



Development
Services Agency



Third Frontier
Innovation Creating Opportunity

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Ohio Third Frontier Entrepreneurial Services Provider Program

Calendar Years 2020-2022

Request for Proposals (RFP) for Entrepreneurial Services Providers

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- Written Questions through August 26, 2019
- Proposals due by 1:00 p.m. on September 6, 2019
- Cost Share Commitment letters due by 1:00 p.m. on November 1, 2019
- Review and Award approximately in November 2019

RFP Administered by:
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*Note any changes made by applicants to the documents in the appendices (other than completion of the forms) may result in disqualification and non-review of the submitted proposal

Ohio Third Frontier

Calendar Years 2020-2022

Request for Proposals (RFP) for Entrepreneurial Services Providers

1 Ohio Third Frontier Statement of Solicitation

1.1 Overview

This Request for Proposals (“RFP”) is intended to support high-value entrepreneurial services for Ohio concept, seed and early stage technology companies in all regions of Ohio (refer to Section 2.3.1) to help achieve significant growth, attract investment capital and create jobs in Ohio through the Entrepreneurial Services Provider (“ESP”) Program (“Program”).

The Lead Applicant (defined in Section 2.3.1) may submit a proposal to provide entrepreneurial services in one or more of the selected service area(s) for the ESP services set forth in section 3.3.8.

1.2 Background

Ohio Third Frontier is a \$2.1 billion economic development initiative supporting technology entrepreneurship and growing jobs across the state of Ohio. Through a statewide network of resources, entrepreneurs have access to the technology, business assistance, capital and talent to turn great ideas into thriving companies. Ohio Third Frontier is driving this expanding, vibrant community of high-growth technology companies, and making Ohio a leading destination for entrepreneurs.

What Ohio Third Frontier Supports:

Ohio Third Frontier seeks compelling business models for near-term market opportunities based on technology and tech-enabled products and services focused in the following areas:

- Software/Information Technology
- Biomedical/Life Sciences
- Advanced Materials
- Sensors
- Energy
- Advanced Manufacturing

For all subsequent sections of this RFP, the above information amplifies the meaning of “concept, seed and early stage companies”.

For more information about Ohio Third Frontier, visit www.ohiothirdfrontier.com.

1.3 Request for Proposals Issuance

This RFP is being issued for funds to be awarded under the Ohio Third Frontier Entrepreneurial Services Provider Program. This RFP will be released by publication on the Ohio Third Frontier website at http://development.ohio.gov/bs_thirdfrontier/esp.htm and the State of Ohio procurement website at <https://procure.ohio.gov>.

The Ohio Third Frontier Commission (“Commission”) reserves the right to fund any proposal in full or in part, to request additional information to assist in the review process, to reject any or all proposals responding to this RFP, and to re-issue the RFP and accept new proposals if the Commission determines that doing so is in the best interests of the State of Ohio. Issuing this RFP does not bind the State to make an award of Ohio Third Frontier funds. Any award of Ohio Third Frontier funds in respect to this RFP will be subject to availability of funds as provided in Ohio Revised Code Section 126.07.

The Ohio Development Services Agency (“Development”) administers this RFP and reserves the right to adjust the dates for this RFP for whatever reason it deems appropriate. Development’s Office of Technology Investments will administer all funds awarded under this RFP. This RFP is not a contract or commitment of any kind on the part of Development.

1.4 RFP Process and Awards Process

The RFP process will consist of the following steps:

- Release of RFP
- Questions and Answers (Q&A) and Communications
- Submittal of Proposals

Each of these steps is discussed in Appendix A – RFP Process, Awards Process, and Mandatory Compliance.

The Awards Process will consist of the following steps:

- Proposal Review and Evaluation Procedures
- Award Decision
- Award and Agreement Preparation and Execution

Each of these steps is discussed in Appendix A – RFP Process, Awards Process, and Mandatory Compliance.

All questions regarding this RFP must be submitted in writing via e-mail to ESP@development.ohio.gov with a subject line of “ESP RFP Q&A”. Lead Applicants, Clients and/or others acting on their behalf shall be aware of all prohibited contact in Section IV of Appendix A – RFP Process, Awards Process, and Mandatory Compliance.

If a Lead Applicant, Client or others acting on their behalf makes prohibited contact, Development, in its sole discretion, may eliminate the proposal from the RFP process.

2 Program Description

2.1 Purpose

The purpose of the ESP Program is to fill gaps in the entrepreneurial system for high-potential Ohio concept, seed and early stage technology companies. The program provides financial support to a regional network of service providers and their collaborators to assist Ohio's technology startup and early stage companies in achieving significant growth.

