

The Ohio State University Accelerator Awards

Request for Applications | September 2019

Key Dates

- RFA released – **September 18, 2019.**
- Pre-proposals due – **November 4, 2019 by 5:00 PM EST.**
- Selected pre-proposal submissions invited to submit full applications – **week of November 18, 2019.**
- Full applications due – **January 13, 2020 by 5:00 PM EST.**
- Pitch presentations to selection committee – **week of February 3, 2020** (tentative).
- Award notices – **week of February 24, 2020.**
- Project kickoff meeting – **week of March 9, 2020.**
- Project period – **April 1, 2020 – March 31, 2021.**

Table of Contents

Fund Overview	3
Award Information	3
Project Eligibility	4
Intellectual Property Requirements	4
Principal Investigator & Team Requirements	5
Funding Requirements	6
Use of Funds	6
Industry Expert	8
Application Submission & Evaluation Process	8
1. Overview	8
2. Pre-proposal	8
3. Full Application	9
4. Pitch Presentation	9
General Evaluation Criteria	9
Award Decisions	10
Conflict of Interest	10
Confidential Information	10
Projects Involving Human Subjects and/or Animal Subjects	10
Post-Award Administration & Award Requirements	11
Contact Information	11

Fund Overview

The Ohio State University Accelerator Awards are a \$1 million pool of funds to advance the translation of cutting-edge Ohio State innovations from the university into the marketplace. The goal of the program is to generate the proof needed to advance technologies to the point that they are either ready to be licensed by an Ohio-based startup company upon completion of the project or determined to be unfeasible for commercialization. The Accelerator Awards are funded by the Ohio Third Frontier [Technology Validation and Start-up Fund](#) (TVSF) and administered through The Ohio State University Corporate Engagement Office. The Ohio Third Frontier aims to create greater economic growth in Ohio through the creation of startup companies that commercialize technologies developed by Ohio institutions of higher education.

Maximum awards are \$150,000 for biomedical/life sciences projects and \$100,000 for all other projects. Funds must be used to perform validation activities of technologies that have already demonstrated proof-of-concept, but for which capital from investment partners has not yet been secured. Program funds will be allocated to specific, measurable project milestones that are key to establishing commercial viability of the technology. The project scope must encompass activities that can be completed within a period of 12-months, with the majority of project funds allocated to external third-party service providers. Predetermined milestones and quantitative metrics of success will be evaluated on a quarterly basis. The Accelerator Awards program is open to all Ohio State faculty and staff who meet the eligibility guidelines.

Award Information

- **Type of award:** grant funding to an Ohio State principal investigator.
- **Total funding available:** up to a total of \$1,000,000 is available for the Accelerator Awards in FY2020, with \$500,000 provided by the Ohio Third Frontier and \$500,000 provided by the university.
- **Maximum award size:** projects in the biomedical/life sciences may request up to \$150,000 direct costs, all other projects may request up to \$100,000 direct costs (includes cost share).
- **Cost share:** the Ohio Third Frontier requires a cash cost share commitment of at least one dollar for every dollar of Ohio Third Frontier funds requested (1:1 cost share). The Corporate Engagement Office provides the cost share funds.
- **Purpose:** demonstrate the technology is commercially viable by performing validation activities.
- **Project timeline:** a single 12-month period from the date of funds disbursement. No-cost extensions will not be granted. Principal investigators are expected to know the start and end date of the project period and must plan accordingly.
- **Grant reimbursement:** the objective of the Ohio Third Frontier in supporting the Accelerator Awards is to create jobs and business opportunities in Ohio. If a technology is licensed to a company outside of Ohio within five years of the award notice, the university must repay the Accelerator Awards grant to the Ohio Third Frontier.

Project Eligibility

- The Accelerator Awards program is intended to fund activities that will demonstrate the commercial viability of a technology. Program funds are not early stage “proof of concept” funds—specific technologies supported by the Accelerator Award program must have already advanced beyond basic research and have the equivalent of a laboratory-scale proof of concept prior to the application.

