

# February 2019 Manufacturing Grant Application Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

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## ELIGIBILITY

**Q: We are a for-profit company, are we eligible for a grant?**

A: You are not eligible to apply for these grants directly, but we encourage you to work with a not-for-profit organization to define a project in which that organization's assets or services will advance your manufacturing operations or capabilities.

The grants are awarded to not-for-profits, as they will be the lead applicant, but applications must include a partnership with a company/companies. For purposes of this application a partner is defined as manufacturer or early stage company with a project relevant to the manufacturing industry.

**Q: Can an applicant receive multiple awards per year?**

A: No. Applicants may only receive one award per calendar year. In the case of a university, only the department or center that receives an award would be ineligible for additional awards in the calendar year.

**Q: If a company has more than 500 employees in New York State throughout multiple locations, can one of their locations that has fewer than 500 employees be a member of an applicant team?**

A: No. The grants are meant to assist a New York State small and medium sized manufacturer (SME), or early stage company with a project relevant to the manufacturing sector. For the purposes of this grant, SME is defined as a business with at least one physical establishment in New York State, and no more than 500 employees across the entire firm or enterprise worldwide.

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

A: In limited cases, FuzeHub will consider awarding projects that involve a non-New York State company, if that company can demonstrate that they are in the process of moving production/jobs to New York State. Out-of-state companies and their not-for-profit applicant should discuss the project with FuzeHub prior to submitting an application in order to confirm eligibility. Companies may be required to submit additional supporting documentation outlining their plans in New York State.

**Q: Are community colleges eligible to submit more than one application?**

A: Community Colleges are only eligible to submit one application per funding round.

**Q: We are a college or university looking to submit several grant applications; are there any restrictions to the applications we can submit?**

A: Colleges and universities are allowed up to three applications per funding round, but each application should clearly be from different departments or centers with distinct projects and companies. University applicants must provide the subset of the university such as college, school or department in the application form.

In the case of the SUNY system, only three applications may come from a single campus, regardless of whether the applications are submitted directly or through the RF SUNY.



**Q: What happens when a college or university submits more than 3 applications?**

A: In the event that we receive more than three applications from a university and/or, more than one from within the same department, we will communicate with all applicant point of contacts to inform them that we have received more than the limit. We will request that they decide internally which applications should be considered for the current funding round and ask them to consider holding the excess applications until the following funding round.

To alleviate this issue altogether, we encourage the departments within colleges and universities to communicate and coordinate their responses to this funding opportunity.

**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 Commercialization Competition?**

A: Yes, if a company has benefitted from a prior award, or is partnering on an upcoming Manufacturing Grant application, they are eligible to apply for the Commercialization Competition. FuzeHub reserves the right to negotiate a new scope of work if the projects are similar in nature.

## **APPLICATION PROCESS**

**Q: Can an application contain multiple projects?**

A: No. Each application should contain one project, but the project can benefit multiple companies, and have multiple not-for-profit partners.

**Q: Could more than one application from a college or university be awarded funding?**

A: Yes. Each application is scored individually on its own merit.

**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 in 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 will be rejected without further review. Applications are considered incomplete if the following items are not submitted: a project description, a project budget, letter(s) of commitment from the company/companies and applicable conflict of interest determination letter(s), or if the applicant has not followed the instructions provided. FuzeHub grant application documents will not be accepted if altered in any way.

**Q: While submitting an application, our organization 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](mailto: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 Manufacturing Grants Guidelines.

**Q: How is intellectual property (IP) handled under the grant in terms of confidentiality and ownership?**

A: FuzeHub does not make any claim to IP ownership from grant applications to the Fund. IP ownership is determined by the applicant team (the not-for-profit and the company/companies in the application), 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: If an application is not awarded in a given funding round, can it be updated and considered for a future funding round?**

A: Yes, an application may be updated and resubmitted in subsequent funding rounds if it is not successful the first time it is submitted.

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

A: Award notifications are made directly to the not-for-profit applicant. FuzeHub encourages all applicants to inform the partnering company/companies listed in the application of the Manufacturing Grant award status.

