

Request for Proposals: Technology Gap Fund (Round 2)

What is the Technology Gap Fund?: The Technology Gap Fund is designed to provide critical "gap" funding that will help promising WSU innovations and inventions that have a high degree of commercial potential to move forward to commercial application. The Fund is looking for proposals from WSU faculty innovators and inventors whose innovations and inventions have high commercial potential but need an additional infusion of funds to get the technology to the level of commercial application. The "gap" funds being offered are intended to be the final infusion of funds for additional research or prototype development that will make the innovation or invention marketplace-ready for licensing or as the basis for a new company start-up.

Availability of Funds/Size of Awards: WSU's Office of Research and WSU's Office of Intellectual Property Administration (OIPA) are sponsoring this RFP. Total funds available under the program are \$150,000 over the 2006-2007 funding cycle. Funds will be allocated to between five and seven recipients whose proposals show the greatest potential for commercial application. Awards generally will be in the range of \$15,000-\$25,000 with a maximum award potential of \$50,000 for an exceptional project.

Source of Funds: \$100,000 of the \$150,000 funds available is being provided by WSU's Office of Research. The remaining \$50,000 is being provided by the Washington Research Foundation.

Two-Step Application Process/Deadline Dates: The application process is being handled in two stages: a pre-proposal submission followed by a full proposal submission. You must submit a pre-proposal to be considered for the program.

Step 1: Pre-proposal submission:

1) A brief (2-page) pre-proposal must be received by OGRD no later than 5:00 p.m. on July 3, 2006.

2) A REX Lite Form (which can be found on the OGRD website at the following address: <http://www.ogrd.wsu.edu/forms.asp>) must accompany the pre-proposal. At this stage, no departmental or college signatures are required on the REX Lite Form.

The pre-proposal will include a description of the proposed project, the specific rationale and justification for Gap Funding, and a brief statement of the perceived commercial potential of the innovation or invention being proposed for funding.

An applicant may submit only one pre-proposal per round as the lead PI, but the applicant may be a co-PI on a different proposal submitted at the same time. However, an applicant may be a PI or a Co-PI on only one funded project at any given time. Resubmitted pre-proposals will be considered if revised based on previous selection committee recommendations.

Once the above deadline for the receipt of pre-proposals has passed, a decision will be made as to which pre-proposals will be allowed to go forward to the full proposal stage. The lead researcher for pre-proposals selected to move forward to the full proposal stage will be contacted by OIPA and given additional instructions and a deadline date for the submission of the full proposal.

Step 2: Full proposal submission:

1) At this stage, the lead investigator who will be submitting the full proposal should submit an invention disclosure to OIPA through his/her college dean. Invention disclosure forms may be found at the following OIPA web address: <http://wsurf5.respark.wsu.edu/>. Though there is no specific due date for receipt by OIPA of the invention disclosure associated with a particular proposal, this step is very important because proposals without companion invention disclosures will not be evaluated for funding.

2) As stated above under Step 1, the lead investigators on selected pre-proposals will be given a date for submission of the full proposals.

3) A REX Lite Form must accompany the submission of the full proposal. At this stage, all departmental and college signatures are required to be on the REX Lite Form. The budget and budget justification accompanying the full proposal is to be reviewed and approved as is normally required under submission procedures for extramural proposals sent through OGRD.

In general, proposals will include a detailed description of the project including a plan for commercialization of the innovation or invention. This should include realistic and commercially meaningful milestones for project development, marketing, and selling of product. If you need assistance with this portion of your proposal, OIPA staff may assist you with this part of the proposal, but OIPA will not write the proposal for you.

Completed applications and their companion invention disclosures will be jointly reviewed by an external committee composed of representatives from Washington-based businesses and venture capital firms. The committee will provide funding recommendations to the Director of OIPA and to the Vice Provost for Research, who will make the final funding decisions.

Please note that the reviewers will not necessarily be specialists in the applicant's scientific field. Thus, the proposals should be written to a broad, non-academic audience. And, although technical field-specific information will be expected, the proposal must be able to be understood by non-specialists.

