



ACADEMIC STARTUP GRANT

Chartered in 1983 by the State of South Carolina as a public, non-profit corporation, SCRA fuels South Carolina's innovation economy by accelerating technology-enabled growth in academia, entrepreneurship, and industry. SCRA's Academic Innovations Program seeks to be an indispensable partner in advancing translational research and supporting academic startups.

Grant Objective

The objective of the Academic Startup Grant is to provide early-stage funding to academic startups to support one or more critical milestones towards commercialization and advance the company's pursuit of follow-on funding.

Eligibility Criteria

- The company is registered as a for-profit business with the SC Secretary of State. In addition, the company's principal place of business is in South Carolina or at least 51% of its full-time equivalent employees are located within the state.
- The company must be an active SCRA Member Company (Note: Company may simultaneously apply to become Member Company and request grant funding.)
- The company must be advancing IP from a South Carolina post-secondary academic institution.
- Applications must be accompanied by a Letter of Support from the Technology Transfer Office (TTO), or equivalent organization, of the relevant academic institution.

Funding Amount & Use of Funds

- Academic Startup Grants provide funding up to \$25,000.
- The company is allowed up to two (2) Academic Startup Grants during its lifetime.
- The Use of Funds must assist with commercialization of the technology. This may include de-risking the technology or de-risking the business case.
- Excluded from the Use of Funds are the following: rent, licensing fees, legal fees, reimbursement of past expenses, and salaries.

Application Process

- Interested applicants should contact their assigned Relationship Manager to schedule a pre-submission meeting. Based upon the outcomes of this meeting, SCRA will provide application materials and instructions.
- Companies that pass initial review will be invited to complete an application for funding.
- When all requested documentation is submitted, the Relationship Manager will present the company's funding request to the Academic Innovations Team.
- Following the meeting, companies will receive notification of SCRA's decision and next steps. This typically occurs within one week.
- If approved, awards are typically funded within 30 calendar days after notification.
- Eligible applications are reviewed on a rolling basis.

Review Criteria

- **Technology Sector:** The business is aligned with SCRA's key technology sectors, which include Advanced Materials/ Manufacturing, Life Sciences, Information Technology, and Clean Technology/Sustainability/ Resilience.
- **Management Team:** The company has experienced team members and/or advisors.
- **Technical Viability:** The technology is differentiated, not easily replicated, and has protected IP such as trade secrets, patents, and/or trademarks.
- **Market Viability:** The company has a clear value proposition, a high-impact business model with the potential to generate significant revenue, and a clear path to market.

- **Funding:** The company has plans to or already has secured initial external funding, such as grants, banks, friends & family. The company has a credible funding plan to enter the market, as well as thoughts on exit opportunities.
- **Impact:** There is potential to create economic impact such as new jobs, new research or solutions for industry, recurring revenue, follow-on funding, etc.
- **Use of Funds:** The proposed use of funds achieves one or more critical milestones towards commercialization or expanding market position and will support the company in pursuing follow-on funding. Clear milestones and deliverables are outlined in the project plan.

Reporting Requirements

- **Grant Final Report:** The company must complete a Grant Final Report within thirty (30) days after the end of the Performance Period outlined in the Grant Agreement. This report documents deliverables and outcomes of the grant and will be referenced should the company request additional funding from SCRA. A Grant Final Report Template is available on the SCRA Member Portal.
- **SCRA Annual Questionnaire:** Annually, the company must complete SCRA's Economic Impact Assessment. The assessment is essential in that it measures the economic impact of SCRA on South Carolina's economy in compliance with SCRA's legislative reporting mandate. The information is aggregated and does not reveal individual company information.

Terms and Conditions

- **Performance Period:** All proposed activities must be completed within the stated performance period in the Grant Agreement. Where circumstances warrant, the company may request in writing to extend the performance period.
- **Relocation:** The company agrees to reimburse all the awarded funds to SCRA if it leaves South Carolina within twelve (12) months of the final distribution of funds.
- **Investment Participation:** SCRA's investment affiliate, SC Launch, Inc., will have a reasonable right to purchase any future offered securities up to the amount of the Grant multiplied by four ("4x Grant Amount"), on uniform terms and conditions with other investors.
- **Acknowledgement of SCRA Funding:** Awardees should acknowledge SCRA as a funding source in publications and news releases that result from the Use of Funds. Copies of any such publications and news releases should be shared with SCRA via the Relationship Manager.
- **Tax Reporting:** Grants may be reportable income to the recipient via a 1099 in the year funds are received.
- **Animal or Human Studies:** If research involves either animal or human subjects, the grant recipient must assure compliance with the prevailing national and institutional guidelines for animal and human studies.

Intellectual Property Guidelines

SCRA does not claim any rights whatsoever to patents, copyrights, trademarks, or any other IP created as a result of work sponsored by its grant funding.

South Carolina Freedom of Information Act

Information provided by the applicant will be treated by SCRA as business sensitive, and SCRA will make all reasonable efforts to protect this information when disclosure is not legally required. However, SCRA is subject to the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), and the applicant should not disclose to SCRA any information that would negatively affect its ability to obtain intellectual property protection or undermine other business efforts. This applies to all verbal or written material.

For Additional Information

Inquiries about the Academic Startup Grant should be addressed to academicinnovations@scra.org