



SUNY TECHNOLOGY ACCELERATOR FUND CLASS OF 2017 APPLICATION AND ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDELINES

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The SUNY Technology Accelerator Fund ("TAF") provides funding to support the advancement of SUNY innovations from the lab to the marketplace. Since its launch in 2011, the TAF has successfully advanced the commercial readiness of a number of SUNY-developed innovations. In most cases, SUNY innovations developed through sponsored research lack critical proof-of-concept data that is needed to attract investment by potential licensees or investors. TAF support targets the critical milestones needed to demonstrate that an innovation is worthy of external investment. TAF's strategic objective is to facilitate the commercialization of SUNY-developed innovations for the public benefit in an expeditious and effective manner. Our aim is to identify opportunities where small investments will provide significant impacts on making SUNY innovations available to the public.

PROJECT ELIGIBILITY

- Projects from all disciplines are welcome to apply for TAF Class of 2017 funding.
- Previously funded TAF projects are eligible for TAF Class of 2017 funding.
- Only SUNY faculty, staff, or students are eligible to apply for TAF funding, and proposals must be endorsed and submitted by the campus RF Operations Manager or designee.
- The project must be led by an individual who has technology commercialization and project management experience, and has proven to be effective at tracking deliverables. It is not required that the proposed principal investigator be the project manager.
- Only proposals which can demonstrate that commercialization milestones are achievable within six months will receive an investment. However, the TAF Managing Director may make an exception to this requirement if the applicant demonstrates that interim milestones can be reached within six months.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

All applications will be reviewed for compliance with the eligibility criteria identified above. Noncompliant applications will be rejected without further review. The TAF Managing Director will review the applications and make funding decisions. Each eligible application will be judged strictly on the likelihood that follow-on investment and public utilization shall result from TAF support.

Specifically the TAF Managing Director will consider the following:

Availability of IP Protection: Can the innovation that exists today be protected by patents, copyrights, trademarks, or even as a trade secret? What is the status of any such intellectual property protection (e.g., patent applications, issued patents, registered copyrights or marks) and the business strategy for establishing and building an intellectual property portfolio?

Marketability: Into what type of product, process, or software can the innovation be incorporated? What is the strategy for attracting the interest of a licensee which may include a startup? Have potential licensees expressed interest? What specific feedback from a licensee is available?

Customer Discovery: Has any customer discovery or industry outreach related to the ultimate product, process, or software incorporating the innovation been conducted? Who was contacted and what is their feedback? How did the feedback inform the commercialization plan for the technology and/or the aims of the project proposed by the project team and potential (or existing) development partners?

Commercial Potential: What is the projected development and commercialization path? How long is it projected to take for a product to be developed and offered for sale? What are the potential barriers to commercialization (e.g., regulatory approval)?

Campus Commitment or Cost Sharing: What commitment of resources has the campus or a third party made to support the TAF project? Patent expenditures may be considered demonstration of campus commitment.

Feasibility: What is the feasibility of the development plan? If the plan is successfully executed, will the outcome increase the commercial potential of the technology?

Breadth of Impact: What portion of the population will benefit from the availability of this technology?

FUNDING

Awards may be made up to \$50,000, but projects will be funded at the level deemed necessary to achieve the proposed project objectives. The evaluation and award process will include a rigorous budget review, therefore applicants are strongly encouraged to work with their sponsored programs office to ensure appropriate project budgeting. The project plan and budget of any submitted proposal may be negotiated by the TAF Managing Director before an award is made. All TAF funding agreements will include a provision requiring that ten percent (10%) of the gross revenue or equity received by the campus from the licensing or other commercialization of TAF-supported technology be transferred to the TAF. By submitting a proposal to the TAF for consideration a campus acknowledges and agrees to follow The Research Foundation for SUNY's [Guidelines for the Administration of Industrial Relationships](#) when negotiating an agreement related to TAF-supported intellectual property.

ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDELINES

TAF awards are intended to close the gap between research and commercialization, therefore TAF projects need not be restricted to laboratory research. Allowable expenditures of TAF funding include but are not limited to the following:

- Materials;
- Supplies;
- Travel;
- Prototype development; and
- Independent contracting.

Class of 2017 funds cannot be used for tuition, construction, renovation, legal fees, patent costs, or permits. Funds may be used for salary and fringe benefits for project personnel if a definitive need is outlined in the proposal submitted. All funds must be used solely for the project described in the application.

TAF applications will be shared with market analysis and intellectual property firms retained by the TAF Managing Director for evaluation purposes, but otherwise will be kept confidential. These firms will review each application and provide technology assessment, competitive landscape, end user inputs, specific market dynamics and an intellectual property review. By applying for TAF Class of 2017 funds, the project manager and all project participants hereby consent to this process and agree to be reasonably available to the TAF Managing Director to answer any questions that may arise in this process and to cooperate with the TAF Managing Director and institutional official.

