



Request for Submission of Letter of Intent for Penn State Commercialization GAP Fund 2026 Cycle

- Info-session: September 8th, 12:30pm, 2025 <https://psu.zoom.us/j/92599711371>
- Deadline for submitting LOI: September 29th, 2025

Program and Scope

The Commercialization GAP Funding program is designed to bridge the gap between promising research innovations and their readiness for market entry. The goal of Penn State's Commercialization GAP Fund is to accelerate the development of promising research across our campuses by closing the funding gaps between proof-of-concept research and readiness for commercialization. This is achieved by providing investigators with targeted funding and other support to advance prototypes, validate technologies, conduct market assessments, and reduce technical and commercial risk—ultimately moving projects to a stage sufficient to attract a commercial licensee or an investor seeking to build a company around the technology.

Eligibility

The PI must be a full-time faculty member of Penn State.

Award

\$75,000 for one year in direct cost

Interested applicants are requested to submit a letter of intent expressing their interest. The LOI should include the following points:

- Title of the invention
- Technology summary (max.250 words)
- Intellectual property status with Penn State and invention disclosure number.
- If competitive landscape analysis has been done



- If any potential licensee/investor/entrepreneur has shown interest. Attaching a support letter from identified industry partner expressing interest will be beneficial.
- The purpose of using Gap funding

Important Dates

RFP Issued: September 2nd, 2025

Info Session: September 8th, 2025, 12pm: <https://psu.zoom.us/j/92599711371>

Deadline for submitting LOI: September 29th, 2025

Notification for submitting full proposal: Oct 29th, 2025

Deadline for submitting full proposal: Nov 30th, 2025

Oral Presentation: March 24th, 2026

Award Notification: April 2026

Funding Start Date: July 2026

Criteria

- Address an unmet need with significant commercial potential
- Have progressed to the point of proof of principle, either on the bench or in the field
- Have the potential to be licensed to an established company, or become a professionally funded and managed start-up within 2-4 years
- Have well defined and well justified GO/NO-GO endpoints
- Have completed the invention disclosure process with Office of Technology Transfer (OTT)
- Have either applied for or completed the I-Corps™ program, or obtained substantial previous experience with industry, licensing or spin-outs
- Have the IP rights assigned to Penn State or belonging to Penn State/PSRF

Budget Guidelines

- Up to \$75,000/year direct costs can be requested
- Funds will be released quarterly in trenches upon successful completion of aims at the proposed time.
- Fund cannot be used for travel purposes except filed study to carried out experiment that is required for the project.



Project Period

Approved projects will be funded initially for up to one year, with the potential to be extended for another year upon review.

Project Review

Projects will be reviewed by internal and external commercialization subject matter experts. Preferences will be given to the projects where commercial interests have been ascertained, and actionable recommendations are obtained from potential licensee(s) to advance the IP to a point (in 1-3 years) to attract a commercial licensee or investor looking to build a company around the technology.

Projects will be reviewed for scientific strength, but the primary focus will be on commercial potential and readiness.

Proposal Format

Proposals must address the following core components of a proposed project in the following format:

A. Project Title:

B. Executive Summary (500-word limit)

C. Unmet Need

- What is the gap or problem where there is no satisfactory solution?
- Who and how many are affected each year globally and, in the USA?

D. Currently Available Solutions

- What is the current gold standard for the problem being addressed?
- What are 2-3 other solutions available today or in development that are intended to impact the same unmet need? What stage of development are they at?

E. Proposed New Solution

- What is the end product or service? How does it address the unmet need?
- Is it a new product or an improvement of an existing product?



- Who is the end user of your product?
- How will your solution be better than the current gold standard? How is it novel?
- Who will buy this product and who will pay for it? Explain why they will pay for it.
- How do you envision pricing this product vs. existing or competitive products? Why?

F. Preliminary Results

- Include results from preliminary testing and data that demonstrates the feasibility of your solution.
 - Describe the current stage of the technology/product and include critical technical hurdles (e.g., product development and/or manufacturing) that have not been solved.

G. Research Plan and Quarterly Milestones

- Describe specific research aims.
- Fill out the below milestone table to describe quarterly milestones for the activities that need to be undertaken during the initial one year of funding.
- How will the results of the GAP funding help you convince subsequent investors or licensees to further invest in your idea (i.e., explain how these specific aims and milestones will get you closer to finding a commercial partner)
- Briefly list the technical and business milestones for the 2 years following the end of the GAP Fund support.

H. Commercialization Plan and Intellectual Property

- **Intellectual Property:** Does the original IP belong to PSU or PSRF? Detail your Technology Licensing Officer and case number. Is the IP patentable or otherwise protectable?
- **Market Size:** What is the US market size today for existing products servicing the target market? What is the projected US market size at full penetration for the proposed product?
- **Regulatory Barriers to Entry:** List significant regulatory (e.g., FDA, EPA, USDA, etc) barriers that must be cleared to enter the target market, if any.
- List companies, investors or organizations that currently have or are likely to have interest in your technology.



- List company names and divisions and why they would be interested (e.g., they sell similar products, sell to similar markets/customers, or this item will fill a gap in their product portfolio).
- List information you have obtained from potential licensees or investors related to this particular project. Have they commented on the value proposition? Any quotes or letters of support would greatly strengthen the application.
- Competition and Commercial Partners: List names of start-up companies and established companies that are currently developing or selling products targeted at solving the same problem. If they are using different technology but are solving the same problem, you should still list them. Remember that competitors could potentially be future commercial partners for your technology.
- Please include competitive landscape research and analytics and business element.

I. Follow-on funding plan

- The Commercialization GAP Fund provides a bridge to other types of commercial and federal funding to get your product closer to the market. It is not enough by itself to get your product all the way to the market. It is very important that you have a plan for obtaining follow-on funding to continue the project after the Commercialization GAP Fund award expires. List of potential sources of funding in bullets and the associated deadlines.

It is required to provide a summary of their proposal based on the following project impact and milestone Gantt chart.

SAMPLE PROJECT IMPACT CHART

	Proposed Solution	Current Gold Standard
What is the unmet need?		
What is the proposed solution?		
What is the market size?		
Who will be using the proposed end-product?		



What is the competitive advantage of the proposed end-product?

SAMPLE PROJECT MILESTONE GANTT CHART

Objective and Timeline		2025		2026	
A	Research Plan and Specific Aim	July-Sept	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	April-June
AIM 1					
1.1					
1.2					
AIM 2					
2.1					
2.2					
AIM 3					
3.1					
3.2					
B					
1					
2					

SAMPLE COMPETITIVE LANDSCAPE CHART

	Your company/Technology/Product	Competitor 1	Competitor 2	Competitor 3
Product Uniqueness				



PennState

Office of Technology Transfer

The Pennsylvania State University
Eric J. Barron Innovation Hub, Suite 311
123 South Burrowes Street
State College, PA 16801

814-865-6277
Fax: 814-865-3591
ott.psu.edu

Business Model	
Pricing	
Strength	
Weakness	

*Application length is limited to a maximum of 10 pages. Extra pages can be added for references.

**** Submit LOI through InfoReady.**

<https://psu.infoready4.com/#freeformCompetitionDetail/1992274>

Contact Information

Penn State Office of Technology Transfer
The Pennsylvania State University
Eric J. Barron Innovation Hub, Suite 311 123 South Burrowes Street
State College, PA 16801

Tel: 814-865-6277

Fax: 814-865-3591

<https://ott.psu.edu/gap-fund/>

Email: angana@psu.edu or GAPFund@psu.edu Tel: 814-865-6277