



## **Missouri Technology Corporation**

### **Investor Education Grant Program Guidelines**

#### **Calendar Year 2025**

**Key Dates:**

Application Period Open – Wednesday, July 31, 2024

Final Submission Deadline – Wednesday, September 04, 2024

Presentation to Investment Committee – Early October 2024

Award Notifications – Early November 2024

Grant Period Start Date – January 01, 2025

## 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, 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, September 04, 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 Applications must be submitted through the [MTC Grants Portal](#) using the designated application form, along with all necessary 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 MTC Grants Portal: <https://missouritechnology.grantplatform.com>

## 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.

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.

To support resources critical for the success of the state's entrepreneurs, MTC is launching the Investor Education Grant Program aimed at fostering early-stage investment through investor education initiatives. The Investor Education Grant Program seeks to award funds to organizations throughout Missouri to support the implementation of investor education programs.

## **2.2. Goals and Objectives**

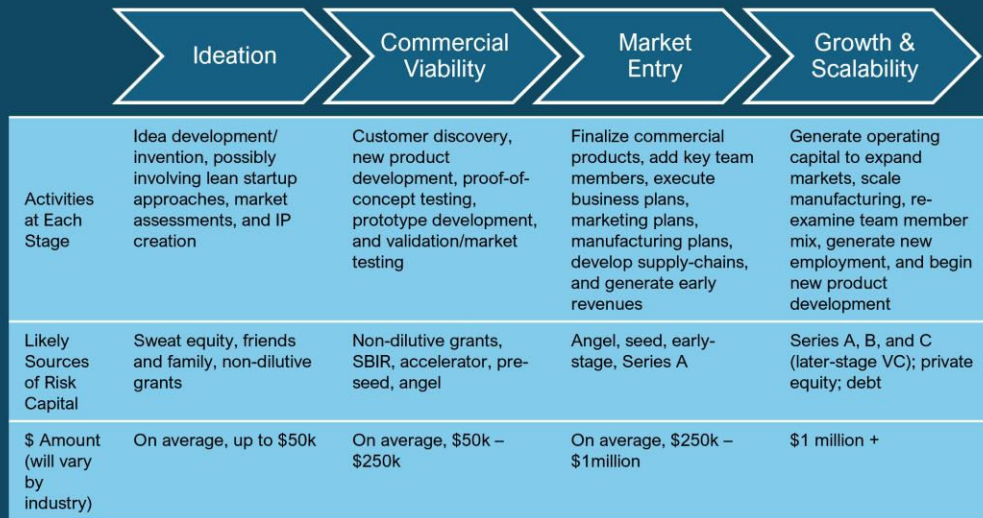
The Investor Education Grant Program is intended to increase the number of active early-stage investors in Missouri by providing grant-based financial support to facilitate angel investor-specific education and training programs. Through such educational resources and training programs, the MTC seeks to make the asset class more accessible and approachable for new early-stage risk capital investors. This initiative will empower a broader range of individuals to participate in early-stage investing, thereby increasing the amount of risk capital available for investment in the venture state across the state.

While certain regions have more developed infrastructure for venture investing, the program intends to address challenges individual regions face in the deployment of risk capital through financing the development of programs that will enhance the knowledge, network connections and abilities of new angel investors.

Programs awarded funding through the grant program are specifically intended to address the educational needs of new early-stage investors across the three initial stages of the risk capital continuum: Ideation, Commercial Viability and Market Entry as illustrated below:

# The Risk Capital Continuum

While risk capital needs vary by industry, the following graphic illustrates the likely sources and average amounts of funding required at each stage of a company's development.



By supporting investor education programs efforts, the MTC hopes to activate individuals and capital resources appropriate for venture investing, increasing the number and activity of the state's Angel Investors high-growth startups.

### 2.3. Intended Use of Funds

Investor education program formats may include, but are not limited to, workshops, events, multi-session courses, investor accelerator programs, facilitated investor peer groups, each in a virtual, in-person, or hybrid format.

