



Missouri Technology Corporation

Physical Infrastructure Grant Program Guidelines

2024

Key Dates:

Application Period Open – Wednesday, March 6, 2024

Final Submission Deadline – Tuesday, April 16, 2024

Presentation to Investment Committee – Late June 2024

Award Notifications – Early August 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. The MTC is governed by a 15-member board of directors 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 Tuesday, April 16, 2024** 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 Narratives should be submitted by completing the application in Google Forms (direct link below) and submitting all required supporting documents. Submissions that do not include all aspects of the proposal requirements as outlined in Section 3 may not be considered for funding at MTC's discretion.

[Direct Link to the online application](#)

2. Program Description

2.1. Background

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 input from over 500 individuals across the state.

Based on a data-driven analysis of the insights collected, TEconomy identified the following five strategies to catalyze the state's innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystems to drive economic development over the next decade:

- **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.

Since the release of the Catalyzing Innovation report, MTC has been focused on the development of new competitive grant programs designed to enhance entrepreneurial capacity throughout the state. Specifically, MTC is establishing grant programs designed to support (a) entrepreneurs' access to affordable physical workspaces across the state, (b) the development of regional nodes across the state to allow entrepreneurs direct access to resources in their regions, and (c) the continued growth of programs and organizations designed to provide resources critical to the success of the state's entrepreneurs.

In order to help entrepreneurs access affordable physical workspaces, MTC initiated a pilot Physical Infrastructure Grant Program in the Spring of 2023. Following the success of the pilot program, MTC is now launching a full Physical Infrastructure Grant Program.

2.2. Goals and Objectives

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. It was developed following recommendations from the Catalyzing Innovation Report and is designed to replace and expand the MTC's previous programmatic support of physical infrastructures in the state in a competitive manner. More specifically, the objective of the Physical Infrastructure Grant Program is to provide state funding to support the following physical infrastructure needs within the state:

- flexible and below-market-rate commercial office space, including co-working spaces, private offices, meeting rooms, and access to high-speed internet, in regions where entrepreneurs lack access to these resources;
- specialized or sector-specific services, facilities, and other infrastructure, including but not limited to wet lab space or greenhouses to be used by the state's emerging biotech and agtech companies, that would otherwise be unavailable in an area/region; and
- infrastructure that is broadly recognized as a center for entrepreneurship for the community/region, helping elevate the role of innovation and entrepreneurship in the economy.

The Physical Infrastructure Grant Program is not intended to provide direct financial support for the Applicant Organization's programmatic activities. Applicant Organizations interested in seeking funding to support programmatic activities designed to catalyze innovation and entrepreneurship are encouraged to submit proposals for MTC's [MOBEC Grant Program](#).

2.3. Eligibility

Eligible Applicants

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

All Applicant Organizations must either own or actively manage the physical infrastructure that is the subject of the Physical Infrastructure Grant Program. If the Applicant Organization does not directly (i.e., not through an affiliate) own the physical infrastructure, the Applicant Organization must identify the legal owner and the relationship, if any, of the legal owner to the Applicant Organization.

Eligible Proposal Types

Applicant Organizations should submit proposals that align with the Catalyzing Innovation Report, which includes funding for the following eligible expenditures:

- operating expenses, including but not limited to rent and utilities, professional services, and management and administrative salaries that are directly related to the operation of the physical infrastructure (i.e. not related to programmatic expenses);
- renovation of space, tenant improvements, or enhanced amenities (high-speed internet, upgrading shared-use technologies, etc.); and
- the purchase or repair of shared-use equipment or resources.

Applicant Organizations should be currently operating a physical infrastructure for entrepreneurs. In limited cases where there is no access to physical infrastructure for entrepreneurs, MTC would consider funding new physical infrastructure projects.

Applicant Organizations that actively manage more than one location that provides physical infrastructure aligned with the Goals and Objectives set forth above may submit separate applications for each location. Applicant Organizations that manage a single location are only eligible to submit one application for funding consideration.

2.4. Term of the Program

Grant proposals can be requested with respect to one-, two-, or three-year operational plans. The grant period commences on September 1, 2024. Accordingly, a one-year grant will terminate on August 31, 2025. A two-year grant will terminate on August 31, 2026. A three-year grant will terminate on August 31, 2027.

Applications must explicitly include the timing for the expenditure of the grant funds. However, MTC will consider, on a case-by-case basis, no-cost extensions requested by Applicant Organizations.

2.5. Budget Restrictions

The request for financial support should closely align with the plan outlined in the application submitted to MTC and should accurately represent the organization's specific funding requirements. **Physical Infrastructure Grant funding will be limited to the lesser of (a) \$200,000 or (b) 25% of the Applicant Organization's average annual operating expenses (as calculated below) per year of funding requested.**

Average operational expenses are calculated as the mean of the operating expenses from the two most recent calendar years (CY) and the projected operating expenses for the funding year.

Subsequently, funding for a 1-year grant is limited to the lesser of a) \$200,000 or (b) 25% of the mean of the Applicant Organization's actual annual operation expenses for CY22 and CY23 and projections for CY24.

Subsequently, funding for a 2-year grant is limited to the lesser of (a) \$400,000 or (b) 25% of the mean of the Applicant Organization's actual annual operation expenses for CY22 and CY23 and projections for CY24 plus 25% of the mean of the Applicant Organization's actual annual operation expenses for CY23 and projections for CY24 and CY25.

Subsequently, funding for a 3-year grant is limited to the lesser of (a) \$600,000 or (b) 25% of the mean of the Applicant Organization's actual annual operation expenses for CY22 and CY23 and projections for CY24, plus 25% of the mean of the Applicant Organization's actual annual operation expenses for CY23 and projections for CY24 and CY25, plus 25% of the Applicant Organization's mean projections for annual operation expenses for CY24, CY25, and CY26.