**Q: When can I expect to hear an award announcement?**

A: It is anticipated that the award announcement for the Manufacturing Grants (February funding) will be posted to the FuzeHub website in late April/ early May 2019. Dates are subject to change.

## **BUDGET/MATCHING FUNDS**

**Q: Which member of the applicant team is responsible for the matching portion of the grant?**

A: Any member of the applicant team can contribute matching funds or resources for the grant application. The application should clearly indicate which organizations are contributing to the match.

**Q: My application consists of multiple companies; how do I determine the number of employees for match purposes?**

A: Applicant teams involving companies with 50 or more employees combined are required to contribute a match according to the sliding scale outlined in the Manufacturing Grant Guidelines, with at least 50% of the match in the form of cash equity. If an application includes multiple companies, the match requirement is based on the total number of employees of the combined companies. The not-for-profit lead applicant is not considered in determining the number of employees.

**Q: What items are eligible to be counted for the grant match?**

A: Equipment, materials and supplies, and consultant and staff time, so long as they are project specific, are eligible to be counted for match.

**Q: The guidelines state that at least 50% of the match (for those required to demonstrate a match) should be in the form of cash equity. What do you define as cash equity, and how should that be demonstrated?**

A: The cash equity requirement can be shown as any materials, supplies, equipment, etc. that are purchased for the project that were paid for in cash.

These items can be demonstrated on the project budget worksheet by labeling one column (of columns B-E) as either “in-kind” or as “cash,” with the corresponding organization that is responsible. Receipts and documentation will be required with the grant reports for the items listed in the cash column.

**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 grant agreement. Project costs that were incurred prior to the grant agreement date are ineligible for reimbursement.

**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 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: Does FuzeHub, for the purpose of the Fund, consider it to be a conflict of interest to have an employee of the not-for-profit applicant (university or otherwise) also be an employee, founder, or have a financial interest in a private company which is an applicant team member?**

A: In cases where an applicant that is a university employs an individual who is also an employee of or has a financial stake in a company that is part of the applicant team, FuzeHub considers such applicants to be eligible, provided that the application includes a letter of support from the university official responsible for overseeing compliance with the institution’s conflict of interest policies. In these cases, the university administrator should submit a letter with the application affirming the university’s understanding of the employee’s private sector interests as they relate to the project, and affirm that the university supports the project and deems it compliant with the institution’s conflict of interest policies.

In cases where a not-for-profit that is not a university employs an individual who is also an employee or has a financial stake in a company that is part of the applicant team, FuzeHub considers such applicants to be eligible, provided that the application receives a letter of support from the not-for-profit’s board chair, who has reviewed the application and potential conflicts of interest.

## **GRANT ADMINISTRATION**

**Q: What types of not-for-profit organizations work with manufacturers?**

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

The applicant must clearly demonstrate how its assets and or services will be leveraged to assist the company/companies through the project.

**Q: Does the grant award go to the lead applicant (the not-for-profit), or to the partnering company/companies?**

A: Funding is awarded to the lead applicant and will be expended according to the project budget. Application scoring criteria includes reasonableness of budget and use of funds. Applicants should discuss the payment process with the company/companies prior to submitting an application.

**Q: In the case of projects with manufacturing-related equipment purchases, who would be the owner of the equipment?**

A: In general, equipment-related proposals will be viewed most competitively if equipment ownership is maintained by the not-for-profit applicant and the equipment benefits more than one company. However, proposals in which a manufacturer would own the equipment will also be considered, and FuzeHub will work with awardee teams to negotiate mutual agreement on this issue. Applicants should state which entity will own the equipment, where it will be located, and how other companies may access it, if it will be shared.

**Q: If awarded, will the applicant be required to provide documentation of in-kind and matching funds?**

A: If the applicant is required to provide a match based on employee size, FuzeHub will require that documentation to support the matching funds be submitted with each milestone report and/or request for payment. 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 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.

Posted/Modified

January 11, 2019. Please check back to this site for updates and additions to the FAQ.