

Maryland E-Innovation Initiative Program Application & Instructions



Maryland

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

401 East Pratt Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21202
commerce.maryland.gov

**Wes Moore, Governor | Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor
Harry Coker, Jr., Acting Secretary**

**MARYLAND E-INNOVATION INITIATIVE PROGRAM
FY 2026 (ROUND 1)
APPLICATION FOR ALLOCATION OF MATCHING FUNDS**

WARNING: False statements made knowingly and willfully in this application, including affidavits or other supporting documentation submitted herewith, are punishable by law. All statements and documents are subject to verification.

1. Name of Research Endowment			
2. Matching Funds Requested:*	\$ _____		
Qualified Donation:	\$ _____		
3. Recruitment or Retention			
4. Field(s) of Study (check all that apply)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Physical Sciences <input type="checkbox"/> Life and Neuro Sciences <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering <input type="checkbox"/> Regulatory Science <input type="checkbox"/> Mathematical and Computational Sciences <input type="checkbox"/> Autonomous Systems <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Sciences <input type="checkbox"/> Aeronautical and Space Science <input type="checkbox"/> Behavioral and Language Science <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> Health Sciences <input type="checkbox"/> Cybersecurity <input type="checkbox"/> Emerging Fields in Science and Technology <input type="checkbox"/> Social Sciences <input type="checkbox"/> Entrepreneurial Sciences			
5. Full Legal Name of Nonprofit Institution of Higher Education ("NPIHE")			
6. Principal Place of Business Address			
City	State	Postal Code	
7. Federal Employer Identification Number			
8. Foundation Federal Identification Number (if different than the NPIHE)			
9. Contact Person**			
Last Name		Suffix (Jr., Sr., III)	
First Name		Middle Name	
Title			
Business Mailing Address			

City	State	Postal Code
Telephone Number (include Area Code)		
Fax Number (include Area Code)		
E-mail Address		

*See Instructions, General Information, Paragraph 6.

**The designated contact person must have the authority to act on behalf of the nonprofit institution of higher education submitting this application.

8. **Attach** the Research Endowment Plan for which the NPIHE is seeking matching funds under the Maryland E-Nnovation Initiative Program (the “Program”). The Research Endowment Plan is intended to provide the Maryland E-Nnovation Initiative Fund Authority (the “Authority”) with an explanation of the NPIHE’s comprehensive research objectives and plans to build competitive research infrastructure in the specified scientific and technical fields of study designated by the Authority in the regulations for the Program, as well as comprehensive measures for achieving this goal.

The NPIHE should provide clearly articulated responses to all of the items set forth in the Program regulations regarding the requirements of a Research Endowment Plan. See COMAR 24.05.22.05. A copy of the Program regulations is available upon request and can also be accessed at [http://commerce.maryland.gov/fund/maryland-e-nnovation-initiative-fund-\(meif\)](http://commerce.maryland.gov/fund/maryland-e-nnovation-initiative-fund-(meif)).

A well-drafted Research Endowment Plan should be presented in a logically arranged, narrative format and include the following information, as well as such other information as the NPIHE deems material for the Authority’s consideration of an award of matching funds under the Program:

- a. An executive summary of the Research Endowment Plan, which condenses and highlights the contents of the Research Endowment Plan.
- b. The field(s) of study covered by the Research Endowment Plan. The eligible scientific and technical fields of study currently designated by the Authority are listed in the Program regulations. See COMAR 24.05.22.02.
- c. The NPIHE’s current research initiatives in the fields of study are covered by the Research Endowment Plan.
- d. The proposed uses of the matching funds, including (i) how such uses address the research needs of the NPIHE in the designated fields of study; (ii) specific disciplinary hires to be funded with the endowment proceeds, or, if the NPIHE has not identified such hires as of the date of the Application, the proposed profiles of the NPIHE’s anticipated disciplinary hires for the positions described in the Research Endowment Plan, including how such identified hires or proposed hires satisfy or will satisfy the entrepreneurial and collaborative requirements of the Program. (See §6-614(c) of Economic Development Article, Title 6, Subtitle 6, Annotated Code of Maryland (the “Act”) for the specifics of these requirements); and (iii) how these uses promote the economic development goals of the Program.
- f. How the Research Endowment Plan will play a role in achieving institutional research objectives in the designated fields of study and the Research Endowment Plan’s relation to and impact on the colleges, schools, departments, centers, institutes, or other academic units proposed, currently under development, or currently operating at the NPIHE.
- g. The current or proposed collaborations, particularly with other institutional partners, that play or will play a significant collaborative role in achieving institutional objectives in the designated field(s) of study.
- h. Possible strategies beyond the award of matching funds from the Program for the Research Endowment Plan that the NPIHE has to enhance the NPIHE’s current research initiatives in the designated field(s) of study.

