **Hüseyin Can Aksoy (LAW)**, **İqra Munir (UNAM)**, **İbrahim Sarpkaya (UNAM)**, **İlker Temizer (ME)**, **Jedediah Wilfred Pap Allen (PSYC)**, **Mehmet Çağlar Manavgat (LAW)**, **Mustafa Ordu (UNAM)**, **Onur Çizmecioğlu (MBG)**, **Özgür Ulusoy (CS)**, **Pınar Önal (MBG)**, **Ronny Rosner (NSC)**, **Talip Serkan Kasırga (UNAM)**, **Yasemin Afacan (FADA)**, and **Zahide Pamir Karatok (PSYC)**.

Additionally, five Bilkent researchers received funding under the 3501 Program, which supports early career researchers: **Saeideh Alipoori (UNAM)**, **Özlem Aybüke Işık Bozbay (MBG)**, **Vishwa Pratap Singh (UNAM)**, **Feray Tunçalp (MAN)** and **Fulya Türker (MBG)**.

## The Era of Artificial Intelligence in Agriculture Begins with a TÜBİTAK-Supported Project

The project **"Development of Artificial Intelligence-Supported Variable Rate Smart Fertigation Applications in Centrally Controlled Irrigation Systems"**, funded under TÜBİTAK's 1833 SAYEM Green Transformation Call, aims to boost agricultural productivity by optimizing water and fertilizer use. Led by Karel, in partnership with Lotec, Plan S, Ankara University, and Bilkent University, the project develops an AI-driven system that delivers water and nutrients precisely according to soil conditions. Asst. Prof. Salih Özgür Ögüz (CS) represents Bilkent University in the project, contributing expertise in artificial intelligence and computational systems. By integrating AI, satellite imagery and IoT, the project seeks to reduce resource use, lower costs, and promote environmentally sustainable farming aligned with the European Green Deal and EU Nitrates Directive.

## Innovative Health Solutions from Bilkent: TÜSEB Funds Four Research Projects

TÜSEB announced the results of its 2025-B-01 call for innovative health science and technology R&D projects. Out of 1,198 applications, 736 were evaluated, and 155 projects were funded, giving an overall success rate of 21.05%. Bilkent University achieved a 50% success rate. Funded Bilkent projects include:

**Prof. Dr. Tolga Çukur (EE):** AI methods to improve MRI diagnostic quality

**Assoc. Prof. Can Alkan (CS):** Mobile computing for sepsis and rapid pathogen detection

**Asst. Prof. Fatih İnci (UNAM):** Repurposing home glucometers for diagnostic use

**Dr. Özgecan Erdem (UNAM):** Antimicrobial microneedles for wound healing



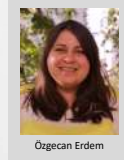
Tolga Çukur



Can Alkan



Fatih İnci



Özgecan Erdem

## Bilkent University and Meteksan Defence Launch Collaborative Research Call

Bilkent University and Meteksan Defence have launched the first project call under their joint research and technology development program, **BİLMET-TECH**. The initiative aims to combine academic expertise with industry experience to support **innovative defence-focused R&D**. The call focuses on two priority areas: IMU use in MİLSAR SAR motion compensation algorithms and metamaterial antenna array technologies. Selected projects will receive up to 12 months of support with a maximum budget of 3,000,000 TL.



# AWARDS

## Prof. Dr. Mustafa Parlar Awards 2025

The METU Prof. Dr. Mustafa Parlar Education and Research Foundation has announced the recipients of its 2025 annual awards. Five faculty members from Bilkent University have been honoured with the **Research Incentive Award**. Presented annually, the Parlar Awards recognize outstanding research and service across all disciplines, certify scientific excellence, and encourage younger generations to pursue careers in science.

The 2025 Research Incentive Award recipients from Bilkent University are **Dr. Talip Serkan Kasirga (UNAM)**, **Asst. Prof. Mustafa Ordu (UNAM)**, **Asst. Prof. Gürkan Yeşilöz (UNAM)**, **Asst. Prof. Hasan Yılmaz (UNAM)**, and **Asst. Prof. Ayşegül Dünder Boral (CS)**.



