

NSF ENGINES FACT SHEET



Entrepreneurial fact sheet on the NSF Engines program

Jumpstart your region's innovation ecosystem with up to \$160 million over 10+ years.

The U.S. National Science Foundation's (NSF) [Regional Innovation Engines](#) (NSF Engines) program supports the development of diverse regional coalitions to catalyze and foster innovation ecosystems across the U.S. Each NSF Engine focuses on use-inspired research and development that creates new technologies, jobs and economic opportunities for national, societal and geostrategic impact. The program – launched in May 2022 by NSF's Directorate for Technology, Innovation and Partnerships (TIP) – was established in the "CHIPS and Science Act of 2022."

Pending congressional appropriations, the NSF Engines program aims to add additional regions to the 10 inaugural awardees announced earlier this year, expanding innovation potential across the U.S.

The NSF Engines program encourages regional teams of innovators and ecosystem builders, including for-profit organizations like startups, incubators, venture studios and accelerators, working in partnership with others, to submit proposals aimed at building innovation ecosystems across the U.S. Institutions of higher education, non-profit organizations, state, local, and tribal governments, and for-profit entities are also eligible to lead NSF Engine applications and be funded through this competition.

NSF Engines funding amount:

Up to \$160 million in funding for up to 10 years.

Funding eligibility:

For profit institutions of all sizes are eligible to apply for funding as lead organizations or core partners. In round 1, more than 28 venture capital funds, incubators and entrepreneurial partners were active participants in successful NSF Engines applications. Several of these awarded NSF Engines received funds while others received complementary funding in regions and topic areas of interest. Six of the 10 inaugural NSF Engines include partners new to NSF funding, demonstrating NSF's openness to novel, creative partnerships.

Check out our website:

<https://new.nsf.gov/funding/initiatives/regional-innovation-engines>



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We invite you to sign up for our newsletter to learn more about the NSF Engines program.

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U.S. National Science Foundation
Regional Innovation Engines

Email us questions:
engines@nsf.gov

Why should startups, venture funds and entrepreneurial support Organizations join an application team?

- NSF Engines program has the potential to be the largest regional innovation ecosystem building effort in the history of NSF and the federal government.
- NSF Engines provides long-term, flexible capital and support to regions—driving economic growth throughout the U.S.
- NSF Engines aims to make ecosystems stronger and more cohesive, leading to more robust research and development and a pipeline for startup companies scale products and services regionally.

How is NSF Engines different from other federal innovation programs?

- The amount and length of program funding per investment (up to \$160 million per region for up to 10 years)—an order of magnitude greater than traditional NSF awards—demonstrates NSF's commitment to driving transformative economic growth throughout the U.S.
- Compared to other NSF innovation programs, NSF Engines support extends beyond basic and use-inspired and translational research, focusing on creating the research and translation spine of a regional innovation ecosystem. NSF Engines spans of basic research to economic growth, including activities focused on startup firm creation, job creation and cultivating the talent pool to fill jobs in industries of the future.
- This program is operated in close collaboration with other federal agencies, most notably the Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration programs, including Tech Hubs and the Build Back Better Regional Challenge.
- For-profit entities can lead applications and participate as core partners; both roles are eligible for funding.

What are some examples of engagement pathways for startups, venture funds and entrepreneurial support organizations?

- Apply as a lead organization (recipient of the NSF funds and responsible for the award's management) or a core partner (a member of the stakeholder coalition often contributing or receiving significant resources).
- Bring the best entrepreneurial innovation ecosystem builders to the table during the application process, ensuring company builders and startup founders have a voice in topic areas and goals.
- Partner on research and development, develop startup support infrastructure and talent initiatives, drive regional need conversations.
- Invest in companies developing breakthrough technologies emerging from NSF Engines.

Take action

- Convene relevant sectors and organizational types within your region.
- Sign up for [upcoming events](#).
- Consider leading or joining your [region's application](#).
- For additional ways to get involved, see the engagement opportunities section above.