THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
KEENAN CENTER FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Ohio | Third Frontier
Innovation Creating Opportunity

The Ohio State University Accelerator Awards

Request for Applications 2022-23

Release Date: May 2022

Pre-Proposal Deadlines

October 3, 2022, for funding in April 2023;

March 3, 2023, for funding in September 2023

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Fund Overview

The Ohio State University Accelerator Awards are a $1 million pool of funds to advance the translation of cutting-edge Ohio State innovations from the university into the marketplace. The goal of the program is to generate the proof needed to advance technologies to the point that they are either ready to be licensed by an Ohio-based startup company upon completion of the project or determined to be unfeasible for commercialization. The Accelerator Awards are partially funded by the Ohio Third Frontier Technology Validation and Startup Fund (TVSF) and administered through the Keenan Center for Entrepreneurship. The Ohio Third Frontier aims to create greater economic growth in Ohio through the creation of startup companies that commercialize technologies developedby Ohio institutions of higher education.

Funds are used to support validation activities of technologies that have already demonstrated proof-of-concept, but for which capital from investment partners has not yet been secured. Program funds will be allocated to specific, measurable project milestones that are key to establishing commercial viability of the technology. The project scope must encompass activities that can be completed within a period of 12-months, with the majority of project funds allocated to independent third-party service providers. Predetermined milestones and quantitative metrics of success will be evaluated on a quarterly basis. The Accelerator Awards program is open to all Ohio State faculty and staff who meet the eligibility guidelines.

Award Information

- **Type of award:** grant funding to an Ohio State principal investigator.

- **Total funding available:** up to a total of $1,000,000 is available for the Accelerator Awards in FY2023, with $500,000 provided by the Ohio Third Frontier and $500,000 provided by the university.

- **Maximum award size:** applicants may request a total award of up to $100,000 direct costs (includes cost share). Because some biomedical technologies typically require greater resources due to the need to meet regulatory requirements, a proposal creating a healthcare product regulated by the FDA may be eligible for up to $150,000 direct costs.

- **Cost share:** the Ohio Third Frontier requires a cash cost share commitment of at least one dollar for every dollar of Ohio Third Frontier funds requested (1:1 cost share). The Keenan Center provides the cost share funds.

- **Purpose:** demonstrate the technology is commercially viable by performing validation activities.

- **Project timeline:** a single 12-month period from the date of funds disbursement. No-cost extensions in 6-month intervals may be approved by the Ohio Third Frontier for certain extenuating circumstances. The project start date is anticipated to be April 2022 (fall cycle) and September 2022 (spring cycle). Awards may be withdrawn for any project not started within 3 months of the project start date.

- **Grant reimbursement:** the objective of the Ohio Third Frontier in supporting the Accelerator Awards is to create jobs and business opportunities in Ohio. If a technology is licensed to a company outside of Ohio within five years of the award notice, the university may be required to repay the Accelerator Award grant to the Ohio Third Frontier.

Application Timeline

	Fall 2022 cycle	Spring 2023 cycle
Pre-proposal due date	October 3, 2022	March 3, 2023
Announcement of finalists	November 2022	April 2023
Full proposal due date (by invitation only)	January 9, 2023	June 2, 2023
Pitch presentations (by invitation only)	TBA (February 2023)	TBA (late June/July 2023)
Award notices	March 2023	August 2023
Funding start date	April 1, 2023	September 1, 2023

Project Eligibility

- The Accelerator Awards program funds milestone-driven activities, informed by industry input, that demonstrate the commercial viability of a technology. Program funds are not early stage "proof of concept" funds for work to be performed in an inventor's lab—technologies supported by the Accelerator Award program must be advanced beyond basic research and have the equivalent of a laboratory-scale proof of concept prior to the application. Projects that have performed initial customer and market research are often well positioned to submit an Accelerator Award. **Funded activities should enable product development and commercialization.**

Examples of activities **too early** for the Accelerator Awards	Examples of activities **appropriate** for the Accelerator Awards	Examples of activities **too advanced** for the Accelerator Awards, appropriate for TVSF Phase 2
o Basic science research o Preliminary/pilot data o Generate laboratory-scale proof of concept o Research customer demand	o Prototype development o Demonstration and assessment of critical failurepoints in subsequent development o Optimization studies o Scale up pilot studies and commercialization o Validate markets and customer demand o Assess regulatory pathways o App development o Bioassays including, therapeutic index tests, toxicology, target specificity, formulation studies, pharmacokinetics o Large scale production/synthesis o Clinical trials o Corrosion/materials testing o Fabrication	o Beta prototype development o Deployment of beta prototype to potential customers for testing and evaluation o Business development activities