The primary criterion for selection is the extent to which the project can realistically be expected to reach full commercial application at the end of the award period and the level

of the overall commercial impact expected. Preference will be given to projects with the greatest potential to impact the economy of the state of Washington.

All full proposals must be submitted with a fully completed and fully signed REX Lite form. The title of the proposal should be the same as the title of the innovation or invention listed on the invention disclosure and must include a statement as to the status of the invention disclosure. Please provide the corresponding OIPA case number if you have that information. This can be obtained at OIPA (5-5526).

Required Components of a Successful Proposal:

A) Project Description: The project description is limited to a maximum of five (5) one-sided pages, using a 12-point font and 1-inch margins. No more than five pages of the project description will be given to the review committee. The table of contents and the budget/budget justification page do not count in the five-page total. The project description section must include the following items:

1) Table of Contents: (Optional, and does not count as part of five-page limit.)

2) Introduction and Rationale: Provide a brief, critical review of the pertinent literature, theoretical background, and justification for the proposed project. Describe any results already achieved, including publications whether submitted, in press, or published. Describe the current status of your innovation or invention.

3) Objectives: What is the project designed to accomplish? What are your objectives?

4) Market Analysis: To which industry (e.g. bioproducts, medical devices, agriculture, pharmaceuticals, entertainment, energy, etc.) and to which type of business is your product directed (wholesale, retail, production, service)? In other words, fully describe the size and nature of your market in detail, noting specific opportunities, trends, intended purchasers, etc.

5) Procedures/Activities: How will you accomplish bringing your innovation/invention to commercial application? If there are any possible project roadblocks to success, discuss these. For example, if access to a particular location or institution is required for research or data collection (e.g. the EMSL at PNNL, bio-safety laboratories, etc), state whether permission has been obtained.

6) Milestones: Provide a schedule showing how measurable progress is to be tracked during the support period. Use of a Gantt chart is recommended. The Gap Funding support period is initially limited to one year. A no-cost extension of up to one additional year may be granted if requested and adequately justified.

7) Needs/Benefits of Gap Fund Support: Explain what other efforts have been made to find support for the project. Discuss any match funding being provided.

Describe how the support provided by the Gap Fund will make a significant contribution to the licensing and commercial potential of your innovation or invention. Please note that Gap Funds are not intended as a supplement to an existing project.

B) Project Budget/Budget Justification: The proposal must contain a one-year, one-page budget and budget justification at the end of the proposal that, as stated above, will be prepared and reviewed and approved in accordance with normal OGRD proposal submission guidelines. Please refer to the following web address for additional information:

http://www.ogrd.wsu.edu/memos/memo2/Memo_2_March_01_06_Version.pdf

Please note the following:

- The combined one-page budget and budget justification need to be together on the same page. (This page does not count in the five-page proposal limit.)
- No indirect costs are allowed.
- No tuition is allowed.
- Any travel funds must be thoroughly justified and essential to the project. Travel funds may not exceed \$1,000, regardless.
- All salaries proposed must be fully explained and justified.
 - Only one month of summer salary for each 9- or 10-month faculty PI or co-PI is allowed over the entire project period. Faculty members to be funded with Gap Funds cannot be on summer salary support for more than one additional summer month from another funding source.
 - Faculty on 12-month appointments or on sabbatical leave are ineligible for summer salary support.
 - Visiting faculty are ineligible for salary support.
 - A compelling case just be made for salary support for technicians and post-docs.
 - Salaries for office/administrative staff are not allowed.
- All other budget line items must directly impact the success of the project and need to be thoroughly justified; budget support is tightly focussed on driving innovations and inventions into the commercial marketplace. Responsible budgeting is a criterion for award selection.
- Cost-sharing is encouraged and is considered another criterion in project evaluation and award.

Project Reporting: Gap Fund awardees must provide OIPA a final project report no later than 90 days following completion of their projects.

For Additional Information Please Contact:

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