



**OCAST**  
Center for the Advancement  
of Science & Technology

# Oklahoma Technology Commercialization Center

Request for Proposals

## Version History

January 12, 2024	Original
January 16, 2024	Updated contact information for questions
January 19, 2024	Updated instructions for letters of endorsement and collaboration
February 12, 2024	Updated Budget Details – Added <i>Appendix A</i>

## Introduction

In alignment with the Oklahoma State Statute §74-5060.20b, the State of Oklahoma has taken a proactive step in fostering an innovation-driven economy by establishing OCAST's Oklahoma Technology Commercialization Center (OTCC). This statute specifically mandates the creation and support of a center dedicated to the commercialization of technology and to catalyze the growth of tech-based entrepreneurial ventures throughout Oklahoma.

The Oklahoma Center for the Advancement of Science and Technology (OCAST) is tasked with implementing the directives of the statute. OCAST is the state's agency entrusted with the mission to grow and diversify Oklahoma's economy through technology development, transferring technology into the marketplace, and ensuring that Oklahoma remains at the forefront of scientific and technological advancements.

This Request for Proposals (RFP) is issued to identify and engage service provider(s) that will operationalize and manage the OTCC. The selected provider will play a critical role in providing the necessary commercialization services to fulfill the statute's objectives. The provider will also be expected to build and maintain robust partnerships within the entrepreneurial ecosystem, secure additional funding sources to support and expand OTCC's programs, establish mentor networks, and conduct statewide outreach to ensure that the benefits of the OTCC are accessible to all parts of Oklahoma.

This up-to five-year contract, valued at \$1.25 million annually, represents a significant investment in Oklahoma's future as a leader in innovation and technology commercialization. The state statutes that have created the OTCC empower it to serve as a nexus for innovation, collaboration, and entrepreneurial support, thereby contributing to a thriving and diverse economy.

The services delivered through the Oklahoma Technology Commercialization Center are set out in existing state statutes and include but are not limited to the following:

*§74-5060.20b. Cooperation between technology commercialization center and technology transfer offices.*

It is the intent of the Legislature that the Commercialization Center funded through the Oklahoma Center for the Advancement of Science and Technology (OCAST) and the technology transfer offices within The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education (OSSHE) complement each other's capabilities and work closely to optimize each other's effectiveness. The OSSHE technology transfer offices shall create an entrepreneurial climate on the campuses to maximize opportunities for commercialization of technology resulting from university research. The Commercialization Center shall assist technology-based businesses to start up and grow in Oklahoma.

Added by Laws 1998, SB 398, c. 210, § 5, emerg. eff. July 1, 1998; Amended by Laws 2010, SB1426, c. 464, § 6, emerg. eff. July 1, 2010.

#### *§74-5060.4. Definitions.*

7. “Commercialization Center” means a private, nonprofit corporation contracting with and funded in part by OCAST to:

- a. attract to, and retain in, Oklahoma technology and technology-based enterprises,
- b. promote and assist with the development and expansion of scientific and technology-based industry in the state,
- c. facilitate the development of incubators for technology-oriented enterprises,
- d. assist technology-based enterprises in developing and expanding their businesses, obtaining financing and funding, attracting capital, including seed capital and venture capital, and attracting and retaining key management personnel, scientists, and skilled labor, and
- e. develop, operate, and manage programs to facilitate entrepreneurial activity with respect to technology, scientific-based, biomedical, biomedical-technical, and technology-oriented enterprises in this state;

Added by Laws 1987, HB 1444, c. 222, § 19, emerg. eff. July 1, 1987; Amended by Laws 1992, HB 2137, c. 230, § 3, emerg. eff. July 1, 1992; Amended by Laws 1994, SB 1042, c. 288, § 6, emerg. eff. July 1, 1994; Amended by Laws 1995, SB 194, c. 279, § 1, emerg. eff. July 1, 1995; Amended by Laws 2002, SB 1391, c. 484, § 5, emerg. eff. July 1, 2002; Amended by Laws 2006, HB 2356, c. 76, § 1, emerg. eff. July 1, 2006; Amended by Laws 2006, HB 2819, c. 263, § 2, emerg. eff. July 1, 2006; Amended by Laws 2006, HB 2185, c. 297, § 1, eff. November 1, 2006 (repealed by Laws 2007, HB 2195, c. 1, § 80, emerg. eff. February 22, 2007); Amended by Laws 2007, HB 2195, c. 1, § 79, emerg. eff. February 22, 2007; Amended by Laws 2010, SB 1426, c. 464, § 4, emerg. eff. July 1, 2010.

