**Background:** The UMBC Office of Technology Development (OTD), under the Office of the Vice President for Research, is continually seeking ways to help bridge the funding gap – support that can be difficult to obtain from traditional funding sources. With support provided by the State of Maryland, we are happy to announce our annual Request for Proposals for the *UMBC Technology Catalyst Fund*, a source designed to advance innovations originating from UMBC research to more commercially viable technologies. Additional proof-of-concept studies, extending data collection and prototype development are examples of the essential steps needed to demonstrate commercial potential.

A total of $100,000 is available annually for this initiative. UMBC plans to make several awards up to $25,000. Projects will be funded at the level deemed necessary to achieve the goals outlined in the proposal. Awards will be for a six- to twelve- month period and only proposals that can demonstrate achievable milestones within that time period will be selected for funding. One-time, no-cost extensions may be granted, subject to approval by the review committee. No overhead will apply.

**Requirements:** All UMBC members with Principal Investigator status are eligible to apply as long as the technology to be developed has been previously disclosed to OTD. We welcome projects from all disciplines and encourage interdisciplinary collaborations.

**Criteria:** All proposals will be reviewed by a committee comprised of internal and outside reviewers from the business community, and will be held confidential. PI’s whose proposals are selected to continue onto the final round of evaluation will be notified, and the PI will be invited to give a presentation to the Review Committee. The evaluation criteria will include factors such as:

* Significance of the market need and opportunity to impact the public.
* Competitive advantage the technology presents over current solutions.
* Probability that the project will result in additional funding or licensing.
* Probability that the research results will strengthen the patent position.
* Probability of reaching milestones within the time frame and budget.

**Deadlines:** OTD must be notified of your intent to submit a proposal by **Friday, September 24, 2021**. The final deadline for proposal submissions is **Friday, October 15, 2021.** Please be advised that several preliminary steps must be completed prior to final submission. **Finalists must be available to present their proposals to the review committee on Friday, November 5, 2021.** Awardees will be notified by the end of the year, with an anticipated starting date of **January 10, 2022**.

**Contact:** Interested applicants should contact Wendy Martin, Director, OTD at wmartin@umbc.edu to request the Proposal Process and Executive Summary Checklist and the Cover Form.