



Missouri Technology Corporation

Missouri Building Entrepreneurial Capacity (MOBEC) Operations Support Grant Program Proposal Guidelines

Fiscal Year 2024

Key Dates:

Application Period Open – Wednesday, September 20, 2023

Final Submission Deadline – Wednesday, November 1, 2023

Presentation to Investment Committee – Early January, 2024

Approval by MTC Board of Directors – Late January, 2024

1. Introduction and General Information

1.1. About the Missouri Technology Corporation

The Missouri Technology Corporation ("MTC") is a public-private partnership created by the Missouri General Assembly to promote entrepreneurship and foster the growth of new and emerging high-tech companies. MTC focuses on 21st Century industries that build on Missouri's rich history in agriculture and technology. The MTC is governed by a 15-member board of directors, which is appointed by Missouri's Governor, Speaker of the Missouri House, and President Pro Tem of the Missouri Senate. The President of the University of Missouri System and the Director of the Department of Economic Development are *ex officio* members of the board.

1.2. Submission of Proposals

Proposals must be submitted no later than **11:59 p.m. CDT on Wednesday, November 1, 2023**, to be considered. Late proposals will not be accepted. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that MTC receives all required materials by the deadline. Final Grant Proposals should be submitted by completing the application in Google Forms (linked below) and submitting all required supporting documents. Grant Applications that did not submit all required supporting documents may not be considered for funding at MTC's discretion.

[Direct Link to Online Application](#)

2. Program Description

2.1. Program Overview

In February of 2022, MTC released a report from TEconomy Partners, LLC ("TEconomy") entitled Catalyzing Innovation: Strategies for Missouri to Drive Innovation and Entrepreneurship (the "[Catalyzing Innovation Report](#)"). The report was informed by a robust, six-month planning process with guidance from a 16-member, statewide steering committee and from over 500 individuals across the state.

Based on a data-driven analysis of the insights collected, TEconomy identified five bold and compelling strategies and 16 action items to catalyze the state's innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystems to drive economic development over the next decade.

These strategies are:

- **Strategy One: Fund** – Deploy greater levels of investment capital to help meet the demands of the growing entrepreneurial base.

- **Strategy Two: Grow and Scale** – Increase access to quality entrepreneurial support services throughout Missouri to ensure companies are able to grow and scale.
- **Strategy Three: Launch and Cultivate** – Take advantage of Missouri's research strengths by converting the intellectual assets into market opportunities.
- **Strategy Four: Inspire** – Encourage more Missourians to participate in innovation and entrepreneurship.
- **Strategy Five: Connect** – Overcome physical and cultural barriers to better connect Missouri's communities with each other and with the world.

In September 2022, MTC released an Implementation Plan (the “Implementation Plan”) that outlines how MTC will either lead or support in the implementation of the strategies and actions recommended by TEconomy. MTC’s implementation plan is informed by the resources currently available to the organization, its capacity, and the alignment of action items to its mission.

Through the Missouri Building Entrepreneurial Capacity grant program (MOBEC), MTC will be focused on funding organizations that not only create more home-grown, high-tech companies, but that are also aligned with the strategies and action items included in the Catalyzing Innovation Report.

MTC anticipates that MOBEC will continue to be a cornerstone of MTC’s investment strategy. Through the MOBEC grant program, MTC makes strategic investments that expand the support system for entrepreneurs that are commercializing new technologies or that enhance the capacity of Missouri to grow its innovation economy.

MTC offers three core grant programs; MOBEC, Regional Node, and Physical Infrastructure. Each of these programs is designed to enhance and foster the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Missouri. It is important for organizations to have a comprehensive understanding of all three grant programs prior to submitting an application. The [Regional Node Grant](#) program provides funding for regions to coalesce their assets in support of innovation and entrepreneurship through coordinated partnerships among entrepreneurial service organizations within the node. The [Physical Infrastructure Grant](#) program seeks to ensure entrepreneurs throughout the state have access to the physical infrastructure and resources required to launch and grow their businesses. With the launch of these two new programs, MTC advises each potential applicant to identify the grant program that most closely reflects the purpose of the applicant’s needs and position within the ecosystem. Applicants to the MOBEC grant program will not be considered if the purpose of the funding is more appropriately reflected in the Regional Node Grant program or the Physical Infrastructure Grant program.

