



## **Virginia Innovation Partnership (VIP) Accelerating Virginia's Innovation Frequently Asked Questions**

The VIP represents a \$2 million innovation program launched by the Commonwealth of Virginia to fund translational research. The Commonwealth will provide \$1 million in funding with the additional \$1 million representing the funds or assets each institution commits to each specific project in a 1-1 match. The intention is for every public institution in the Commonwealth to support and embrace this funding opportunity as a means to advance their early-stage technologies with the potential for commercial application. Ultimately, each institution's support through in-kind or cash matches will increase licensing opportunities, encourage corporate partnerships and sponsored research opportunities, and create jobs and internships.

Each institution's matches should be developed on a project-by-project basis. These may be cash or in-kind. Matches will only be realized if the project is funded. It is desirable to have the match identified at the time of application submission.

Examples of appropriate matching funds may include:

- External or institutional funds allocated to support the approved research proposal. External funds might include a private donor or foundation.
- Contributed faculty efforts, including salaries and fringe benefits, directly related to the approved research proposal
- In-kind matches of staff time for new project-related duties
- Fees associated with using core facilities or equipment directly relating to the advancement of the project
- Costs of lab consumables, contractual services, materials and equipment directly related to the approved research project
- Patent costs or legal expenses (up to \$25,000)
- Indirect costs at the rate of up to 50% calculated on the VIP portion of the funds (not the total project funds).

### Frequently Asked Questions about the Virginia Innovation Partnership (VIP) Program

#### **When calculating the 1-1 matching funds, do you calculate 100% of the VIP requested funds or 100% of the total project funds?**

- Calculate using 100% of the VIP requested funds.

For example, if the project submits total project funds of \$100,000, then the VIP program will fund \$50,000 and the remaining \$50,000 represents the 1-1 match.

#### **Can universities partially match by waiving overhead costs?**

- Yes, the VIP program allows each project to include waived overhead costs as a match at the rate of up to 50% calculated on the VIP portion of the funds. Indirect costs should be assessed against the VIP portion of the funds (not the total project

funds) in recognition of infrastructure costs (facilities and administrative) not attributable to a single project.

In the above example, the project requires a \$50,000 match. The institution may choose to include a match of up to \$25,000 for overhead.

**May a researcher's start-up funds be used as part of the match?**

- Yes, as long as they are allocated to support the approved research proposal.

**Can funds from an existing federal grant be used as part of the match?**

- Federal funds are already allocated to a specific project or expenditures so would not be eligible as a match.

**Can a researcher's contributed efforts be considered as part of the match?**

- Yes, a researcher's salary and fringe benefits may be considered as "contributed efforts" as long as the salary is not drawn from allocated funds (such as Federal funds) and the salary is not included as a budget item in the funding proposal.

**Can expenditures that have already been expensed be used as a match?**

- Yes, as long as they fit all other matching criteria, were incurred within the past six months and represent an expenditure that advances the project in some way.

**Do I have to identify where matching funds will come from before the grant is considered?**

- Yes, since the program requires a 1-1 match, it is desirable to have the match identified at the time of application submission. This does not mean that the institution must commit monies to directly fund the project. The institution will, however, commit assets to each specific project. These assets may include designated project time spent on existing equipment, time designated by a programmer or technician to new project-related duties, or various other costs associated with the approved research project. Remember that the VIP program also allows up to a 50% facilities and administrative match.

If the project is not funded by the VIP program, then the institution is not responsible for any matching commitments. However, these commitments should be clearly outlined up-front in the proposal in the event that the project is funded.

**My project is a collaborative effort with a small company. Can some of the VIP funds be used for this type of work? And can the company provide part of the matching funds?**

- This will be considered on a case-by-case basis. In general, VIP funds are specifically targeted at early-stage university technologies, not at advancing company research projects. If the funds will be used to advance the patents or technologies of the company, then the answer is no. If, however, the company provides reagents, services, equipment etc so that the approved project can advance, then the answer is likely yes. If the company provides these services or

consumables at no charge, then they would likely qualify as a match. Careful attention to conflicts of interest, liabilities, ownership etc. will need to be addressed.

**My project has IP protection through our tech transfer office. How much of this information do I need to disclose in the VIP application?**

- Your proposal must include a description of the project's IP status. Specific details about the patent are not required, but you may wish to include a brief summary of the patent to address its potential for creating new IP, licensing deals and commercialization. It will be important to show that there is freedom to operate and that the IP is under the management of the university. Your submission should also include evidence that the project's IP status has been pre-reviewed by the tech transfer office.

**Please note that all funding requests and proposed matches will be reviewed on a project-by-project basis by the Review and Governing Boards. This information is provided only as a guideline.**