ADVANCE Grant Program

Proposal Submission

Proposals [including cover page(s), project description, along with completed Budget and Signature Form and Budget Justification] for ADVANCE projects must be submitted to the ADVANCE Grant Program Manager via one pdf e-mail attachment to msugran2@msu.edu

**ADVANCE GRANT PROCESS OVERVIEW:** After verification of compliance and completeness, proposals will be reviewed on a rolling basis by the ADVANCE Grant Program evaluation committee. Applicants will be notified within eight (8) weeks of submission of the proposal. Awarded funds will be made available to the selected projects as quickly as possible after necessary documents are executed.

**ELIGIBILITY**: The ADVANCE Grant Program was developed to fund advancement of novel, commercially viable, technologies that will result in a defined product or service that solves an unmet market need. The technology must be the subject of an Invention Disclosure to your institution of higher education [e.g. Invention Disclosure form for Michigan State University (MSU) can be found at: <http://www.technologies.msu.edu/researchers/disclose-invention>] and be under active management of your Technology Transfer Office (TTO) or equivalent (e.g. for MSU this would be MSU Technologies <http://www.technologies.msu.edu/>). Technologies included in an ADVANCE grant proposal must be available for licensing from a university TTO.

1. Applicants must be from institutions of higher education in the State of Michigan;
2. The relevant technology must have an invention disclosure filed and have an identified commercial application;
3. Grant applications may be submitted at any time by the University TTO. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis;
4. Typical applications for these funds will be prototyping, customer discovery, market application research, animal studies, detailed IP analysis, etc.;
5. Project funding requests are up to $40,000 of which $20,000 is supplied by the Program and $20,000 matched by the university submitting the proposal. Grant dollars supplied by the program must be matched in cash dollar for dollar by the university. In-kind contributions are not accepted as matching funds; and
6. Projects involving optioned or licensed technologies are ineligible for funding.

It is **important to note** that the template for the Proposal plus the Budget and Signature Form (see below) include additional requirements related to matching funding, indirect cost limits, project management, etc. Additionally, the mechanism to provide funding to awardees is through a subagreement from MSU which should be reviewed prior to submitting a proposal to ensure your organization can enter into a subagreement with those terms . The subagreement should be signed within one (1) month of receipt of the subagreement; otherwise, there is the potential for the award to be rescinded.

If you have any questions regarding eligibility, contact ADVANCE Grant Program Manager, Ann Spalding at msugran2@msu.edu for assistance.

**EVALUATION CRITERIA:** Grants will be awarded based on their scores against the following criteria:

1. Fitness against the objectives of the ADVANCE Grant Program (25%);

2. Technical and commercial feasibility of the proposed scope of work (25%);

3. Ability of the proposed scope of work to meaningfully advance the university invention to a commercial outcome as measured by a license to an existing company or startup formation (50%).

**CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION:** Please note that the members of the evaluation committee who will be reviewing the proposals and approving the grants ARE NOT under any confidentiality agreements. Therefore, do not include proprietary information which has not been disclosed to your TTO. If intellectual property (e.g., patent) related to the proposal has not yet been filed, it is advisable to work with your technology manager on the content of the proposal to avoid public disclosure that could affect the ability to later file for intellectual property (IP) rights. One possible way to approach this is to focus discussion on what the product or process does, rather than very specifically how it does it. As the objective of this grant program is advancement toward commercialization, the proposal should be focused towards the commercial and business opportunity rather than the underlying technical details. If you have any questions or concerns in this regard, please contact your technology manager at your university.

