



# **Accelerator Grant for SBIR/STTR and other Federally-funded R&D programs**

**A Component of the MTI Business Innovation Program**

## **Application Instructions**

### **Key Dates:**

Application Submission – First Tuesday of Each Month

Award Notification – Four Weeks after Submission

### **Contact:**

Shane Beckim

Investment Officer

Phone: 207.588.1018

Email: [sbeckim@mainetechnology.org](mailto:sbeckim@mainetechnology.org)

Kim Doughty

Lending & Grant Associate

Phone: 207.203.2072

Email: [kdoughty@mainetechnology.org](mailto:kdoughty@mainetechnology.org)

# Table of Contents

## OVERVIEW

Goals & Objectives.....	3
Confidentiality .....	4
Eligibility (Who is Eligible, Eligible Projects, Eligible Activities).....	4-5
Limitations and Restrictions.....	5
Specific Instructions for SBIR/STTR Phase I/II Applicants .....	5-6
Economic Benefit to Maine.....	6
Application Process and Timeline.....	7
Appeals Process.....	7
Process for Grant Recipients .....	7
Reporting Requirements .....	7

## APPLICATION ELEMENTS

Directions and Checklists.....	8-13
Online Registration Information.....	8
Non-confidential Project Summary .....	8
Copy of SBIR/STTR Phase I/II Grant Contract .....	8
SBIR/STTR Project Description .....	8
Application Narrative	
Scope of Work.....	9
Market Potential.....	9
Commercialization and Potential for Economic Impact .....	9
Management Team .....	9
Budget (Form B).....	10
Professional Summary .....	10
Example image of Budget Form B .....	11
MTI Allowable Rates and Matching Fund Requirements.....	12
Checklist .....	13

### Application Requirements

#### Online submissions

- Must be one, complete PDF attachment uploaded via MTI’s Online Application Portal, by 5pm on the stated deadline date.
- Once your final draft is complete, follow this link to apply online:  
[https://www.grantrequest.com/SID\\_2050?SA=SNA&FID=35037](https://www.grantrequest.com/SID_2050?SA=SNA&FID=35037)

#### Application layout

- 1” margins, 12 pt. font, 8.5” x 11” pages
- All applications should be presented in a **narrative format** with the use of diagrams, data, tables, and charts as needed. Hyperlinks are allowed within the application narrative.
- Applications **must be arranged in the order dictated by the Application Checklist** – See Application Checklist included here on Page 13.

## Overview of MTI Business Innovation Program

### Goals and Objectives

The Business Innovation Program includes a suite of competitive grants, loans and equity investments for technology-based start-ups, established companies and research institutions in Maine. Managed by the Maine Technology Institute (MTI), an industry-led, state-funded, private non-profit organization, the program's suite of funding options addresses the "funding gap" that often hinders technologies from making the leap from development to commercialization.

The Program consists of grants and investments that cost share early-stage foundational and planning activity and help Maine leverage external R&D funding such as the Federal Small Business Innovation Research/Small Business Technology Transfer Program (SBIR/STTR), Broad Agency Announcements (BAA), other federally-funded R&D programs, and equity capital funding further along the commercialization and growth continuum. Applications are typically competitively reviewed and require at least a 1:1 ratio of external funding for every dollar of MTI investment. MTI funding helps leverage the capital required to develop and market the technology and results in positive economic impact within Maine.

### Purpose

Over MTI's first decade of funding, the track record of MTI-funded companies demonstrated that projects with strong, experienced management teams and/or projects that incorporated business development activities into its business plan typically had higher rates of commercial success. It has been MTI's experience, as well as the experience of technology-based economic development (TBED) programs in other states, that this is particularly important for start-up/initial stage companies, and doubly so when entrepreneurs do not have prior experience growing a technology company or when a management team lacks certain expertise. As a result, MTI has created the Accelerator Grant to support the business and commercialization activities necessary to bring a product, process or service to market.

