

TechStart Program

Contact: Linda Saffer
Program Manager, University
Programs
410-715-4175
lsaffer@marylandtedco.org

Purpose:

Experience has shown that licensing technology to university or federal lab spin-out companies for commercialization has significant local economic impact. TEDCO has worked closely with these technology licensing offices to identify barriers to new business formation. Early barriers that have been identified include a lack of an analysis of a potential market and little or no funds to assess the strength of their intellectual property. The TechStart Program is designed to fill at least one of these two gaps to increase the number of university and federal lab start-ups annually.

Program Proposals:

The TechStart Program will fund university-based or federal lab-based teams to determine whether specific technologies would have the potential to be commercialized through a startup company. A university or entrepreneur submits a proposal on a disclosed technology to TEDCO for evaluating the opportunity. An award would defray costs of evaluating the feasibility of the startup opportunity. Proposals are capped at \$15,000.

Eligible Applicants:

All universities or entrepreneurs working with federal laboratories in the State are eligible for TechStart funding. To be eligible, a university or entrepreneur is required to assemble a team consisting, at a minimum, of the following:

- An experienced entrepreneur who can provide business guidance for the team as they pursue the due diligence process,
- An inventor or inventor team willing to assist in evaluating the feasibility of a startup, if one is formed; and
- A technology transfer manager.

TechStart cannot be used to analyze a technology for a student project.

This team is responsible for developing an initial evaluation of the potential for a startup and submitting a proposal to the TechStart Program. In the case of universities the proposals are submitted online at: www.TEDCOFunds.org. In the case of the federal lab the proposals should be e-mailed to Linda Saffer, lsaffer@marylandtedco.org.

Eligible Expenses:

Eligible expenses that could be covered by the Program would include but are not limited to:

- in-depth evaluation of the potential market;
- IP competitive analysis;
- development of an initial business strategy for a startup company;
- other analytic tasks critical to determining the viability of a startup company; and
- identifying qualified officers who could help manage the new company.

Non Eligible Expenses:

- travel and lodging expenses,
- copy and art expenses for business plan, and
- fund raising expenses.

Funding of the entrepreneur team member is allowable, but can not exceed 50% of the total cost. Results of the TechStart Project evaluation will be available to all team members, including TEDCO.

An option for the technology must be negotiated before the signing of the TechStart Agreement.