UW-Milwaukee Research Foundation

Guiding Innovation, Fostering Partnerships

Catalyst Grant Program | Overview

The 2027 Catalyst Grant Program is made possible through the generous support of the **Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation and Invenergy**. *This year, one award of $50K will be dedicated specifically to clean energy projects*. To date, these organizations – along with the Richard and Ethel Herzfeld Foundation, GE Healthcare, Rockwell Automation Charitable Corporation, and Clarios – have contributed more than $6.5M in awards, driving commercialization of UW-Milwaukee research.

Proposal Overview:

These awards will seed promising research and development in ideas that solve problems locally and worldwide. Proposals must focus on projects that will have commercial potential either as products or services.

Assessment criteria will include:

1. **Intellectual property**
   - An active invention disclosure with patent or copyright potential.
2. **Market potential**
   - Preference will be given to projects with a well-supported assessment of the intellectual property's market potential.
   - Programs such as **NSF I-Corps (Innovation Corps)**, sponsored by UWM, assist researchers with these evaluations.
   - Researchers who have completed the Milwaukee I-Corps program will be strongly favored for a full proposal.
3. **Industry partnership**
   - Proposals that include at least a **1:1 match of Catalyst Grant funds** from an industry partner (as additional sponsored research for the project), documented through a commitment support letter, will **automatically be invited to submit a full proposal**.
   - The industry partner must be a **NEW** relationship for the research team, not a repeat activity from a past collaboration.
   - We will be hosting 2 **mini I-Corps sessions** on **December 2 from 3:00-4:30 p.m.** or **December 3 from 1:30-3:00 p.m.** to help you think about market fit and work on reach out to industry members.

Focus Areas:

Biomedical Engineering
Healthcare/Med devices
Drug Discovery
Advanced Automation
Clean Energy
Materials/Devices
Energy Storage/Transmission
Artificial Intelligence (AI)
Agriculture
Water/Freshwater
Aquaculture
Transportation
Social Innovation
Environmental
Education
Other topics

Award Types:

	Catalyst Grants	***Gap Fund Awards***
Objective:	Proof of concept	Prototype or commercial milestone
Review:	Review by leading scientists	Reviewers include industry/investors
Intellectual Property:	Potential or existing IP	Existing IP with license potential
Emphasis:	Scientific aims	Business case
Commercial:	Commercial potential	Go-to-market plan
Award Amounts:	Up to $50,000	Typically, $10,000 to $25,000