### Confidentiality

MTI maintains the confidentiality of applications, reports, and other project information submitted to MTI, with the exception of basic contact and company registration information, as identified in this Application Instructions document – applicants are also asked to submit a Non-confidential Project Summary of 100 words or less. All MTI Board of Directors, Technology Board members, Peer Reviewers, other consultants, and staff are required to sign and adhere to a non-disclosure agreement and conflict of interest policy statements (both forms are available at: [www.mainetechnology.org](http://www.mainetechnology.org)).

## Accelerator Grant Specifications

<b>Accelerator Grant</b>	<b>Type of Matching Funds</b>	<b>Grant Fund Amount</b>	<b>Application Deadlines</b>	<b>Eligible Applicants</b>
<i>-For Early Stage Development Loan (DL) recipients</i>	Grant <u>in addition to</u> MTI DL funds	Up to 10% of the awarded Development Loan	Tied to DL project	Early stage company DL recipients (See DL-specific application instructions)
<i>-For SBIR/STTR Phase I recipients</i>	Grant <u>in addition to</u> SBIR/STTR Phase I grant	Up to 20% of SBIR/STTR Phase I grant not to exceed \$15,000	Monthly	Maine small businesses that have been awarded and executed an SBIR/STTR Phase I contract within the past 90 days
<i>-For SBIR/STTR Phase II recipients and other Federal R&amp;D program Awardees</i>	Grant <u>in addition to</u> SBIR/STTR Phase II/other federal award	Up to 10% of SBIR/STTR Phase II grant / other federal award - not to exceed \$50,000	Monthly	Maine small businesses that have been awarded and executed an SBIR/STTR Phase II contract/other federal award within the past 180 days

### Who is Eligible to Apply?

The MTI Accelerator Grant is available to the following categories of companies:

- Companies that have recently been chosen for a Federal Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Phase I and Phase II grants or other Federal R&D program awards and/or
- Start-up/Early Stage Companies that are awarded MTI Development Loans (DLs).

Accelerator grant funds are provided to the company in addition to their SBIR/STTR/other Federal R&D project funding, or DL funding, and do not have to be repaid to MTI.

Eligible companies may apply for a Accelerator Grant at any time during the course of their Development Loan project (see DL Accelerator Grant instructions for further details) and/or after receiving formal notice of award from federal agency funding the corresponding project.

### Eligible Projects

Eligible companies can use these grant funds to support commercialization and business development/capacity activities not eligible for SBIR/STTR/other Federal R&D project funding. Eligible funds are to be used to advance the new technology to market and to firmly establish or increase the scope and sustainability of the business enterprise. The grant is intended to increase the competitiveness of the company by providing funds directed at products/services commercialization, business and management team development, and company organization.

## List of Eligible Activities

- Business planning and business model development
- Evaluation of commercialization opportunities and identification of resources needed
- Development of strategy to secure target customers/strategic partners/investors
- Identification and analysis of target customers/strategic partners or other relevant stakeholders
- Evaluation of potential distribution channels
- Development of target market strategy, including market research, analysis and travel to gather market data
- Capital fundraising, including creation of materials to attract potential strategic partners and investors, etc.
- Strengthening of company financial management capacity and systems
- Intellectual property protection
- FDA or other certification body approval (i.e. UL, CSA or European standards certifications)
- Hiring of qualified personnel to support business development activities
- Travel related to product development, manufacturing, distribution, or trade shows that will contribute meaningfully to commercial success
- Preparation of an SBIR/STTR Phase II proposal– grant writers, experts, costs to gather information (literature search, market research or reports, etc.), in-state travel to develop partnerships for the Phase II project are allowable. All projects must end with submission of a completed SBIR/STTR Phase II proposal.
- Entrepreneurship training for management team members that will contribute to company success
- Recruiting of key management team or technical expert employees
- Establishing a board of directors or advisors for the company
- Activities surrounding the establishment of a legal corporate entity presence including filing organizational material and taking care of all basic legal matters, such as those related to employees, consultants, partner contracts and license agreements
- Other activities the applicant can establish which are critical to commercial success and fit within the purpose as outlined above and approved by MTI

Indirect or overhead costs are **NOT** eligible expenses. In addition, funding may not be requested for activities already covered by SBIR/STTR or other Federal R&D project funding.