Examples of activities too early for the Accelerator Awards	Examples of activities appropriate for the Accelerator Awards	Examples of activities too advanced for the Accelerator Awards, appropriate for TVSF Phase 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Basic science research ○ Research customer demand ○ Generate laboratory-scale proof of concept 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Prototype development ○ Human clinical data studies ○ Animal studies ○ Complete software coding or user interface development ○ Validate markets and customer demand ○ Demonstration and assessment of critical failure points in subsequent development ○ Scale up and commercialization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Beta prototype development ○ Deployment of beta prototype to potential customers for testing and evaluation ○ Business development activities

- The Accelerator Awards fund milestone-driven projects designed to obtain the proof needed to license the technology to a startup company. Project milestones are informed by industry input to focus the project on achieving commercially-relevant objectives.
- All proposals must fall within one of the State of Ohio’s technology focus areas:
 - Software/Information Technology
 - Biomedical/Life Sciences
 - Advanced Materials
 - Sensors
 - Energy
 - Advanced Manufacturing

Intellectual Property Requirements

- The technology must be the subject of an invention disclosure filed with the Ohio State Corporate Engagement Office **30 days** prior to the pre-proposal deadline and be under active management by the assigned Technology Licensing Manager. Invention disclosures are submitted through the [Innovate portal](#).

- Projects must be designed to advance the commercialization of University-owned intellectual property assigned to The Ohio State University or to the Ohio State Innovation Foundation (OSIF). All intellectual property developed under an Accelerator Award project will be assigned to OSIF.
- If the technology is jointly owned with an academic institution, an inter-institutional agreement (IIA) must be in place by the pre-proposal submission deadline and must designate OSIF as having the lead role in commercializing the technology.
- **A technology must already have intellectual property (IP) protection, defined as patent pending or patent issued, by the full application submission deadline.** Copyrighted materials, including software, are eligible if OSIF has the right to commercialize the copyrighted materials via an exclusive license agreement. It is the applicant's responsibility to notify the Licensing Manager at the Corporate Engagement Office assigned to their invention disclosure **30 days** prior to the full application submission deadline in order to ensure the IP is in good standing.
- The technology must be available for licensing at the time of the award notice.
 - Intellectual property rights must not be encumbered by any prior obligation, such as an industry sponsored research agreement or consultant agreement.
 - Technologies under an option agreement in the applicable field of use are NOT eligible for Accelerator Awards funding.
 - Technologies under a license agreement in the applicable field of use are NOT eligible for Accelerator Awards funding.

Principal Investigator & Team Requirements

- The principal investigator (PI) must be faculty at The Ohio State University with an appointment that allows them to serve as PI on an externally sponsored research project. The PI must be listed as an inventor on the associated invention disclosure form. Post-docs and Ohio State staff are eligible to apply as co-PIs.
- An investigator is limited to submitting one (1) application as PI or co-PI per application cycle.
- An investigator may only serve as PI of one (1) Accelerator Award project at a time. Investigators are eligible to re-apply with proposals for a different application of the same technology or for new technologies once the initial project is completed. Investigators must be compliant and in good standing with all previous award requirements.
- If the PI transfers from The Ohio State University to another institution during the project period, the Accelerator Award funds may not be transferred to the new institution. If a new principal investigator cannot take over the award responsibilities, the award will be terminated. The principal investigator should notify the Accelerator Awards program and provide contact information at the new institution in case the program needs to contact the investigator after leaving the university.
- All members of the team should be committed to the commercialization objectives of the project and be open to receiving coaching and oversight of their projects.

Funding Requirements

- The Accelerator Award funds are designed to fill the funding gap between basic academic research support and the investment of seed stage capital. Therefore, technologies with industry sponsorship, research grant support, or investment partners are not eligible for support under the Accelerator Awards. Technologies that are the subject of a TVSF Phase 2 award are considered too far developed, and are therefore ineligible for funding under the Accelerator Awards program.
- Funding is provided in tranches aligned with the project milestones. At least one milestone must be proposed per quarter. A quarterly progress report must be submitted and approved at the quarterly progress update meeting in order to receive the subsequent tranche of funds at the scheduled time.
- The Accelerator Awards oversight team reserves the right to halt financial support for the project for reasons including, but not limited to the following:
 - Technology is no longer available to OSIF for licensing (e.g. active license agreement is entered into, IIA lead is transferred to another institution, etc.);
 - PI leaves Ohio State;
 - Intellectual property offers limited protection of the technology or potential business model;
 - Potential opportunity for the startup is limited, including market size;
 - Failure to complete project milestones on time or with affirmative results; and
 - Failure of PI to comply on time with all Accelerator Awards reporting requirements.

