



# INNOVATION ADOPTION PROGRAM

*Accelerating technology, innovation, and commercialization*

TechConnect's Innovation Adoption Program Pairs Manufacturers with Centers of Excellence to Develop New Products and Processes

## Background

There has been a renewed and growing focus on manufacturing in West Virginia, with state leaders urging action to increase the number of manufacturing jobs through on-shoring, increased exports, retraining, and support for small business.

Manufacturers today face many challenges operating in the global economy: more competition, increased technical competence of those competitors, cost pressures, market expectations, and the availability of a skilled work force. In response to global business issues such as: currency valuation, unreliability of supply chains, and increased transportation costs, manufacturing companies also need help in preparing to take full advantage of on-shoring opportunities. The marketplace has evolved to expect high product quality, rapid introduction of enhanced product functions, and quick delivery on orders. The challenge for manufacturers is to stay one step ahead, continue to innovate, become more productive and improve quality. Manufacturers understand that leadership in innovation and technology are crucial to their future competitiveness.

We at TechConnectWV (TCWV) understand that as well, and so in collaboration with Innovation Works of Southwestern PA, we are rolling out an [Innovation Adoption Program](#), based on IW's successful model, which will be tailored to West Virginia's manufacturing sector.

The Innovation Adoption Program (IAP) is a project-based initiative that will provide a source of funding necessary to address the technology and/or new product development needs of existing manufacturers by connecting them with the prototyping, design, testing, and analytical capabilities of the State's higher education institutions and non-profit Centers of Excellence.

## IAP Objective

The objective of the IAP is to help manufacturers located in West Virginia develop cutting-edge technologies that will accelerate their business development and growth, and enable them to gain a competitive advantage in local and global markets.

The IAP is a project-based initiative that will provide a source of funding necessary to address the technology and/or new product development needs of existing manufacturers by connecting them with the prototyping, design, testing, and analytical capabilities of the State's higher education institutions and non-profit Centers of Excellence.

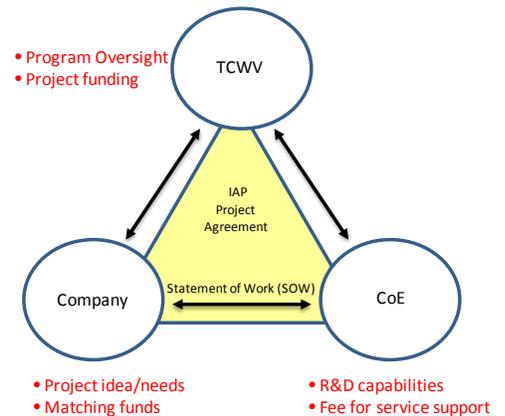
The desired outcome of this initiative is to make manufacturers in West Virginia more technologically innovative, productive, and profitable through the creative use of the State's non-profit and university technology commercialization resources.

## Program Structure

The IAP provides funding to help small-to-medium sized manufacturing companies in West Virginia gain a competitive edge in the marketplace. The program is project-based and driven by the needs of manufacturing companies. The IAP also has a requirement that each project must be supported by a non-profit Center of Excellence (CoE) located in the State.

Each IAP project involves a 3-way partnership (see graphic), which is formalized in an IAP project agreement, between:

1. TCWV, who provides program oversight and funding,
2. the Company, who has a qualified project to execute, and
3. a non-profit CoE, who provides R&D capabilities to help the Company accomplish the project goals through a well-defined statement of work collaboratively defined with the Company.



## Program Guidelines

- **Company eligibility**
  - located in West Virginia
  - an actual manufacturer, i.e., a company that actually builds and sells a product(s) and/or system(s) in the marketplace (retail and service companies are not eligible)
  - in business for more than 3 years
  - employs less than 250 workers in West Virginia
- **Center of Excellence eligibility**
  - a non-profit organization
  - located in West Virginia
  - capable of engaging in (fee-for-service) work with an industry partner
  - able to provide R&D capabilities to help accomplish the IAP project goals through a well-defined statement of work (SOW) collaboratively defined with the Company.
- **IAP Project profile**
  - product engineering and design
  - rapid prototyping of product designs
  - improved engineering or manufacturing processes
  - industrial analysis and overhaul of existing manufacturing techniques
  - machine customization for product manufacturing
  - advanced fabrication techniques
  - other projects that improve the competitiveness of existing manufacturers
- **Programmatics**
  - three-way partnership agreement with TCWV, Company and the CoE supporting the project
  - funding from TCWV of up to \$25,000
  - project period of 12 month or less
  - company provides cash match of 1:1
  - repayment provisions

## Contact Us

TechConnect West Virginia seeks to diversify the state's economy through innovation-based economic development, primarily in the areas of advanced energy, chemicals and advanced materials, biometrics, and biotechnology. TechConnectWV works to build R&D and commercialization capacity, a culture that supports innovation and entrepreneurship, access to capital, and a proactive business climate with incentives for innovation-based start-ups.

For more information about how your company can benefit from the IAP, visit us on the web at [www.techconnectwv.org](http://www.techconnectwv.org) or contact the IAP Program Manager at [iap-pm@techconnectwv.org](mailto:iap-pm@techconnectwv.org).