APPLICATION PROCESS

The deadline to submit TAF Class of 2017 proposals for consideration is **March 20, 2017**. Each SUNY campus may submit a maximum of two proposals for consideration. Proposals must be submitted only by the campus RF Operations Manager or designee. Please consult with your campus RF Operations Manager or designee to ensure compliance with any local procedures regarding your participation in the TAF program. Proposals must be no more than ten pages in length (not including items 1 and 5-8 below), use a font size of 11 points or larger, and at least one inch margins (top, bottom, left, and right) for all pages. Funding decisions will be made by the TAF Managing Director within eight weeks of the application deadline, March 20, 2017, and the decision will be communicated promptly by written notice from the TAF Managing Director to the project's principal investigator and copied to the appropriate campus RF Operations Manager or designee, institutional official (see item number 1 below), Technology Transfer Director, or RF Assistant Director for Innovation Support Services.

Applications must contain:

1. A cover page with the names and contact information for all staff proposed to be part of the project team and the name of an institutional official who will be responsible for ensuring compliance with the obligations identified in a TAF funding agreement;
2. An executive summary describing the market problem to be addressed, the solution offered by this innovation/technology, why it is likely to be successful, the project aims and the budget proposed;
3. A nonconfidential description of the technology related to the proposed project that is no longer than five sentences with the aim of sharing this description to industry and customers for feedback;
4. A project narrative, to be developed with the campus Technology Transfer Office or RF Assistant Director for Innovation Support Services, that includes:

- Problem: Describe the problem and who has the problem (i.e., the customer) and include whether the hypothesis has been verified through customer discovery;
 - Technology Description and Solution: Concisely describe your invention, the solution, the invention's value proposition, and why the invention is superior to existing alternatives (i.e., compare to the competition);
 - Technical Feasibility: Outline the key studies and findings to date that supports the viability of this technology, provide a concise review of recent research in the field, and list related peer-reviewed journal publications;
 - Intellectual Property: Describe the nature of the invention and what will be claimed (i.e., composition of matter, device, method), discuss the status of any domestic or international patent filings, summarize any known prosecution risks, explain the filing strategy, and provide a concise review of the relevant prior art;
 - Commercial Opportunity: Describe the potential size and scope of commercial applications, provide data and sources supporting market assumptions, discuss any startup potential and any business models that have been successful, and describe feedback from marketing and customer discovery efforts including any interest from companies or investors;
 - Development Plan: Describe the specific aims of your development plan and how they will better position the technology for commercialization (e.g., technical validation, address questions raised by industry, strengthen or broaden intellectual property, quantify market opportunity, funding strategy). For each aim, provide a detailed budget and timeframe for completion.
 - Milestones: Describe the milestones expected to be accomplished utilizing the TAF award. Include a completed [TAF Class of 2017 Scope of Work](#) showing the expected timelines for completing each milestone and the itemized cost for achieving each.
5. A description of the roles and responsibilities of the project manager and other project staff, including a biography/CV for each;
 6. A summary of feedback from at least two industry partners, investors, or seasoned entrepreneurs planning to develop a startup company around the invention (letters of interest and/or support from potential partners will be considered);
 7. A letter of support from the campus RF Operations Manager or designee.
 8. A completed [TAF Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form](#) for all staff proposed to be part of the project team. Proposals submitted without a completed TAF Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form may be rejected by the TAF Managing Director.¹
 9. For Prior TAF Awardees Only: Describe any outcomes that have occurred as a direct result of receiving prior TAF funding (i.e., new industrial partnerships, new intellectual property filed, significant challenges solved). Provide information relating to the status of previous TAF milestones and how they increased the value of the technology. To receive additional TAF investments, prior awardees must be able to illustrate that a partner is committed to supporting the continued development and commercialization of the TAF-

¹ Each TAF Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form will be reviewed by the TAF Managing Director. Based on this review, the TAF Managing Director may determine that a conflict of interest management plan for project personnel is required in order to receive a TAF award.

supported technology, which can include but is not limited to sponsoring research, licensing, and agreeing to provide matching funds.

AWARD PROCESS

TAF Class of 2017 awardees will be required to submit within two weeks from receiving an award letter a project scope of work that includes a budget for each task. Projects are required to commence within six weeks of receipt of the funding notice or the award may be revoked.

OPERATING REVIEWS

TAF awardees may be required to present project findings and experiences at the request of the TAF Managing Director. Reasonable efforts will be made to accommodate the schedules of all parties.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY POLICY

The project manager and project staff shall abide by all SUNY policies, with particular attention to [Patents, Inventions and Copyright](#) and [Computer Software](#) policies.

PROJECT MANAGER RESIGNATIONS AND TRANSFERS

In the event of the project manager's resignation or inability to continue the project, the TAF Managing Director, in consultation with the appropriate institutional official, will evaluate the specific circumstances to determine the disposition of remaining funds. If a project manager intends to transfer to another institution he/she is required to contact the TAF Managing Director, who will evaluate the specific circumstances to determine if the award is transferable.

PRIVACY POLICY

Information provided in the TAF application will be used to make a decision as to whether or not to fund the project. As part of this decision-making process, TAF may rely on outside advisors to assist in the review of all applications received and will use reasonable efforts to distribute the application only to those with a need to know to achieve TAF objectives. Such outside advisors will sign a non-disclosure agreement.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION and QUESTIONS

Applications for TAF Class of 2017 should be submitted by the campus RF Operations Manager or designee to TAF@rfsuny.org. All questions regarding this program should be e-mailed to TAF@rfsuny.org. All questions and answers will be posted to the FAQ section on the [TAF webpage](#).