

**Food and Agriculture Research & Development Pilot Grant Program**

<b>Funding Source</b>	<p>Total funding of \$750,000 for the Food and Agriculture Research &amp; Development Pilot Grant Program (the “Program”) will come from New Jersey Economic Development Authority’s (“NJEDA”) Fiscal Year 2022 (“FY2022”) appropriations for “Food and Agriculture Innovation” via a Memorandum of Understanding between NJEDA and CSIT.</p> <p>Funding will be used to award grants made through the Commission on Science, Innovation, and Technology’s (“CSIT”) Program.</p> <p>CSIT aims to fund five (5) companies for awards of up to \$75,000 each.</p>
<b>Program Purpose</b>	<p>The Program’s goal is to support innovation from researchers and entrepreneurs focused on developing technology and other solutions to address food insecurity in New Jersey. The Program will accelerate New Jersey’s early-stage innovation-based companies’ research and development of technologies to transform new discoveries from research stage concepts to commercially viable products and services that address the food security needs of New Jersey’s communities. The Program seeks to identify and implement ways to increase access to nutritious foods and develop new approaches to alleviate food deserts. The Program aims to support the development of innovative technologies within the target areas listed below.</p>
<b>Eligible Industry Areas</b>	<p>The Program is for companies conducting research and development or testing technologies in the following target areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Life Sciences (e.g., Next Generation Crop, Soil Health, indoor agriculture, and aquaculture);</li> <li>• Technology (e.g., Digital services and platform development for improved food access, digital services to reduce food waste, digital platform to access emergency food and other services necessary for food security);</li> <li>• Food and Beverage (Non-retail, e.g., Improved connection between urban food systems and rural and urban communities to improve food access, increased capacity, and distribution of farm fresh products);</li> </ul> <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transportation and Logistics (e.g., online platform designed to facilitate business-to-business connections with local food systems to address disruptions to the local food supply, innovative food delivery models with reduced carbon footprint).</li> </ul>
<b>Eligible Applicants</b>	<p>Program applicants (“Applicant(s)”) <b>must</b> meet the following eligibility criteria at the time of Program application (“Application”) submission and throughout the Application Review Period:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Be authorized and in good standing to conduct business in New Jersey as evidenced by a current New Jersey tax clearance certificate listing New Jersey Commission on Science, Innovation and Technology. All certificates listing another state agency will be rejected.</li> <li>b. Have no more than 25 full-time equivalent (“FTE,” calculated on a 35-hour work week) workers at time of application.</li> </ol>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>c. Have a minimum of one (1) full-time worker (calculated on a 35-hour work week). A founder can be counted as a worker; a worker may be paid or unpaid.</li> <li>d. 50% or more of the cumulative hours worked by all workers, founders, and contractors in New Jersey calculated on an full-time equivalent basis of 35 hours per week.</li> <li>e. Have less than or equal to \$2,000,000 in calendar year 2022 sales revenue (excluding grant revenue)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Eligible Uses</b></p>	<p>The grant funding can be utilized for project research and development activities.</p> <p>In addition, no more than 30% of the budget proposed for the Project, in the aggregate, may be spent on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marketing and customer discovery specific to the innovation</li> <li>• IP patent prosecution and licensing-related expenses</li> <li>• Conference registration fees</li> </ul>
<p><b>Ineligible Uses</b></p>	<p>Grant awards cannot be used for the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Direct services to individuals or organizations;</li> <li>• Manufacturing of products for sale or commercial use;</li> <li>• Real estate rental expenses;</li> <li>• Patient clinical trial expenses;</li> <li>• Construction costs;</li> <li>• Travel, entertainment, and other similar expenses;</li> <li>• Allocations of general overhead expenses;</li> <li>• Any expenditures incurred before the “Effective date”, the date representing the last date of execution of the Grant Agreement by the respective Parties;</li> <li>• Any expenses for equipment and materials that Applicant does not use for the Project during the Project period; or</li> <li>• Fees related to Conferences not associated with the Project.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Application Process and Board Approval</b></p>	<p><b>Application process:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Applications will be open for a limited timeframe</li> <li>2. A document completeness review will be done as applications are received</li> <li>3. Applicants with missing documentation will be notified and given 10 business days to submit missing documents</li> <li>4. Only complete applications will be evaluated and scored. Applicants that have not submitted a tax clearance, and/or any documentation that verifies bonus points, at the time of application submission will be given up to the start of the Application Scoring period to submit the tax clearance certificate. If a tax clearance certificate is not submitted at the start of the Application scoring period, the application will be declined. Applicants that have indicated in the application that they are a minority/women/veteran owned business and did not submit the NJ state certification at the time of the application will also have up to the start of the Application Scoring period to submit the document. If the documentation is not received by that point, bonus points will not be applied to the application.</li> </ol>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. An evaluation committee comprised of CSIT and NJEDA staff will review and assign a score to each application, after receiving qualitative input from Subject Matter Experts (SMEs)</li> <li>6. In order to be eligible for funding, an Applicant must receive a minimum of 70 of the available 100 points on the standard scoring. In order to receive bonus points, an applicant must also receive a minimum score of 70.</li> <li>7. If more applications are received than available funding, priority will be given to applications that score the highest against the scoring criteria.</li> <li>8. Denied Applications may appeal CSIT’s declination, provided they do so within the timeframe provided in CSIT’s declination letter. Appeals must be written and include an explanation as to how the applicant has met the Application criteria.</li> </ol> <p><b>Board Approval:</b> The CSIT Program Committee will review scored Applications and make funding recommendations to CSIT. CSIT will make the final decision on grant awards.</p>
<p><b>Scoring criteria: (Based Upon Technical Proposal/Milestone and Budget Proposal)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Innovation <b>(up to 30 points)</b></li> <li>• Market Opportunity <b>(up to 10 points)</b></li> <li>• Implementation Plan -Budget and Milestones <b>(up to 20 points)</b></li> <li>• Go-to-Market strategy <b>(up to 10 points)</b></li> <li>• Economic and Community Impact <b>(up to 10 points)</b></li> <li>• Team <b>(up to 20 points)</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Bonus Points</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Company is using technology initially developed at a NJ university, under an executed License Agreement with such university <b>(15 points)</b></li> <li>• NJ Certified women-owned business <b>(10 points)</b></li> <li>• NJ Certified minority-owned business <b>(10 points)</b></li> <li>• NJ Certified veterans -owned business <b>(10 points)</b></li> <li>• Primary place of business or R&amp;D located within an opportunity zone eligible census tract or Government restricted municipality <b>(5 points)</b></li> <li>• Has not previously received a CSIT grant or voucher <b>(10 points)</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Grant Amounts/Duration</b></p>	<p>Eligible Applicants can propose a Project with a maximum budget of \$75,000 for a term of up to one (1) year. At CSIT’s sole discretion, a single extension to the grant term for up to an additional 3 months at no cost may be permitted.</p>
<p><b>Grant Disbursement</b></p>	<p>First disbursement of 80% of grant award at the Execution Date of Grant Agreement. Second disbursement of 20% after Final Report is submitted.</p>
<p><b>Cost</b></p>	<p>There is no application fee.</p>