Other than placement of the executive summary at the beginning of the Research Endowment Plan, there is no required order for the presentation of the above Research Endowment Plan elements. The NPIHE should present such information, as well as any other information deemed relevant by the NPIHE regarding the Research Endowment Plan, in any order that will best provide the Authority with a complete understanding of the NPIHE's proposal.

Please note that the Authority will view more favorably those Research Endowment Plans that provide specific details, rather than generic statements, in the presentation and description of the Research Endowment Plan elements above, all other factors being equal.

9. **Attach** the gift or donor agreement(s) signed by the NPIHE and the donor(s), provided that the donation(s) provided for thereunder must otherwise meet the requirements for a Qualified Donation. Please note that the minimum amount of a donation (or bundle of donations) is \$500,000 for an NPIHE that has an annual unrestricted current funds budget greater than \$250,000,000 or \$200,000 for an NPIHE that has an annual unrestricted current funds budget of less than \$250,000,000 in order for such donation (or bundle of donations) to be a Qualified Donation. (See §6-613 of the Act and the Program regulations for guidance regarding the requirements for a Qualified Donation.) In addition, if the Authority awards matching funds to the NPIHE based on the Research Endowment Plan, the NPIHE must be able to submit disbursement requests to the Authority such that the required amount of Qualified Donations underlying the request for matching funds can be deposited into the appropriate Research Endowment fund no later than 90 days after the Authority approves the request for disbursement but in no event later than the last day of the fiscal year. (See COMAR 22.05.22.07E and 22.05.22.08.)

10. Oath and Signature

Under penalties of perjury, I declare that I have examined this Application, and to the best of my knowledge, information, and belief, it is true and correct as of the date hereof.

Name of NPIHE: _____

By: _____

Date (mm-dd-yyyy)

Name: _____

Title: _____

INSTRUCTIONS

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. The *Application for Allocation of Matching Funds* must be completed by the NPIHE and approved by the Authority prior to the first submission of a *Request for Disbursement of Matching Funds* by the NPIHE in a fiscal year.
2. The Submission Dates for Round 1 Applications are **June 1**. Applications must be received by the Authority no later than **5:00 p.m.** on such dates; requests for extension of this time and date will not be granted.
3. NPIHE should submit one (1) electronic executed electronic version (in PDF format) of the Application.
4. Applications should be emailed to sarah.sheppard1@maryland.gov. The timely receipt of the Application will be determined by the date and time the electronic copy of the Application is delivered to and received by the Authority at the email address above. Applications may not be submitted by facsimile.
5. Public Information Act Notice. NPIHEs should be aware that all information submitted in or accompanying an Application may be subject to the provisions of the Maryland Public Information Act (General Provisions Article, Title 4, Annotated Code of Maryland). The NPIHE should clearly identify those portions of its Application, including the Research Endowment Plan, which it considers confidential and/or proprietary commercial information or trade secrets and provide justification why such materials, upon request, should not be disclosed by the State under the Public Information Act. NPIHEs are advised that, upon request for this information from a third party, the Authority is required to make an independent determination whether the information must be disclosed.
6. In the absence of a reallocation of matching funds under COMAR 24.05.22.08, NPIHEs are limited to the receipt of **25%** of cumulative Program funds. For FY 2026, the Program funds available for award, after taking into account the administrative costs of the Program, and subject to funds being available through the budget, are **\$8,500,000**. The 25% limit is determined by reference to the cumulative funds appropriated to the Program to date, which is **\$100,538,250** (\$8,425,000 for FY 2016, plus \$8,450,000 for FY 2017, plus \$8,500,000 for FY 2018, plus \$8,450,000 for FY 2019, plus \$8,500,000 for FY 2020, plus \$7,550,000 for FY 2021, plus \$12,450,000 for FY 2022, plus \$8,500,000 for FY 2023, plus \$8,500,000 for FY 2024, plus \$12,300,000 for FY 2025) (net of administrative expenses). Therefore, the 25% limit per NPIHE for FY 2026 is **\$25,134,563**. NPIHEs that received an award or awards for Application(s) approved by the Authority in previous fiscal years should deduct the aggregate amount of their previous award(s) from **\$25,134,563**, to determine the maximum amount of matching funds available to it for Applications submitted during FY 2026.