## Limitations and Restrictions

Companies are limited to no more than \$100,000 of Accelerator Grants over five years. MTI requires that companies considering applying for a Accelerator Grant first contact MTI to schedule a meeting with a member of the Business Innovation Program team to discuss their plans prior to submitting an application.

## Specific Instructions for SBIR/STTR/other Federal R&D program Applicants

MTI makes its Accelerator Grants available to help Maine companies that succeed at securing the highly competitive federal Small Business Innovation Research and Small Business Technology Transfer (SBIR/STTR) and other Federal R&D program funding to position their companies for commercial success. Specifically, these grants help Federally-funded recipients to:

- Fund commercialization and business development activities not eligible for SBIR/STTR or other Federal R&D funding, but required to advance the research and development to market

- Increase the incentive for Maine companies to apply for Federal R&D program awards
- Increase the competitiveness and success of Maine SBIR/STTR/other Federal R&D projects by providing matching funds directed at commercialization and business development activities not typically paid for by the federal award
- In the Phase I/ II review process conducted by the federal agency, help companies be more competitive by stating the company is eligible to receive matching funds that will accelerate commercialization and business success
- Augment and leverage funds for Phase I, IB and Phase II and IIB awards.

Prior to submission of the Federal R&D program proposal, applicants should contact MTI to obtain a letter of support and notice of commitment of the Accelerator Grant. The MTI letter must be requested 14 days prior to the Agency’s required due date. MTI support letters are not required to receive the matching funds, but are highly encouraged.

**Economic Benefit to Maine**

Projects funded by MTI must show a high potential for significant economic benefit to Maine.

Outcome measures will include some of the following benefits:

- creation or retention of jobs
- additional company investments
- increased competitiveness
- infrastructure investments by the company
- increased sales and revenue
- increasing Maine’s capacity for R&D
- patents, trademarks and/or licenses
- additional outside investment into the company
- firm sustainability and growth

**Maine Seven Targeted Technology Sectors**

- Advanced Technologies for Forestry & Agriculture
- Composite Materials Technology
- Aquaculture and Marine Technology
- Environmental Technology
- Biotechnology
- Information Technology
- Precision Manufacturing Technology

## Application Process

### Step One – Meet with your MTI Investment Officer

Prior to submitting an application, contact your MTI Investment Officer to discuss a prospective scope of work for your Accelerator Grant proposal. MTI strongly encourages applicants to email a draft proposal at least two weeks prior to the deadline date.

### Step Two – Receipt and Review of Complete Application

Final proposals must be uploaded through the MTI Online Application Portal as one, complete PDF. Any incomplete applications, late applications, applications that exceed page limits or otherwise do not follow the guidelines laid out in this instructions document will not be accepted for review.

### Step Three – Review Committee Evaluation

All complete Accelerator Grant Applications will be forwarded to the assigned Review Committee. Members of the MTI Board of Directors, Technology Boards, and MTI Staff may evaluate applications using specified evaluation criteria to determine which projects best meet MTI's objectives and are thus suitable for funding.

### Step Four – Grant Notification

All applicants will be notified via email of their application's funding decision. All unfunded applicants will also be provided with relevant comments of the review committee. MTI staff will be available for conversations by phone or in-person to discuss the outcome of the application review.