- Projects should be commercially driven, and the commercialization goal is to license to a startup company.
- All proposals must fall within one of the six Ohio Third Frontier's technology focus areas:

  - Software/Information Technology
  - Biomedical/Life Sciences
  - Advanced Materials
  - Sensors
  - Energy
  - Advanced Manufacturing

Intellectual Property Requirements

- Projects must be designed to advance the commercialization of University-owned intellectual property assigned to The Ohio State University or to the Ohio State Innovation Foundation (OSIF). All intellectual property generated during the performance of the Accelerator Award project including, but not limited to, discoveries, inventions, patents, and copyrighted materials is subject to ownership by The Ohio State University as set forth in Ohio State's *Intellectual Property Policy* and must be promptly disclosed to the Technology Licensing Office using an invention disclosure form.

Pre-Proposal Submission Requirements

- The technology must be the subject of an accepted invention disclosure filed with the Ohio State Technology Licensing Office in advance of the pre-proposal submission deadline and must be under active management by the assigned Technology Licensing Manager. **Please reach out to your Technology Licensing Manager if you intend to submit a pre-proposal** to allow time to evaluate the invention disclosure, conduct patentability review, and analyze the market and competitive technologies to determine the invention's commercialization potential. Invention disclosures are submitted through Ohio State's online inventor portal, *Innovate.*

Full application Submission Requirements

- **A technology must already have intellectual property (IP) protection, defined as patent pending or patent issued, by the full application submission deadline.** Copyrighted materials, including software, are eligible if OSIF has the right to commercialize the copyrighted materials via an exclusive license agreement. It is the applicant's responsibility to notify the Technology Licensing Manager assigned to their invention disclosure at least **30 days** prior to the full application submission deadline to ensure the IP is in good standing.

- If the technology is jointly owned with another academic institution, OSIF must be designated as the lead institution in commercializing the technology under a fully executed inter-institutional agreement (IIA). Applicants should contact their assigned Technology Licensing Manager with any questions or concerns related to IP ownership.

- The technology must be available for OSIF to exclusively license at the time of the award notice.
  - Intellectual property rights must not be encumbered by any prior obligation, such as an industry sponsored research agreement or consultant agreement.
  - Technologies under an option agreement in the applicable field of use are NOT eligible for Accelerator Awards funding.
  - Technologies under a license agreement in the applicable field of use are NOT eligible for Accelerator Awards funding.

Principal Investigator & Team Requirements

- The principal investigator (PI) must be faculty at The Ohio State University with an appointment allowing them to serve as PI on an externally sponsored research project. The PI must be listed as an inventor on the associated invention disclosure form. Eligible post-docs and Ohio State staff that are co-inventors on the invention disclosure are eligible to apply as co-PIs.

- An investigator is limited to submitting one (1) application as PI or co-PI per application cycle.

- An investigator may only serve as PI of one (1) Accelerator Award project at a time. Investigators are eligible to re-apply with proposals for a different application of the same technology or for new technologies once the initial project is completed. Investigators must be compliant and in good standing with all previous award requirements.

- If the PI transfers from The Ohio State University to another institution during the project period, the Accelerator Award funds may not be transferred to the new institution. If a new principal investigator cannot take over the award responsibilities, the award will be terminated. The principal investigator should notify the Accelerator Awards program and provide contact information at the new institution in case the program needs to contact the investigator after leaving the university.

- All members of the team should be committed to the commercialization objectives of the project and be open to receiving coaching and oversight of their projects.

Funding Requirements

- Technologies with industry sponsorship, research grant support, or investment partners are not eligible for support under the Accelerator Awards. Technologies that are the subject of a TVSF Phase 2 award are considered too far developed and are therefore ineligible for funding under the Accelerator Awards program.

- Funding is provided in tranches aligned with the project milestones. At least one milestone must be proposed per quarter. A quarterly progress report must be submitted and approved at the quarterly progress update meeting as a condition of receiving the subsequent tranche of funds at the scheduledtime.