The ESP Program aims to foster sustainable engines of entrepreneurial activity and technical assistance, and to continue to generate visibility and excitement about entrepreneurship in Ohio. The Program seeks to reach out to minority, women, veteran, and rural entrepreneurs, and aims to position Ohio as a leader in inclusive technology entrepreneurship.

2.2 Goals

The overarching goals of the Program are to:

- Provide value-add services and resources to effectively and efficiently advance Ohio concept, seed and early stage companies in order to create new Ohio jobs, attract professional investment capital and generate product sales;
- Fill gaps in the regional entrepreneurial system that present obstacles to the growth of Ohio concept, seed and early stage companies, such as talent, capital, access to customers and mentor networks, and inclusion;
- Continue to build a pipeline of high-growth companies, and actively seek to engage minority, women and rural technology entrepreneurs;
- Identify those high-performing technology-based companies supported by the entrepreneurial network where additional targeted services and resources could be applied to accelerate growth, and provide these key services and resources;
- Attract resources of venture capital firms both within and outside of Ohio; and
- Foster regional collaboration and increased alignment among the regional network for the purpose of advancing the entrepreneurial system, efficiency, sustainability, and accessibility to entrepreneurs.

2.3 Eligibility

2.3.1 *Lead Applicant*

A Lead Applicant is the entity that submits a proposal, and that will serve as the ESP organization in the selected Region(s) below for the ESP services set forth in section 3.3.8. The Lead Applicant will be legally and financially responsible for any resulting award of Ohio Third Frontier funds and the administration of the contract.

The Lead Applicant is responsible for forming and managing the Project organization that will execute the activities described in this RFP, the proposal and the grant agreement. The Lead Applicant is not required to form a separate legal entity in order to conduct the Project, and is discouraged from doing so if it would lead to an increase in

administrative complexity or cost. However, the Lead Applicant should be mindful of conflicts of interest that may arise in this situation and build specific processes and policies to ensure equal access for all entrepreneurs to the services and resources offered.

Proposals are sought from Lead Applicants and their Collaborators to provide entrepreneurial services in one or more of the following service areas (each a “Region”):

Central Ohio (composed of the counties of Delaware, Fairfield, Fayette, Franklin, Hocking, Knox, Licking, Logan, Madison, Marion, Morrow, Perry, Pickaway, Ross and Union)

West Central Ohio (composed of the counties of Champaign, Clark, Darke, Greene, Miami, Montgomery, Preble and Shelby).

Northeast Ohio (composed of the counties of Ashland, Ashtabula, Carroll, Crawford, Columbiana, Cuyahoga, Erie, Geauga, Holmes, Huron, Lake, Lorain, Mahoning, Medina, Portage, Richland, Stark, Summit, Trumbull, Tuscarawas and Wayne)

Northwest Ohio (composed of the counties of Allen, Auglaize, Defiance, Fulton, Hancock, Hardin, Henry, Lucas, Mercer, Ottawa, Paulding, Putnam, Sandusky, Seneca, Van Wert, Williams, Wood, and Wyandot)

Southeast Ohio (composed of the counties of Adams, Athens, Belmont, Coshocton, Gallia, Guernsey, Harrison, Jackson, Jefferson, Lawrence, Meigs, Monroe, Morgan, Muskingum, Noble, Pike, Scioto, Vinton and Washington)

Southwest Ohio (composed of the counties of Butler, Brown, Clermont, Clinton, Hamilton, Highland and Warren)

2.3.2 Collaborators

Development defines a “Collaborator” as an organization, institution, company or other legal entity that is not an affiliate of the Lead Applicant, or an individual not employed by or related to the Lead Applicant, that is anticipated to receive Ohio Third Frontier funds and/or is contributing to Cost Share, and is actively involved in the delivery of services on an ongoing basis.

All Collaborators and cost share providers must be listed on the Collaborator Information Form in Appendix B – Application Forms and provide Commitment Letters as described in Section 3.3.133 of this RFP.

2.3.3 Clients

A “Client” must be an Ohio concept, seed or early stage company, or a company currently located outside Ohio that commits to locating a Principal Place of Business in Ohio. A Principal Place of Business is a facility located in the State of Ohio where the company, which is registered with the Secretary of State to conduct business in Ohio, maintains physical operations managed by a senior representative who is authorized to make decisions and to obligate the company and its resources. This facility must be owned by the company or be subject to a long-term lease.