Use of Funds

- Applicants may request an award of up to \$150,000 direct costs for biomedical/life sciences projects and up to \$100,000 direct costs for all other projects (includes cost share). The budget for the Accelerator Award project **should NOT include indirect costs or overhead**.
- All funds must be spent by **March 31, 2021**. Funding will only be provided for actual project expenditures specified in the budget, up to the amount of the award. Any funds not expended at the conclusion of the project period will be forfeited.
- Allowable budget expenditures include: salary and fringe benefits for non-faculty project personnel, purchased services, supplies, and equipment. The Selection Committee will be evaluating proposals for the appropriateness of the project budget to complete the project within a 12-month timeframe and that all requested funds are reasonable and necessary.
- General definitions of allowable budget categories are as follows:
 - Personnel: includes all compensation that will be paid for services of Ohio State employees rendered during the period of the Accelerator Awards grant. It includes, but is not limited to salaries, wages, and fringe benefits. **Faculty salaries may NOT be included in the budget.** Post-doc, student and technician salaries are permitted. Generally, Ohio State faculty and staff cannot be paid as consultants on sponsored projects. If the project activity falls outside their normal university responsibilities, Ohio State personnel can be paid supplemental compensation. In addition to approval by the Accelerator Awards program, supplemental compensation will be subject to the approval of the department and college.

- Purchased services: independent contractors or firms hired to provide a specific service or product (product purchase or fee-for service) and are not employed, either full-time or part-time, by Ohio State. These types of services don't involve employee benefits, temporary employment or contracted labor. An executed agreement between both parties is typically required, referencing the scope of work and deliverables being provided.
 - Supplies: tangible property other than equipment that can be expensed and consumed without delay (i.e. not capital equipment). Items are typically less than \$5,000 and are necessary for continued operation of the project.
 - Equipment: tangible long-term asset that will depreciate over time. Individual items are typically more than \$5,000 and are necessary for continued operation of the project. The Accelerator Awards is not intended to be a capacity-building program; rather it is designed to support commercialization of specific technologies. Applicants are strongly encouraged to consider what resources can be utilized at the university before including new equipment requests in the proposal. Accordingly, any equipment requests must be well justified in the budget narrative.
- Given the technology transfer goals of the Accelerator Awards program, **75% of project expenditures must be spent with external third-party service providers (i.e. vendors outside of the university)**. No more than 25% of the total project budget may be allocated to personnel costs.
 - There is a strong preference to use vendors located within Ohio. Proposed budgets that include funds allocated to vendors outside of Ohio must include sufficient justification in the budget narrative.
 - All expenses must be direct expenses that are necessary for the conduct of the Accelerator Award project. Approval of all expenses is at the discretion of the Accelerator Awards program and the Ohio Third Frontier. Generally, allowable and unallowable expenses are as follows:

<u>Expense Type</u>	<u>Allowed</u>
Consultants	Yes
Service contracts	Yes
Supplies	Yes
Equipment	May be requested, approval required
Ohio State non-faculty personnel	May be requested, approval required
PI salary/fringes	No
Collaborating investigator salary/fringes	No
Tuition costs	No
Indirect costs	No
Overhead	No
Bonuses, incentives or rewards	No
Industry expert payment or fees	No
Legal fees	No
Licensing fees	No
Professional affiliations or membership dues	No
Publication costs or reprints	No
Subcontracts	No
Travel – domestic or foreign	No