- The Accelerator Awards program reserves the right to halt financial support for the project for reasons including, but not limited to the following:
    o Technology is no longer available to OSIF for licensing (e.g. active license agreement is entered into, IIA lead is transferred to another institution, etc.);
    o PI leaves Ohio State;
    o Intellectual property offers limited protection of the technology or potential business model;
    o Potential opportunity for the startup is limited, including market size;
    o Failure to complete project milestones on time or with affirmative results; and
    o Failure of PI to comply on time with all Accelerator Awards reporting requirements.

Use of Funds

- All technologies are eligible to apply for up to $100,00 in funds. The average award amount is expected to be approximately $75,000. Some biomedical projects may require greater resources because of the nature of the proposed work. Proposals creating a healthcare product regulated by the FDA that request to fund activities associated with significant cost to address FDA requirements, for example, clinical trials, large animal model studies, large commercial-scale animal studies, or FDA regulatory consulting and assessment, FDA or IND enabling studies, may request a budget up to a maximum of $150,000. Proposals seeking to fund small animal studies, pre-clinical studies including cell-based work, medical device prototyping and bench top-testing are not eligible to request an increased budget.

- Funding requested should align with the amount necessary to achieve milestones that validate and de-risk the technology and must be supported by quotes from independent third party-service providers.

Budgets must be closely tied to specific milestones and funding is released upon successful completion of milestones. Milestones must address the key objectives required to validate and add value to the commercialization potential of the technology and require a clear deliverable and metric of success to determine if the milestone was successfully accomplished. Awards up to the maximum budget of $100,000 may be approved but will require clear justification for the funds requested. The selection committee will evaluate proposals for the appropriateness of the project budget to complete the project within a 12-month timeframe and that all requested funds are reasonable and necessary.

- Funding is disbursed in milestone-driven tranches. Continued funding is dependent on satisfactory quarterly progress on milestones.

- Funding will only be provided for actual project expenditures specified in the approved budget, up to the award amount. Any funds not expended at the conclusion of the project period will be forfeited and returned to the Keenan Center and the Ohio Third Frontier.

- One of the benefits of the Accelerator Award is the availability of funds to validate the technology outside of the inventor's lab which helps provide proof that the technology is viable for commercialization. Given the technology transfer goals of the Accelerator Awards program, technologies applying for an Accelerator Award should be sufficiently developed to transition from in-lab work to independent third-party service providers. To align with this goal, one of the key budget requirements is that **75% of requested funds must be allocated to validation work using independent third-party service providers, that are either;**

    a) External to the university.
    b) Ohio State Core Facilities that are available as a purchased service by external customers for a fee. The work should be performed independently of the PI lab and project personnel. Justification for how the work performed through a core facility independently validates the technology will be required during the full application submission.

- The remaining 25% of the total project budget may be allocated internally to support personnel and materials and supplies.

- Generally allowable budget expenditures are direct expenses necessary for the conduct of the project and includes salary and fringe benefits for non-faculty project personnel, purchased services, supplies and materials. Equipment may be requested in extraordinary circumstances but must meet certain criteria to be considered an allowable expense. Approval of expenses is at the discretion of the Accelerator Awards program and the Ohio Third Frontier. A summary of allowable and unallowable expenses is provided below.

Expense Type	Allowable?
Bonuses, incentives or rewards	No
Consultants	Yes
Equipment	May be requested, approval required
Faculty salary/fringes	No
General support for PI's lab	No
Indirect costs	No
Industry expert payment or fees	No
Legal fees	No
Licensing fees	No
Ohio State non-faculty personnel	May be requested, approval required
Overhead	No

Professional affiliations or membership dues	No
Publication costs or reprints	No
Service contracts	Yes
Subcontracts	No
Supplies	Yes
Travel – domestic or foreign	No
Tuition costs	No

Industry Expert

- Industry experts are valuable contributors that volunteer their time to advise faculty pursuing an Accelerator Award. Industry experts engage with the applicant, leveraging their industry and entrepreneurial experience to help the applicant develop milestones that are commercialization focused. This helps to ensure that key deliverables and success metrics are aligned with the end-user/customer technology features and/or specifications necessary for commercialization. They may assist with identifying vendors or other external resources that are necessary for successful completion of the project. Industry experts are encouraged to remain engaged throughout the application process and subsequent project period if a project is selected for an award.