To be considered a Client, the company must have signed a service agreement with the Lead Applicant and/or Collaborators and received a minimum of 20 documented hours of services from the Lead Applicant, Collaborators, professional service firms and expert mentors managed by or under contract with the Lead Applicant. A company does not become a Client simply upon the initiation of due diligence, the provision of incubator space, the selection into an accelerator, or an introduction to a source of funding.

At the time of becoming a Client, the company is expected to be in the Imagining, Incubating or Demonstrating stages of the Technology Commercialization Framework (refer to Appendix C – Technology Commercialization Framework).

As is characteristic of companies in one of these three phases of commercialization, the companies will typically not be sufficiently mature to attract significant venture capital or other forms of commercial financing. After becoming a Client and advancing to meaningful market entry as a result of the services provided, the company may continue receiving services through the Market Entry stage of the Technology Commercialization Framework.

2.4 Funding and Cost Share

2.4.1 Funding Available

Development anticipates awarding up to a total of \$75.6 million through the ESP Program for Calendar Years 2020-2022, with funding for Calendar Year 2022 as an option year at the Commission's discretion contingent upon a determination following an in-depth performance review and funding availability.

If a Lead Applicant's plan requires time to commence one or more major areas of ESP services (see section 3.3.8), then the Lead Applicant's budget should reflect a commensurate rate of growth from the first to the second year.

The Commission, through Development, engages an independent, professional evaluator to review and recommend awards, which may include recommendations of support for ESP services set forth in Section 3.3.8 by Lead Applicant in one or more of the Regions, or multiple Lead Applicants in a Region.

The Commission reserves the right to award additional or fewer funds and to shift the allocation of funds among Lead Applicants if it determines that this best serves the interests of the Program.

2.4.2 Cost Share

The Cost Share commitment must be at least one dollar for every dollar of Ohio Third Frontier funds requested (i.e., a ratio of 1:1). A minimum of 75% of Cost Share must be in the form of cash. Up to 25% of Cost Share may be in the form of donated services for high-value services to Clients from third party professional firms. Examples of these services include legal, tax, accounting and marketing, with a documented number of hours spent with Clients at hourly rates which are verifiable and auditable. Cost Share may also include ESP-related events and sponsorships, subscriptions to databases or services that are ESP-related, and travel costs incurred to advance ESP-related

activities. Other forms of in-kind Cost Share such as donated facilities or in-kind personnel are not allowable.

Up to 10% of cash Cost Share may be used for broader, regional network-wide inclusion and/or small business support activities that indirectly advance the Program goals, and that align with the Commission's and/or Development's strategic priorities. Examples include inclusion activities that have a broader focus than the concept, seed or early stage high-growth technology companies as defined in this RFP, educational initiatives focused on inclusion, activities that advance the overall small business support system in the region, etc. Approval will be at Development's discretion.

The preference is that each Collaborator participating in the proposal provides Cost Share for the proposal activities in order to demonstrate support from its local or regional community. However, the distribution of Cost Share is at the discretion of the Lead Applicant and Collaborators.

The Lead Applicant may draw on a grant award to reimburse itself or its Collaborators for budgeted expenses. However, before reimbursements will be authorized, the Lead Applicant must have expended cash Cost Share and/or accessed donated services in proportion to the amount dictated by the Cost Share ratio committed in the proposal.

For details regarding the Budget, please see Section 3.3.12.

2.5 Term of Project

The Project is the plan of activity or activities that make up the total scope of work for which an award of Ohio Third Frontier funds is requested and for which a proposal is approved. The period during which the active work funded by the grant award will take place shall be no more than three years, from January 1, 2020, until December 31, 2022 ("Project Period"). For an additional three years beyond the Project Period, reports detailing the overall status of Project activities and the economic impacts in a form requested by Development may be required. The form of the reporting is expected to be on an individual Client basis.

3 General Proposal Requirements

3.1 General Instructions

Proposals must be submitted in the following manner:

Proposals are to be submitted electronically as a single readable PDF file to ESP@development.ohio.gov with subject line “ESP Proposal Submission”.

Additionally, all tabular data including Metrics, Appendix E – Budget Forms, and Appendix D – Staff Information shall be submitted in Excel (.xlsx) format.

It is the Lead Applicant’s responsibility to ensure submission of a complete proposal based on all requirements of this RFP.