NOTE: Laws 1994, c. 287, § 7 repealed by Laws 1995, c. 279, § 9, eff. July 1, 1995. Laws 2006, c. 297, § 1 repealed by Laws 2007, c. 1, § 80, emerg. eff. Feb. 22, 2007

#### **Scope of Services**

The selected service provider will deliver a comprehensive suite of services to promote the commercialization of emerging technologies in Oklahoma, with a focus on the following key areas:

##### **Commercialization Services:**

- **Market Analysis and Strategy:** Conduct thorough market research to identify commercial opportunities, define market entry strategies, and develop competitive analysis frameworks.
- **Business Plan Development:** Assist clients in creating robust business plans that encompass financial models, contract structures, operational strategies, and growth projections to attract investors and partners.
- **Intellectual Property Management:** Offer access to expert guidance on the protection and management of intellectual property, including patent filing, licensing strategies, and IP valuation.

**Partnership Development:**

- Ecosystem Integration: Cultivate strategic partnerships with key players in the technology sector, including research institutions, business accelerators, investors/VCs, commercial lenders, corporate entities, and industry-specific associations, to foster a collaborative environment.
- Linkages and Networking: Organize networking events, workshops, and seminars to connect entrepreneurs with potential partners, customers, and investors.
- Policy Advocacy: Engage with policy makers to advocate for a conducive regulatory environment for technology startups and commercialization.

**Funding Acquisition:**

- Implement programs designed to prepare founders for critical funding milestones. This includes:
  - Accelerator Readiness: Equip entrepreneurs with the skills and knowledge necessary to apply to accelerator programs, including pitch refinement, business model optimization, and product-market fit analysis.
  - Venture Capital Engagement: Facilitate connections with venture capital firms by preparing investment materials, executive summaries, and due diligence packets, and by organizing networking events and pitch sessions.
  - Diverse Financing Avenues: Educate and guide founders on the diverse range of financing options available beyond traditional venture capital, such as angel investments, corporate investment government grants, loans, and crowdfunding platforms. Provide tailored assistance for each financing avenue, including strategy development and application process management.

**Mentorship Network Creation:**

- Expert Recruitment: Recruit a diverse group of subject matter experts with proven experience in technology sectors relevant to the clients' needs and specific to technology based economic development.
- Mentor-Mentee Matching: Implement a structured program to match these experts with entrepreneurs and startups for guidance and advisory support.
- Skill Development Workshops: Organize regular training sessions and workshops focusing on essential skills for all variants of technology commercialization, such as pitch coaching, negotiations, contracted development, royalty relationships and leadership.

**Statewide Outreach:**

- Regional Engagement: Launch initiatives targeting underrepresented regions of the state to ensure equitable access to commercialization services and financing.

- **Community Programs:** Collaborate with local governments, economic development groups, and community organizations to tailor services that meet the unique needs of different regions.

#### **Marketing and Promotion:**

- **Brand and Co-Branding Strategy:** Develop a strong and cohesive brand identity for OCAST's Oklahoma Technology Commercialization Center (OTCC), ensuring that it is effectively integrated with co-branding elements that represent a partnership between the Oklahoma Center for the Advancement of Science and Technology (OCAST) and the selected service provider(s). This strategy should emphasize the collaborative nature of the OTCC, highlighting the combined expertise and resources that OCAST and the service provider(s) bring to the table, and should be consistently applied across all marketing materials and campaigns to reinforce the unity and shared vision of the initiative.
- **Success Stories:** Showcase client achievements through case studies, press releases, and media campaigns to highlight the center's impact.
- **Digital Presence:** Leverage social media, content marketing, and online platforms to reach a broader audience and engage with the tech ecosystem.

#### **Performance Measurement:**

- **Impact Analysis:** Establish metrics and key performance indicators (KPIs) based on technology based economic development standards to evaluate the success of commercialization efforts and the overall impact on the state's economy.
- **Continuous Improvement:** Implement feedback mechanisms to continuously refine services based on client needs, results from focus groups of experienced business leaders and demonstrable market demands.
- **Reporting and Accountability:** Provide at least quarterly, detailed reports to stakeholders on progress, outcomes, and financial stewardship. These quarterly reports will include a discussion of gaps discovered in the concept to commercialization pipeline and solutions implemented or being considered to overcome those gaps.

#### **Strategic Plan Support:**

- **Strategic Alignment:** Ensure that all activities are in line with the state's science and innovation strategic plan and contribute to the overarching goals of economic growth and diversification.
- **Policy Input:** Offer insights and recommendations to update and evolve the state's and OCAST's strategic plans based on emerging trends and industry shifts.
- **Long-Term Visioning:** Participate in the state's long-term planning processes to forecast technology trends and prepare the ecosystem for future opportunities.