Talip Serkan Kasirga



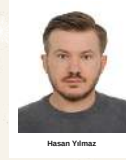
Mustafa Ordu



Gürkan Yeşilöz



Ayşegül Dünder Boral



Hasan Yılmaz

## Dr. Talip Serkan Kasirga Awarded TÜBİTAK Incentive Award



Dr. Talip Serkan Kasirga (UNAM) has received the TÜBİTAK Incentive Award for his outstanding research on phase transitions in low-dimensional systems. His work has made significant contributions to the fields of solid-state physics, nanoscience, and nanotechnology. The TÜBİTAK Incentive Award is granted to researchers who demonstrate exceptional promise and achievement, and Dr. Kasirga's success reflects his dedication and leadership in cutting-edge scientific research.

## Bilkent Faculty Receive 2025 BAGEP Awards

Five Bilkent faculty members have received the Distinguished Young Scientist (BAGEP) awards for 2025. The awards are given by the Science Academy Association, established in 2011 “to promote, practice and uphold the principles of scientific merit, freedom and integrity.” The objective of the BAGEP program is to recognize highly promising young scientists and assist them in furthering their investigations.

The Bilkent awardees are: **Asst. Prof. Ahmet Alperen Günay (ME and UNAM)**, **Asst. Prof. Yaghoub Heydarzade (MATH)**, **Assoc. Prof. Özlem Karsu (IE)**, **Asst. Prof. James Kinkaid (PHIL)** and **Asst. Prof. Erdiç Tatar (EE and UNAM)**.



Alperen Günay



Yaghoub Heydarzade



Özlem Karsu



James Kinkaid



Erdiç Tatar

## Bilkent University's Success at the 2025 Turkish Academy of Sciences (TÜBA)-GEBİP Awards

The **2025 TÜBA Awards** have been announced and will be presented on 23 December 2025 at the TÜBA-TÜBİTAK Science Awards Ceremony. The awards include the TÜBA International Academy Awards, TÜBA-GEBİP (Outstanding Young Scientist) Awards, and TÜBA-TESEP (Scientific Authorship) Awards.

This year, the **TÜBA-GEBİP Award**, which recognizes exceptional young scientists and supports their research groups, was awarded to **Asst. Prof. Emre Ozan Polat (PHYS)** and **Assoc. Prof. Naci Saldı (MATH)** for their outstanding scientific achievements.



Emre Ozan Polat



Naci Saldı





# EVENTS

## “New Beginnings for Collaboration” Event Held

On September 24, 2025, Bilkent University’s Technology Transfer Office hosted the first “**New Beginnings for Collaboration-Academia-Industry Dialogues I**” at the Rector’s Residence. The event featured opening remarks by Prof. Dr. Orhan Aytür, talks by Prof. Dr. Ekmel Özbay (NANOTAM) and Fikret Çınar (Nurol Makina), and dynamic discussions in three thematic areas: **Greener Future, Digital Horizons, and Better Living & Health.**

Bringing together **thirty-two academics** and **thirty-seven industry representatives** from diverse sectors, the event enabled direct knowledge exchange and explored potential collaborations. Participants generated recommendations on university outputs, emerging cooperation models, and ways to create faster impact.



## ERC Grants Info Day and Experience Sharing Panel



Bilkent University and TÜBİTAK co-hosted the “**ERC Grants Info Day and Experience Sharing Panel**”, bringing together researchers and aspiring ERC applicants on April 21, 2025. The event offered detailed guidance on ERC funding, including application procedures, evaluation criteria, and practical tips for preparing strong proposals, with insights from TÜBİTAK.

A roundtable panel, chaired by Bilkent TTO, featured ERC awardees and experts - Prof. Dr. Refet Gürkaynak (Consolidator Grant, 2016), Prof. Dr. Tolga Mete Duman (Advanced Grant, 2021), Asst. Prof. Erdinç Tatar (Starting Grant, 2023), Prof. Dr. Turgay Dalkara (Advanced Grant Panelist), and Aslı Vural - who shared first-hand experiences and perspectives.