3.1.1 *General Formatting Requirements*

- Proposals are to be submitted on 8.5 x 11-inch page size.
- Margins must not be less than $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch on all sides, with the exception of forms found in the Appendices.
- Font must be 11 point or larger with no more than 6 lines per inch.
- All pages must be numbered consecutively using the format “Page [#] of [total number of pages]” (e.g., Page 2 of 25).
- The proposal title and Lead Applicant name must appear at the bottom of each page.
- Proposals should not include color figures that cannot be understood when photocopied in black and white.
- The first page of the proposal must be the Application Information Page found in Appendix B – Application Forms.
- Do not include a cover or cover letter other than the Application Information Page.

3.1.2 *Page Limitations*

Any pages beyond the page limits listed below will be eliminated from the proposal before it is sent for review and evaluation. Except as otherwise noted, appendices or other methods to augment the information presented in the proposal are not allowed. References to web-based information to supplement the proposal are not permitted, and such references will not be considered in the evaluation.

- Abstract – 1 page
- Qualifications of Lead Applicant – 1 page
- Strategy – Up to 3 pages
- Organization, Governance and Administration – Up to 2 pages

- ESP Services & Additional Activities – Up to 12 page or 4 pages/topic
- System-Wide Metrics Projections – Up to 2 pages
- Sustainability Plan – Up to 2 pages
- Budget – Use specified forms
- Budget Narrative – Up to 8 pages
- Letters of Commitment – Maximum of 1 page per letter

3.2 Public Information

Lead Applicants are reminded that all information submitted in response to this RFP will be treated as public information under the Ohio Public Records Act in Section 149.43 of the Ohio Revised Code.

3.3 Order and Content of Proposal Sections

Unless otherwise noted, the proposal must address all of the elements listed in this section in the order requested.

3.3.1 *Application Information Page*

The first page of the proposal must be the completed Appendix B – Application Forms.

3.3.2 *Abstract*

Prepare an Abstract that summarizes the Lead Applicant’s work plan. This section must minimize the use of jargon and technical language and be written so that a non-technical person can understand it. This section will be used in public documents, including press releases, and must be understandable by the general public.

3.3.3 *Table of Contents*

Prepare a Table of Contents with detail for all levels of headings requested in this RFP. This section should also include a list of Charts, Figures and Tables that appear in the proposal with a page number for each.

3.3.4 *Qualifications of Lead Applicant*

Provide a narrative establishing the qualifications of the Lead Applicant to deliver the proposed ESP services set forth in section 3.3.8 in the selected Region(s).

3.3.5 *Strategy*

Describe the current state and future vision for the proposed service area’s entrepreneurial community. Describe any collaboration models and identify the Region’s local support. Highlight key opportunities, needs or gaps, and community assets or stakeholders. Describe a cohesive, integrated strategy to deliver economic impacts and return on the State’s investment.

3.3.6 Organization, Governance and Administration

Organizational Structure. Describe the Project organization, including its structure, legal status, and direct reporting relationships with other entities (including the Collaborators). Describe the composition of the Project executive team and explain how the team will manage the resources of the Lead Applicant and the Collaborators to ensure the seamless delivery of services to Clients. Additionally, Lead Applicant must identify all of its officers and directors.

Governance. Describe the role of the board or other governing body in assuring that the Goals of the Program are being met and discuss the provisions that will be made to assure that Development will have full access to oversight meetings and other communications commensurate with its observer status.

Conflicts of Interest. Lead Applicant shall have adopted, or identify plans to adopt, a Conflict of Interest Policy that aligns with the conflict policies of the State of Ohio such that officers and directors are treated similarly to public officials under Ohio ethics laws.

3.3.7 Key Application Topics

Responses to ESP services (3.3.8) should each address the following topics for each selected Region in the numbered order:

1. Opportunity/Gap/Need	Clearly identify a unique opportunity, gap, or need in the entrepreneurial community and the stakeholder engagement to support the Lead Applicant addressing the opportunity.
2. Goal/Outcome	Articulate a measurable overall goal or vision for the different services.
3. Approach/Process	Provide detail on the approaches and/or process to be used to achieve the overall service goal/outcome.
4. Leadership/Key Personnel	Detail the individual(s) and stakeholders(s) who will be responsible for achieving the service goal(s). Detail the duties and document the level of commitment of each key individual.
5. Client Acquisition and Service Delivery	Describe the types of client businesses (i.e., phase of development and growth) to be served and how they will discover and access services. Describe how client satisfaction will be objectively measured and reported.
6. Outreach Efforts	Describe the planned efforts to engage minority, women and rural-area technology entrepreneurs
7. Key Success Criteria	Describe how success or achievement will be measured and tracked. Justify the criteria selected. Include milestones that may establish interim progress.