The OTCC is expected to become a cornerstone of Oklahoma’s innovation landscape, driving technology commercialization through strategic services that are both comprehensive and adaptable to the evolving needs of the state’s technology entrepreneurs and startups. OCAST’s Oklahoma Technology Commercialization Center should also be seen as a primary technology based economic tool for startups and innovative industry partners in the state.

### Eligibility Criteria

Applicants must demonstrate:

- Lead applicant must be a non-profit organization registered to do business in Oklahoma.
- A proven track record in technology commercialization and partnership building, or demonstrated of key personnel and partners in technology commercialization and partnership building.
- Financial stability and the capacity to manage a budget of \$1.25 million annually.
- Experience in securing funding from diverse sources.
- Extensive knowledge of the Oklahoma entrepreneurial ecosystem, or the ability to rapidly acquire such knowledge.
- Ability to create and implement effective marketing strategies.

### Proposal Submission

Proposals submitted in response to this RFP must be comprehensive and provide a clear understanding of how the service provider will fulfill the requirements outlined in the Scope of Services. The following components must be included in the proposal:

#### **Executive Summary (maximum of two pages):**

- Overview: Concise summary of the proposal, highlighting the provider’s unique value proposition and alignment with the OTCC’s objectives.
- High level budget outline

#### **Detailed Approach (maximum of ten pages):**

- Service Delivery Plan: A step-by-step plan detailing how the service provider will execute each aspect of the Scope of Services, including who will deliver services.
- Innovation Strategies: Description of innovative practices or tools that will be utilized to enhance service delivery and program outcomes, in both urban and rural parts of the state.

#### **Annual Budget Breakdown (maximum of two pages):**

- Yearly Financial Projections: A detailed annual budget for each of the five years, showing planned expenditures, projected revenues, and allocation of the \$1.25 million annual funding.

- Cost Justification: Rationale for budget allocations and explanations of cost-efficiency measures including number of entrepreneurs and unique businesses served through each program offering.
- Please outline areas and cost associated with or where other partners will be compensated to deliver OTCC services.
- Please reference *Appendix A* for additional budget details.

**Letters of Support (no limit on collaboration letters, max limit of seven endorsements):**

- Collaboration Details: Letters from proposed partners and collaborators detailing the programs on which they will collaborate and the services they will offer, including any commitments or agreements in principle.
- Endorsements: Letters from stakeholders or previous clients endorsing the applicant's capability and reliability in delivering similar services.
- Please address the collaboration and endorsement letters to *Jennifer McGrail*. These need to be included in the application package. Please note that there is a difference between collaboration letters and endorsement letters as well as their count towards the page limits on the responses.

**Funding Success (maximum of three pages):**

- Funding Track Record: Evidence of the applicant's and their partners' success in securing outside funding, including grants, investments, and other financial supports.
- Financial Acumen: Demonstrated ability to manage and leverage funds effectively to achieve program objectives and sustain operations.

**Program Delivery Success (maximum of three pages):**

- Performance Metrics: Documentation of the applicant's current success in delivering program objectives, including tangible outcomes and performance metrics.
- Projected Performance Metrics: Projected numbers of clients to be reached and served through services, trainings, and program offerings.
- Case Studies: Specific examples or case studies that illustrate the applicant's success in fostering technology commercialization and innovation.

**Partnership Success (maximum of three pages):**

- Partnership Profiles: Detailed information on comprehensive partnerships the applicant has built, including the roles and contributions of each partner to past initiatives.
- Network Utilization: Examples of how these partnerships have been leveraged to achieve desired outcomes and deliver value to clients.
- Access to international partners and markets a preference.

**Key Personnel (no limit to key personnel, limit of two pages on team structure):**



- Staff Profiles: Resumes of key personnel who will be involved in the project, including their qualifications, experience, and relevant successes.
- Team Structure: An organizational chart showing the team structure, roles, and lines of communication.

**Submission Instructions:**

- Proposals must be submitted as a single PDF document. Main proposal shall be no more than 25 pages. Each proposal shall include an appendix with the resumes of key personnel, collaboration letters, and no more than seven endorsement letters.
- All proposals must be complete and received by the stipulated deadline to be considered.
- OCAST reserves the right to come back to applicants with clarifying questions from evaluators and could require applicants to participate in a question-and-answer session with evaluators if deemed necessary.

OCAST is committed to a transparent and competitive selection process to ensure that the most capable service provider is chosen to help advance Oklahoma’s position as a leader in technology commercialization. We look forward to reviewing detailed proposals with contracted external experts that demonstrate the ability to deliver a high return on investment and substantial economic impact for the state.

