

The Corridor Early-Stage Innovation Fund

**the
florida
high tech
corridor**

early-stage innovation fund



The Florida High Tech Corridor and USF Research & Innovation are launching a new program to support early-stage innovations and applied research with significant commercial potential. These funds are meant to seed USF-developed technologies that could lead to industry investment, start-up creation, and/or licensing opportunities. USF researchers may request **up to \$25,000** to support USF research expenses associated with the further development of the target innovation. Initial funding has

been provided to support two pilot rounds of this program with three awards anticipated in each round (six awards total).

Key Considerations:

- Funding is intended to support USF-developed innovation and cannot be used to further develop an outside companies' existing technology.
- Funds can be used for faculty, student, and staff time, supplies and materials, lab access fees, and other associated USF research expenses.
- Awardees will have six months from the date of award to complete the outlined research.
- All funding will be used to support the proposed research effort. Because these funds are internal to USF, no indirect costs will be applied to these awards.

Key Dates:

Round 1:

- Friday, November 18, 2022 (5pm) - Letter of Intent Due
- Friday, January 13, 2023 (5pm) - Full Proposal Due
- Friday, March 3, 2023 - Awards Announced (Anticipated)
 - Funded research will coincide with summer 2023 term

Round 2*:

- Friday, March 31, 2023 (5pm) - Letter of Intent Due
- Thursday, May 25, 2023 (5pm) - Full Proposal Due
- Friday, July 14, 2023 - Awards Announced (Anticipated)
 - Funded research will coincide with fall 2023 term

* Round 2 Dates Subject to Change

Letter of Intent: To be considered for funding, interested applicants must submit via email a one-page Letter of Intent by the due date above to Elizabeth Nelson, Program Director, Florida High Tech Corridor (ernelson1@usf.edu). The letter of intent should include:

- **Lead Principal Investigator - Name, Title, Department, & College**
- **Other Participating Faculty/Staff, if applicable**
- **Project Title**
- **Funding Request Amount**
 - **Preliminary Budget:** Detailed justification is **not** needed at this time. Simply allocate funding into the anticipated budget categories.

- **Abstract:** In common language, provide an overview of the early-stage innovation, the research proposed, and potential commercial impact. One to two paragraphs maximum (limit to 250 words).
- Proposals must be signed by the lead PI's Dean

Note: Only one Letter of Intent per lead PI will be accepted.

Full Proposal: Select researchers will be invited to submit a full proposal addressing the points below. Proposals must be submitted via email to Elizabeth Nelson, Program Director, Florida High Tech Corridor (ernelson1@usf.edu) by the due date above. Proposals must be a PDF. It should include a 1-page cover sheet with the project details, a narrative of no more than **THREE** pages (double spaced, 11 pt font), and a 1-page budget with budget justification. Additional details below.

The review committee expects to notify applicants of the funding decision within six weeks of the due date. Researchers will have six months from the date of award to complete the outlined research.

Proposal Coversheet (1 Page)

- **Lead Principal Investigator - Name, Title, Department, & College**
- **Other Participating Faculty/Staff, if applicable**
- **Project Title**
- **Funding Request Amount**
- **Abstract:** In common language, provide an overview of the early-stage innovation, the research proposed, and potential commercial impact. One to two paragraphs maximum (limit to 250 words).
- Proposals must be signed by the lead PI's Dean

Proposal Narrative (3 Pages)

- **Background:** Provide a general description of the early-stage innovation and its place among the current state-of-the-art. Please identify any collaborators or co-inventors. Summarize the research and development you and your team have previously completed. What is the innovation's current patent status? Outline any previous funding (internal or external) that has been invested into this early-stage innovation.
- **Potential Commercial Viability:** What problem or unmet need does this innovation address? Who is primarily impacted? Is there a demonstrated demand for a solution to this problem/unmet need? How have you determined this demand? How unique or novel is this solution? What competitive advantage does the innovation offer over what is already available?
- **Project Plan:** Please outline the proposed research plan. What is the overall goal of the research effort? What tasks will be completed to achieve this goal? What method will be used to accomplish each task (simulation, experiment, economic study, beta test)? What results are expected? How will this research help to move the early-stage innovation further along towards commercialization?
- **Long-Term Commercialization Strategy:** What is your anticipated path to commercialization for this early-stage innovation? What has informed this pathway/strategy? What steps have you previously taken to support this path (i.e. market research, networking, industry engagement, etc.)?

- **Follow-On Funding Strategy:** Upon completion of the proposed research, how will additional funding be secured? Proposals with a specific future funding strategy will be viewed most favorably.

Proposal Budget (1 Page)

- **Budget & Justification:** Provide a one-page budget breakdown including budget justification. Provide the name and contact information of your fiscal & business administrator who will oversee fund transfer should the proposal be awarded.

When composing your proposal, please consider the [Corridor's targeted high-tech industry clusters](#) and [USF's strategic areas of focus](#). Proposals that align with these areas will be viewed most favorably.

Corridor's Targeted High-Tech Industry Clusters

- Aerospace & Aviation
- Agritechology
- Gaming, Entertainment, & eSports
- Financial Technology
- Information Technology
- Life Sciences & Medical Technology
- Microelectronics, Nanotechnology & Sensors
- Modeling, Simulation, & Training
- Optics and Photonics
- Energy & Environmental Science

USF's Strategic Areas of Focus

- Analytics & Data Science
- Biology by Design
- Design, Arts & Performance
- Global & National Security
- Healthy, Society, and Biomedical Science
- Social Justice & Human Rights
- Sustainability, Environmental & Oceanographic Sciences

This is a pilot program and funding is not committed beyond the initial two rounds. We will identify ways to refine and improve our support of Early-Stage Innovations moving forward.

Reporting Requirements:

To capture impact and ensure that funds are spent in full towards the intended purpose, awardees are required to submit the following information within 30 days of the project period end date.

- Reconciliation of funds expended
- Summary of work completed
- Future workplan based on these accomplishments

Annual surveys of follow-on progress must be completed up to five years beyond the project period. Awardees will be required to report major milestones associated with this technology to program staff – including external investments, company formation, licensing opportunities, etc..