8. Core Resources	Detail the assets, capital, intellectual property, or other resources required to achieve the service goal(s). Describe the role that each type of asset plays in accomplishing the service goal(s) and how the assets support plans for organizational sustainability.
9. Key Risks and Mitigations	Discuss and prioritize risks that may impact the goal or success criteria. Present plans to mitigate these risks.
10. Other Considerations	Provide any additional information that may be useful in evaluating the proposed ESP services.

3.3.8 *ESP Services*

Lead Applicants should describe the services and activities being proposed for an identified Region(s) with a Statement of Work. Each response should identify and follow the ordered topics described in Section 3.3.7 **Error! Reference source not found.**, plus the Additional Activities as described in Section 3.3.8.4. Alternatively, Lead Applicants may describe the services and activities being proposed for one or more of the three principal ESP services identified below.

3.3.8.1 Institutional Technology Commercialization

The purpose of this service is to create value from early stage technical assets and to build a sustainable environment for technology commercialization and entrepreneurship.

Relevant goals or activities included in this service area may include, but are not limited to:

- Engaging with research institutions and other sources of deal flow
- Identifying and validating commercial potential of early stage technology
- Providing access to “voice of the customer”
- Developing systems and expertise to scale technology screening
- Streamlining licensing
- Establishing grant programs to provide early market or technical validation
- Providing services to enable pursuit of non-dilutive funding, and
- Attracting initial leadership teams and developing overall regional entrepreneurial talent.

3.3.8.2 Venture Development Services

The purpose of this service is to engage enterprises from institutional and non-institutional sources at the earliest stages of company formation. Firms at this stage of development benefit from services to aid in attracting additional executive and technical talent and capital to enable product validation and refinement, as well as larger investment. Funds may additionally be required for mentors, Entrepreneurs-in-Residence (EIRs), or other experts who assist firms in securing capital and building “first customer” relationships. Types of support may

range from a general process regime of education and business assistance to the formal structures of incubators and accelerators as described below:

Incubators provide workspace to their tenant firms as well as basic business services. Incubators often provide necessary technical facilities such as rapid prototyping, laboratories, or testing facilities that align with area assets and the ESP strategy. In addition, they also offer some mentorship and sometimes more formal educational resources to help firms refine their business models and learn about entrepreneurship. There is no fixed time limit for users of incubators and they are typically aimed at very early stage or seed stage firms.

Accelerators have many of the same attributes as Incubators: they provide business mentorship and educational opportunities aimed at helping companies progress. However, accelerators have a competitive and programmatic aspect—accelerator programs are structured around fixed beginning and end dates, often tied to capital raises from angels and other early stage investors. Acceleration services may include a blend of traditional accelerator programs as well as innovative accelerator models designed to meet the unique needs of the region and/or the industry in which a client company competes (i.e., life sciences needs are quite different from fintech needs).

Lead Applicants may offer general business assistance and education, incubator services, accelerator services or all three. Lead Applicants should describe the mix being offered and why it is appropriate for the proposed service area.

3.3.8.3 Enterprise Development Services

This service includes the diverse set of high-quality services required by high growth-potential firms. ESPs not only provide access to services, but also help anticipate firms' needs and stage appropriate resources and services to scale their businesses. Support for customer base development and revenue generation is a significant element of this component.

Access to capital at the seed through traditional “series A” rounds to support growing firms is critical at this stage. Services may include providing connectivity with diverse capital sources both from within and outside of Ohio, and providing mentoring and other support to help firms become investment-ready and to identify and pursue appropriate investors.

Talent attraction programs are designed to engage seasoned entrepreneurs to lead high-potential firms, as well as building out personnel to support growth.

EIRs and Mentor Networks may be built to provide targeted guidance and access to customers, investors, business intelligence or other resources. These networks should align with the industry focus of the service area, and may be recruited from industry or other stakeholders.

A diverse pool of **high-quality professional services** such as accounting, legal, marketing, and information technology help growing firms maintain their growth trajectory while addressing key needs.

3.3.8.4 Additional Activities

ESPs are charged with an array of other activities that are necessary regardless of the range of specific client services being offered. Please describe the specific

activities and initiatives that will be undertaken to ensure support for each item below:

- Marketing, Branding, and Outreach
- Pipeline Development and Client Management
- Inclusion and Diversity
- Stakeholder Engagement, i.e., Corporate, Municipal, Foundation/Charitable, Educational, Non-Profit, Research Lab, Health System, etc.
- Other proposed initiatives that the Lead Applicant considers to be important to the service area.

List the expected outcomes and describe the financial and other resources that will be applied to each activity.