- To protect the technology underlying an Accelerator Award application, please submit a request for a confidentiality disclosure agreement (CDA) (also known as a non-disclosure agreement) electronically through Ohio State's online inventor portal, *Innovate,* prior to engaging in discussions with any industry expert or external party.

- Industry experts may not have a financial relationship with the PI or with any consultants or vendors funded by the Accelerator Awards. Upon conclusion of the Accelerator Award project, the industry expert will not receive any preferred rights to negotiate for an option or license agreement.

- Please visit our *website* for additional guidance on industry experts.

Guidance Regarding Industry Experts at each Application Stage

Pre-Proposal Requirements - Time Commitment >1hr.
- Identifying the right industry expert can take time and the key to maximizing the benefits of working with an industry expert is to ensure adequate time is available to provide guidance.
- The ideal time to identify potential industry experts is prior to/during the pre-proposal stage. A good resource at this stage is your licensing manager who may have suggestions or recommendations. Contacts in industry or industry representatives from technical conferences may also be a resource. If an industry expert is unable to be identified, please contact the Accelerator Awards Program may be able to assist.
- At this stage consider initially contacting potential industry experts to discuss their interest in participating, as well as providing an overview of the role, expectations, and time commitment.

Invitation to Submit a Full Proposal Requirements - Time Commitment (2-6 hr over a 5–6-week period).
- Engaging with an industry expert is required to submit a full proposal. Finalists invited to submit a full proposal should reach out to confirm with the industry expert as soon as possible. If not already in place, request a CDA prior to discussing the proposal and technology.
- This is the appropriate time to discuss project scope, milestones and what needs to be addressed in the letter of support. Include follow-up engagement to inform the proposal and milestones based on suggestions or feedback.

- The industry expert will need to provide a signed & dated letter of support to the applicant as part of the full application package.

Funded Project Requirements Time Commitment (<1 hr per quarter/mid-year meeting over a 12 months).

- If a proposal is recommended for an Accelerator Award, it is strongly encouraged to continue to engage with the industry expert. This can be on an ad-hoc basis as needed, to obtain feedback on successful completion of milestones. Attendance at quarterly and/or a mid-year project meeting is helpful to review progress to date and discuss commercialization goals of the project.

Questions to Guide Engaging with Industry Experts.

- What do we need to prove so that this product will be of interest to investors?
- Do the project milestones address key specifications or capabilities that need to be demonstrated to attract licensing or investment interest?
- What is the price point at which the product/service is acceptable to the market? How does the cost of producing the product/service compare to this price?
- Is the project plan outlined reasonable? Especially with respect to timeline, budget, outcomes.
- How do I define quantifiable success criteria that can be used to assess if milestones were successfully achieved or not?
- Who do you think would be the best customers/target market to start with?
- What other products in the market would be our competitors?
- What differentiating features would be important for adoption?
- What is a reasonable go to market strategy? What critical steps and barriers should we consider?
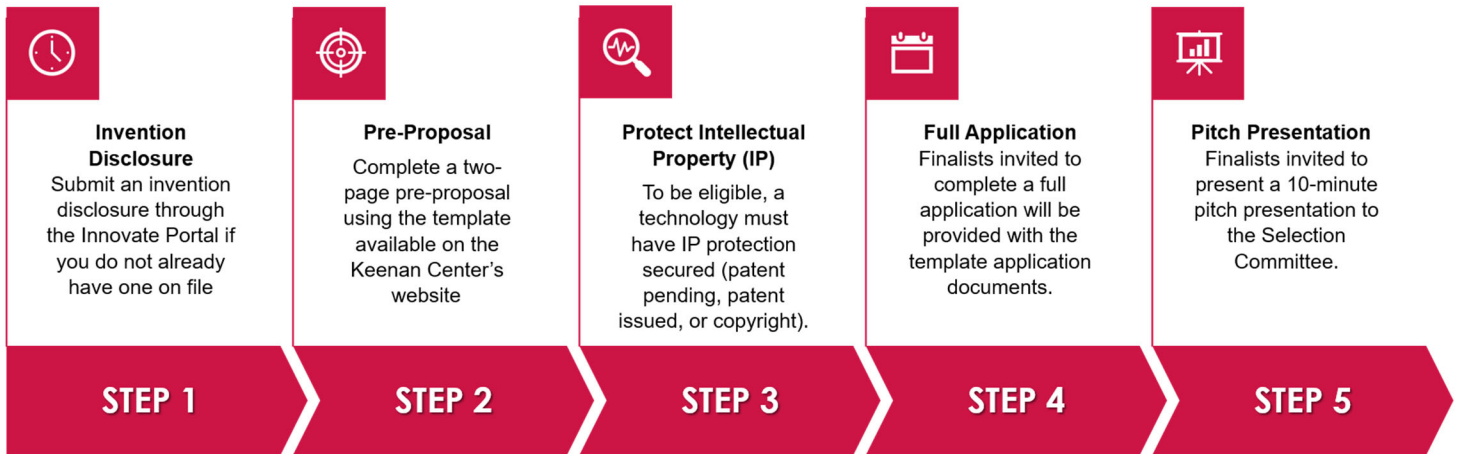
Letter of Support Guidelines

