

Pava LaPere Innovation Acceleration Grant Program

Frequently Asked Questions

When did it start?

[Pava LaPere Legacy of Innovation Act of 2024](#) was passed during the 2024 Maryland legislative session and effective July 1, 2024. The planning for the first Pava Innovation Awards selection process started in the fall of 2024, culminating in the inaugural MD Student Venture Showcase on February 18, 2025.

How many nominations are made and ventures selected?

- Each of the 20 colleges & universities in the Baltimore-Columbia-Towson Metropolitan Statistical Area are able to nominate up to four (4) student ventures for consideration.
- Nominated ventures will apply through TEDCO.
- The review committees will select anticipated nine (9) student ventures to receive up to \$50,000 in grant funding – with no more than two (2) selected from the same college/university.

What is the award amount?

- Up to \$50,000 in non-dilutive grant funding.

Does my company have to be for profit?

- Yes. Above that, eligible businesses must offer technology-based product(s) and/or service(s) and be registered in the State of Maryland. Contact ssaintarmand@tedcomd.com if unsure that your business entity qualifies.
- Ventures must be incorporated in 30 days or less upon notice of award.

After I apply, when can I expect to receive a decision?

- TEDCO will coordinate an internal review process leveraging experienced external reviewers to evaluate applicants along a guided rubric.
- Highest ranked applicants move forward to interviews, where TEDCO staff screens candidates for grant eligibility, guided by Econ. Dev. § 10-462.
- Awarded candidates receive notice of award and ideally close within the same school semester. TEDCO coordinates closing with the Office of Attorney General.

Do I receive the funding at once?

- Typically, disbursement is handled in two phases. The first tranche is released after the grant agreement is signed. The second tranche's deployment is anticipated six months after initial deployment.

Is there a minimum number of credits to be considered a student?

- There is a three (3) credit enrollment minimum at the time of application and award. If you are graduating this school year, see our detailed eligibility requirements for more information.

What if I am a graduate school student?

- Undergraduate, graduate and PhD students are eligible, so long as the status remains consistent between application and notice of award.

Where does a company need to be incorporated vs. headquartered?

- The venture can be incorporated anywhere, but its primary place of business (headquarter) must be in the Baltimore-Columbia-Towson Metropolitan Statistical Area.

My university owns intellectual property/equity in my company. Am I still eligible?

- Yes, so long as one or more current eligible student(s) hold 50% or more equity in the company, as evidenced by the company's operating agreement, bylaws or cap table.

I have university faculty/staff as a founding team member. Am I still eligible?

- Yes, as long as student(s) ownership is 50% or more and enrolled at one of the eligible colleges or universities in the Baltimore-Towson-Columbia MSA. Student(s) must be recognized as a founder of the company's official operating agreement or bylaws.

What is the role of the steering committee member from my school?

- If your company is nominated by your steering committee member, your nominator can be a guide for your application submission. Ultimately, the quality of your application is your responsibility – they will not complete it on your behalf.

Who is my school's steering committee representative / nominator?

- Please refer to "Pava LaPere Innovation Acceleration Grant Program" page on TEDCO's website.

What if your institution does not have a representative? Or I cannot reach my school representative?

- Please reach out to ssaintarmand@tedcomd.com.

Will I receive feedback about my application from evaluators?

- Upon request, applicants can request general feedback from TEDCO once the notice of award is released. Feedback is anonymized to protect the identity of the evaluator.

What are the expectations after the award?

Awarded companies are expected to:

- Leverage internal resources provided through TEDCO's Venture Development, UpSurge and any other coordinated business and technical support services through Baltimore's entrepreneurial ecosystem. Awardees can anticipate regularly scheduled meetings with the Program Manager to evaluate what support services align best with their project activities.
- Attend and participate at the MD Student Venture Showcase.
- Provide company updates to TEDCO with a 6-month regular cadence during active project years and a final report.
- Maintain their primary business location in Maryland for the duration of the award cycle.
- Support the subsequent cycles of the award program by mentoring or sharing their story with future nominees.

What support/resources will my venture receive post award?

Awardees will work alongside TEDCO's Venture Development team to determine the appropriate business and technical resources for project and founder development. Resources include:

- Direct mentorship & advisory services: Network Advisors, Prelude Pitch, UBII Mentorship, BRIDGE, IP Gen
- Business Development: FounderTrac, MyNextRaise, ICorps
- Ecosystem introductions, as needed
- Free tickets to incoming TEDCO's Entrepreneur Expo

My student venture was nominated, but not selected for an award – how can I still participate?

- All nominated student ventures will be eligible for sponsored community awards. These are smaller dollar amount awards (\$250-500) provided by ecosystem sponsors and decided on by audience vote during the MD Student Venture Showcase.
- Pending space, nominated student ventures may be invited to attend or participate at the MD Student Venture Showcase to gain additional exposure as part of the event.