

CLEMSON UNIVERSITY RESEARCH FOUNDATION
Technology Maturation Fund Program
Request for Proposals
RFP Date: May 2, 2016
Response Deadline: June 27, 2016

This document explains the Technology Maturation Fund, a program managed by the Clemson University Research Foundation (CURF). Unlike any other source of funding available to Clemson faculty, the purpose of this funding is solely to support the final development steps that will directly lead to the **commercialization of Clemson intellectual property**.

Criteria for Proposal Evaluation

Proposals will be evaluated on the following specific criteria:

1. Required Relationship to Existing Intellectual Property: Proposed projects must involve intellectual property that has already been disclosed to CURF and intellectual property should be referenced as part of your proposal by including the appropriate CURF Case ID. Contact a CURF representative to verify Case ID and status of intellectual property as needed.

2. Demonstrated Path to Commercialization: The request for funding should be sufficient to achieve a measurable milestone in the commercialization process. The types of activities which will be selected for funding will be those that propose to advance the intellectual property or technology to a stage of maturity that will bring an industry partner to the table—either to fund further research or to license the technology. What is currently preventing a company from licensing your technology? What specific question does your prospective licensee or industry sponsor want to have answered before they will consummate a license or sponsor research? The maturation project should address this specific barrier, thereby enabling a sponsored research contract or a license. Proposed activities for technology maturation funding might include:

- prototype development
- field testing
- generation of data that would be suitable to show prospective licensees
- generation of samples

In addition to a final report which will be required of all awardees, tangible deliverables may also be required, such as data reports, demonstration of prototypes which have been developed, etc. It is not out of the question to receive funding for the purchase of equipment that is necessary for your project, but typically, proposals for the purpose of equipment purchase will be ranked lower than proposals which outline other tasks as listed above. Proposals should clearly outline steps, timeline, and deliverables anticipated. Also, explain why you believe that the activity you are proposing will make the intellectual property more attractive to a commercial entity.

Preference for funding will be given to proposals that contain a documented interest from a commercial company that has expressed an interest in licensing the intellectual property pending the successful completion of the proposed activities. Please list commercial interactions to date as further evidence of potential commercial interest and provide any support letters from appropriate commercial companies. Examples of appropriate commercial companies include but are not limited to potential licensees,

manufacturers, and influential end users. ***Proposers are strongly cautioned to avoid making promises or commitments of any kind to potential partners pending the announcement of the awards.***

3. Technical Merit of the Project: Please explain the technical merit of your project in a way that a selection committee member (who may have expertise in a discipline different from your own) can appreciate your technical approach and the distinctive competitive advantage achieved through this approach. Please note that the focus of this proposal should be on market and commercialization outcomes, not technical detail.

Guidelines for Preparing Proposals

Funding Availability:

The total amount of funding available will vary each year and the number of proposals funded will depend on the quality of proposals received. Awards will be made at the sole discretion of CURF. **When putting together your budget request, please remember that the projects that we expect to fund will be short-turnaround, low dollar requests that have tangible outcomes. This is not fundamental research funding.**

Eligibility:

Any Clemson faculty member who has had interactions with CURF via the invention disclosure and patenting or copyright process is eligible to submit a proposal for the maturation of their already-disclosed intellectual property. Postdoctoral research associates, graduate students, and undergraduate students may participate as co-investigators but are not eligible to lead a project as principal investigator. As a first step in preparing your proposal, please consult with your Technology Commercialization Officer (TCO) about your desire to participate. Your TCO will be able to provide information about the process and help you to prepare your proposal to its best advantage. Your proposal is more likely to be selected for funding if you have coordinated with your TCO prior to submission. Contact information is included below.

Submission of Proposals:

In 2016, all Technology Maturation Fund applications will be processed through the InfoEd Proposal Development System (PD). All proposal documents, including electronic signatures, must be received by 4:30 p.m., June 27, 2016 in InfoEd PD. Only those proposals submitted on time through InfoEd will be reviewed. To ensure that all electronic signatures are received on time, **faculty are strongly encouraged to submit their proposals for routing and electronic signature at least two business days before the deadline.**

Research Compliance:

All applications selected for award will be required to have any necessary approvals from the Office of Research Compliance before the award can be set up.

Proposal Format:

Proposals should include the sections listed below. **The overall length of the proposal should not exceed five pages.** You are encouraged to attach additional informational items to your proposal as Appendices (See below). It is not necessary to submit CVs.

A. Title Section

- Project title
- List of PI and other investigators, and college and departments (or affiliations). Include only Clemson personnel who will work on the project.
- PI contact information: phone number and email address.

B. Abstract

- The 1-2 paragraph abstract should briefly explain the central idea of the proposal, unmet market/industry need or problem addressed, and the ultimate objectives to commercially advance the technology.

C. Summary Information

- Proposed budget, timeline of project including start date and targeted end date, all key milestones and capital equipment. There will be no F&A on these projects so please do not include F&A in your estimate.
- Status of intellectual property. List the patents, patent applications or copyrights for which the proposal is intended to be a maturation project. Consult with your designated CURF TCO to confirm CURF ID of related cases.

D. Narrative:

- Background/Opportunity/Benefits: State the specific benefits to be derived from a successful pursuit of the project, including the specific transactions such as licensing that are anticipated.
- Technical Approach: Describe the nature of the work and the ultimate commercialization objectives of the project. If appropriate, break down the proposed approach into a series of tasks. Each task should have a clearly defined deliverable. Include any plans to leverage external resources (e.g., collaborations with other universities or industrial partners). This section should contain enough information so that a technical evaluation of the proposal can be made, including judgment of the soundness of the project plan, likelihood of its success, and adequacy of facilities, equipment, and workforce.
- Commercialization Approach: Describe your commercialization strategy for continuing this effort after the Technology Maturation project is completed. Identify specific probable future commercial licensee(s). Your strategy should have sufficient specificity such that future commercial licensing success can be traced to projections made here.
- Budget & Justification: Describe your budget in terms of the following categories: 1) personnel, 2) materials, and 3) "other" if there are uses of funds for items other than personnel and materials.

E. Appendices

- Please submit supplemental items that support your proposal, such as: published papers, manuscripts of unpublished papers, dissertations, videos, presentations given as invited talks at conferences, etc.

Contact Information – Technology Commercialization Officers

Andy Bluvas (bluvasa@clemson.edu)

Charlie Shaw (cvshaw@clemson.edu)

Chris Gesswein (agessewe@clemson.edu)

or

Vincie Albritton, Deputy Director of CURF (valbrit@clemson.edu)

Casey Porto, Executive Director of CURF (cporto@clemson.edu)