



Jeff Lawrence Innovation Fund

COMMERCIALIZATION COMPETITION GUIDELINES

Competition Application Period

Opens August 2, 2021

Closes August 31, 2021

Finalists Notified October 2021

Finalist Presentations November 8-9, 2021

In-Person at the New York State Innovation Summit

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 hold a New York State Commercialization Competition on November 8 & 9, 2021. Companies will compete to demonstrate the commercialization potential of their technology or product and can win up to \$50,000. This competition is intended to help small and medium (SME) size manufacturing and technology companies further develop their prototype in an effort to pursue additional investment and customers as well as strengthen their “go-to-market” strategies, as they move from new product/production method to marketplace.

The competition attracts companies in industries including, but not limited to, advanced manufacturing, biotechnology, cleantech, health/medical, consumer products, consumer electronics, agri-tech, robotics, IoT (such as wearables, or smart devices).

AWARD DETAILS

FuzeHub anticipates making awards of up to \$50,000 each. FuzeHub maintains the right to award less than is being requested. Funds provided to awarded companies are distributed on a reimbursement basis. As a condition to receiving any award proceeds, competition winners will be required to enter into a Simple Agreement for Future Equity (SAFE). All awards are subject to the availability of funds from Empire State Development.



ELIGIBILITY

Companies are required to have an existing tangible prototype (for the purposes of the Commercialization Competition, a tangible prototype is the physical representation of an idea or product presented as an early sample or test model that contains innovative hardware / manufacturable components).

- Applicants must be available to pitch in person November 8-9, 2021
- Applicants must propose to fund activities to improve upon an existing tangible prototype and/or improve upon their “go-to-market” strategy.
- Applicants must have a clearly defined plan to commercialize the prototype product/process.
- Company must be located in New York State. Company will be required to provide articles of incorporation and if needed, registration to do business in New York State. Company must be incorporated/registered to do business in New York State at the time they submit an application.
- Company will need to be registered with Dun & Bradstreet, and have an eligible North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) code – specific to manufacturing – identified in their D&B profile. The application will require your DUNS Number and the associated NAICS code. **Applicants will need to evidence this information in order to present as a finalist.** Please be advised that only the following (NAICS) codes are acceptable:
 - Manufacturing Sector (Any NAICS Code beginning with 3*) (See https://www.census.gov/manufacturing/numerical_list/)
 - 541714 Research and Development in Biotechnology
 - 541715 Research and Development in the Physical, Engineering, and Life Sciences
 - 423510 Metal Service Centers and Other Metal Merchant Wholesalers

- 488991 Packing and Crating
- 541330 Engineering Services
- 541380 Testing Laboratories
- 561910 Packaging and Labeling Services
- 811310 Commercial and Industrial Machinery & Equipment (except Automotive & Electronic) Repair & maintenance

FuzeHub recognizes that a company may have multiple NAICS codes. If you are in the process of registering a NAICS code in your D&B profile, FuzeHub will verify this information during the application process.

- Company must be pre-revenue (less than \$100,000 in revenue)
 - Grants do not count as revenue;
 - SBIR Phase I & Phase II awardees are still considered pre-revenue, and eligible; and
 - Seed funding and/or Angel investment are not considered revenue for this application.

The following application proposals are **INELIGIBLE**:

- Software products and software services including, but not limited to: mobile applications, big data, and SaaS platform services.
- Proof-of-Concept (theories/hypotheses that have not been tested to show promise)
- New product launch for an established company with a total revenue in excess of \$100,000

ELIGIBLE PROJECT COSTS

Eligible costs are associated with eligible projects as outlined in eligibility requirements. Consultants and vendors should be located in New York State unless the applicant demonstrates that the products, services, or expertise being procured are not available in the state.

Eligible costs include:

- Equipment;
- Materials;
- Engineering/Design;
- Non-executive team personnel (e.g. salaries to the extent that personnel time is directly involved in the project; the project budget must include a justification narrative describing how the personnel costs directly relate to the project);
- Customer Discovery; and
- Other costs directly related to executing the defined project (subject to review).