## Appeals Process

MTI's standard appeals policy governs the program. Appeals must be filed within two weeks from the date of email notification. The full existing policy is available at:

[http://www.mainetechnology.org/docs/appeal\\_policy.pdf](http://www.mainetechnology.org/docs/appeal_policy.pdf)

## Process for Grant Recipients

Grant recipients will be notified and arrangements will be made to finalize the Grant Agreement contract. Grants are contingent upon execution of the Grant Agreement. Up to 80% of the approved award will be disbursed at the start of the project, with remaining funds to be disbursed upon project completion and MTI approval of the project final report, as detailed in the Grant Agreement.

The Grant Agreement requires the applicant to specify the expected endpoint documentation and targeted project completion date (to include ample time to compose and submit the project final report) – these details must be agreed-upon by both the Recipient and MTI.

## Reporting Requirements

Completion of the grant project requires MTI approval of a project final report, as outlined in the Grant Agreement, to include the following:

- Summary of the executed business development and/or commercialization efforts
- Summary of the project results obtained
- Summary and documentation of all expenses identified within the project budget
- Copy of the Phase I/II interim/final reports that are submitted to the federal agency.

## Instructions for composing your Accelerator Grant Application

### REQUIRED ITEMS

**Final applications must be submitted via MTI's Online Application Portal. To compose your final application document for upload, be sure to include each of the following items listed below. The final application document must be uploaded as one, complete PDF.**

*Please email questions to MTI Lending & Grant Associate, Kim Doughty, at: [Kdoughty@mainetechnology.org](mailto:Kdoughty@mainetechnology.org)*

### Registration Information via Online Application Portal

*Please Note – “Public Information” submitted in MTI's Online Registration Form may be shared with media or MTI partner organizations, excluding Tax Identification Numbers (TIN) & email addresses, which are used only for MTI's internal operations. MTI treats as confidential all contents of the uploaded application documents. For our confidentiality and conflict of interest policies, please refer to our website at: [www.mainetechnology.org/who-is-mti/technology-boards/](http://www.mainetechnology.org/who-is-mti/technology-boards/)*

**NOTE:** On our website you will also find listed all MTI Technology Board reviewers, as well as MTI's Board of Directors. If there are specific individuals whom you would prefer not review your application, please be sure to provide their names in the “Withhold From” field of your Online Registration Information – MTI will withhold your confidential application information from all individuals identified here, and those individuals will not have access to your application materials, other than (a) the public information you provide in the Online Registration Information sections, and (b) your non-confidential project summary.

### Non-Confidential Project Summary (≤ 100 words) via Online Portal

Applicants submitting through MTI's Online Application Portal will be asked to include a non-confidential project summary, along with their initial registration information. The project summary must be **non-confidential** and must not exceed 100 words. Please note that this summary may be included in subsequent MTI press releases, and may also be provided to members of the public or MTI partner organizations, if so requested. The summary should describe the benefit and feasibility of the project, as well as the project's specific goals. A complete non-confidential summary includes the following:

- a. Identification of the technology
- b. Summary scope of the project
- c. Expected outcome of the project

*PLEASE NOTE: The federal funding contract and project description (see below) should be the opening pages of your Application PDF to be uploaded via MTI's Online Application Portal. Please title your Application PDF as follows: “[Company Name], [Primary Contact Name], BAG”*

#### **1. SBIR/STTR Phase I, Phase II or other Federal R&D program Contract/Grant**

Provide a complete copy of the awarded Contract/Grant from the federal funding agency.

#### **2. SBIR/STTR/other Federal R&D Program Project Description**

On separate page, submit a brief description of the Federally-funded R&D program project scope of work, and the technical and market need for the project and the final product/service to be commercialized – note that this item is separate from the Non-confidential project summary.



### **3. Application Narrative Components (≤ 4 pages in total)**

#### **Scope of Work**

- Provide a detailed description of the objectives for the scope of work. The plan should describe what will be done, where it will be done and how the project will be carried out. The plan to achieve each objective should be discussed in detail. (See “Eligible Projects” above on page 5 for a list of appropriate activities.)
- Describe how the proposed scope of work will advance this technology toward commercialization and augment the work of the Federally-funded R&D program project.
- Identify measurable outcomes showing progress towards commercialization and growth (such as business plan completed, patent filed, market research completed, grant proposal submitted, certification achieved, etc.).
- Provide a timeline corresponding to the proposed scope of work not to exceed the timeline for the corresponding Federal R&D project. The proposed timeline will be taken into consideration as part of the applicant’s ability to complete the project in a timely manner.