Programs primarily focused on coordinating investment events, such as pitch competitions, that are not in conjunction with investor education activities will not be considered for funding.

### 2.4. Eligibility & Applicant Requirements

The Investor Education Grant Program requires one entity to be designated as the primary applicant (referred to as the Applicant Organization). The Applicant Organization is also the fiscal agent for the grant. MTC will communicate directly with the Applicant Organization throughout the application process as well as the active grant and reporting periods. The Applicant Organization will enter into the grant agreement with MTC and receive the grant funding.

The Applicant Organization must either be:

- A public or private **non-profit** Missouri research institution, including institutions of higher education; and
- A **non-profit** entrepreneurial support or related organization.

Applicant Organizations are encouraged to collaborate with partner organizations for their submission to the Investor Education Grant program, though partnerships are not mandatory. For partnerships, partners should be classified as follows: the Applicant Organization (acting as the fiscal agent), Primary Partners (financial beneficiaries), and Affiliated Partners (non-financial beneficiaries). Applicant Organizations must clearly identify in both the Grant Application and the Grant Proposal Narrative any partner organizations that will be receiving a portion of the grant funding.

Primary Partners are required to be actively engaged in the proposed activities of the investor education program, rather than merely providing goods or purchased services, and submit letters of commitment. The Applicant Organization must complete a budget form section located on the 2025 Investors Education Budget form for each Primary Partner. Partners are not required to be non-profit organizations or public or private non-profit Missouri research institutions.

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

- A State of Missouri certificate of good standing for the Applicant Organization;
- A certificate of authority for the Applicant Organization to conduct business in the State of Missouri (applicable for non-Missouri corporate entities); and
- A current Missouri tax clearance certification.

Each of the certifications identified above must be dated within 30 days of the effective date of the grant agreement.

## **2.5. Term of the Program**

Grant proposals can be requested with respect to one- or two-year programmatic plans. The grant period commences on January 1, 2025. Accordingly, a one-year grant will terminate on December 31, 2025. A two-year grant will terminate on December 31, 2026.

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.

## **2.6. Budget Restrictions**

The request for financial support should be specifically and narrowly tailored to the plan outlined in the application and reflect the actual funding needs of the Applicant Organization to complete the project. **MTC will not award more than \$250,000 for any grant.**

Grant activity must not duplicate the efforts of any currently active MTC grants held by the Applicant Organization.

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 Applicant Organization must complete the online **Grant Application** which also includes uploading the **Grant Proposal File** (a digital PDF of the combined Cover Letter, Grant Proposal Narrative, Appendices, and Affirmation and Signature Page as indicated in Section 3.2), as well as **the required and any additional supporting documents** (as PDFs) 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](http://www.missouritechnology.com).
- (ii) All proposals must include the subject matter outlined below in Section 3.2.
- (iii) Any information included in the Grant Proposal File 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 overview of the project, goals, and a summary of the impact and associated outcomes of the grant. The cover letter may not exceed one page in length and should be included in the Grant Proposal File but is not included in the 15-page Grant Proposal Narrative limit.

### 3.2.2. Grant Proposal Narrative

Each Grant Proposal Narrative should include sections that clearly and concisely address the topics below and should not exceed fifteen (15) pages in length. *Topics should appear in the order below and each section should be clearly labelled with the corresponding title in bold below.*

