

Friday, Jan 05, 2018

OU Research Office announces 2018 programs to support high-tech startups

The Mobilization Zone (MZ) of Oakland University's Research Office offers several opportunities for local, high-tech startup companies, including two programs sponsored by the Michigan Corporate Relations Network — the Small Company Innovation Program (SCIP) and the Small Company Internship Award (SCIA) program.

"These programs are fundamentally important to the startup ecosystem," said Michael Long, executive director of the MZ. "Early-phase companies lack needed resources and are always cash-conscious. By providing matching funds, interns, and mentors, OU helps them move closer to commercialization."

The SCIP provides matching funds up to \$40,000 to Michigan small businesses for conducting a research project. The program is intended to help companies overcome a common challenge faced by startups — getting research and development needs met so they can get to commercialization faster.

The SCIA program provides matching funding to help small businesses hire university students to work as interns on projects that are both beneficial to the company and academically relevant to the student.

Specifically targeted toward Michigan businesses in the science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) fields, the SCIA program is designed to increase students' exposure to innovative processes and products emerging from companies that employ high-skill workers and to encourage student job placements with innovative and dynamic Michigan companies after graduation.

A third program, the Ideas to Business (I2B) program, is jointly run by OU's Research Office and the OU School of Business Administration. The program equips small businesses with targeted assistance from mentor-led student teams, focusing on specific gaps in the early phases of development. The volunteer mentors, consisting of local executives, successful entrepreneurs, and OU faculty, staff, and alumni, oversee the student teams providing advice and needed expertise.

According to Long, any OU student can participate in the I2B program.

"You do not need to be a business or related major," he said. "In fact, other expertise and viewpoints are needed."

Students accepted into the I2B program will receive a small scholarship (\$200 for undergraduates and \$300 for graduates) and a certificate upon successful completion of the six-week program.

"From the I2B program, we aim to build a meaningful bridge between academia and the real world," said Jae Kang, Ph.D., an assistant professor of entrepreneurship in the Department of Management and Marketing at Oakland University.

The Small Company Internship Award (SCIA) application process starts in March. Meanwhile, applications for the Small Company Innovation Program (SCIP) are accepted on a rolling basis, though preference is given to those who apply early in 2018. Applications to work with I2B teams will be accepted beginning in early January.

For more information on these programs, the application process, and the MZ, contact Michael Long at mwlong@oakland.edu or Jae Kang, Ph.D., at kang@oakland.edu.

About the Mobilization Zone



The Mobilization Zone of Oakland University's Research Office offers several opportunities for local, high-tech startup companies.

increasing jobs and prosperity in the region. Specifically, MZ programs address educating the future workforce, creating an entrepreneurial culture, advancing innovation and company formation, and promoting the region's resources, workforce, and businesses. The community development arm of the MZ hosts programs to support faculty, staff, and students, by sharing their knowledge, skills, and expertise outside the university.