The industry expert will provide a signed & dated letter of support to the applicant as part of a full application package. The letter must address the following:
  - Verify there is a viable market need for the technology.
  - Confirm that the project milestones adequately de-risk the technology for technology transfer.
  - Corroborate that successful completion of the project will result in impactful validation and development of the technology, securing it for commercialization next steps.
  - Indicate ongoing commitment to advise project team regarding technical development during an Accelerator Award project.
  - Disclose any potential conflicts of interest.
  - Express any potential interest in licensing the technology and specify technology requirements or features that must be developed to merit further licensing interest.

Application Submission & Evaluation Process

The Accelerator Awards application process consists of three required stages: a pre-proposal, full application (by invitation), and a pitch presentation (by invitation). The technology must be the subject of an accepted invention disclosure filed with the Ohio State Technology Licensing Office by the pre-proposal submission deadline and must be under active management by the assigned Technology Licensing Manager. Invention disclosures are submitted through Ohio State's online inventor portal, *Innovate.*

Invention Disclosure Submit an invention disclosure through the Innovate Portal if you do not already have one on file	**Pre-Proposal** Complete a two-page pre-proposal using the template available on the Keenan Center's website	**Protect Intellectual Property (IP)** To be eligible, a technology must have IP protection secured (patent pending, patent issued, or copyright).	**Full Application** Finalists invited to complete a full application will be provided with the template application documents.	**Pitch Presentation** Finalists invited to present a 10-minute pitch presentation to the Selection Committee.
STEP 1	STEP 2	STEP 3	STEP 4	STEP 5

Pre-proposal Submission

Pre-proposals will be accepted until 5:00 PM ET on Monday October 3, 2022 (fall cycle) and Friday, March 3, 2023 (spring cycle). Please submit the pre-proposal as a PDF file and email to the Accelerator Awardsprogram at accelerator_awards@osu.edu. The pre-proposal template can be downloaded from the *application process* section of the website.

Pre-Proposal Review

Pre-proposals will first be reviewed for compliance with the program's requirements and alignment with the goals of the Accelerator Awards program. Pre-proposals that meet the eligibility requirements will be reviewed and scored by the external selection committee. Applicants with pre-proposals that best fit the evaluation criteria will be invited to submit a full application as finalists.

The external selection committee consists of representatives from the Keenan Center for Entrepreneurship and external partners with commercialization, investment, and entrepreneurial expertise. **All applicants who submit a pre-proposal will be notified of the outcome (invited or not invited to submit a full application) in November 2022 (fall cycle) or April 2023 (spring cycle).** Applicants that do not advance to the full application phase may request a debriefing for further feedback on the pre-proposal to guide resubmission for a future application cycle.

Full Application and Pitch Presentation (by invitation)

Finalists invited to prepare a full application must submit the proposal by 5:00 PM ET on Monday January 9, 2023 (fall cycle) and Friday June 2, 2022 (spring cycle). Invited finalists will receive further details regarding preparation for the full application and pitch presentation.