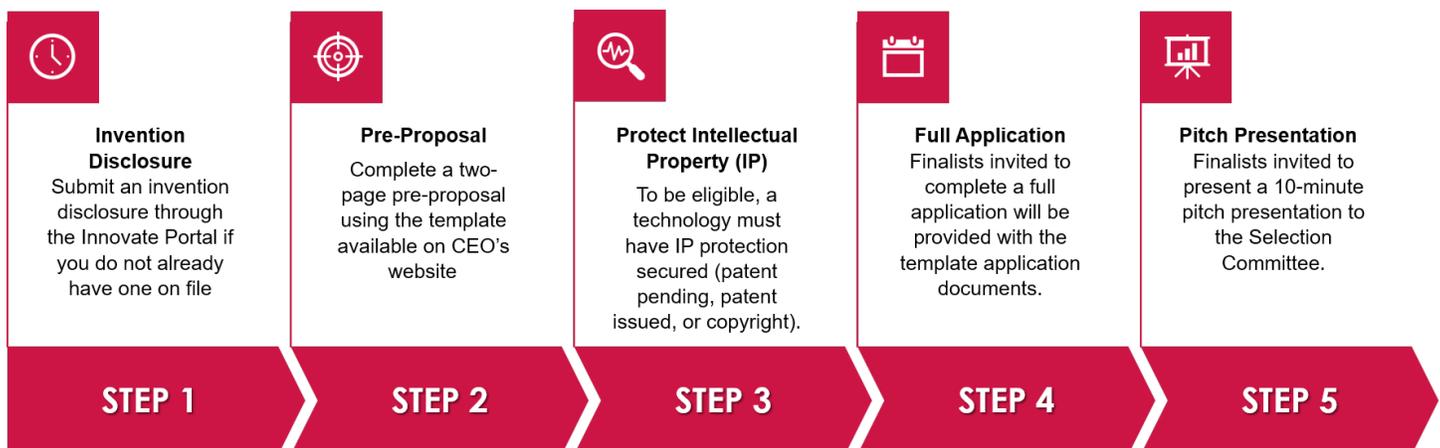
Industry Expert

Accelerator Awards fund milestone-driven projects designed to obtain the proof needed to license the technology to a startup company. Industry input is critical to developing commercialization-focused milestones that are appropriate for the technology. The Accelerator Awards program requires that finalists who are invited to submit a full application engage with an industry expert to help refine the commercialization objectives of the project. The industry expert will provide input to the PI to assist the applicant in submitting a strong, commercialization-focused milestone plan. As part of the pre-proposal, the PI is encouraged to identify potential industry experts that would be suitable to advise on the project. Industry experts are external to the university and have significant industry experience in the relevant technology area. The matching of an industry expert to the project will be facilitated by the Corporate Engagement Office, in collaboration with the PI, based upon factors such as alignment of the industry expert’s background and expertise with the project technology area.

Application Submission & Evaluation Process

1. Overview

The Accelerator Awards application process consists of three required stages: a pre-proposal, full application (by invitation), and a pitch presentation (by invitation). Invention disclosures for the technology associated with the application must be filed with the Ohio State Corporate Engagement Office by October 4, 2019 to be eligible for the Fall 2019 application cycle. Disclosures are submitted through the [Innovate](#) Portal.



2. Pre-proposal

Pre-proposals will be accepted until 5:00 PM on November 4, 2019. Please submit the pre-proposal as a PDF file and email to the Accelerator Awards program at accelerator_awards@osu.edu. The pre-proposal template may be downloaded from the Corporate Engagement Office’s website (<https://ceo.osu.edu/technology-development-funding>) and should be limited to two pages in length, in addition to the cover page. Pre-proposals will first be reviewed for compliance with the program’s requirements and alignment with the goals of the

Accelerator Awards program. Pre-proposals that meet the screening requirements will advance to an internal review committee.

The internal review committee consists of representatives from the technology commercialization and new ventures functions of the Ohio State Corporate Engagement Office. The internal review will be conducted from **November 6, 2019 – November 15, 2019**. **Invitations to submit a full proposal will be sent to the finalists via email during the week of November 18, 2019**. Proposals that do not advance to the full application phase will receive notification via email and may request a debriefing for further feedback on the pre-proposal to guide a resubmission for a future application cycle.

3. Full Application

Finalists invited to prepare a full application must submit the proposal by 5:00 PM on January 13, 2020. Full application instructions will be provided to finalists at the time of notification.

4. Pitch Presentation

Finalists will be invited to make a pitch presentation to the Accelerator Awards Selection Committee during the week of **February 3, 2020 (tentative)**. An individual timeslot will be assigned to each finalist. Finalists will prepare a 10-minute pitch of how the proposed project will accelerate the commercialization of the technology, with an additional 15-minutes for questions and answers. PIs are encouraged to work with their assigned Technology Licensing Manager to prepare for the pitch presentation. The PI is required to present the pitch using a template PowerPoint slide deck that will be provided to the finalists. PowerPoint slide decks must be emailed to accelerator_awards@osu.edu at least 48-hours in advance of the assigned timeslot.

