

## REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS (RFA)

# SBIR/STTR Matching Funds

### **Purpose:**

The TEDCO SBIR/STTR Matching Funds Program (the “Program”) is a competitive program established to provide an eligible small business with an award to match a Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) or Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) award by an agency of the federal government. The purpose of the program is to further strengthen the power of the SBIR/STTR award, foster job creation and economic development in Maryland by promoting the commercialization of research conducted by small businesses, stimulate innovation and entrepreneurship, attract to Maryland early-stage small businesses engaged in research and development, facilitate technology transfer from universities and federal labs to small businesses, and encourage small businesses, including economically disadvantaged small businesses, to apply for SBIR/STTR funding programs.

### **Eligibility:**

TEDCO may make an award to an applicant if TEDCO determines the applicant meets all the following criteria:

- Over half of the applicant’s workforce works at and from a physical location in Maryland.
- The applicant is in good standing with the State of Maryland.
- The applicant’s principal business operations are conducted from a physical location in Maryland.
- The applicant agrees to execute a securities repurchase agreement or an equivalent commitment, in the form determined and approved by the Office of the Attorney General, requiring the applicant to return to TEDCO any money from an award including accrued interest and fees, if the applicant does not remain its status as a [Qualified Business](#) for at least 2 years after receiving a Program award.
- The applicant agrees to return the award if the applicant fails to fulfill the eligibility and maintenance requirements of the Program or if the SBIR/STTR award is canceled or rescinded.

- The applicant agrees to use the award primarily to support business operations in Maryland or, in the case of a start-up business, establish and support business operations in Maryland.
- The applicant employs less than 250 employees.
- The applicant is not primarily engaged in retail sales, real estate development, insurance, banking, or lending and is not primarily engaged in the provision of professional services by accountants, attorneys, or physicians.
- The applicant must have received an Initial Phase I or Initial Phase II award under the federal SBIR or STTR program within six (6) months immediately preceding the date of submission of the Matching Fund Program application to TEDCO. **The award date is determined by the date indicated on the Notice of Award issued by the federal funding agency.**
- For purposes of this Program, an “Initial Phase I” or “Initial Phase II” award means the first federal award issued for a specific project under a Phase I or Phase II solicitation and excludes any continuation, renewal, supplement, amendment, extension, bridge funding, Phase IIb, Commercialization Readiness Pilot (CRP), sequential Phase II, or other post-Phase II or follow-on SBIR/STTR award, regardless of federal agency designation.
- The applicant has received no prior award under the Program in the current fiscal year.
- The applicant has received less than 3 awards under the Program.

TEDCO will confirm all this information as part of the review process.

### **Funding Amount:**

Subject to the availability of funds, TEDCO will grant awards to selected applicants as follows:

- For a Phase I SBIR or STTR award to a company, TEDCO can grant that company an award under the Program in an amount the lesser of 25% of the Phase I SBIR or STTR award or \$25,000.
- For a Phase II SBIR or STTR award to a company, TEDCO can grant that company an award under the Program in an amount the lesser of 25% of the Phase II SBIR or STTR award or \$75,000.

TEDCO plans to issue awards on a quarterly basis and anticipates making 4-6 SBIR/STTR Phase Matching awards and 2-3 SBIR/STTR Phase II Matching awards each quarter. These numbers are subject to vary depending on the availability of funding.

**TEDCO Funding Mechanism:**

TEDCO will provide Program Awards to selected companies in the form of a grant. The award will be subject to the execution of a grant agreement, which will contain standard terms and conditions of the award, including reporting obligations, and will be non-negotiable. A template of the grant agreement is available for consideration.

**[Grant Agreement Template](#)**

Awardees must remain in good standing throughout the term of the funded project.