Ineligible costs include the following, but not limited to:

- Applicant company executive team salaries (Founder, Co-Founder, CEO, CFO, COO, CTO) are ineligible costs under the Commercialization Competition regardless of the nature of the work to be completed;
- Administrative costs (such as business accounting/accountant fee costs);
- Legal consultation;
- Marketing;
- Patent fees; and
- Indirect costs (operational expenses that are not directly related to executing the project, for example: office rent, utilities, or non-project-specific personnel costs).

Projects should be clearly defined and ready to be undertaken. Project work should not begin prior to award announcements and any project costs that were incurred prior to the award agreement date are ineligible for reimbursement. Any partners that would receive any portion of the award funding to assist the company with commercialization should also be located in New York State.¹

Projects are expected to be completed within one year of an award.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Companies must complete the online application at <https://fuzehub.smapply.io/>. Applicants will be required to create a SurveyMonkey Apply account in order to submit an application. Each company may only submit one Commercialization Competition application.

No application items will be accepted via email or postal mail, even if they are received prior to the application deadline. Applicants are advised to familiarize themselves with the application questions, character limits, and criteria before beginning to develop a response. There is a \$50 fee for each submitted application. Note: once an application has been submitted, no changes can be made and no documents can be added. The application deadline is Tuesday, August 31, 2021 at 4:00PM EST.

The Commercialization Competition timeline is listed in the table below:

Online Application Opens	Application Deadline ²	Finalists Notified	Finalist Presentations
August 2, 2021	August 31, 2021	October 2021	November 8-9, 2021

1: Any use of outside partner/vendor costs must include a justification in the additional notes section of the budget template.

2: The online application will close promptly at 4:00 PM on the day of the deadline. All materials/uploads must be submitted at time of application.

The Commercialization Competition Application must include the following materials:

1. **Confirmation of Business Status** – Each applicant must provide an electronic copy of their Certificate of Incorporation. If the Certificate of Incorporation reveals that the applicant company is incorporated outside of New York State, the applicant company must provide further documentation that the applicant company is located in New York State and is registered to do business in New York State. (There are several documents that can individually fulfill this requirement, including but not limited to: NYS articles of incorporation/ formation, NYS Certificate of Authority, NYS Department of State Division of Corporations and State Records filing receipt showing the company name and provided DOS ID number.) Applicants should review the guidelines to ensure that the appropriate supporting documentation is submitted with the application. Note: These documents must be uploaded in PDF file format.
2. **Commercialization Summary (PPT template deck)**
 - Each applicant must provide a Commercialization Summary slide deck. The slide deck must describe the company's plans for bringing the product/technology to market. The applicant must provide information related to company structure, customer discovery, market research, competitive landscape, intellectual property, production, marketing, pricing, team, economic impact and finance plans. This document may not exceed ten (10) slides. Any pages in excess of the limit will not be reviewed. A template plan is available on the website. Note: This must be in PDF file format.
3. **Product Prototype** – Each applicant must upload a video (3-5 minutes) to address the following three tasks: demonstrate the working prototype; describe what stage the prototype is in (alpha test, ready to show customers, etc.); and explain the features that were developed based on customer discovery. The video should not be longer than five minutes in length. For proposals where a physical prototype cannot be produced, the applicant must upload supporting material to document that the product/technology has been proven. Note: Videos and supporting material must be uploaded in .mp4, .png, .jpg, .jpeg, .pdf, or YouTube format. Applicants are restricted to two separate uploads.
4. **Project Budget** – Applicants must complete the Project Budget Form within the online application system. The Project Budget Form must outline a \$50,000 project budget to clearly detail how the applicant intends to expend the FuzeHub funds. (No upload required.)