Finalists invited to make a pitch presentation to the Accelerator Awards external selection committee will take place during February 2023 (fall cycle) and late June/July 2023 (spring cycle) (final dates to be announced). An individual timeslot will be assigned to each finalist. Finalists will prepare a 10-minute pitch of how the proposed project will accelerate the commercialization of the technology, with an additional 10-minutes for questions and answers. PIs are encouraged to work with their assigned Technology Licensing Manager to

prepare for the pitch presentation and a practice pitch with the Accelerator Award Program is required.

Award Decisions

Final funding decisions will be made by the Ohio Third Frontier based upon recommendations of the Accelerator Awards selection committee. **Award notifications will be communicated to finalists via email in March 2023 (fall cycle) and August 2023 (spring cycle).**

General Evaluation Criteria

- Project Plan: project will generate the proof needed for the technology to be licensed to a startup company; proof is defined by industry input; proof is meaningful, measurable, and impactful; milestones are clearly defined and can be completed within 12-months and with resources requested; degree to which project activities are performed using independent, third-party resources.

- Project Outcome/Startup Opportunity: commercialization plan clearly articulates plan for license to Ohio-based startup company; sufficient opportunity to sustain startup company within reasonable period of time (3-5 years); the project is well positioned to attract follow on funding for the next stage of development and ultimately funding for commercialization.

- Technology: degree to which the technology is innovative/disruptive; strength of the proof-of-concept data; stage of technical development; time to market for product; competitive advantage over technologies currently available/in development/status quo.

- Intellectual Property: strength of intellectual property position to protect the business model

- Market: market assessment performed and demonstrates a strong market/clinical need; reasonable path to market entry.

- Commercialization: the value proposition is clear, robust and compelling; technology is significantly scalable to achieve commercialization objectives.

- Team: team has the appropriate expertise to successfully complete the proposed project; PI and Co-PIs will dedicate the time needed to complete the project within proposed timeframe; the inventor(s) is committed to developing and commercializing the technology.

Confidential Information

Members of the Accelerator Award external selection committee who will be reviewing the proposals and making the funding recommendations, are NOT under any confidentiality agreements. **Accordingly, applicants must not include proprietary information that has not been disclosed or protected by the Technology Licensing Office.** Publicly disclosing confidential information to external parties without a confidentiality agreement risk destroying the patentability of the invention. When preparing the application materials, a typical approach is to focus on what the invention does, rather than the detailed technical information as to how it does it. Applicants are encouraged to contact their assigned Technology Licensing Manager with any questions or for additional guidance.

Projects Involving Human Subjects and/or Animal Subjects

- If an Accelerator Award project contemplates activities involving human subjects, the PI must obtain

Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval for the project, such approval to be current within one (1) year of the notice of award. Any modifications to the project plan must be approved by the IRB

- If an Accelerator Award project contemplates activities involving animal subjects, the PI must obtain Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) approval for the project, such approval to be current within three (3) years of the notice of award. Any modifications to the project plan must be approved by the IACUC.

- Given the length of time needed to obtain the necessary approvals to conduct human and/or animal subject research, all full application submissions must have IRB/IACUC protocol(s) approved or pending by the full application submission deadline.

- Awarded projects must have IRB/IACUC approval prior to the release of any funds. Documentation submitted to Accelerator Awards program should include (1) the IRB/IACUC-approved protocol and (2) a signed letter from the IRB/IACUC indicating that the study has been approved or exempted. Applicants are strongly encouraged to complete these requirements during the application phase to avoid delays in funding. **Funds may not be awarded if the necessary IRB/IACUC approvals are not obtained within 3-months of the award notice.**

Post-Award Administration & Award Requirements

The Ohio State University Keenan Center for Entrepreneurship is responsible for the administration and implementation of the Accelerator Awards in conjunction with the Office of Sponsored Programs. Awardees are expected to engage with the commercialization team on a regular basis. As a condition of the award, awardees will be expected to:

- Attend the project kickoff meeting
- Meet quarterly (in person or by telephone) with the Accelerator Awards program and the commercialization team
- Provide written quarterly progress reports
- Submit a final report within 30 days of the end of the project period that summarizes technical achievements and discusses commercialization next steps
- Present a final pitch to the selection committee

Failure to provide timely and complete required documents may result in early termination of the Accelerator Awards project and may preclude the PI from being eligible for any Ohio Third Frontier funding in the future.

Contact Information

For more information or questions, please contact the Accelerator Awards by email accelerator_awards@osu.edu.

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