General Evaluation Criteria

- **Project Plan:** project will generate the proof needed for technology to be licensed to a startup company; proof is defined by industry input; proof is meaningful, measurable, and impactful; milestones are clearly defined and can be completed within 12-months and with resources requested; degree to which project activities are performed using independent, third-party resources.
- **Project Outcome/Startup Opportunity:** commercialization plan clearly articulates plan for license to Ohio-based startup company; sufficient opportunity to sustain startup company within reasonable period of time (3–5 years); the project is well positioned to attract follow on funding for the next stage of development and ultimately funding for commercialization.
- **Technology:** degree to which the technology is innovative/disruptive; strength of the proof of concept data; stage of technical development; time to market for product; competitive advantage over technologies currently available/in development/status quo.
- **Intellectual Property:** strength of intellectual property position to protect the business model
- **Market:** market assessment performed and demonstrates a strong market/clinical need; reasonable path to market entry.
- **Commercialization:** the value proposition is clear, robust and compelling; technology is significantly scalable to achieve commercialization objectives.

- Team: team has the appropriate expertise to successfully complete the proposed project; PI and Co-PIs will dedicate the time needed to complete the project within proposed timeframe; the inventor(s) is committed to developing and commercializing the technology.

Award Decisions

The Accelerator Awards Selection Committee consists of two representatives of the Corporate Engagement Office and seven external partners with commercialization, investment and entrepreneurial expertise. Funding decisions will be made by the Ohio Third Frontier based upon recommendations of the Accelerator Awards Selection Committee. **Award notifications will be communicated to finalists via email the week of February 24, 2020.**

Finalists not selected for an award will be provided with feedback from the Accelerator Awards Selection Committee via email the week of February 24, 2020 along with any recommended resources or alternative strategies to support the commercialization of the project.

Conflict of Interest

As part of the full application review process, the Office of Research Compliance may undertake a conflict of interest review of the proposed Accelerator Awards project.

Confidential Information

Members of the Accelerator Award Selection Committee who will be reviewing the proposals and making the funding recommendations, are NOT under any confidentiality agreements. **Accordingly, applicants must not include proprietary information that has not been disclosed or protected by the technology commercialization function of the Corporate Engagement Office.** Publicly disclosing confidential information to external parties without a confidentiality agreements risks destroying the patentability of the invention. When preparing the application materials, a typical approach is to focus on what the invention does, rather than the detailed technical information as to how it does it. Applicants are encouraged to contact their assigned Technology Licensing Manager with any questions or for additional guidance.

Projects Involving Human Subjects and/or Animal Subjects

- If an Accelerator Award project contemplates activities involving human subjects, the PI must obtain Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval for the project, such approval to be current within one (1) year of the notice of award. Any modifications to the project plan must be approved by the IRB.
- If an Accelerator Award project contemplates activities involving animal subjects, the PI must obtain Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) approval for the project, such approval to be current within three (3) years of the notice of award. Any modifications to the project plan must be approved by the IACUC.

- Given the length of time needed to obtain the necessary approvals to conduct human and/or animal subject research, all full application submissions must have IRB/IACUC protocol(s) approved or pending by the full application submission deadline.
- Awarded projects must have IRB/IACUC approval prior to the release of any funds. Documentation submitted to Accelerator Awards program should include (1) the IRB/IACUC-approved protocol and (2) a signed letter from the IRB/IACUC indicating that the study has been approved or exempted. Applicants are strongly encouraged to complete these requirements during the application phase so as to not cause any delays in the time to funding. **Funds may not be awarded if necessary IRB/IACUC approvals are not obtained within 3-months of the award notice.**

Post-Award Administration & Award Requirements

The Ohio State University Corporate Engagement Office is responsible for the administration and implementation of the Accelerator Awards in conjunction with the Office of Sponsored Programs. Awardees are expected to engage with the commercialization team on a regular basis. As a condition of the award, awardees will be expected to:

- Attend the project kickoff meeting
- Meet quarterly (in person or by telephone) with the Accelerator Awards program and the commercialization team
- Provide written quarterly progress reports
- Present a mid-year project update to the Selection Committee
- Submit a final report within 30 days of the end of the project period that summarizes technical achievements and discusses commercialization next steps
- Present a final pitch to the Selection Committee

Failure to provide timely and complete required documents may result in early termination of the Accelerator Awards project and may preclude the PI from being eligible for any Ohio Third Frontier funding in the future.

Contact Information

For more information or questions, please contact the Accelerator Awards team by email at accelerator_awards@osu.edu.

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