

# Hilliard Development Corporation

## Innovation Grant Program Guidelines

### OVERVIEW

The HDC Innovation Grant Program is designed to grow research and development (R&D) investment and high-wage job creation within the City of Hilliard. Grant funding must be used for the acquisition of equipment associated with the development, demonstration and/or commercialization of emerging technologies.

### ELIGIBILITY

The Hilliard Development Corporation (HDC), will provide matching grants to businesses or non-profit entities that conduct research, demonstration, prototyping or manufacturing activities in one or more growth industries (Advanced Manufacturing, Aerospace & Aviation, Automotive, Healthcare, Financial Services & Information Technology). Examples of projects could include, among other areas of focus, Additive Manufacturing (3-D Printing), Advanced Materials, Aeropropulsion, Autonomous Vehicles, Biomedical, Carbon Fiber, Cybersecurity, Data Analytics, Financial Technology (FinTech), Energy Storage/Fuel Cells, Internet of Things (IoT), Sensors and Unmanned Aerial Systems.

### GRANT AMOUNT

Grants are available to cover up to 50% of the total eligible project costs, not to exceed **\$25,000**. Grantees will be reimbursed at the conclusion of the project, after certification of project costs and verification of compliance with applicable city regulations. HDC may consider larger grants for economically significant projects (high investment, job creation, positive community impact, etc.).

### ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

The intent of the program is to help offset costs for equipment critical to the demonstration, prototyping, research or manufacturing of new products and technologies. Priority will be given to projects that result in the retention or creation of jobs in the City of Hilliard and for equipment not easily moved or transferred.

Below is a general list of the eligible equipment\*:

- Manufacturing capital equipment such as lathes, CNC machines, welders, etc.
- Lab and clean room
- Testing
- Robotics
- 3D printers / additive manufacturing
- Proof of concept products

\*HDC may consider additional equipment not listed as “eligible equipment” on a case-by-case basis.

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## **INELIGIBLE COSTS**

- Working capital and other soft costs
- Projects which commence prior to HDC approval
- Supplies

## **DECISION CRITERIA**

If grant requests exceed available funding, HDC will rank the applications based on the criteria listed below (in no particular order). HDC's final decision is not appealable by applicants. HDC reserves the right to reduce grant awards if project activities are ineligible or the amount of grant requests exceed available funding.

- Level of R&D investment proposed
- Job creation and/or retention
- Applicant's demonstration of financial need
- Community impact
- Demonstrable experience in completing similar projects
- Useful life of equipment
- Applicant's ability to complete the project in six months or less

## **TERM**

Grantees are required to abide by the program requirements for five years following the disbursement of funds.

## **GRANT REQUIREMENTS**

The applicant shall comply with all applicable provisions of the Hilliard Codified Ordinances and Ohio Building Code. HDC retains the right to withhold reimbursements from the applicant until such violations are corrected to the satisfaction of City Staff.

No funds will be awarded if the project begins before the application is reviewed and approved by the HDC Board. Applicants have 180 days from the earlier of the HDC award notification or receipt of a grant agreement to complete the project. The applicant must request an extension in writing. HDC will notify the applicant its approval or denial.

Equipment must be used within the City of Hilliard corporation limits. If the applicant leaves the project site, moves the equipment outside of the City of Hilliard or fails to adequately maintain the equipment during the grant term, the applicant will be subject to a clawback of grant funds.

Applications and grant agreements are not transferable without written consent from HDC.

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## **GRANT PROCESS**

### **Step 1 – Innovation Grant Application Submittal**

The applicant shall submit the following to the Executive Director:

- Completed HDC Innovation Grant Program Application
- Estimated budget with detailed line items
- Pictures or other visual representations of the proposed equipment acquisition

The Executive Director will review the information and make preliminary determinations as to whether the proposed project meets program requirements. If the Executive Director determines the initial information provided meets program criteria, the project will be allowed to continue to HDC Board for approval.

### **Step 2 – Project Approval Process (HDC & City Approvals)**

The HDC Board will vote on the grant request after the Executive Director determines project eligibility. If the project is approved by the HDC, the applicant will receive a grant agreement. If the project is denied, the applicant will receive notification of the HDC's decision. Applicants must receive any necessary building permits before commencing work.

Applicants have 180 days from the earlier of the HDC award notification or receipt of a grant agreement to complete the project.

### **Step 3 – Project Completion & Grant Reimbursement**

HDC will review projects for compliance within 30 days of notification of project completion by the applicant.

For a project to be considered complete and eligible for reimbursement, the applicant must:

- Obtain all applicable building permits and pass all building inspections relating to the Project;
- Comply with all applicable City of Hilliard code provisions;
- Submit a completed W-9;
- Submit third-party receipts or invoices to HDC that match the project description and final budget;
- Pass an on-site inspection and receive written confirmation from the Executive Director that the project was completed in accordance with the application's scope of work.