2.2. Goals and Objectives

In alignment with the Catalyzing Innovation Report and Implementation Plan, the MOBEC grant program seeks to achieve the following goals in Missouri:

- Enhance the capacity of non-profit organizations that support entrepreneurs who are:
 - commercializing new technologies around which high-growth companies can be created; and
 - creating sustainable, high-paying, private sector jobs based on the establishment or growth of new and emerging companies.

2.3. Eligibility & Applicant Requirements

Eligible Applicants

- Public or private **non-profit** Missouri research institutions, including institutions of higher education; and
- **Non-profit** entrepreneurial support or related organizations.

Eligible Proposal Types

Applicants may submit proposals that align with the newly released Catalyzing Innovation Report, which includes the following eligible proposal types:

- Access to Capital
- Entrepreneurial Mentoring/Networking
- Entrepreneurial Training/Education
- Commercialization Assistance

Applicant Organizations awarded grant funding will be required to submit the following corporate governance documents prior to the execution of the grant agreement (as applicable):

- A state of Missouri certificate of good standing for the Applicant Organization obtained within 30 days of the grant agreement (applicable for all non-statutorily created Applicant Organizations).
- A certificate of authority for the Applicant Organization to conduct business in the State of Missouri obtained within 30 days of execution of the grant agreement (applicable for non-Missouri corporate entities)
- A current Missouri tax clearance obtained within 30 days of execution of the grant agreement (applicable for all entities, including tax-exempt organizations).

2.4. Grant Type

Applicants will be asked to indicate the type of grant proposal they are submitting which should be characterized as either Operations Support or Project Support. This set of guidelines addresses the specifics of Operations Support grants. You can find the Project Support guidelines at www.missouritechnology.com.

Operations Support funding can be used to support the operations required to fulfill the mission of the applicant organization. Funding can be used to support the day-to-day operations of the organization, as well as multiple projects or programs.

Operations Support funding cannot be used to fund projects or programs actively receiving MOBEC Project Support funding.

2.5. Term of the Program

Grant proposals can be requested with respect to one-, two-, or three-year implementation plans. The grant period commences on April 1, 2024. Accordingly, a one-year grant will terminate on March 31, 2025. A two-year grant will terminate on March 31, 2026. A three-year grant will terminate on March 31, 2027. All grant applications must explicitly include the timing for implementation of the grant proposal.

Grant activities must be completed by the first, second, or third anniversary, as applicable, of the grant award.

Applicant Organizations may submit multiple grant proposals under the following conditions:

- If one proposal is an Operations Support grant proposal, there can be no duplication in requested funding for general operational support and the specific project or program that is the subject of the Project Support proposal.
- An organization is only eligible to submit one Operations Support grant proposal per application cycle.

2.6. Budget Restrictions

The request for financial support should be specifically and narrowly tailored to the plan outlined in the application submitted to MTC and reflect the actual funding needs of the organization. **MTC will not award more than \$150,000 for any grant with a one-year implementation plan, more than \$325,000 for any grant with a two-year implementation plan, and more than \$500,000 for any grant.**

MTC expects that the applicant's budget will have an approximately equal amount of funding requested for each year of the proposed plan. MTC expects that no more than 60% of the total budget is to be spent in either year of a two-year grant, and no more than 40% of the total budget is to be spent in any year of a three-year grant, unless a strong justification for an uneven distribution of funds is clearly identified in the Program Budget of the Grant Proposal narrative.

Applicants must have an actual, conditional, or anticipated third-party cost-sharing commitment to match the requested MTC Grant funding. Consideration will be given to applications that are proposing to satisfy a portion of the cost-sharing requirement

through a contribution of in-kind cost-support on a limited basis, but in-kind matching funds generally will be evaluated less favorably.

Any proposed budget requesting reimbursement for indirect costs must limit the indirect cost recovery allocation to no more than 5% of the total amount of funding requested. It is MTC's preference that indirect costs or overhead not be reimbursed from grant funds. If indirect costs are taken MTC requests that the funding is not used to support the general activities of the applicant organization and is instead used to fund activities directly related to the mission of MTC and the awarded grant proposal.

3. Proposal Submission Requirements

3.1. General Proposal Requirements

- (i) Each respondent must complete the online Grant Application and submit a digital copy (PDF) of the Grant Proposal and the required supporting documents by the submission deadline. Hard copy submissions or submissions received after the submission deadline will not be considered. A link to the Grant Application can be found at www.missouritechnology.com.
- (ii) All Grant Proposals must include the subject matter outlined below in Section 3.2.
- (iii) Any information included in the proposal that a respondent wishes to request to be treated as confidential during the evaluation process should be clearly marked as confidential. All proposals submitted will become public records once the awarding process is completed.