#### **Market Potential and Commercialization**

- Give an overview of the target market for the technology and what meaningfully unique competitive advantage the product, process or service has over current solutions and competition.
- Define and quantify targeted customers. A letter from a significant interested buyer, end-user or partner may be included within the supporting documentation.

#### **Commercialization and Potential for Economic Impact**

- Briefly describe the proposed business model and any pricing and cost insight or explain how this application better defines the model.
- Describe how and where the technology will be manufactured or implemented.
- Describe how the proposed project will lead to positive economic impact to the State of Maine.
- Describe ownership over any primary intellectual property or proprietary knowledge associated with this project and how it provides a competitive marketplace advantage and/or barrier to current or future competitors.

#### **Management Team**

- Identify the key project personnel, including staff, consultants, advisors and partners.
- Briefly identify each person’s title and role.

It is not necessary to identify each team member’s personal background in this section; instead, include resume/CV for key individuals in the Professional Summaries section, just before the application checklist.

#### 4. Budget Summary (Form B) and Budget Supporting Document

All eligible and properly documented MTI expenses and matching contributions may be claimed back to the application submission date. See page 13 for specific match requirements.

\*Note: the full award from federally-funded R&D program constitutes the required match.

Obtain the Excel Budget Form online at [MTI's Accelerator Grant program page](#)

An example is provided on page 12 of this document – use the Budget Form to indicate:

- Line-item expenses for the proposed project (*Note: overhead and indirect costs are not allowable in the Accelerator Grant project*)
- Number of hours and hourly rate for all personnel and consultants
- Total funds requested from MTI

##### 4a. Budget Supporting Document (1 page)

Applicants may provide documents explaining the details of information provided in Form B.

Examples of budget supporting documents may include: lists of items to be purchased, purchase order agreements for materials to be used within the project, and scope of work agreements with consultants for work to be performed on the project.

##### WAGE / SALARY RATE GUIDELINES

All paid salaries/wages **must be the actual pay rate (based on historical paystubs), or must NOT exceed MTI limits** based on reasonable rates for the current market within Maine. Unpaid salaries also may not exceed the MTI salary rate limits set. For more details on the salary rate guidelines, please see the MTI Allowable Rates and Matching Fund Requirements on page 13.

#### 5. Professional Summary (≤ 2 pages each)

On separate paper, please submit biographies for the primary contact and any other project personnel identified on the Accelerator Grant Budget Form B and/or within the project Scope of Work, including any named consultants and/or (sub) contractors. Be sure the biographies indicate experience relevant to the performance of tasks related to this application.

Note: Biographies may not be longer than two pages per person. Any additional biography pages over the two page per person limit will be discarded. Biographies may come in the form of a resume, CV, or paragraph summary style.

## Form B: Budget Summary Form

Provide a description of each expense and from which source the expense will be paid for the proposed project. All gray cells are formula driven. You may add additional lines where necessary. Reviewers will assess the

				<b>Total</b>
<b>Employees</b>	Title	Hours	Hrly Rate	
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
<b>Consultants</b>	Role	Hours	Hrly Rate	
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
<b>Equipment (* = Include if leased)</b>		*Hours	*Hrly Rate	
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
<b>Materials</b>		Units	Cost per	
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
<b>Other</b>		Units	Cost per	
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
<b>Total Project Costs</b>				<b>\$ -</b>

## MTI Allowable Rates and Matching Fund Requirements

---

### Cash Match

*Definition:* A match in funding that results in the applicant disbursing dollars toward the completion of the proposed project. Cash match is weighted higher than other match in the application review process.