**How to Apply for SBIR/STTR Match Funds:**

Subject to the availability of funding, TEDCO will accept applications for Program awards up to four (4) times per year. TEDCO will start accepting applications on each Application Cycle Open date specified below and stop accepting applications as of 5:00 pm Eastern Time on the corresponding Application Cycle Deadline specified below for each cycle of its review process:

| Application Cycle Open  | Application Cycle Deadline (5:00 pm) |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| January 1 <sup>st</sup> | March 30 <sup>th</sup>               |
| April 1 <sup>st</sup>   | June 30 <sup>th</sup>                |
| July 1 <sup>st</sup>    | September 30 <sup>th</sup>           |
| October 1 <sup>st</sup> | December 31 <sup>st</sup>            |

If an Application Cycle Open date or Application Cycle Deadline date occurs on a weekend or Maryland State holiday, the effective Application Cycle Open or Application Cycle Deadline date will be the first non-holiday weekday following the specified date.

To ensure fairness, all Program applications must be received through the Program’s application portal on TEDCO’s website. Applications that are received through other means, such as email or mail, or after the Application Cycle Deadline will not be considered for funding.

Applications for funding must be submitted through TEDCO’s online portal, which can be found at:

**<https://www.tedcomd.com/sbirsttr-matching-funds>**

Applicants will receive an email confirming their submission.

Applicants might be required to attend an in-person interview at TEDCO's Columbia Office at 10960 Grantchester Way, Suite 120, Columbia, MD 21046 as part of the review process.

## **Application Process Details**

### TEDCO Registration

If an applicant has not registered as an entity with TEDCO and does not have a TEDCO ID, they will be prompted to do so prior to starting an application. The TEDCO registration process collects general information about the applicant including:

- General company details (name, company type, website, phone)
- Principal Business Operations Address
- The RBII Region (if applicable)
- Additional business locations
- An overview of the business (100-word limit)
- Primary and Secondary Contact information
- Company details (# employees, # MD employees, # Active founders, # C-level executives)
- Demographic Data

Once this information has been entered, the applicant will be issued a TEDCO ID which can be used to apply for the Program or any of TEDCO's programs.

Applicants with a TEDCO ID can then apply directly for the SBIR/STTR Matching Funds program.

## **Application for SBIR/STTR Matching Funds**

The application for the SBIR/STTR Matching Funds program includes three (3) components: General Applicant Information, Proposal and Award Information, and Use of Funds Justification.

### **A. General Applicant Information**

The applicant will be required to submit the following General Applicant Information, which will be used to assess eligibility and establish a baseline for the potential economic impact of the award. (Some of this information might be prepopulated using information from the TEDCO Registration process):

Applicant information:

- Company name
- Company type
- Primary contact name, title, email, phone

- Company website
- Industry
- Company description (up to 150 words)
- UEI (if registered in SAM.gov)

#### Basic Qualifications:

- Screenshot of MD Good standing certificate (link provided)
- Technology or life sciences company
- Agreement to use TEDCO services to support business operations in MD or to establish business operations in MD
- Company does not provide professional services (accountants, attorneys, physicians, or management consultant)
- Confirmation that applicant is not primarily engaged in retail sales, real estate development, insurance, banking or lending.

#### Business Ownership/Demographics

- Small disadvantaged business
- Women-owned small business
- Veteran-owned small business
- Maryland Business Enterprise (MBE)
- I-Corps Participation
- Company is primarily US-owned
- Venture backed

#### Intellectual Property

- Number of patent applications pending
- Number of issued patents

#### Employment Data

- Number of full-time MD founders and employees
- Number of part-time MD founders and employees
- Is the CEO based in MD

#### Funding History

- Received SBIR/STTR in the past
- If yes, from which agency(ies)
- If yes, which phase(s)
- Total SBIR/STTR funding raised

- Other grant funding awarded
- Amount of dilutive/venture funding raised-to-date
- Amount of debt financing raised-to-date
- Last complete year's revenue

#### Additional Information

- Date of Notice of Award: this date must be within the 6-month window preceding the date of submission of a Program application to TEDCO.
- Have you received SBIR/STTR Matching Funds in the past year?

