

Innovation Incentive Prize

FOOD, BEVERAGE & AG TECHNOLOGIES

Introduction

FuzeHub administers the Jeff Lawrence Innovation Fund, which supports a set of activities designed to spur technology development and commercialization across New York State.

As part of the Jeff Lawrence Innovation Fund, FuzeHub will administer a New York State Innovation Incentive Prize Program for Food, Beverage & Agriculture Technologies. Technology plays an important role throughout the food ecosystem including the development, preparation, handling, processing and removal of food and beverage products. The Innovation Incentive Prize Program will solicit proposals that support the development of innovative products and/or solutions that will lead to more efficient operations within small scale farm businesses as well as food processing/ beverage production businesses.

The Innovation Incentive Prize Program will operate as a rolling application process and is subject to availability of funding. **There is no deadline to apply, but funding for the Innovation Incentive Prize Program is limited. It is strongly suggested that applicants contact Julianne Clouthier, Industry Engagement Manager, at julianne@fuzehub.com to confirm if there are available program funds.**

Prizes

FuzeHub anticipates making at least nine awards of \$10,000 each through three focus areas:

- Food Processing
- Beverage Production
- Agriculture

FuzeHub also maintains the right to award less than is being requested.

Funding cannot be used for overhead or administrative costs, indirect costs (operational expenses that are not directly related to executing the project, for example: office rent, utilities, non-project-specific personnel costs, and applicant company executive salaries), marketing, inventory, real estate transactions, or for working capital. Salary and fringe benefits are eligible expenses to the extent that personnel time is directly involved in the project.

Eligibility

The Innovation Incentive Prize Program is open to any small or early stage company seeking to implement innovative solutions that will benefit the food processing/beverage production and/or agriculture industries. For the purposes of this program, a small company is defined as a business with 0-49 employees. FuzeHub encourages participation by military veterans, socially or economically disadvantaged small businesses as well as businesses certified as a Minority/Women Business Enterprise (M/WBE).

- Craft beverage, distilleries, packaged food & beverage entrepreneurs, food processing companies and beginning small scale farm/producer businesses are eligible to apply. Start-up or early stage companies that provide services/solutions to these sectors are also eligible to apply.
- Company must be formally incorporated.
- Company must be located in New York State and planning to grow and remain in New York State.

Eligible Uses/Project Types

Proposals must be for a “project” in which program funds would be used to assist a food processing, beverage production or agriculture company in becoming more profitable, efficient, safer, and/or more environmentally friendly, including but not limited to:

- Precision Agriculture/Crop Management;
- Food waste diversion;
- Value-added food processing;
- Implementation of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and/or Analytics and/or machine learning;
- Adoption of a technology or process to enhance a process and/or product within manufacturing and/or processing facilities (including, but not limited to: robots, sensor technology, IoT, food waste reduction).

For questions regarding project eligibility, please contact Julianne Clouthier at julianne@fuzehub.com

Projects should be clearly defined and ready to be undertaken. Project work should not begin prior to program award announcements and any project costs that were incurred prior to the award agreement date are ineligible for reimbursement. Projects must be completed between six months and one year of an award.

Submission Process for Applicants

There is a two-step process for the Innovation Incentive Prize Program. First, the applicant must complete the online application form www.fuzehub.com/fba-t/. Second, the applicant must submit a scope of work and budget. No application items will be accepted via email or postal mail. Applicants are advised to familiarize themselves with the application questions and criteria before beginning to develop a response. There is a \$30 fee for each submitted application. Payments are processed via credit card through a secure online payment system; the system accepts all major forms of credit cards.

1. **Online Application:** www.fuzehub.com/fba-t/
2. **Additional Application Documents**
 - a. **Scope of Work** - A scope of work must be uploaded to the online application. The scope of work should contain a summary of the project the company would undertake using the program funds, including key milestones and project timeline. This document should not exceed one page, including any graphics, and must be in a font of a legible size (12pt Times New Roman or Calibri font). **Provide in PDF format.**
 - b. **Budget** – A project budget worksheet must be uploaded to the online application form; this worksheet is the only acceptable format. Applicants should propose a project budget of no more than \$10,000 (the maximum award amount). Please include details and explanations sufficient for reviewers to determine the reasonableness of budget and use of funds. **Provide in Excel format.**

Criteria and Review Process

Applications that do not include all required items may be deemed incomplete and may be rejected without further review. Applications may be considered incomplete if any of the aforementioned items in the Application Process section are omitted or do not follow the instructions provided. Complete and eligible applications will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- Defined business challenge
- Technology innovation/solution
- Impact on company’s growth
- Impact on food, beverage & agriculture sectors
- Reasonableness of budget and use of funds
- Project feasibility and schedule

Award/Payment

FuzeHub will enter into an agreement with each award recipient. Half of the Innovation Incentive Prize Program funds will be awarded up front and the second half of the Innovation Incentive Prize Program funds will be awarded upon project completion and approval of all project cost documentation, including but not limited to: invoices, canceled checks and receipts. Award agreements will include a clause noting that payments will be based on the availability of funds.



Award recipients will be required to submit W-9 and Payment Directive forms prior to receiving funds.

Deliverables

Award recipients will be required to submit a milestone report and project-completion documentation. A project site visit will be conducted by the FuzeHub Innovation Fund and Solutions Team program staff.

Reporting

Award recipients will be required to submit two annual reports. FuzeHub may collect additional Innovation Incentive Prize Program related metrics and success stories.

FuzeHub Privacy Policy

Please review the complete FuzeHub privacy policy [here](#).

Posted/Modified

December 14, 2018. Please check back to this site for updates and modifications to these guidelines.

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