

Innovation Incentive Prize

FOOD, BEVERAGE & AG TECHNOLOGIES

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

ELIGIBILITY

Q: We are a for-profit company, are we eligible for an award?

A: Yes, the competition is intended for for-profit companies.

Q: Are the Innovation Incentive Prize program funds specific to certain industry sectors?

A: Yes. 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 and food/beverage businesses. Please see full program guidelines for more information on applicable project eligibility.

Q: What types of projects are covered under the Innovation Incentive Prize program?

A: Proposals must be for a “project” in which award funds would be used to assist a food processing, beverage production or agriculture company in becoming more profitable, efficient, safe, 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, and 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).

Q: If a company has more than 50 employees, can the company submit an application for the Innovation Incentive Prize program?

A: No. The Innovation Incentive Prize Program is meant to assist 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.

Q: If a company is considering relocating to NYS are they eligible to participate in this program?

A: No, Innovation Incentive Prize Program funds are for companies currently operating in New York State.

Q: If a company has benefitted from a prior award from the Jeff Lawrence Innovation Fund, are they eligible to apply for other FuzeHub funding such as the Innovation Incentive Prize Program?

A: Yes, if a company has benefitted from a prior Jeff Lawrence Innovation Fund award they are eligible to apply for the Innovation Incentive Prize Program.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Q: What amount of program funds are available through the Innovation Incentive Prize Program?

A: FuzeHub anticipates making at least nine awards of up to \$10,000 each.

Q: What is the application process for the Innovation Incentive Prize Program?

A: 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. A scope of work must be uploaded to the online application; the scope of work should contain a summary of the project that the company would undertake using the award funds, including key milestones and project timeline. A project budget worksheet must also be uploaded to the online application form; this worksheet is the only acceptable format.

Q: Is there a deadline for submitting an application?

A: The Innovation Incentive Prize Program will operate as a rolling application process within the Jeff Lawrence Innovation Fund 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.

Q: Does the character limit on the online application form include spaces?

A: Yes. The maximum number of characters includes spaces. These are indeed counted as characters and not words. Most document applications will show a character count, and there are several online tools available to assist in determining character count.

Q: Can I save my online application and complete it another time?

A: No. To best ensure that no data is lost, we recommend that you save your application responses on a separate document.

Q: Can an applicant resubmit items that were incorrectly uploaded or omitted from the application submission process?

A: No. Applications that do not include all required items will be deemed incomplete and may be rejected without further review.

Q: While submitting an application, our company was unable to submit all required documents; will FuzeHub still receive my application?

A: No, if you receive an error message while submitting your application, please email fund@fuzehub.com or contact FuzeHub at 518-768-7030 and FuzeHub staff will work with you to resolve the issue. Please ensure that all files are uploaded as requested in the Innovation Incentive Prize Program Guidelines.

Q: How will my application be evaluated?

A: Complete and eligible applications will be evaluated based on the following criteria: defined business challenge; technology innovation/solution; impact on company's growth; impact on food processing, beverage production & agriculture sectors; reasonableness of budget/use of funds; and project feasibility/schedule.

Q: How is intellectual property (IP) handled under this program in terms of confidentiality and ownership?

A: FuzeHub does not make any claim to IP ownership from applications to the Fund. IP ownership is determined by the applicant, and not something that FuzeHub has a preferred policy for.

FuzeHub treats each application as confidential. Additionally, all selection panelists who score applications have signed panelist agreements with confidentiality clauses, and treat each application as confidential. However, all confidential or proprietary information, including confidential IP, should be clearly marked as such where it appears.

Q: Does FuzeHub notify the company/companies identified in the application of program award status?

A: Award notifications are made directly to the company.

BUDGET/MATCHING FUNDS

Q: How does an applicant submit a project budget?

A: A project budget worksheet must be uploaded to the online application form; this worksheet (available at www.fuzehub.com/fba-t/) 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. The budget must be provided in Excel format.

Q: Can a company use the funds to purchase inventory?

A: No, Innovation Incentive Prize Program funding *cannot* be used for marketing, inventory, real estate transactions, or for working capital costs.

Q: Is there an allowed administrative rate in the budget?

A: Funding cannot be used for overhead or administrative rates, or for indirect costs (operational expenses that are not directly related to executing the project, for example: office rent, utilities, or non-project-specific personnel costs).

Q: Are applicants permitted to include salaries to be used for direct project costs in the budget?

A: Salaries and fringe benefits are eligible expenses, for a portion of the project, to the extent that personnel time is directly involved in the project; the project budget worksheet must include a justification narrative describing how the costs directly relate to the project.

Q: Are project costs that are paid for in advance of the award reimbursable?

A: No. The application should not include budget items that will have been incurred prior to the award agreement. Project costs that were incurred prior to the award agreement date are ineligible for reimbursement.

Q: Are matching funds required?

A: There are no matching funds required; however, applicants are encouraged to provide information to explain any partnerships, in-kind contributions and/or leveraged funds.

AWARD ADMINISTRATION

Q: Does the award go directly to the company?

A: Yes. 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.

Q: If awarded, what documentation is required to receive payment from FuzeHub?

A: Appropriate and sufficient documentation should include but not be limited to: cancelled checks, check stubs, receipts and invoices for project work completed.

Q: If awarded, what type of deliverable is the company responsible to produce?

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

Q: What types of not-for-profit organizations work with start-up/ early stage companies and manufacturers?

A: Not-for-profits that work with start-up/early stage companies and manufacturers include: economic development organizations; New York Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) centers; colleges and universities, including Centers of Excellence (COE) and Centers for Advanced Technology (CAT); incubators and many others.

For more information on NYSTAR assets including New York Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) centers, please visit <https://esd.ny.gov/nystar/default.asp>.

Posted/Modified

December 14, 2018. Please check back to this site for updates and additions to the FAQ.