Request for Proposals for “Regents Innovation Fund” Grants Competition

The Office of the Vice President for Research and Economic Development is accepting applications for the grants program designed to expand the commercialization of ISU technology. The grants program is supported by Iowa economic development appropriations to the Board of Regents (“Regents Innovation Fund”).

The funds are to support the development of ISU innovations with commercial potential and to help more ISU technology reach the marketplace as the foundation for new Iowa companies and/or the growth of existing Iowa companies. The funding is intended to support a wide-range of stages in technology development, from the initial research concept (prior to intellectual property disclosure), to proof of concept, to licensing and commercialization. All proposals should have a clear commercial benefit or potential for the state of Iowa and must show a clear participation by Iowa industry(s). Interdisciplinary proposals are encouraged.

Funding per project will be up to $50,000 and for a six month long project; successful projects may have the opportunity for a second phase of funding of up to $50,000 for additional six months of work. Successful proposals will demonstrate a high potential to lead to one or more of the following:

- New Iowa businesses and/or jobs created based on ISU technology.
- Increased sales and/or profitability of Iowa companies developed from or utilizing ISU technology.
- Improvements in the products and/or practices in Iowa businesses receiving assistance from ISU programs.
- New ISU technology licensed to companies with an Iowa presence.
- Collaborative research projects with companies with an Iowa presence.
- Increased funding for research from Federal agencies (NSF, NIH, USDA, etc.)
- Submissions to the SBIR/STTR programs (Small Business Innovative Research & Small Business Technology TRansfer)

Matching Funds Requirement

Each proposal must demonstrate one-to-one matching funds. Most sources of funding can be used as matches. Examples include:

- The university general fund, including faculty and staff salaries (even if these are from multiple sources), start-up funds and recruitment packages
- Federal funds
- Industry funds are strongly encouraged– cash or in-kind support. While not required, in comparing submissions, cash match will carry more weight than in-kind.
- Private gifts and endowments
- Pappajohn Center donor support
- Funds generated by the Research Park

State appropriations specifically directed to economic development programs at Iowa State University cannot be used as matches. Please contact Lisa Lorenzen (llorenze@iastate.edu) at the Iowa State University Research Foundation if you have specific questions regarding the ability to use matching funds.

Please remember that a cost share is considered cash only when provided by a third party as funds paid to ISU in support of the project. All other cost share is considered “in-kind”.

To apply, please complete the Proof-of-Concept Initiative (POCI) application form. Note that this form includes a cover page and two pages for the project description. Proposals that fail to conform to the application guidelines may be returned without review.

A copy of the application form can be downloaded here, while the evaluation criteria can be viewed here.