



***The Corridor's Matching Grants Research Program  
- University of South Florida -  
Program Guidelines***

[The Florida High Tech Corridor's](#) Matching Grants Research Program (MGRP) fosters applied research between the region's high-tech industry partners, and top-rate faculty and student researchers at the University of Central Florida (UCF) and the University of South Florida (USF).

Since the program started in 1996 to grow the region's talent and technological capabilities, its signature public-private partnership approach has generated an estimated \$1 billion in downstream economic impacts. Countless successes include the hiring of student research participants, commercialization of new products with life-changing capabilities, groundbreaking patents and stronger company positioning to attract federal funds.

**Program Contact:**

Elizabeth Nelson; Matching Grants Program Director  
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**Overview:**

The Matching Grant Research Program at the University of South Florida can provide up to \$150,000 in matching funds for applied research projects between local industry partners and USF researchers, including [Small Business Innovation Research \(SBIR\) / Small Business Technology Transfer \(STTR\)](#) projects. These funds match the industry partner's investment in the project and are used to expand the project's scope of work and allow our students to participate in cutting-edge, applied research.

***Program staff will help to pair interested companies with appropriate USF researchers to take advantage of this program. Please contact program staff to discuss the project and potential collaboration.***

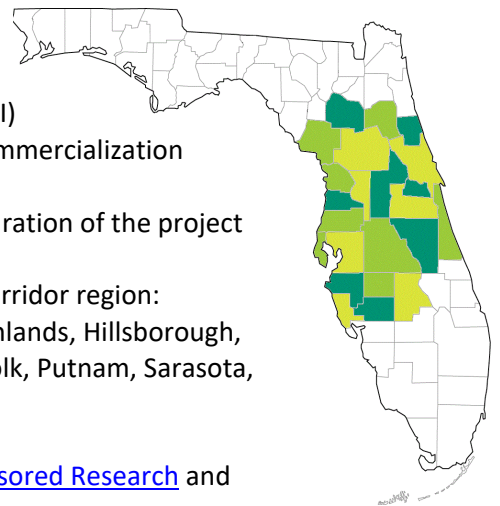
**Eligibility:**

To be eligible, projects must:

- Involve a local industry partner and a USF Principal Investigator (PI)
- Focus on applied research that supports the development and commercialization of new technologies
- Include support for at least one USF student researcher for the duration of the project

The industry partner must have a significant presence in the 23-county Corridor region:

- Alachua, Brevard, Citrus, De Soto, Flagler, Hardee, Hernando, Highlands, Hillsborough, Lake, Levy, Manatee, Marion, Orange, Osceola, Pasco, Pinellas, Polk, Putnam, Sarasota, Seminole, Sumter, Volusia



If awarded, the industry sponsor and PI must work directly with [USF Sponsored Research](#) and appropriate College staff to finalize and execute a research agreement. The project will not officially begin until the sponsored research agreement is in place.

## Priorities:

Participation in the Matching Grants Research Program has become increasingly competitive. The program prioritizes funding for projects that:

- Generate new intellectual property or technology
- Develop and commercialize existing USF technology
- Leverage federal funding through the SBIR/STTR or other programs
- Align with USF's [strategic areas of focus](#)
- Align with [Corridor's key industry clusters](#)
- Engage new participants in the program (industry or faculty)
- Encourage research across colleges and/or across Corridor Universities
- Provide a tangible impact for the industry partner in terms of revenue, sales, workforce expansion, etc.
- Provide high-level, hands-on research experiences for our students and fellows

By focusing on these priorities, the program supports high-impact research benefiting local industry, the university, and our region.

## Application Process:

***There is no annual deadline to apply. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis.***

Before beginning the application, the project team should contact program staff to discuss the proposal and review the required documents and application process.

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A complete application consists of the following documents:

1. **Application Cover Sheet:** Provides basic project details
2. **Scope of Work:** Summarizes the project, company background, student participation, and economic impact
3. **Budget:** Details industry cash, matching funds, and in-kind support
4. **Industry Commitment Letter:** Confirms the industry partner's intention to provide cash and in-kind support for the project

Program staff will provide electronic application templates. The application documents should be completed collaboratively by the PI and industry partner. Program staff is available to review document drafts and provide feedback throughout the application process.

**Please Note:** Funding is provided for one year. Past awards do not guarantee future funding. A new application is required for each new project or additional funding request. In determining future awards, the review team will consider the successful completion and stewardship of past projects.

**Budget:**

Applicants may request \$1 in matching funds for every \$2 provided by the industry partner (\$1 cash/\$1 in-kind).