3.3.9 System-Wide Metrics Projections

Provide projections for the metrics outlined below during the Project Period. Explain the rationale behind these projections and the justification for the likelihood of achievement.

For each category, please indicate the projected number as of year-end (12/31/20, 12/31/2021 and 12/31/22) for each calendar year only.

	2020	2021	2022
New Ohio permanent, full-time jobs at Clients			
New Ohio 1099 contract jobs at Clients			
Total third-party professional investment raised by Clients (\$)			
Third-party professional investment attracted into Ohio (\$)			
New product sales (\$)			
Federal grants, licensing income and other revenue (\$)			
Qualified Deals*			
Woman-owned/led**			
Minority-owned/led**			
Veteran-owned/led**			
Rural***			
Active Clients****			
New Clients			
Woman-owned/led**			
Minority-owned/led**			
Veteran-owned/led**			
Rural***			
New Clients attracted to Ohio			
New Clients that are research institution spinouts			
Number of Clients that raise at least \$250,000 in third-party professional investment capital			

Number of Clients that raise at least \$1 million in third-party professional investment capital			
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Jobs totals should reflect the following:

- Report only new full-time jobs created above the baseline number of retained jobs of the company that were present at the time it became a Client of the ESP.
- New jobs should be a net total of new jobs created less those lost for reasons including, but not limited to, attrition, company closings, or companies moving out of the state of Ohio. Another way to measure this is total Ohio permanent employment as of year-end less the baseline retained number of employees for each company. This will be the net new job creation (or loss) for each company.

Active client totals should also be reported as of each calendar year end. Similar to jobs, it will reflect the net total of new clients added in that calendar year less those clients lost due to graduation, disengagement, out of business, leaving Ohio or otherwise exiting the portfolio.

*Qualified Deals must meet the following requirements (“Qualified Deal”):

- Technology-based or technology-enabled opportunity in the Imagining, Incubating or Demonstrating phases of commercialization;
- Significant potential to create jobs, attract capital or achieve product sales and move to a point of sustainability after the engagement;
- Completed online application form; and
- Initial assessment of the opportunity by the Lead Applicant and/or the Collaborators through a direct interaction with the entrepreneur(s).

**Defined as having at least 30% ownership and/or CEO/President position

***Located outside a Metropolitan Statistical Area

****Active Client – Client that is actively receiving services from the Lead Applicant and/or a Collaborator.

3.3.10 Internship Program

Providing meaningful exposure and learning opportunities to students is vital to the continued growth of the technology-based entrepreneurship ecosystem in Ohio. These opportunities are essential to the creation and development of the workforce talent in Ohio. In support of this workforce development initiative, ESPs awarded under this Program will be tasked with the creation and management of an internship program. Proposals by Lead Applicants must include a plan for an internship program using up to 10% of the requested grant award to reduce or cover the wages of an intern at a host company. Funding for this internship program can be matched by eligible cost share from the Lead Applicant or funds contributed by the intern host companies. Lead Applicants should describe the planned internship program, how both interns and host companies will be identified and any matching or placement process.

3.3.11 Sustainability

The ESP Program aims to create sustainable engines of entrepreneurial activity and assistance. Please describe the Lead Applicant and Collaborators’ strategy for greater sustainability beyond the Project Period without ESP funding assistance. Discuss

alternative (non-state) sources of funding and revenue, and the vision for the scope and level of entrepreneurial support activity in 2023 to 2024. Discuss any anticipated shifts in the types of clients or service offerings beyond 2022.

	State funds	Other Gov't or university cash support	Private/corporate cash support	Nonprofit /income	Total
2020					
2021					
2022					
2023					
2024					

3.3.12 Budget

Please see Section 2.4 for additional information.

The budget must clearly describe all sources and uses of funds for the proposed Project Period. The Lead Applicant is to provide a detailed budget and related explanations that are consistent with the level of resources being requested. In preparing the budget, the Lead Applicant must use the applicable budget forms contained in Appendix E – Budget Forms.

Other Ohio Third Frontier or state of Ohio funding may not be used as cost share for this proposal, and funds awarded under this RFP may not be used as cost share against other Ohio Third Frontier projects. The expense of cost share must take place during the Project Period. All expenses and cost share must be verifiable and auditable, and must be documented within the financial books of the Lead Applicant. All expenses and cost share must be allowable and are subject to audit in accordance with 2 CFR 200.

Lead Applicant Responsibility. The Lead Applicant is solely responsible to have adequate funds to cover all expenses not covered by the Ohio Third Frontier funds awarded. Such acceptance must be documented by the Lead Applicant in a letter that specifically states that it understands and accepts this responsibility.