**Evaluation Criteria**

Proposals will be evaluated in no particular order based on:

- Approach to service delivery.
- Prior experience and success rate.
- Quality and extensiveness of partnership networks.
- Innovative strategies for funding acquisition.
- Marketing and outreach plans.
- ROI on all program offerings (including but not limited to number of founders served, unique programs offered, trainings offered, number of consultations.)
- Matching funds and/or in-kind support to broaden impact of program offerings.
- Alignment with Oklahoma’s Science and Innovation Strategic Plan.
- Demonstrated knowledge of Oklahoma’s ecosystem or a detailed plan to acquire such knowledge.

**Evaluation Process:**

- Proposals will be reviewed by a selection committee of external contracted experts, and applicants may be invited for a presentation or interview.
- The selection process will include a thorough review of all materials provided, and applicants may be asked to furnish additional information if necessary.

### Submission Deadline

The application will open January 12, 2024, and close February 12, 2024, 5:00 PM CST. All proposals must be submitted electronically by to [OCAST-OTCC-RFP@ocast.ok.gov](mailto:OCAST-OTCC-RFP@ocast.ok.gov).

**No applications will be accepted after this stated deadline for any reason.** After this deadline will be a blackout period and OCAST staff will be unable to communicate about your application.

### Contact Information

All questions must be received in writing and will be answered in writing through an updated RFP, please contact:

*Kristina Wadley, Associate Director of Program*

[OCAST-OTCC-RFP@ocast.ok.gov](mailto:OCAST-OTCC-RFP@ocast.ok.gov)

### Terms and Conditions

The contract will be eligible for renewal for a period of up to five years, subject to annual reviews, availability of funds, and approval of the OSTRaD Board. The State of Oklahoma reserves the right to reject all proposals. OCAST additionally reserves the right to accept only partial portions of proposals and combine them with the services of other proposals.

After award announcement, Provider(s) will complete a background review. Once the background review is completed, OCAST will execute a Professional Services Contract. Funds will be dispersed through a yearly contract, which will be a cost-reimbursable contract between OCAST and the selected provider(s), subrecipient(s). Providers are required to submit a detailed budget as part of their professional services contractual agreement itemizing salaries, benefits, travel, supplies/materials, and other costs associated with the proposed program plan.

Providers must be registered with the State of Oklahoma Supplier Portal located at <https://oklahoma.gov/omes/divisions/central-purchasing/vendors-and-payees/supplier-portal/supplier-portal-signin.html> in order to receive funds– but need not be registered at the time of application to be considered eligible for an award.

This RFP represents a significant commitment by the State of Oklahoma to advance its technological capabilities and innovation landscape. We look forward to receiving detailed proposals that demonstrate an understanding of our objectives and the ability to deliver results.

**Additional Details – Budget and Appropriate Fund Usage**

**Conditions are subject to change prior to issuance of final contract.**

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**CONSIDERATION AND PAYMENT**

- 1. Amount of Funds.** OCAST shall provide funding to the Contractor up to the amount of the State funds awarded in this Contract as listed in Part I of this Contract, subject to approval by OCAST's Board, and payable as set forth per executed contract. The funds for this Contract are to be paid to the Contractor for reimbursement of costs incurred during the period funded in the implementation and operation of the Program pursuant to this Contract. No Contract funds may be used for expenses incurred either prior to or after the time period specified.
- 2. Disbursement of Funds.** OCAST shall make payments to the Contractor in accordance with the terms set out in this Contract, contingent upon OCAST's receipt and acceptance of the Contractor's financial and progress reports specified in this Contract and proper invoices as described in the approved Contractor's approved budget. Contractor may invoice OCAST monthly. Invoices are due the last day of the month following the month the costs were incurred. Payment shall be made by OCAST forty-five (45) days after receipt of a valid invoice without the option for an early payment discount. Only those costs actually incurred and approved for payment will be reimbursed by OCAST. Any request for funds submitted more than sixty (60) days after the final date of the funding period may be disallowed by OCAST. Notwithstanding any other provisions, payments made pursuant to this Contract are to be made only from monies made available to OCAST by the State and are subject to the availability of such funds to OCAST as determined by federal and/or State action and/or law. OCAST may take any action it deems necessary in accordance with such determination including a reduction in whole or in part in the amount of Contract Funds and/or a reduction in the amount that is a higher or lesser percentage of the Contract Funds than other contracts of any kind or nature that provides for funding by OCAST to other persons or entities. Other than the Contract Funds, OCAST shall have no obligation to provide any monies or funding to the Contractor. In no event will any subcontract entered into by the Contractor incur obligation on the part of OCAST.
- 3. Use and Return of Funds.** The Contractor shall be reimbursed for its expenses solely for and in accordance with the purposes and terms of its Business Plan and this Contract. The Contractor shall not use OCAST funds to duplicate, replace, or supplant concurrent funding from other sources, which have been designated or restricted for the same use.