Industry Partner		Corridor
Cash	In-Kind*	Matching Funds
\$1	\$1	\$1

Using the provided budget form, applicants will allocate the industry cash, in-kind support, and requested matching funds by budget item (salary, supplies, equipment, etc.). PIs should work with their College’s research administrative staff to develop the project budget in accordance with any College-specific policies.

Any significant changes or adjustments to the approved budget should be reviewed with program staff in advance.

\*Industry partners are required to provide quantifiable in-kind (non-monetary) support such as staff time, travel, the use of supplies, equipment and/or space. The value and relevance of in-kind support must be reasonable and justified.

**Required & Eligible Expenses:**

**Required Student Support:**

- Matching funds **must** be allocated to support at least one USF student for the duration of the project in the form of tuition and/or salary.

**Other Eligible Expenses:**

- Principal Investigator and Co-PI Salaries (Including a fringe of 29%)
- Staff Salaries (Including a fringe rate of 40%)
- Postdoctoral Salaries
- Laboratory Supplies
- Publication Costs
- Patent Costs
  - Patent costs for USF technologies associated with the project are an eligible expense according to the table below, as recommended by the USF Technology Transfer Office.

Corridor Match Request Range	Maximum Patent Costs Allowed
Up to \$39,999	20% of the match request
\$40,000-49,999	25% of the match request
\$50,000-59,999	40% of the match request
\$60,000-100,000	50% of the match request
Above \$100,000	Not to exceed \$50,000

**Budget Notes:**

- Any equipment costs must be covered by the industry cash, not Corridor funds.
- Corridor funds cannot be used for entertainment or food.
- Other expenses may be allowable with proper justification. Please discuss these proposed expenses with program staff before applying.

**Review & Award Process:**

Once the application is complete, it will be reviewed by program leadership and a review committee of business, economic development, science, and technology professionals from across Tampa Bay and the Corridor. The application will be evaluated against the program priorities. Program staff may request changes to the application based on feedback from the review committee. Funds are awarded based on the priorities outlined above. **Full funding is not guaranteed.** Following review, a formal award notice will be sent to the industry partner and PI.

### **Sponsored Research Agreement:**

If Corridor funds are awarded, a sponsored research agreement must be executed within three months of the Corridor award letter to ensure the availability of Corridor funds. The sponsored research agreement is the contract between the industry partner and University outlining the payment and legal terms of the research project.

The industry sponsor and PI must work directly with [USF Sponsored Research](#) and appropriate College staff to finalize and execute a research agreement. The Corridor project will not officially open until the sponsored research agreement is in place.

### **Payment Process:**

Matching funds are provided to the project's PI. **The industry partner does not receive any direct funding.** Matching funds are transferred upon confirmed receipt of the industry partner's cash payment. Program staff will closely monitor the industry partner's payments to ensure timely transfers. Please alert program staff of any known funding interruptions, delays or other deviations from the standard payment process.

**Please Note:** If the industry partner does not provide the full investment as outlined in the budget, the Corridor matching grant will be reduced accordingly. The Corridor matching grant will not exceed the industry's cash investment in the project.

### **Crediting Requirement:**

Awardees must acknowledge funding from the Florida High Tech Corridor in any resulting publications, news releases, or publicity specific to the funded project. Proper acknowledgement helps highlight the Corridor's positive economic impact in Florida and ensure the continuation of state funding.

*Suggested Language:* This research was supported in part by the Florida High Tech Corridor's Matching Grant Research Program.

**Note to Faculty:** If any new technology or intellectual property results from this project, please note the Corridor as a funding source on [USF's Invention Disclosure Form](#).

**Note to Industry Partners:** In accordance with USF's sponsored research agreement, neither party may use the name of the other party or its employees in any publicity, advertising, or news release without the prior written approval of an authorized representative of that party. Prior to release, please share any such publicity citing USF or Corridor with program staff for review and approval.

## Reporting Requirements:

The Corridor final report consists of a ***budget reconciliation*** and a ***qualitative report***. Final reports are due within one month of the project close. If a project is extended, interim reports are due at the time of the extension.

**Budget Reconciliation:** Accounts for how industry and Corridor funds were spent compared to the approved budget. Any significant deviations will require justification. [Budget Reconciliation Template](#)

**Qualitative Report:** Captures information on the successes of the project and impact of Corridor funding. This document should include input from the industry sponsor to capture the holistic benefits of the project. [Qualitative Report Template](#)

Corridor representatives will also survey industry partners and PIs following the project close (up to seven years) to track the downstream impact of the Matching Grants Research Program. The information collected helps to demonstrate the program's positive economic impact and ensure the continuation of state funding. We appreciate your cooperation.

***Future awards will be contingent upon the receipt and approval of final reports for previous projects.***