



***The Corridor's Matching Grants Research Program  
- University of South Florida -  
Program Guidelines***

[The Florida High Tech Corridor's](#) Matching Grants Research Program is a state-funded initiative that fosters the development of commercially applicable emerging technologies by encouraging applied research between the region's high tech industry partners and the three Corridor universities: University of South Florida, University of Florida, and University of Central Florida.

**Program Contact:**

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**Overview:**

The Matching Grant Research Program at the University of South Florida can provide up to \$150,000 in matching funds for applied research projects between local industry partners and USF researchers, including [Small Business Innovation Research \(SBIR\) / Small Business Technology Transfer \(STTR\)](#) projects. These funds match the industry partner's investment in the project and are used to expand the project's scope of work and allow our students to participate in cutting-edge, applied research.

***Program staff will help to pair interested companies with appropriate USF researchers to take advantage of this program. Please contact program staff to discuss the project and potential collaboration.***

**Eligibility:**

To be eligible, projects must:

- Involve a local industry partner and a USF Principal Investigator (PI)
- Focus on applied research that supports the development and commercialization of new technologies
- Include support for at least one USF student researcher for the duration of the project

The industry partner must have a significant presence in the 23-county Corridor region:

- Alachua, Brevard, Citrus, De Soto, Flagler, Hardee, Hernando, Highlands, Hillsborough, Lake, Levy, Manatee, Marion, Orange, Osceola, Pasco, Pinellas, Polk, Putnam, Sarasota, Seminole, Sumter, Volusia

**Priorities:**

With USF's [Preeminence designation](#) and ongoing commitment to [industry collaboration](#), the Matching Grants Research Program at USF has become increasingly competitive in recent years. The program aims to support projects that:

- Generate new intellectual property or technology
- Develop and commercialize existing USF technology
- Leverage federal funding through the SBIR/STTR or other programs
- Invest in [USF's strategic research areas](#) and the [Corridor's key industries](#)
- Engage new participants in the program (industry or faculty)
- Encourage research across colleges and/or across Corridor Universities

- Provide a tangible impact for the industry partner in terms of revenue, sales, workforce expansion, etc.
- Provide high-level, hands-on research experiences for our students and fellows

By focusing on the these priorities, the program supports high-impact research benefiting local industry, the university, and our region.

**Application Process:**

***There is no annual deadline to apply. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis.***

Before beginning the application, the project team should contact program staff to discuss the proposal and review the required documents and application process.

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A complete application consists of the following documents:

1. **Application Cover Sheet:** Provides basic project details
2. **Scope of Work:** Summarizes the project, student participation, and economic impact
3. **Budget:** Details industry cash, matching funds, and in-kind support
4. **Industry Commitment Letter:** Confirms the industry partner’s intention to provide cash and in-kind support for the project

Program staff will provide electronic application templates. The application documents should be completed collaboratively by the PI and industry partner. Program staff is available to review document drafts and provide feedback throughout the application process.

Corridor applications will be reviewed **prior** to the execution of the sponsored research agreement. The sponsored research agreement is the contract between the industry partner and University outlining the payment and legal terms of the research project. If Corridor funds are awarded, a sponsored research agreement must be executed within three months of the Corridor’s award letter in order to ensure the availability of Corridor funds. The research agreement must align with USF’s standard terms (IP, publication, etc.).

**Please Note:** Funding is provided for one year. Past awards do not guarantee future funding. A new application is required for each new project or additional funding request. In determining future awards, the review team will consider the successful completion and stewardship of past projects.

**Budget:**

Applicants may request \$1 in matching funds for every \$2 provided by the industry partner (\$1 cash/\$1 in-kind).

Industry Partner		Corridor
Cash	In-Kind*	Matching Funds
\$1	\$1	\$1

Using the provided budget form, applicants will allocate the industry cash, in-kind support, and requested matching funds by budget item (salary, supplies, equipment, etc.). Any changes or adjustments to the approved budget should be reviewed with program staff in advance.

\*Industry partners are required to provide quantifiable in-kind support such as staff time, travel, the use of supplies, equipment and/or space. The value and relevance of in-kind support must be reasonable and justified.

**Required & Eligible Expenses:**

**Required Student Support:**

- Matching funds **must** be allocated to support at least one USF student for the duration of the project in the form of tuition and/or salary.

**Other Eligible Expenses:**

- Principal Investigator and Co-PI Salaries (Including a fringe of 26%)
- Staff Salaries (Including a fringe rate of 35%)
- Postdoctoral Salaries
- Laboratory Supplies
- Publication Costs
- Patent Costs
  - Patent costs for USF technologies associated with the project are an eligible expense according to the table below, as recommended by the USF Technology Transfer Office.

Corridor Match Request Range	Maximum Patent Costs Allowed
Up to \$39,999	20% of the match request
\$40,000-49,999	25% of the match request
\$50,000-59,999	40% of the match request
\$60,000-100,000	50% of the match request
Above \$100,000	Not to exceed \$50,000

**Budget Notes:**

- Any equipment costs must be covered by the industry cash, not Corridor funds.
- Corridor funds cannot be used for entertainment or food.
- Other expenses may be allowable with proper justification. Please discuss these proposed expenses with program staff before submitting an application.

**Review & Award Process:**

Once the application is complete, it will be reviewed by program leadership and a review committee of business, economic development, science, and technology professionals from across Tampa Bay and the Corridor.

The application will be evaluated against the program priorities. Program staff may request changes to the application based on feedback from the review committee. Funds are awarded based on the priorities outlined above. Full funding is not guaranteed.

Following review, a formal award notice will be sent to the industry partner and PI. If Corridor funds are awarded, a sponsored research agreement must be executed within three months of the Corridor award letter in order to

ensure the availability of Corridor funds. The research agreement must align with USF's standard terms (IP, publication, etc.).

**Payment Process:**

Matching funds are provided to the project's PI. ***The industry partner does not receive any direct funding.*** Matching funds are transferred upon confirmed receipt of the industry partner's cash payment. Program staff will closely monitor the industry partner's payments to ensure timely transfers. Please alert program staff of any known funding interruptions, delays or other deviations from the standard payment process.

***Please Note:*** If the industry partner does not provide the full investment as outlined in the budget, the Corridor matching grant will be reduced accordingly. The Corridor matching grant will not exceed the industry's cash investment in the project.

**Reporting Requirements:**

The Corridor final report consists of a ***budget reconciliation*** and a ***qualitative report***. Final reports are due within one month of the project close. If a project is extended, interim reports are due at the time of the extension.

**Budget Reconciliation:** Accounts for how industry and Corridor funds were spent compared to the approved budget. Any significant deviations will require justification. [Budget Reconciliation Template](#)

**Qualitative Report:** Captures information on the successes of the project and impact of Corridor funding. This document should include input from the industry sponsor to capture the holistic benefits of the project. [Qualitative Report Template](#)

Corridor representatives will also survey industry partners and PIs following the project close (up to seven years) to track the downstream impact of the Matching Grants Research Program. The information collected helps to demonstrate the program's positive economic impact and ensure the continuation of state funding. We appreciate your cooperation.

***Future awards will be contingent upon the receipt and approval of final reports for previous projects.***