#### Document Submission

- Winning SBIR/STTR Proposal
- SBIR/STTR Award Letter
- Use of Matching Funds Justification

### **B. Proposal and Award Information**

In addition to the General Applicant Information, applicants will be required to submit a copy of the proposal for which they received an SBIR/STTR award. TEDCO understands that by their nature SBIR/STTR proposals contain confidential business, financial, and other proprietary information. TEDCO will use the proposal solely for the purpose of assessing the potential economic impact of a matching award. TEDCO will consider these proposals *Confidential Business and Financial Information* and maintain their confidentiality as permitted by Maryland's Public Information Act; nevertheless, TEDCO recommends that applicants place a legend on their proposal indicating it as "*Confidential Business and Financial Information.*"

Applicants will also be asked to attach a copy of their SBIR/STTR award letter or equivalent including the amount of the award.

### **C. Use of Matching Funds Justification**

Applicants will be required to provide a Use of Matching Funds Justification document. The document should not exceed 2 pages using a standard font of at least 11 points and 1-inch page margins. TEDCO recommends that the document be submitted in Adobe PDF format. This Use of Matching Funds Justification document should include two sections:

- (i) Use of Matching Funds Strategy (Approximately 0.75 page).  
The Use of Matching Funds Strategy section should explain how matching funds will be used, and why the funds are needed. Please provide details on planned efforts, e.g.,

technical tasks, equipment purchase, marketing activities, hiring, IP protection, etc. Please also explain how these funds will help your company grow.

(ii) Potential Impacts (Approximately 1.25 page)

The Potential Impact section should describe the scale of impact the developed technology will have on economic development in Maryland. This section should provide:

- 1) Brief technology description: a clear and concise description of the developed technology, the target problem, and where you are in the development of a product or service. Include the Technology Readiness Level (TRL) if known.
- 2) Promotion of commercialization or technology transfer: whether the applicant's business promotes commercialization of research in Maryland or facilitates the transfer of technology from universities and federal research laboratories.
- 3) Relevance to public health crisis: whether the applicant's business is primarily engaged in research and development activities that assist in the prevention of, preparedness for, or response to a public health crisis in Maryland.
- 4) Use of Matching Funds towards commercialization: whether and the degree to which the applicant will use the matching funds award towards commercialization.
- 5) Job creation and economic impact: the level of potential economic impact of the applicant's growth in Maryland, and whether the matching funds award has the potential to foster job creation and economic development in Maryland.
- 6) Economic impact on rural community: whether the matching funds award has the potential to result in a positive economic development impact for a region or an area which is economically distressed or a rural area or a rural community.
- 7) Community representation: whether a founder of the applicant or a member of the applicant's executive leadership can self-identify as a member of a group that is economically disadvantaged.

Once all information is provided, the applicant will need to submit the application using the 'Submit' button on the application portal. Applicants will receive an automated email following submission to confirm TEDCO's receipt of the application.

**Review Process:**

Program applications submitted through TEDCO's application portal will not be reviewed until after the Application Cycle Deadline date.

The review process for each funding cycle consists of four stages: a Compliance Review, a Detailed Review, a Due Diligence Process, and a Final Decision. Applications may be rejected at any stage of the process if they do not meet the program's requirements.

## **Compliance Review**

All applications will undergo a preliminary Compliance Review to ensure that the applicant and the project meet the eligibility requirements as specified in this RFA. Applications that fail to meet these requirements will be rejected, and applicants will be notified within forty-five (45) days of the Application Cycle Deadline.

## **Detailed Review**

Applications that pass the Compliance Review will undergo a Detailed Review by TEDCO staff using the Review Criteria set forth below. Each application will be individually scored and discussed by a committee of reviewers, which will then make recommendations regarding which applications should progress to the Due Diligence Process stage.