Contract Funds remaining at the end of the contract period may be carried over to the next fiscal year's contract if approved by OCAST upon written request made by the Contractor on or before June 30th of the contract year.

4. **Equipment.** The Contractor will keep any equipment or other property purchased with Contract Funds in good repair and condition and free from all liens and other encumbrances. Upon termination of this Contract, the Contractor shall offer to transfer any equipment or other tangible personal property purchased with Contract Funds to the Contractor's successor.
5. **Excess Expenditures.** Any commitment for expenditures incurred by the Contractor in excess of the amount of the Contract Funds shall be the sole responsibility of the Contractor.

#### **BUDGET AND FINANCIAL PLAN**

1. **Annual.** The Contractor's annual Business Plan shall include the fiscal year detailed budget with revenue sources and expenses (categorized as specified by OCAST), a staff allocation table, and the most recent month-end balance sheet if applicable. At no time shall the yearly budget exceed the total Contract Amount stated in this Contract.
2. **Modifications to Budget.** The budget may not be modified to exceed the Contract Amount stated in Part I of this Contract for the applicable fiscal year. If Contractor desires to overspend in any budget category (as specified by OCAST in Contractor's Budget and Business Plan) by more than 5% of the total Contract Amount, or to overspend any amount designated for a particular purpose as stated in Part I of this Contract by any amount, Contractor shall submit a written budget modification in advance. OCAST shall have the authority to approve or disapprove proposed budget modifications in its sole discretion. OCAST shall timely notify the Contractor in writing of its decision to approve or disapprove any change.
3. **Fiscal Year.** The Contractor's fiscal year shall be the period commencing July 1 and ending June 30 of the following year.
4. **Subcontract Approvals.** Any subcontract to this Contract over \$25,000 requires the prior written approval of the OCAST Project Manager.
5. **Other State Funds.** If the Contractor manages State funds other than the Contract Funds, such funds may not be commingled with Contract Funds.

#### **GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

- **Employee Benefits.** The Contractor has full responsibility for payment of workers' compensation insurance, unemployment insurance, social security, state and federal income tax, and any other payments or deductions required by law for the Contractor's employees. Copies of Workers' Compensation certificates shall be provided to OCAST upon request.
- **Employment Limitation.** No person who has been involved in any manner in the development of this Contract while employed by the State of Oklahoma shall be employed to fulfill any of the services provided for under this Contract.
- **Independent Contractor.** The Contractor is an independent Contractor. The Contractor shall not have the authority to assume or create any obligation, express or implied, on behalf of the State of Oklahoma or OCAST. This Contract does not establish an employment relationship between the State of Oklahoma or OCAST and any person performing under this contract.
- **Insurance.** The Contractor will obtain and maintain insurance against all hazards, risks, losses and liability to persons, property and business that may arise from the operation of the Program by the Contractor and its employees and agents. The Contractor agrees to notify OCAST of any change or cancellation of such policies at least thirty (30) days prior to such change or cancellation. The Contractor will obtain bonds (or their equivalent) in the minimum amount of \$150,000 for those employees directly responsible for managing the Contract Funds, including but not limited to repayments.
- **Intellectual Property Policies and Procedures.** The Contractor shall establish policies governing royalties or other income derived by the Contractor from the licensing, sale, or use of any patent or copyright. Such policies shall be subject to the approval of OCAST.
- **Notice of impending payments and payment submittal to OCAST.** Alerts of impending payments shall also be sent to the Director of Administration and Finance of OCAST. All payments made to OCAST shall be sent to the attention of the Director of Administration and Finance, at the same address as the Program Manager, or hand-delivered to the OCAST reception desk.
- **Prohibited Activities.** No portion of the Program Funds shall be used for any political activity or to further the election or defeat of any candidate for public office. No portion of the Program Funds shall be used for lobbying activities. Furthermore, if the Contractor arranges for the services of a registered lobbyist at any time during the term of this Contract, then prior to the beginning of such services, the Contractor will provide OCAST with written notification of the Contractor's intention to use a lobbyist, the purposes for which the lobbyist is being employed, and the name of the lobbyist. The lobbyist may not speak on behalf of OCAST or represent OCAST in any way without prior express written authorization by OCAST.