Operating expenses should be limited to the operating expenses of the physical infrastructure seeking funding and not the entire organization that manages the physical infrastructure. Specifically, any programmatic expenses and salaries for employees or

contractors unrelated to the operation of the physical infrastructure should be omitted from the operating expenses that are being presented.

Applicant Organizations must demonstrate an actual, conditional, or anticipated third-party cost-sharing commitment to match the requested MTC grant funding that equals at least the amount requested in the application. Applications may propose to satisfy a portion of the cost-sharing requirement through in-kind cost-support, but in-kind matching funds generally will be evaluated less favorably.

Proposed budget requests for indirect cost reimbursement must limit the indirect cost recovery allocation to no more than 5% of the total amount of funding requested. MTC intends to prioritize applications that utilize grant funding for permissible direct expenditures without reimbursement for indirect costs. No indirect costs to support the general activities of the Applicant Organization may be reimbursed with grant funds.

3. Proposal Submission Requirements

3.1. General Proposal Requirements

- (i) Each respondent must complete the Grant Application (Google Form) 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 [MTC's website](#).
- (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 and the number of years of operating support 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, including a summary of the Applicant Organization's leadership team, historical successes, and historical economic development impact (Applicant Organization).
- (iii) An overview of the Applicant Organization's responsibilities as the owner or operator of the physical infrastructure (Role).
- (iv) An overview of the physical infrastructure the funding will support, including historic and current client companies (Physical Infrastructure).
- (v) A clear identification of the entrepreneurial infrastructure needs of the region/sector (Problem Statement).
- (vi) An overview of how the funding, if awarded, will allow the physical infrastructure to address the problem statement (Solution).
- (vii) An explanation of how the Applicant Organization and physical infrastructure aligns with the Goals and Objectives of the Physical Infrastructure Grant Program as well as alignment with the recommendations included in the Catalyzing Innovation Report (Goals & Objectives).
- (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 any milestones that the Applicant Organization proposes applicable to the MTC and matching funding (Critical Milestones).
- (x) A description of the Applicant Organization's plan 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 Budget Form that is available on the [MTC website](#). 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 the 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).

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

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

Grant proposals must utilize the designated Budget Form. Applicant Organizations are advised against altering the Budget Form or adjusting page settings when converting it to a PDF.

3.2.4. Summary of Projected Economic Impact

Summarize the projected economic impact for the physical infrastructure to be funded using the Summary of Projected Economic Impact Form that is available on the [MTC website](#). 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 Form is included in Appendix 2.

Grant proposals **must** use the Summary of Projected Economic Impact Form provided, do not create your own form.

3.2.5. Affirmation and Signature Page

The 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 Affirmation and Signature Page should be included as Appendix 3 to the grant proposal.

3.2.6. 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 physical infrastructure seeking funding. Without the financials for the physical infrastructure seeking financial support, the grant proposal cannot achieve a maximum score in the Finance Plan and Sustainability scoring categories.

Example 1. A physical infrastructure directly associated with a university should submit the requested financial documents for the physical infrastructure and not for the university.

Example 2. A physical infrastructure that is part of an entrepreneurial support organization should submit the requested financial documents for the physical infrastructure and not for the Applicant Organization.

3.2.7. Additional Supporting Documents

The Applicant Organization 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 3.2.5 should be combined into a single file and uploaded as a PDF. Supporting Documents described in Sections 3.2.6 and 3.2.7 should be uploaded as individual files - preferably in PDF format.

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 on the five criteria outlined below:

- **Alignment with Goals and Objectives:** Grant proposals should include a clear articulation of the application's alignment with the Physical Infrastructure Grant Program goals and objectives and at least one of the five strategies included in the Catalyzing Innovation Report. The assigned score will reflect the strength of the alignment to the Physical Infrastructure Grant Program goals and objectives, as well as the Catalyzing Innovation Report, specifically the strategies prioritized in the Implementation Plan.
- **Grant Proposal:** Grant proposals will be assessed on the relative strength of the proposal, including support for physical infrastructure that provides specialized services, facilities, or other infrastructure that would otherwise be unavailable in an area. The assigned score will reflect the proposal's feasibility and clarity, including the underlying logical and factual support.
- **Applicant Organization Experience and Role:** Grant proposals will be assessed based on the Applicant Organization's experience, historic success/achievements, and role in managing the Physical Infrastructure. The strength of the management team, advisors, and collaborators committed to the organization's success will be taken into account when assigning a score. The assigned score will reflect the Applicant Organization's active role in operating the physical infrastructure and its ability to achieve the proposed outcomes.
- **Economic Impact:** Grant proposals will be assessed on the relative strength of the physical infrastructure's projected economic impact in Missouri, including the development of high-growth potential, traded sector, and venture-backed companies, 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 an assessment of the rationale and 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 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 the mission and goals and how the physical infrastructure contributes to such mission and goals. The assigned score will reflect the viability of the plans to maintain the physical infrastructure in the future when MTC funds have been exhausted, including the underlying logical and factual support for the sustainability plan.

5. Reporting

If awarded funding through the Physical Infrastructure Grant Program, bi-annual reports will be required – a six-month report covering September 1 through February 28, due by March 31, and a six-month report covering March 1 through August 31, due by September 30. Forms providing structure for these reports will be provided once the grant is awarded.

Additionally, annual economic development reporting will be required once a year beginning in the summer of 2025 (FY25 Annual Reporting) and required for 5 years after the grant period ends.

6. 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 Physical Infrastructure grant program, including eligibility or online application issues, should be directed to Nate Marschalk (nate.marschalk@missouritechnology.com).

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