**PROPOSAL:** To be accepted for review, the Proposal submission must include the following information according to the format provided and MUST not exceed the stated page limits. *Maintain at least 0.5-inch page margins and use type no smaller than Arial 10pt. font throughout all documents submitted.*

1. **Cover Page and Summary (1 page total) –** See Cover Page and Summary template at the end of this document. The cover page contains the project title, name of the TTO representative, faculty inventor, budget amount requested, tech transfer case/file number(s) with IP status, plus a brief summary (one paragraph ideally) of the proposal.
2. **Project Description (2 pages total) –** *It is recommended that you use the following headings (or similar) in the body of your Proposal; however, you must adhere to the total page limit. Attachments such as letters of support or verification of contribution are not included in the page count.*
3. **Technical Description -** Include a *brief* summary of the technology (1 page or less.).
4. **Market Opportunity / Unmet Need -** What is the envisioned commercial application product/service? Who would the customer/market be and why would they be interested or view it as important (e.g., what problem is it solving for whom?)?
5. **Path to Commercialization -** What are the steps and/or barriers that must be overcome to bring this technology to market? Please describe how the ADVANCE Grant funding of the activities in this proposal will “move the needle” toward a commercial application. Which do you envision, a start-up company or an existing company, ultimately licensing the technology to produce/provide the final product or service (it is fine if it is too early to anticipate who would be the licensee but mention possibilities?)?
6. **Milestones -** What are the outcomes of the proposed project? Specifically, how do these milestones meaningfully advance or de-risk the technology toward a commercial outcome? For each milestone provide a projected completion date.
7. **Prior and Concurrent Funding -** Has any other prior funding gone into commercial efforts for this technology? Be specific about amounts, source of funds (e.g., university, MEDC, MTRAC or other), and purpose of the funds? If you have received MTRAC funding, please provide the name of the program and the period of time funded.
8. **Budget and Signature Form and Budget Justification Form – (no page limit; use number of pages needed to complete the Form).** Include a proposed budget using the appropriate Budget and Signature Form. The total budget cannot exceed $40,000. Please note that there are separate columns in the Form for expected in-state and out-of-state expenses. You have the flexibility to build the budget you feel you will need, and you should only request the amount needed.

**Applicants will need to provide at least 50% of the total budget as matching funds.**  No in-kind match is permitted. These matching funds cannot originate from another MEDC (or Michigan Strategic Fund) funded program. The TTO rep submitting the application will be expected to oversee the budget and execution of all the activities proposed in the proposal.

***Please note the following related to your budget:***

1. No indirect costs are allowed.
2. All of the funds are to be used to advance the goals of the project per the activities in the proposal.
3. Allowable budget expenditures include: salary and fringe benefits for project personnel (important to justify if any faculty inventor salary is included as this is generally not viewed favorably), materials, supplies and services, contract research (if required), outside contractors, limited travel (important to justify the need), and other relevant costs. Budgets should be primarily allocated to conducting the work and activities outline in the proposal. During the funding decision, the appropriateness of the proposed project budget is reviewed.
4. Items not directly related to achievement of the project goals, such as travel to conferences are outside the scope of the ADVANCE program and are not permitted.
5. Unallowable expenses include the following:
* Student tuition;
* Equipment;
* Construction or renovation expenses; and
* IP (filing, prosecution, or other costs associated with patents, copyright, or trademarks).

f) Out-of-State subcontractors, consultants, or significant services

 requires specific details in the budget justification.

**4.** (If applicable) **References/Literature Cited**

1. (If applicable) **Letters of Support and Verification** **of Contribution (no page limit).** Include substantive letters of support from collaborators, potential commercialization partners, etc. The required financial support as matching funds for applicants (at least 50% of the project budget) requires an authorized verification signature on the Budget and Signature Form; however, an additional letter further explaining and/or confirming the match can be included. If additional funds beyond the required match are being supplied, these need to be described relative to amount and purpose in a letter on appropriate letterhead.

ADVANCE Grant Program

**Project Title**

Name:

Institution or Organization:

Department:

Email address:

Phone:

**TTO Rep Name and Contact Information**

**Faculty Inventors and their email addresses**

**Other key personnel and their email addresses**

**Total Proposal Budget Amount**

**Technology and Intellectual Property (IP) -** please complete table below**:**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  **Tech Transfer File Number** | **Type of IP** Patent, Copyright, or Trade Secret | **Type of Patent Filing** (None, Provisional, US Application, PCT, etc.) | **Filing Date(s) if applicable and IP not yet issued**  | **Issued Patent Number(s) if applicable**  |
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 **Brief Summary of the Proposal**

**Brief Summary of the Proposal (cont’d)**