3.2. Proposal Form and Content

3.2.1. Cover Letter

The cover letter should include the name and contact information for the Applicant Organization, the amount of funding being requested, a brief summary of the organization, goals, and projected economic development impact. The cover letter may not exceed one page in length and should be included in the Grant Proposal and is not included in the 15-page Grant Proposal limit.

3.2.2. Grant Proposal

Each proposal should include sections that clearly and concisely address the topics below and should not exceed fifteen (15) pages in length. Please clearly label each section with the title in parentheses.

- (i) A brief summary or overview of the entire grant proposal (Abstract).
- (ii) An overview of the Applicant Organization's entrepreneurial programs and efforts, including a summary of the organization's programs' historical successes and their economic development impact (Applicant Organization).
- (iii) A clear identification of the problem/issue being addressed with the grant proposal and the relevant background information that would help the reviewer understand the benefit of addressing the problem/issue identified (Problem Statement).
- (iv) An explanation of how the organization with the support of MTC funds will align with the Catalyzing Innovation Report and MOBEC Goals and Objectives (Goals and Objectives).
- (v) A description explaining how the organization will strengthen partnerships across service providers and institutions that operate within an entrepreneurial ecosystem (Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Synergies).
- (vi) Enumerate and describe the specific milestones that the organization seeks to achieve using the MTC and matching funds. Vague or generalized milestones are not acceptable responses (Critical Milestones).
- (vii) A description of the experience of the Applicant Organization's leadership team (Applicant Experience).
- (viii) A brief narrative that describes the specific use of funds and the source and status of matching funds outlined in the Budget Form (Program Budget).
- (ix) A description of the Applicant Organization's funding to sustain the operations after the MTC and matching funds are exhausted (Future Finance Strategy).

3.2.3. Program Budget

Complete a proposed budget using the MOBEC Budget Form that is available on the MTC website at www.missouritechnology.com. The Budget Form should include the source and status of all matching funds and provide an itemized summary/overview of the planned expenses for each budget category. Note, that a brief narrative describing the specific use of funds and the source and status of the matching funds included on the Budget Form must be included in the Grant Proposal (Section 3.2.2.viii).

MTC will not award more than \$150,000 for any grant with a one-year implementation plan, more than \$325,000 for any grant with a two-year implementation plan, and more than \$500,000 for any grant.

The Program Budget Form should be included in the grant proposal and is not included in the 15-page proposal limit.

A copy of the Program Budget Form should be included as Appendix 1 to the grant proposal.

Grant proposals must use the MOBEC Budget Form provided. Applicants should not create a budget form or change the page settings in the Budget Form when creating a PDF.

3.2.4. Summary of Projected Economic Impact

Summarize the projected economic impact for the organization using the MOBEC Summary of Projected Economic Impact Form that is available on the MTC website at www.missouritechnology.com. The form requires a detailed description of the assumptions and methodology used to project the economic impact.

The Summary of Projected Economic Impact Form should be included in the Grant Proposal and is not included in the 15-page proposal limit.

A copy of the Summary of Projected Economic Impact should be included as Appendix 2 to the grant proposal.

Grant proposals must use the MOBEC Summary of Projected Economic Impact Form provided.

3.2.5. Baseline Annual Reporting

The Baseline Annual Reporting Form is available on the MTC website at www.missouritechnology.com.

The Baseline Annual Reporting Form should be included in the Grant Proposal and is not included in the 15-page proposal limit.

A copy of the Baseline Annual Reporting Form should be included as Appendix 3 to the grant proposal.

3.2.6. Affirmation and Signature Page

The MOBEC Grant Affirmation and Signature Page Form is available on the MTC website at www.missouritechnology.com.

The Grant Affirmation and Signature Page should be included in the Grant Proposal and is not included in the 15-page proposal limit.

A copy of the Grant Affirmation and Signature Page should be included as Appendix 4 to the grant proposal.

3.2.7. Required Supporting Documents

Governance and Organization Supporting Documents

- Attach a copy of the current Business/Operating/Strategic Plan for Applicant Organization. This supporting document is limited to 10 pages.

- Attach copies of the following for the Applicant Organization:
 - Articles of incorporation
 - Organizational chart *
 - List of officers, directors, and management team *
 - List of advisory board members *
 - List of organizations of any corporate type that own in whole or in part the Applicant Organization *
 - List of organizations of any corporate type that the Applicant Organization owns in whole or in part *

* Documents may be submitted as a single file or up to five (5) individual files.