3.3.12.1 Cost Share

The cost share commitment must be at least one dollar for every dollar of Ohio Third Frontier funds requested (i.e., a ratio of at least 1:1). All cost share must be identified by amount, proposed use and source, and documented in the Budget Forms. The cost share must represent a specific, new commitment, including the dollar amount or value.

New Cost Share. Resources that have already been designated as cost share for another award cannot be used as cost share for a Program award, including the Pre-Seed Fund Capitalization Program.

Future Cost Share. A Lead Applicant may submit future cost share commitments. The use of future cost share commitments is limited to potential funders with unique budget processes and cycles. All cost share must be current by the time the Grant Agreement with Development is executed.

Use of Cost Share. Cost share must be used directly in support of the Project and not for coincidental or related/similar allocations. Cost share must be necessary and directly allocable to activities that support the Project objectives. Except as set forth below, any activity/expense incurred that is not eligible for reimbursement under Ohio Third Frontier funds can also not be applied as cost share. Travel expenses, meeting or event expenses, and sponsorship or membership expenses will only be eligible as Cost Share and not reimbursable with ESP grant funds.

3.3.12.2 Budget Forms

Budget Form 1- Lead Applicant Budget is to be used by the Lead Applicant. The total Ohio Third Frontier funds requested in the proposal must be represented on this form as the grant amounts that will be used by the Lead Applicant and Collaborators. The Subcontract/Sub-Grant line on this form refers to the funds provided to Collaborators by the Lead Applicant or cash Cost Share provided by Collaborators.

Budget Form 2- Collaborator Budget is to be completed for each Collaborator that is receiving a Subcontract/Sub-Grant from the Program and/or is committing Cost Share to the proposed Project, and is actively involved in the delivery of services on an ongoing basis. The total of the requested Ohio Third Frontier funds and related Cost Share detailed on Budget Form 2 must equal the total corresponding amounts of the Subcontract/Sub-Grant line reported in Budget Form 1.

Budget Form 3- Cost Share requires the Lead Applicant to report the sources and type of Cost Share by entity from itself and all Collaborators. A Letter of Commitment on the Cost Share source's letterhead, signed by an authorized representative, must support each Cost Share amount claimed. In addition, any entity providing Donated Services as Cost Share must complete and submit the Donated Services Provider Information Form found in Appendix B – Application Forms.

Please note that the Lead Applicant accepts full responsibility for securing and delivering the Cost Share commitments. Such acceptance must be documented by the Lead Applicant in a letter that specifically states that it understands and accepts this responsibility.

3.3.12.3 Allowable Expenses and Specific Budget Definitions

Indirect Costs. Indirect costs are allowed under the Program. Indirect costs are those costs incurred for common or joint objectives and are necessary to the

operation and administration of an entity but cannot be readily identifiable to a specific cost objective or grant. These costs are commonly known as “Facilities & Administrative (F&A) costs,” “General & Administrative (G&A) costs” or “Management & Administrative (M&A) costs.” All facility related costs are to be considered indirect costs. These include, but are not limited to, rents, utilities, janitorial services, grounds maintenance and minor building maintenance. Purchase of real estate, capital improvements and renovations are not allowable as either direct or indirect costs. Depreciation expense and interest on mortgages are allowable as indirect costs pursuant to 2 CFR 200.

For Lead Applicants with indirect rates approved by a “cognizant federal agency”, Development will accept the approved or provisional rates for use in calculating fully loaded costs. The Indirect Cost Negotiation Agreement letter or similar document from the cognizant agency documenting the approved rates for federal FY2019 must be included with the proposal. For Lead Applicants without federally approved indirect rates, a 2 CFR-200-compliant rate application must be submitted with the proposed budget using a modified total direct cost basis. Upon approval by Development, these indirect rates will be applied for the Project Period. All costs are subject to reconciliation. Complete financial records are expected to be kept and will be subject to audit.

Compensation. Compensation costs are allowable to the extent that they are reasonable, conform to the established policy of the Lead Applicant consistently applied regardless of the source of funds, and reasonably reflect the percentage of time actually devoted to the Project. Lead Applicant may request from Grant Funds 50% of an individual’s gross compensation, up to a maximum of \$100,000 per individual per year. The other 50% of an individual’s gross compensation, up to a maximum of \$100,000 per individual per year, shall constitute eligible Cost Share. Any additional gross compensation will be the responsibility of the Lead Applicant and not eligible for reimbursement of Grant Funds or Cost Share. These limitations shall also apply to employees of any Collaborator and any subcontractors acting in executive capacities of the ESP or Collaborator. Additionally, performance compensation is only allowable for reimbursement and eligible as Cost Share if there is a clearly defined, consistent, organization-wide performance-based compensation structure. No other types of bonuses or rewards or any discretionary compensation are allowable.