## Bilkent University at the ÜSİMP National Patent Fair

Bilkent University Technology Transfer Office (TTO) participated in the ÜSİMP National Patent Fair held on 27-28 November 2025, showcasing six innovative technologies, four of which are protected by patents. Developed by Bilkent faculty members, these technologies attracted strong interest from industry representatives and technology transfer professionals. Through its participation, Bilkent TTO contributed to strengthening university-industry collaboration and national technology transfer culture. In addition, Ebru Başak Aköz, Director of Bilkent TTO, moderated the Manufacturing Technologies Panel within the R&D and Design Centers Symposium, facilitating discussions on current trends and innovative practices in manufacturing technologies.





# EVENTS

## Intellectual Property Seminars for Engineering Students

During the Fall semester of the 2025-2026 academic year, Bilkent TTO organized Intellectual Property Rights Awareness Seminars for senior engineering students. The seminars addressed patent protection, patentability, confidentiality, university-industry collaboration, and the role of IP in entrepreneurship, supported by discipline-specific examples. Students were also informed about Bilkent University's Intellectual Property Policy and the support mechanisms offered by Bilkent TTO. The seminars were enriched by contributions from Turkish and European Patent Attorneys.

## Bilkent University at IDEF 2025

Bilkent University exhibited a patented, soft spring-shaped sensor invention at the 17th International Defence Industry Fair (IDEF 2025), held between 22-27 July 2025 in Istanbul. The invention, developed under the supervision of Assoc. Prof. Onur Özcan, was exhibited at a booth supported by the Turkish Patent and Trademark Office. The fair provided significant international visibility with more than 121,000 visitors from 114 countries. The invention was presented by Bilkent alumnus Amiralı Aleali, contributing to the global promotion of Bilkent's research capabilities.

## IP Pioneers Project: Students Raising IPR Awareness

Within the scope of the IP Pioneers Project, carried out in cooperation with TÜRKPATENT and WIPO, Bilkent University Faculty of Law students contributed to raising intellectual property awareness among younger generations. After receiving training from TÜRKPATENT experts, students delivered IP-focused presentations at vocational high schools in Ankara. Their contributions were recognized with certificates presented during the World Intellectual Property Day event, highlighting Bilkent students' active role in promoting IP awareness nationwide.



# IPR AND COMMERCIALIZATION VISION

## Bilkent University TTO's 2025 Patent and Commercialization Vision

In 2025, Bilkent TTO focused on expanding its patent portfolio and accelerating technology commercialization through systematic patent evaluation, market validation, and licensing activities. Nearly 60 one-on-one meetings with academic staff resulted in a significant increase in patent applications compared to 2024. Technology information sheets were prepared for high-potential patented technologies, and commercialization efforts were initiated through company matchmaking.

## From Model to Market: Bilkent's Ar-Ti Approach for TTOs

Bilkent University has developed the "Ar-Ti Model" as a structured, TRL-based commercialization and technology management framework designed to facilitate university's TTO operations on Research Commercialization activities. Developed within the BUTechTransfer Project funded by TÜBİTAK, the model is now introduced to fellow TTOs in Ankara in order to foster broader adoption and innovation capacity across institutions.



# OUR TEAM

## Project Development Team

Have a project idea but not sure where to start? The Project Development Team is here to support researchers at every step of their journey. From shaping project ideas to submitting proposals and finalizing contracts, the team helps turn ideas into funded projects. They also guide researchers in finding the right funding opportunities, building strong partnerships, and navigating academic, technical, and budgetary requirements.



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## Intellectual Property Rights and Commercialization Team

Have an invention or research outcome with commercialization potential? The Intellectual Property Rights & Commercialization Team supports Bilkent researchers in evaluating inventions, managing national and international IP filings and overseeing patent processes. They also develop IPR protocols for collaborations, facilitate licensing of know-how and patented technologies, and conduct market and competitive analyses to identify commercialization opportunities and build strategic partnerships. Through training and awareness activities, they help strengthen the IP culture across the university and turn innovations into real-world impact.

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## Project Management Team

The TTO Project Management Team stands alongside project coordinators throughout the entire journey of nationally and internationally funded research projects at the university. From EU and TÜBİTAK grants to other global funding programs, the team ensures smooth project implementation by managing budgets, monitoring expenditures and coordinating with internal units. Overseeing reporting and administrative processes; with a detail-oriented and solution-driven approach, the team helps turn funded projects into successful research stories.



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Transforming Ideas into Results.  
Your Project, Our Passion!