- (i) **Abstract** - A short summary or overview of the entire Grant Proposal Narrative.
- (ii) **Applicant Organization** - An overview of the Applicant Organization's entrepreneurial programs and efforts, including a summary of the Applicant Organization's programs achievements and economic development impact.
- (iii) **Problem Statement** - A clear identification of the problem/issue being addressed by the proposal and the relevant background information that would help the reviewer understand the benefit of addressing the problem/issue identified.
- (iv) **Goals and Objectives Alignment** - An explanation of how the Applicant Organization's program will align with the Catalyzing Innovation Report and Investor Education Goals and Objectives. Specifically, this section should detail how the proposed efforts will improve the knowledge, network connections and ability of new angel investors to actively engage in making investments in technology-based, high-growth potential startups in Missouri and increase in the number of active angel investors in Missouri.
- (v) **Program Design and Implementation** - A comprehensive description of the proposed investor education program, detailing the specific steps and resources needed for execution including a plan to identify, market to, and attract new early-stage investors to the program. The section should clearly state the roles and responsibilities of the Applicant Organization, as well as any Primary Partners and Affiliated Partners.
- (vi) **Critical Milestones** – A description of specific milestones that the Applicant Organization seeks to achieve using the MTC and matching funds. Vague or generalized milestones are not acceptable responses.
- (iv) **Applicant Experience** - A description of the experience of the Applicant Organization's leadership team and experience of any Primary Partners.

- (v) **Program Budget Narrative** - A brief narrative that describes the specific use of funds, the source and status of matching funds, and future finance strategy to sustain the operations longer term

### **3.2.3. Program Budget**

Complete a proposed budget using the **2025 Investor Education Budget Form** that is available on the MTC website at [www.missouritechnology.com](http://www.missouritechnology.com). The Investor Education 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 Investor Education Budget Form must be included in the Grant Proposal Narrative (Section 3.2.2.v/8). Completed Investor Education Budget Form sections for the Applicant Organization and any Primary Partners are required.

MTC will not award more than \$250,000 for up to a two-year implementation plan.

The Program Budget Form should be included in the Grant Proposal File as **Appendix 1** to the Grant Proposal Narrative and is not included in the 15-page Grant Proposal Narrative limit.

**Proposals must use the Investor Education Grant 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 organization using the **Investor Education Summary of Projected Economic Impact Form** available on the MTC website at [www.missouritechnology.com](http://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 File as **Appendix 2** to the Grant Proposal Narrative and is not subject to the 15-page Grant Proposal Narrative limit.

Proposals must use the Investor Education Summary of Projected Economic Impact Form provided.

### **3.2.5. Affirmation and Signature Page**

The Affirmation and Signature Page Form is available on the MTC website at [www.missouritechnology.com](http://www.missouritechnology.com).



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

### 3.2.6. Required Supporting Documents

#### Governance and Organization Supporting Documents

- Attach copies of the following for the Applicant Organization as individual PDF files:
  - 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

#### Financial Related Supporting Documents

- Attach financial statements for the three most recently completed fiscal years of the Applicant Organization. The financial statements should be combined into a single PDF file.
- Attach a single PDF file of the most recent balance statement of the Applicant Organization at the time this application is submitted.
- Attach a single PDF file of the most recent profit & loss statement for the Applicant Organization at the time this application is submitted.
- Attach a single PDF file of 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 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.

#### **Letters of Commitment (if Primary Partners are included in proposal)**

Each proposal submitted for consideration may, but is not required to, include Primary Partner organizations that will receive financial support from the grant and must take an active role in the proposed activities. The Applicant Organization must attach letters of commitment from each Primary Partner organization. All letters of commitment should be combined into and attached as a single PDF file.

#### **3.2.7. Additional Supporting Documents**

The Applicant Organization is encouraged to upload additional supporting documents, including, but not limited to, letters of support for collaborators or commitment letters from the source of any matching funds. Please combine supporting documents into a single PDF file or, if necessary, into no more than three (3) separate PDF files.

#### **3.2.8. File Formatting for Proposal Submission Uploads**

(i) **Grant Proposal File** (PDF file): The documents described in Sections 3.2.1 through 3.2.5 collectively make up the **Grant Proposal File**. The documents from Sections 3.2.1 through 3.2.5 should be combined, in the order below, into a **single** PDF file and named with the following convention: **ApplicantOrgName\_GrantProposalFile** i.e., MTC\_GrantProposalFile.