Equity Interests. An ESP cannot take an equity or membership interest, in any form, in return for services rendered to a Client. Additionally, an ESP cannot take an equity or membership interest, in any form, in a Client through a grant award by the ESP to the Client.

Travel Expenses, Meeting/Event Expenses and Sponsorship/Membership Expenses. Expenses for travel, meetings and events, and sponsorships and memberships, if eligible, may only be submitted as Cost Share and will not be reimbursed with Grant Funds.

3.3.12.4 Budget Narrative

A budget narrative must be included covering a detailed explanation of the uses of funds for (i) the Ohio Third Frontier funds requested and (ii) Cost Share

committed. The uses of funds and the scope of activities must be clearly and fully described for each line item. Make sure to be very specific regarding “Other Direct Costs”.

Identify each full-time and part-time position supported by the Ohio Third Frontier funds, the percentage of time dedicated to entrepreneurial services to Clients, and the total compensation in Appendix E – Total Compensation.

3.3.13 Letters of Commitment

A Commitment Letter must be provided for each Cost Share provider identified in Budget Form 3. Commitment letters may not be more than one page and may not include appendices or attachments except for those providing a Donated Services Provider Information Form.

The letters must:

- Be submitted on the letterhead of the Cost Share provider;
- Include the name of the Lead Applicant and the LOI number assigned by Development;
- State the specific amount of the Cost Share commitment that matches the Cost Share amount on the corresponding Budget Form 2, and the type of cost share (cash or Donated Services);
- Briefly state the nature and the duration of the collaboration;
- If the collaboration involves the delivery of services, state the magnitude of the Ohio Third Frontier Funds anticipated to be received as part of this proposal and state how the proposed services will contribute to the overall strategy of the regional entrepreneurial network;
- State when the committed Cost Share will be available to the Lead Applicant;
- If applicable, state any resources other than Cost Share that the Cost Share provider is committing to the Lead Applicant;
- Be dated and signed by a representative of the Cost Share provider with the authority to make the Cost Share commitment.

Organizations providing Donated Services as Cost Share must complete the Donated Services Provider Information Form which includes the number of hours committed, cost per hour, description of the services to be provided, and the total monetary value of the commitment.

General support letters are not allowed. Any such letters submitted will be removed from the proposal and not transmitted to the external evaluation team.

4 Evaluation Criteria

Only the most meritorious proposals will be considered. Proposals will be evaluated by an independent, professional evaluator based on responsiveness to all the requirements of this RFP and on the Lead Applicant's response to any additional information that may be requested. The evaluator may or may not recommend funding for each ESP service area based on the quality of the plan presented. Implicit in those requirements and evaluation criteria is the quality of the proposal and budget.

The following criteria have been designated with the highest relevance to and weighting for the ESP Program:

- Alignment of the proposal with the Program purpose, goals, objectives, eligibility, funding and Cost Share requirements as described in Section 2 of this RFP.
- Quality of the proposal to the requirements of this RFP. The specific elements of the proposal that will be examined include but are not limited to the following:
 - Likelihood of meaningfully advancing the regional entrepreneurial system during the Project Period;
 - Likelihood of achieving the proposed projections;
 - Likelihood of attracting the resources of venture capital firms both within and outside of Ohio;
 - Level of coordination of the regional entrepreneurial support network;
 - Meaningful efforts to build self-sustainability into the operating model, and create sustainable engines of entrepreneurial activity and support;
 - Depth of understanding of diversity and inclusion issues in the technology entrepreneurship space, and meaningful efforts to advance the inclusion of underserved populations in the region;
 - Likelihood of meaningful impact and success of the planned internship program;
 - Tangible community support in the form of cash Cost Share; and
 - Appropriateness of the amount of donated services proposed relative to the number of Clients.

Consideration will also be given to the quality and reasonableness of the major non-service-component elements of the proposal and how well they enable the effective delivery to Clients of the services proposed. The major non-service-component categories include:

- Organization, governance and administration
- Additional activities

5 APPENDICES

Appendix A – RFP Process, Awards Process, and Mandatory Compliance

Appendix B – Application Forms

Appendix C – Technology Commercialization Framework

Appendix D – Staff Information

Appendix E – Budget Forms