AUTHORITY REVIEW AND APPROVAL PROCESS

1. The Authority will review each Application for compliance with the Act and the Program regulations.
2. If the Authority determines that an Application is not responsive, the Authority shall notify the NPIHE of the deficiency, and the NPIHE shall have five (5) business days to cure the deficiency.
3. The Authority shall provide notice to the NPIHE of approval or rejection of an Application, including the Research Endowment Plan submitted with the Application, including any allocation of matching funds, within 60 days after the Authority deems the Application complete. If an Application is not approved, the Authority shall include the reason(s) the Application could not be approved.
4. NPIHEs should note that the Authority may allocate all the matching funds available under the Program to applications received for the June 1, submission date. There can be no guarantee that funds will be available under the Program for allocation to applications received after June 1, submission date.

Maryland E-Innovation Initiative Program (“Program”)

Evaluation Criteria for Round 1 Applications Submitted on or before June 1, 2025

In evaluating whether and the extent to which it will allocate matching funds to a nonprofit institution of higher education (“NPIHE”) for a research endowment plan (“REP”) submitted to the Authority with the NPIHE’s application for matching funds from the Program, the Authority will consider the following criteria, all of which will be weighted equally in the overall allocation determination:

1. Scientific and Technical Fields of Study. The Authority has identified the scientific and technical fields of study eligible under the Program in regulations. The Authority has determined that these scientific and technical fields of study are identical to the fields of study included in the Act. At this time, the Authority will weight each such field of study equally.
2. Leverage Provided by the Qualified Donations. In order to constitute a Qualified Donation under the Act, the donation (or bundled donation) from a donor must be at least \$200,000. Qualified Donations that result in a greater than 1:1 match of Program funds will receive a proportionately higher ranking in the evaluation process. For example, all other factors being equal, an application that includes a Qualified Donation of \$1,000,000 and requests an allocation of matching funds from the Program of \$500,000 (e.g., a 2:1 match) will receive a higher ranking in the evaluation process than an otherwise identical application that includes a Qualified Donation of \$500,000 and requests an allocation of matching funds from the Program of \$500,000 (e.g., a 1:1 match).
3. Entrepreneurial Activity. The Act provides that an individual in a position that is funded by endowment proceeds under the Program shall (a) work at least one day of each week in

support of a federal laboratory or associated federal laboratory research support organization; (b) hold a joint appointment or secondary position at another nonprofit institution of higher education in the State; or (c) work at least one day each week in support of entrepreneurial activities with a company engaged in one or more of the research areas identified in the Act. Although the Authority will consider REPs that include any or all of these activities as part of a proposed faculty profile, the Authority has determined that entrepreneurial activities will have a greater impact on the economic development goal that underlies the Program. Therefore, the Authority will rank REPs that contemplate the pursuit of purely entrepreneurial activities higher in the evaluation process than a research endowment plan that is mostly or solely focused on research activities. A research endowment plan that includes a mix of both entrepreneurial and research activities will be ranked somewhere in the middle of the purely entrepreneurial side of the spectrum and the purely research-focused side of the spectrum, with the exact placement to be determined by the degree of entrepreneurial activity included in the REP.

4. Retention of Faculty. The Authority is authorized to award matching funds from the Program to nonprofit institutions of higher education to both recruit and retain top university researchers. The Authority has determined that at this time, the recruitment of these top university researchers will have a greater impact on the economic development goal underlying the Program. Therefore, the Authority will rank REPs that contemplate the recruitment of faculty and researchers higher in the evaluation process than a research endowment plan that contemplates the use of the endowment funds under the Program for use in the retention of current faculty. A research endowment plan that includes a mix of both recruitment of faculty and retention of other faculty will be ranked somewhere in the middle of the purely recruitment side of the spectrum and the purely retention side of the spectrum, with the exact placement to be determined by the degree of recruitment included in the REP.
5. Compliance with Reporting Requirements. The Authority is authorized to consider a NPIHE's lack of compliance with reporting requirements when evaluating new applications. COMAR 24.05.22.05D allows the Authority to consider (1) compliance with other research endowment plans previously approved for the institution; and (2) "such other evaluation criteria as the Authority may establish from time to time." Noncompliance of the reporting requirements (including the proper formatting of reports) will be considered and weighted against a NPIHE who is not in compliance at the time of application submissions.

In addition to the evaluation criteria set forth above, the Authority will provide additional guidance to NPIHEs for purposes of preparing their applications for submission by the First Submission Date (June 1, 2025) in an application form, which will be made publicly available on or about April 1, 2025.