1. Cover Letter
2. Grant Proposal Narrative (*15-page limit*)
3. Investor Education Budget Form
4. Investor Education Summary of Projected Economic Impact Form
5. Affirmation and Signature Page

(ii) **Supporting Documents:** The required supporting documents described in Section 3.2.6 should be uploaded as PDF files as indicated in Section 3.2.6. Additional Supporting Documents described in Section 3.2.7 can be combined into one, but not more than three, PDF files for uploading. All supporting documents should be named according to the following naming convention: OrgName\_documenttitle i.e., MTC\_articlesofincorporation.

#### **4. Evaluation Criteria**

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

- **Alignment with Goals and Objectives:** Proposals will be assessed on the relative strength of the proposal’s alignment with the Investor Education Goals and Objectives which aim to improve the knowledge, network connections and ability of new angel investors to actively engage in making investments in technology-based, high-growth potential Missouri startups leading to an increase in the number of active angel investors in the state. Proposals will also be evaluated based on alignment with the strategies included in the Catalyzing Innovation report and the potential ability to support the launch and growth of technology-based high-growth potential startups. The assigned score will reflect the alignment with these two key metrics guiding MTC’s program initiatives.
- **Proposal Strength and Feasibility:** Proposals will be evaluated on the relative strength of the Applicant Organization's strategy to identify and attract new potential angel investors for the proposed educational program, the effectiveness of the plan to educate and engage participants, the approach to improving investors' knowledge and expanding their network connections, and the likelihood of the educational program significantly increasing the number of active angel investors in Missouri. The assigned score will reflect the proposal’s overall strength, feasibility, and clarity. This includes the logical and factual support provided, as well as the articulation of critical milestones.
- **Applicant Experience:** Proposals will be assessed on the relative strength of the Applicant Organization and any Primary Partner’s experience and prior success. The assigned score will reflect the strength of the team's experience and ability to achieve the outcomes described in the Grant Proposal Narrative.
- **Impact:** Proposals will be assessed on the relative strength of the Applicant Organization's anticipated economic impact in Missouri from receiving an Investor Education Grant, including the expected increase in the amount of early-stage capital being invested in high-growth potential startups within the Applicant Organization’s region. The assigned score will reflect the potential for economic impact relative to the region, 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:** Proposals will be assessed on the relative strength of the Applicant Organization's finance plan. The assigned score will reflect the nature of the matching funds (secured, committed, cash vs. in kind), how the funds will be utilized, the appropriateness of the budget in relation to the proposed activities and the feasibility of the financial plan. Matching funds are assessed by MTC based on their capacity to be independently verified in their support for the project or organization. The competitiveness of matching sources is typically evaluated on the following scale:

  - Highly competitive: This refers to funds that are secured from local, regional, or federal partners/organizations specifically for the Investor Education Grant Program.

- Competitive: This category includes cash on hand, programmatic revenue, and non-programmatic revenue.
- Least competitive: This refers to in-kind funds received from either a first or third-party source.

## 5. Reporting

If awarded funding through the Investor Education Grant Program, the following bi-annual grant reports will be required during the term of the Grant: (a) a six-month grant report covering January 1<sup>st</sup> through June 30<sup>th</sup> due by July 31<sup>st</sup> and (b) a six-month grant report covering July 1<sup>st</sup> through December 31<sup>st</sup> due by January 31<sup>st</sup>. Forms providing structure for these reports will be provided once the grant is awarded.

Additionally, annual economic development reports will be required once a year beginning in the spring of 2026 (CY2025 Annual Report) and required for three years after the grant period ends.

## 6. Additional Notes

To submit an online application, the Applicant Organization must have or create an account on the [MTC Grants Portal](#). Instructions for creating an account can be found at [www.missouritechnology.com](http://www.missouritechnology.com).

Questions related to the Investor Education Grant Program, including eligibility or online application issues, should be directed to Sheila Baker ([sheila.baker@missouritechnology.com](mailto:sheila.baker@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.