

DEVELOPMENT BANK OF JAMAICA

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Funding for Technology Extensions Centres in the provision of specialized industry support to innovative, high-growth potential Start-ups and MSMEs

The Development Bank of Jamaica (DBJ) is seeking proposals from university-based and industry-focused centres of technical expertise (Technology Extension Centres - TECs) for the provision of specialized technical support to Jamaican start-ups and micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) operating in high-growth potential industries, **and** that are introducing innovative products or services.

Technology Extension Centres supply specialized industry expertise and technical equipment to support firms in their product or service development, or accelerate the spread and usage of technologies developed elsewhere by companies seeking to leverage new technologies in developing their products or services. In the countries where TECs have been systematically deployed, they have greatly encouraged innovative activities that have contributed to increased competitiveness, productivity and growth. These TECs could be planned or existing; and could have been legally incorporated as a single entity; part of a broader organisation; or formed as a consortium across universities and/or other similar entities.

This grant may be used to finance capacity-building activities, staff training, improvement of existing infrastructure and equipment and/or the provision of specialized consultancies, to support start-ups and MSMEs that are developing or adapting new, market-demanded technologies or high-value agricultural goods or services **for local/regional and global markets**. The proposal must clearly explain how these services or equipment currently or will support the targeted group of entrepreneurs and how the TEC intends to manage its own financial and operational sustainability.

Each university-based or industry-focused centre applying for this grant must demonstrate its abilities in any of the following:

- (i) Provide technical expertise, equipment *and/or* assistance to innovative start-ups and MSMEs that are developing cutting-edge, technology-based solutions or high value agricultural goods or services to address local and international market needs;
- (ii) Provide consultancies (industry experts with demonstrated local or international experience) for technical assistance *and/or* extension services to the targeted group of entrepreneurs;
- (iii) Provide equipment for product prototyping, development and refinement. These may include laboratory, digital manufacturing, specialized computing and device prototyping services;
- (iv) Support the analysis and implementation of Lean Operations and quality improvement - certification to standards (such as ISO 9000, TS 16949, ISO 13485, ISO/IEC 17025) in innovative start-ups and MSMEs that are developing cutting-edge, technology-based solutions to address local and international market needs, or high value agricultural goods or services.

The DBJ will provide non-reimbursable, matching funding of up to US\$100,000 under this grant.

Centres or potential centres applying for programme support must submit a full proposal **of not more than 10 pages (excluding annexes)**, detailing how the organisation plans to support innovation-based, high growth potential start-ups and MSMEs in the chosen industry or industries. The proposal should also **fully demonstrate the business case** for the choice of industry/industries and the target clients and markets; and how they will develop and sustain a pipeline of such clients. Applicant entities must demonstrate how they meet the following criteria:

- Experienced, specialist industry expertise and equipment to support innovation-based, high-growth potential start-ups and MSMEs in the targeted industry/sector;
- Adequate in-house staffing and a qualified (internal or extended) team to provide the stated services (provide CV/LinkedIn links; if the team is extended, include Memorandum of Understanding/Letters of Commitment/Letters of Intent);
- Provide product development services, expertise/consulting services and/or specialized equipment to support high-growth potential start-ups and MSMEs innovating in the following areas:
 - Digital Transformation
 - Developing or adapting new technologies to enable local/regional companies, organisations or consumers to move to higher levels of performance and global competitiveness, leveraging Information Technologies such as Cybersecurity, FinTech, BioTech, HealthTech, EdTech, ClimateTech and AgriTech
 - Artificial Intelligence, Robotics and 3D Printing
 - Advanced Manufacturing
 - Biotechnology (including medical devices, pharmaceuticals and nutraceuticals)
 - Blue Economy/Climate Change
 - High-value Agricultural Products
 - Creative Industries
- Legal incorporation as a partnership or limited liability company, for profit or non-profit, or part of such an entity;
- Operational in Jamaica (may include overseas-based industry specialists);
- Operating and administrative processes, tools, and procedures currently in place for existing TEC (e.g. service level agreements, pricing system, etc);
- Business and/ or sustainability model/ strategy;
- Willing to provide counterpart funding of at least 30% of the programme cost (up to 50% of this contribution can be in kind).

This is a competition for grant funding and not every submission will be funded. The winner/s will be chosen through a rigorous assessment process and all applicants will be notified of the outcome.

Further information may be obtained by sending an email to: thinkbigjee@dbankjm.com

Proposals must be submitted **no later than Wednesday, February 21, 2024 at 12:00 noon**, via the online application provided on the BIGEE website: <https://forms.office.com/r/3yb2s5TWyp>

GUIDELINES FOR APPLICATION

Introduction

The objective of this intervention is to address the technical needs of Jamaican start-ups and early-stage companies in high-growth potential industries that are introducing innovative products or services.

This grant may be used to finance capacity-building activities, staff training, improvement of existing infrastructure and equipment and the provision of specialized consultancies at university-based and industry-focused centres of technical expertise, in order to support start-ups and early stage companies that are developing/adapting new, market-demanded technologies or high-value agricultural goods or services for local *and* international markets. The funded solutions must directly support the targeted group of entrepreneurs and enable the Centre to manage its own sustainability.

What is the Application and Selection Process?

Centres must submit proposals that clearly demonstrate their area of expertise and how their specialized services and equipment will be used to support start-ups and MSMEs that are developing or adapting new, market-demanded technologies or high-value agricultural goods or services for local/regional *and* global markets. The service delivery process and the sustainability of the Centre will also be considered.

