

1 State of Arkansas
2 95th General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2025
4

A Bill

SENATE BILL 218

5 By: Senator Irvin
6 By: Representative Steimel
7

For An Act To Be Entitled

8
9 AN ACT TO AMEND THE ARKANSAS SMALL BUSINESS
10 INNOVATION RESEARCH MATCHING GRANT PROGRAM; AND FOR
11 OTHER PURPOSES.
12
13

Subtitle

14
15 TO AMEND THE ARKANSAS SMALL BUSINESS
16 INNOVATION RESEARCH MATCHING GRANT
17 PROGRAM.
18

19 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:
20

21 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 15-3-703(2), concerning the definitions to
22 be used in relation to the Arkansas Small Business Innovation Research
23 Matching Grant Program, is amended to read as follows:

24 (2) "Matching grant" means a discretionary grant of up to fifty
25 percent (50%) of the amount of a federal Small Business Innovation Research
26 grant or Small Business Technology Transfer grant for each approved matching
27 grant application;
28

29 SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 15-3-703(4), concerning the definitions to
30 be used in relation to the Arkansas Small Business Innovation Research
31 Matching Grant Program, is amended to read as follows:

32 (4) "Small Business Innovation Research Program" means the
33 federal program administered by the United States Small Business
34 Administration according to regulations adopted pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 638,
35 as it existed on October 1, 2016, which provides funds for Phase I and Phase
36 II Small Business Innovation Research grants and Small Business Technology



1 Transfer grants through participating federal agencies.

2

3 SECTION 3. Arkansas Code §§ 15-3-704 – 15-3-707 are amended to read as
4 follows:

5 15-3-704. Administration.

6 (a)(1) The Arkansas Small Business Innovation Research Matching Grant
7 Program is created.

8 (2) The ~~Division of Science and Technology of the~~ Arkansas
9 Economic Development Commission shall administer the program.

10 (b) The ~~division~~ commission shall:

11 (1) Create application forms to be submitted by eligible
12 businesses seeking a matching grant from the program;

13 (2) Devise an application process that:

14 (A) Defines the eligibility criteria for a matching grant;

15 and

16 (B) Establishes application submittal and review

17 processes;

18 (3) Define a process by which matching grants may be awarded;

19 and

20 (4) Execute standard legal grant agreements and other
21 documentation governing the disbursement and use of matching grants.

22

23 15-3-705. Eligibility.

24 (a) To be eligible for a matching grant under this subchapter, an
25 applicant shall:

26 (1) Be an eligible business; and

27 (2) Certify that:

28 (A) The eligible business:

29 (i) For Phase I applications, has received a Small
30 Business Innovation Research grant or a Small Business Technology Transfer
31 grant from a sponsoring agency in response to a specific federal
32 solicitation; or

33 (ii) For Phase II applications, has:

34 (a) Submitted a final Phase I report to the
35 sponsoring agency;

36 (b) Demonstrated that the sponsoring agency

1 has interest in the Phase II proposal; and

2 (c) Submitted a Phase II proposal to the
3 sponsoring agency; and

4 (B) All cognizant federal ~~Small Business Innovation~~
5 ~~Research~~ grant requirements will be met.

6 (b) An eligible business awarded a matching grant under this
7 subchapter shall:

8 (1) Remain in Arkansas for the duration of the matching grant
9 ~~project~~ award period;

10 (2) Designate an Arkansas resident or employee as the principal
11 investigator/project manager during the duration of the matching grant award
12 period; and

13 (3) Be principally engaged in one (1) or more of the following
14 targeted business activities:

15 (A) Advanced materials and manufacturing systems;

16 (B) Agriculture, food, and environmental sciences;

17 (C) Biotechnology, bioengineering, and life sciences;

18 (D) Information technology;

19 (E) Transportation logistics; and

20 (F) Bio-based products.

21
22 15-3-706. Application requirements.

23 (a) To request a matching grant under this subchapter, an applicant
24 shall complete and submit the application forms prescribed by the ~~Division of~~
25 ~~Science and Technology of the~~ Arkansas Economic Development Commission under
26 § 15-3-704.

27 (b) An applicant shall submit an application for each federal Phase I
28 and federal Phase II grant proposal for which the applicant is requesting a
29 matching grant.

30 (c) The ~~division~~ commission shall:

31 (1) Review applications:

32 (A) In order of receipt, as determined by the date and
33 time stamp of receipt; and

34 (B) In accordance with rules promulgated by the ~~division~~
35 commission under § 15-3-709; and

36 (2) Not consider an incomplete or noncompliant application and

1 shall return an incomplete or a noncompliant application without further
2 review;

3 ~~(3) Review each application with the advice and recommendation~~
4 ~~of the Commercialization Committee of the Board of Directors of the Division~~
5 ~~of Science and Technology of the Arkansas Economic Development Commission;~~
6 ~~and~~

7 ~~(4) Provide advice to the Director of the Arkansas Economic~~
8 ~~Development Commission concerning the applications for matching grants~~
9 ~~reviewed by the division.~~

10 (d)(1) Applications submitted to the ~~division~~ commission are subject
11 to the Freedom of Information Act of 1967, § 25-19-101 et seq.

12 (2) To the extent an applicant believes that information in an
13 application is confidential or otherwise exempt under the Freedom of
14 Information Act of 1967, § 25-19-101 et seq., the applicant shall
15 specifically designate in writing the information the applicant believes to
16 be confidential or exempt and the basis for the confidentiality or exemption
17 on that portion of the application in which the information appears.

18

19 15-3-707. Matching grant awards.

20 (a) A matching grant awarded under this subchapter:

21 (1) Shall not:

22 (A) Be awarded under this subchapter unless offered in
23 writing by the Director of the Arkansas Economic Development Commission; and

24 (B) Exceed fifty percent (50%) of the federal Small
25 Business Innovation Research award or the Small Business Technology Transfer
26 award, up to:

27 (i) Fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) for a matching
28 grant awarded to match a federal Phase I award; and

29 (ii) One hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) for a
30 matching grant awarded to match a federal Phase II award; and

31 (2) Subject to funding and the discretion of the director, may
32 be offered to an eligible applicant that successfully completes the
33 application process.

34 (b) The matching grant agreement between the ~~Division of Science and~~
35 ~~Technology of the~~ Arkansas Economic Development Commission and the eligible
36 applicant shall delineate all requirements of the matching grant.

1 (c) At least fifty-one percent (51%) of the amount awarded for the
2 matching grant shall be spent in Arkansas.

3 (d) Disbursements for matching grants shall be made on a reimbursable
4 basis, payable when invoices and financial reports are submitted to and
5 approved by the ~~division~~ commission.

6 ~~(e) An eligible business shall not receive more than three (3)~~
7 ~~matching grants under this subchapter.~~

8
9 SECTION 4. Arkansas Code § 15-3-709 is amended to read as follows:
10 15-3-709. Rules.

11 The ~~Division of Science and Technology of the~~ Arkansas Economic
12 Development Commission shall promulgate rules to carry out the purposes of
13 this subchapter.