Financial Related Supporting Documents

- Attach financial statements for the three most recently completed fiscal years of the Applicant Organization.
- Attach the most recent balance statement and profit & loss statement at the time this application is submitted.
- Attach pro forma financial projections for the Applicant Organization for at least a three (3) year period.

Note, Applicant Organizations that are applying as a private or public university, or as part of a larger organization, are required to submit the requested financial documents, including pro forma, for the program seeking funding. Without the financials for the program seeking financial support, the grant proposal cannot achieve a maximum score in the Finance Plan and Sustainability scoring categories.

Example 1. An Innovation Center or an entrepreneur support organization directly associated with a university should submit the requested financial documents for the Innovation Center or entrepreneurial support organization and not for the university.

Example 2. An entrepreneurial support organization that is part of a larger national entrepreneurial support organization should submit the requested financial documents for the programs in Missouri and not for the national organization.

3.2.8. Additional Supporting Documents

The Applicant is encouraged to include additional supporting documents, including but not limited to letters of support for collaborators or commitment letters from the source of any matching funds.

The documents described in Sections 3.2.1 through 3.2.6 should be combined into a single file and uploaded as a PDF. Supporting Documents described in Sections 3.2.7 and 3.2.8 should be uploaded as individual files - preferably in PDF format and with easily identifiable file names.

All files submitted should be named using the following naming convention - OrgName_documenttitle i.e., MTC_articlesofincorporation.

4. Evaluation Criteria

Grant Proposals submitted by eligible Applicant Organizations will be evaluated based upon the five criteria outlined below:

- **Alignment with Goals and Objectives:** Grant proposals should include a clear articulation of the organization's alignment with at least one of the five strategies included in the Catalyzing Innovation Report, as well as the MOBEC Goals and Objectives. The assigned score will reflect the strength of the alignment to the strategies in the Catalyzing Innovation Report, specifically the strategies prioritized in the Implementation Plan, as well as the feasibility of achieving MOBEC Goals and Objectives.
- **Applicant Grant Proposal:** Grant proposals will be assessed on the relative strength of the Applicant Organization's proposal, including overarching capacity-building goals, structural improvement to an entrepreneurial ecosystem, and articulation of critical milestones. The assigned score will reflect the proposal's feasibility and clarity, including the underlying logical and factual support.
- **Applicant Experience:** Grant proposals will be assessed on the relative strength of the Applicant Organization's experience and prior success, including the management team, advisors, collaborators, and mentors committed to the organization. The assigned score will reflect the strength of the team's experience and ability to achieve the outcomes described in the grant proposal.

- **Economic Impact:** Grant proposals will be assessed on the relative strength of the Applicant Organization's proposed economic impact in Missouri, including developing high-growth potential, traded sector, venture-backed companies, increasing capital investment, strengthening one or more of MTC's targeted high-tech clusters and creating high-paying private-sector jobs. The assigned score will reflect the potential for economic impact relative to the region in which it is located, the likelihood of the Applicant Organization achieving the projected economic impact within the context of the submitted proposal, and the feasibility of the underlying methodology used to project the economic impact.
- **Finance Plan:** Grant proposals will be assessed on the relative strength of the Applicant Organization's finance plan. The assigned score will reflect the amount of the matching funds presented relative to the MTC funds requested, the strength of matching funds (secured, committed, cash vs. in kind), use of funds, appropriateness of the budget relative to the milestone activities outlined in the proposal and the feasibility of the finance plan.
- **Sustainability:** Grant proposals will be assessed by the relative strength of the Applicant Organization's plan to sustain their mission and goals. The assigned score will reflect the viability of the plans to finance the organization in the future or to otherwise sustain the structural entrepreneurial ecosystem change when MTC funds have been exhausted, including the underlying logical and factual support for such sustainability plan.

5. Additional Notes

In order to submit an online application, you will need to have a Google account. Anyone with a Gmail email address has a Google account. However, you do not need a Gmail email address to have a Google account. If you do not have a Google account, you can create one with your existing non-Gmail email address.

Questions related to the MOBEC Grant Program, including eligibility or online application issues, should be directed to Jakob Pallesen (Jakob.Pallesen@missouritechnology.com).

Awards authorized by MTC are contingent upon the Applicant entering into a binding contractual agreement with MTC. The binding contract will require that the MTC be given appropriate oversight of its award.