*Examples of what is eligible for cash match:*

*\*Each component of the Business Innovation Program has its own set of eligible activities. Applicants should refer to the RFA of each funding component for a complete list.*

- Actual dollars paid to consultants hired by applicant to complete the project
- Actual dollars paid to employee(s) of applicant to cover hours that employee(s) worked on project
- Actual dollars paid for project materials, related project travel expenses, and intellectual property costs
- Actual dollars paid for the purchase or rental of project related equipment
- Funding from a Federal SBIR/STTR Phase I or Phase II award, as long as the dollars received from the grant are going toward activities or the purchase of the equipment relevant to the technology being developed and are included as part of the proposed project
- Third party investment in company from sources other than an SBIR/STTR Phase I or Phase II award

*Examples of what is NOT eligible for cash match:*

- Funding from a Federal SBIR/STTR Phase I or Phase II award or funding from any other third party investment that is NOT going toward funding activities or purchasing equipment relevant to the technology being developed by the proposed project
- Actual dollars from any other MTI or State of Maine funding program

### Other Match in Services or Equipment

*Definition:* A match in funding where the applicant contributes or receives services or equipment that helps to complete the proposed project without compensation.

*Examples of what is eligible for other match:*

- Hours put in by sole proprietor or equity owner that does NOT currently receive payroll or salary (i.e., sweat equity), using MTI's approved pro-bono hourly rates not to exceed \$50 for principals or executive level management and not to exceed \$30 for all other individuals participating in the project
- Hours put into the project by consultants that receive NO dollar payment for work (i.e., working pro bono); the maximum hourly pro-bono rate for a consultant is \$50
- Hours that equipment owned either by the applicant or an outside third party is used for activities necessary to complete the project where no payment is made for its use and is instead assigned a fair market value which requires justification for an hourly rate

*Examples of what is NOT eligible for other match:*

- The difference between personnel or a consultant's market rate and the reduced rate being charged to applicant
- The difference between a third party manufacturer's market rate to rent use of equipment and what being charged to applicant

**MTI RETAINS SOLE DISCRETION TO DETERMINE MATCH  
ACCEPTABILITY AND ADEQUACY AS PROPOSED IN THE APPLICATION**

## ACCELERATOR GRANT APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Please know that MTI strongly encourages all applicants to email a draft proposal at least two weeks prior to the targeted application deadline. Please email your draft proposal to your assigned MTI Investment Officer.

Applications submitted through MTI's Online Portal must be uploaded as one, complete PDF attachment including all necessary items listed below – please title your Application PDF file as follows: “[Your Company Name], [Primary Contact Name], BAG”

\_\_\_\_\_ **Online Registration Information:** Please note that the general contact information provided in the Online Application Portal is treated as public information; however, all contents of the uploaded application file, Tax ID#s, and email addresses are confidential.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Non-confidential Project Summary (100 words or less):** Submit through MTI's Online Application Portal, along with initial registration information.

*PLEASE NOTE: The federal funding contract and project description (see below) should be the opening pages of your Application PDF to be uploaded via MTI's Online Application Portal.*

\_\_\_\_\_ **1. SBIR/STTR Phase I, Phase II or other Federal R&D program Contract/Grant**

\_\_\_\_\_ **2. SBIR/STTR/other Federal R&D Project Description:** Separate from Non-confidential summary.

\_\_\_\_\_ **3. Application Narrative:** Not to exceed four pages in total, this section must address the criteria identified in the application instructions.

\_\_\_\_\_ **4. Form B - Budget Summary:** Obtain Form B at [MTI's Accelerator Grant program page](#)  
\_\_\_\_\_ A one-page budget supporting document is optional.

\_\_\_\_\_ **5. Professional Summary:** Submit biographies for the primary contact and any other key project personnel, including any named consultants and/or contractors. **Biographies may NOT be longer than two pages per person.**