CRITERIA AND REVIEW PROCESS

Applications that do not follow the instructions provided and/or applications that do not include all required items may be deemed incomplete and may be rejected without further review. Eligible applications will be evaluated by a selection panel based on the following criteria:

Business Challenge / Problem

- Describe the problem you are trying to solve, and how you validated the need through customer discovery.

Technology Innovation / Solution

- Demonstrate your existing prototype by clearly articulating the technology/innovation in layman's terms and explaining how it solves the problem better than the alternatives.

Intellectual Property

- Explain your Intellectual Property strategy (for example patents, trade secrets, etc.)

Market Summary

- Describe the size of your market and addressable market, identify your target customers, and how you differentiate yourself from your competition.

Sales & Marketing Strategy

- Describe your sales/marketing plan; explain your cost/price structure, show how you will attract initial customers based on results of customer discovery. (Identify any letters of intent or early customer interest).

CRITERIA AND REVIEW PROCESS (CONTD.)

Production & Distribution

- Describe your business model; explain your supply chain and in-house production capabilities, and identify manufacturing facilities for work you cannot do in-house.

Team

- Describe the expertise and time your key players will commit to the project, and explain what gaps still need to be filled.

Scope of Work

- Provide a project budget and scope of work for the FuzeHub project and show how the project fits into your overall commercialization timeline.

Top applicants will be considered “finalists” and invited to “pitch” to a panel of judges at the Commercialization Competition on November 8-9, 2021. Details regarding the event and expectations of the participating companies will be provided to finalists at a later date.

In the course of evaluating applications, panelists may request that FuzeHub ask applicants for additional information or clarification, or to present to the panel, as needed. In some cases, FuzeHub may discuss an application with an expert in the relevant technology field.

In anticipation of a high volume of applications, FuzeHub will not commit to providing debriefs to unsuccessful applicants.

Commercialization Competition Judges

A panel of judges will be announced prior to the event and information will be made available on the FuzeHub website. Semi-finalist and finalist judges are from local, regional and statewide partner organizations.

Award / Reporting

FuzeHub will enter into an agreement with each award recipient. The agreements will detail agreed-upon project scopes, milestones, payment schedules, and commitments to participate in post-award project tracking and surveys. Payment schedules will be determined on an award-by-award basis and may involve reimbursement payments, and milestone payments. Each agreement will be designed to require demonstration of commitment to the project by the company. Agreements will include a clause noting that payments will be based on the availability of funds. Requests for payments, with supporting documentation, will be submitted to FuzeHub for review and processing in accordance with the agreements.

Impacts

- Describe the beneficial outcomes of this project and quantify the anticipated economic benefits of the project (employment, economic output, cost savings, etc.).

Financial Snapshot

- Describe any additional financing needs (seed funding, venture capital, etc.) including the anticipated financing type and how those will correspond with timeline/phases along the company’s critical path to success.

Award recipients will be required to submit one six-month and (up to) two annual reports. FuzeHub may collect additional commercialization-related metrics and success stories.

Investment Instrument / SAFE

As a condition to receiving any award proceeds, competition winners will be required to enter into a Simple Agreement for Future Equity (SAFE). A template of the SAFE agreement is available on the FuzeHub website.

Additional details related to the SAFE will be available on the FuzeHub website prior to the event.

About Jeff Lawrence

The Fund is named for Jeff Lawrence, a champion of the New York manufacturing and entrepreneurial communities who passed away in 2015. During his more than 20 years at the Center for Economic Growth, the Manufacturing Extension Partnership affiliate in the Capital Region where he served as executive vice president, Jeff directed programs of direct assistance to manufacturers and technology companies to increase their competitiveness. He is remembered for being an invaluable and generous mentor to many in the area's business community and a tireless advocate for manufacturing innovation throughout New York.

Contact Information

Questions should be sent to the Innovation Fund program at fund@fuzehub.com.

FuzeHub Privacy Policy

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

Posted/Modified July 9, 2021. Please check back to this site for updates and modifications to these guidelines.