## **Due Diligence Process**

Following the Detailed Review, TEDCO will conduct a Due Diligence process on selected applications recommended by the review committee. This might include:

- Review of the applicant's history with SBIR/STTR funding
- Validation of the potential impact to the State's ecosystem
- Site visits, presentations, or interviews
- Validation of claims and assumptions made in the application
- Other due diligence research deemed necessary by TEDCO

## **Final Decision**

After the Due Diligence Process, TEDCO staff will submit funding recommendations to TEDCO's CEO for a Final Decision. Once a final decision is made, the applicant will be notified of the outcome. The Final Decision will be based on:

- The application
- The reviewer's scores from the evaluation of the proposal and their recommendations for funding
- Diversity and inclusion criteria
- The likelihood that an award will foster job creation and economic development in the State
- Staff recommendations based on due diligence information

- The amount of money available for this program and the number of review cycles remaining in the year

**Review Criteria:**

TEDCO Staff will review and score applications using the following General Criteria:

- Whether the applicant’s business promotes commercialization of research in Maryland or facilitates the transfer of technology from universities and federal research laboratories
- The degree to which the applicant will use the award towards commercialization of the research
- Whether the applicant’s business is primarily engaged in research and development activities that assist in the prevention of, preparedness for, or response to a public health crisis in Maryland
- The potential economic impact of the applicant’s growth in Maryland
- Whether the award has the potential to foster job creation and economic development in Maryland
- Adherence to the application process

Applications will be scored on each of these factors using a scale from 1 to 5 as follows:

| Score | Description |
|-------|-------------|
| 5     | Excellent   |
| 4     | Very Good   |
| 3     | Good        |
| 2     | Fair        |
| 1     | Poor        |

Each application will receive an average score for each criterion and a total score (sum of average scores). All criteria will be weighted equally.

In addition to a score on the General Criteria, TEDCO reviewers will consider Diversity and Inclusion Criteria, which include whether:

- The award has the potential to result in a positive economic development impact for a region or an area which is economically distressed or a rural area or a rural community, and

- A founder of the applicant or a member of the applicant's executive leadership has self-identified as a member of a group that is economically disadvantaged.

Finally, the following Other Criteria will be considered when making recommendations for funding:

- TEDCO will give a preference to first time SBIR/STTR awardees.
- SBIR/STTR awardees that have not received Program funds in the past will have a preference over those that have received past Program funding.
- The potential economic impact of the matching funds on the company and the State will be taken into consideration.

At an applicant's request for feedback on their proposal, TEDCO will provide general written comments. TEDCO is unable to provide detailed feedback or discuss proposals with applicants. Applicants should understand that TEDCO anticipates high demand for this program and that it is likely that many good applications will not be selected for funding due to limitations of the total funding available. Requests for general feedback can be made to [sbir-ta@tedcomd.com](mailto:sbir-ta@tedcomd.com).

#### **Award Process:**

Once an application is approved for funding, TEDCO will notify the applicant. The applicant will then have up to thirty (30) days to execute the funding agreement, which will be in a non-negotiable form.

#### **Award Payments:**

Upon successful completion of the closing process, the applicant, now an awardee, will receive the full amount of the awarded funds through an ACH funds transfer. The Awardee will be required to provide bank routing and account information to complete the transfer.

#### **Reporting Requirements:**

As a condition of accepting an SBIR/STTR Matching Funds award from TEDCO, the applicant will be required to submit economic impact reports every year for a period of 5 years following the award. The reports will be in a form determined by TEDCO, but will include information about revenues, employees, follow-on funding, and similar economic impact data.

All reports provided to TEDCO will be held in confidence to the extent reasonably permitted by [Title 10, Subtitle 6 of State Government Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland](#). Reports

provided by the company containing confidential information should include a clear legend, “Confidential Business and Financial Information,” at the top of the report.

**Questions:**

Inquiries regarding the SBIR/STTR Matching Funds at TEDCO should be directed to:

[sbir-ta@tedcomd.com](mailto:sbir-ta@tedcomd.com)