Proposals will be assessed in accordance with the following evaluation categories:

- **Client Identification and Marketing**
- **Revenue Model and Sustainability**
- **Organisational Structure and Provision of Services**
- **Procedures to Monitor Client Satisfaction**

The detailed evaluation criteria are outlined in the table below:

| Evaluation Criteria | Weight |
|---|---------------|
| 1. Client Identification and Marketing | 20% |
| a. Definition of industry of expertise and targeted client segments | 5% |
| b. Marketing, channels and partners | 15% |
| 2. Revenue Model and Sustainability | 20% |
| a. Revenue Model and Strategic Objectives | 15% |
| b. Strategy for Sustainability of operations | 5% |
| 3. Organisational Structure & the Provision of Services | 50% |
| a. Management, operations and consultancy team | 10% |
| b. Support services model | 10% |
| c. Access to extended industry or technical experts | 15% |
| d. Access to specialized equipment | 5% |
| e. Budget and counterpart commitment | 10% |
| 4. Procedures to Monitor Client Performance and Satisfaction | 10% |

| | |
|--|-------------|
| a. Procedures to monitor client performance and satisfaction levels | 5% |
| b. Procedures for extended monitoring of client performance and satisfaction after service provision | 5% |
| TOTAL SCORE | 100% |

The process for selection will be as follows and is expected to take approximately eight (8) weeks for completion.



ANNEX I – EVALUATION GUIDELINES FOR TECHNOLOGY EXTENSION CENTRES

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|---|
| 1. Client Identification and marketing 20% |
| a. Definition of clients' segments 5% |
| Evaluation questions |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the TEC have a targeted economic sector or industry of specialization? How does the TEC define its client segment/s? Does the TEC have a quantitative estimation of potential clients? |
| b. Marketing, channels and partners 15% |
| Evaluation questions |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the TEC have an appropriate mix of marketing activities properly targeted at its defined client segments? Does the TEC have partnerships, integrations, or alliances (for example with business incubators, or business associations) that help it build its client pipeline and promote its services? Does the TEC have an on-line presence (web page, social media) that contributes to acquiring new clients and increasing industry knowledge? Does the TEC generate "repeat business" from its inventors/entrepreneurs/start-up clients? |
| 2. Revenue Model and Sustainability 20% |
| a. Revenue Model and Income Streams 15% |
| Evaluation questions |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the TEC have a clearly-articulated revenue model? Are there multiple, functioning revenue streams? Are its operations aligned with, and support the revenue model/income streams? Are expected revenue amounts substantial? |
| b. Sustainability of Operations 5% |
| Evaluation questions |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the business model sustainable? Does the TEC have a feasible strategy to sustain its operations? |
| 3. Service structure and value-added services 50% |
| a. Management, operations, and consultancy team 10% |
| Evaluation questions |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the TEC led by someone qualified and experienced in the specific industry/sector? Does the TEC leader manage the Centre based on private sector principles of cost-efficiency, margin optimization and customer satisfaction? Does the TEC have an operations team that is experienced in the targeted industry/sector? Has the TEC documented its processes? Does the TEC have a qualified and experienced consultancy team? Do team members devote a substantial share of their time to supporting the inventors/entrepreneurs/start-ups? |

- Does the TEC seek improve its operations incorporating best practices?

b. Support services model 10%

Evaluation questions

- What is the client/technology intake and problem assessment process? Is it likely to generate a high level of customer satisfaction?
- Does the TEC perform a formal needs assessment for each inventor/entrepreneur/start-up?
- Does the TEC make recommendations for optimizing the clients' original prototype design or service model?
- Does the TEC provide (or gives access to) prototyping and elaboration of Minimum Viable Products (MVP)?
- What is the process to access specialized equipment or consultancy services? Is it likely to generate a high level of customer satisfaction?

c. Access to extended industry or technical experts 15%

Evaluation questions

- Does the TEC own or have access to individuals that have deep expertise and technical know-how in its sector of focus?
- Does it provide access to these individuals as part of its client support model?
- Does the TEC have strong connections with businesses or organisations that may serve as suppliers, buyers or strategic partners to its clients?
- Does it provide its clients with access to these connections, as part of its support model?
- Does the TEC have strategic alliances with international partners?
- Does the TEC have strategic partnerships with universities, incubators, or accelerators to provide specialized services to inventors/ entrepreneurs/ start-ups?
- Does the TEC have strategic partnerships with medium or large private sector organisations to provide specialized services?

d. Access to specialized equipment 5%

Evaluation questions

- Does the TEC have access to specialized equipment to support inventors/entrepreneurs that operate in its sector of focus?
- Is the equipment in keeping with current/future technological trends or outdated?
- Does TEC have an adequate number of staff sufficiently trained to operate the specialized equipment?
- Does the TEC have different types of equipment to support a wide range of inventor/ entrepreneur needs within its sector of focus?

e. Budget and counterpart commitment 10%

Evaluation questions

- Is the budget proportionate to the programme's objectives and structure? Is there an appropriate balance across budget items?

- Is the budget cost-effective? Are indicators of cost-benefit provided? What is the cost per client supported?
- Is there a substantial counterpart commitment in terms of cash and in-kind contributions? Are there other partners contributing resources to the Centre?

4. Procedures to Monitor Client Performance and Satisfaction 10%

a. Procedures to monitor client performance and satisfaction 5%

Evaluation questions

- Does the TEC conduct entrepreneur satisfaction surveys and/ or entrepreneurs' feedback sessions?
- Does the TEC collect baseline data on client business performance and monitor evolution during service provision?

b. Procedures to monitor client performance and satisfaction, post-service 5%

Evaluation questions

- Does the TEC collect business information from companies, particularly on business results, product functionality or service effectiveness, after the provision of service? Are there multiple evaluations? For an adequate period of time? (for example, up to one year after service)