

STATE OF MAINE

—
 IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD
 TWO THOUSAND AND SEVENTEEN

—
 H.P. 918 - L.D. 1324

An Act To Support Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Maine's Economic Future

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. 5 MRSA §15301, sub-§§1-A to 1-C are enacted to read:

1-A. Accelerator. "Accelerator" means a program that supports entrepreneurs by providing training, business assistance and mentors in a time-limited training program.

1-B. Entrepreneurial support system. "Entrepreneurial support system" means a network of organizations and programs in the State that facilitate entrepreneurial growth including capital providers, chambers of commerce, local governments, economic development organizations, universities, incubators and accelerators.

1-C. Incubator. "Incubator" means a program that supports entrepreneurs by providing training, business assistance and mentors and office, manufacturing or laboratory space.

Sec. 2. 5 MRSA §15301, sub-§2-A is enacted to read:

2-A. Technology transfer. "Technology transfer" means the disclosure, protection and licensing of intellectual property including patents, trademarks, copyrights and trade secrets.

Sec. 3. 5 MRSA §15303, sub-§6, ¶E, as enacted by PL 1999, c. 401, Pt. AAA, §3, is amended to read:

E. Shall cooperate with the Department of Economic and Community Development, ~~the Maine Science and Technology Foundation,~~ the Maine Manufacturing Extension ~~Program Partnership,~~ the University of Maine System and others in their efforts to ensure that a complementary system of support services, including, as needed and appropriate, incubators, business assistance, technology transfer, market research, patent research and similar services, is in place and available to companies and research laboratories receiving funds from the institute.

Sec. 4. 5 MRSA §15303, sub-§7, as enacted by PL 1999, c. 401, Pt. AAA, §3, is amended to read:

7. Other duties and powers. The institute shall do all things necessary or convenient to carry out the lawful purposes of the institute under this chapter- and may establish and operate programs, including, but not limited to, the following:

A. A technology center pursuant to section 15322;

B. A program to promote and encourage the establishment, maintenance and operation of incubators and accelerators in the entrepreneurial support system by awarding grants and other forms of financial assistance to companies, nonprofit entities, economic development agencies, educational institutions, government agencies or other entities for programs that promote an entrepreneurial business environment or train or educate entrepreneurs. Support for a program under this paragraph must be awarded on a competitive basis, with effectiveness and effect on Maine's economy as the primary criteria. The administrative costs of a program under this paragraph are not management and related operating costs of the institute under section 15305;

C. A program, in cooperation with the University of Maine System, to provide summer internship opportunities for college students in the entrepreneurial support system. Students must be selected on a competitive basis and be placed with companies, nonprofit entities, economic development agencies, educational institutions, government agencies or other entities in targeted technologies. The administrative costs of a program under this paragraph are not management and related operating costs of the institute under section 15305;

D. A program, in collaboration with the Maine Innovation Economy Advisory Board under Title 10, section 949, to support the technology transfer activities of the University of Maine System, other postsecondary educational institutions in the State and nonprofit research institutes eligible for funding under an asset technology fund established and administered by the institute, to increase the level of patenting at the University of Maine System, other postsecondary institutions in the State and nonprofit research institutes and to promote the licensing of the patents, especially to new and existing companies with operations in the State. Support under this paragraph may include expenses associated with patenting and licensing. The administrative costs of a program under this paragraph are not management and related operating costs of the institute under section 15305; and

E. A program in collaboration with the University of Maine School of Law to support the commercialization and manufacturing of innovations in the State by providing education and assistance with the patent process of the United States Patent and Trademark Office to companies, inventors and entrepreneurs in the State. The administrative costs of a program under this paragraph are not management and related operating costs of the institute under section 15305.

Sec. 5. 5 MRSA §15322, sub-§2, ¶B, as enacted by PL 2011, c. 691, Pt. C, §4, is amended to read:

B. The Department of Economic and Community Development shall determine assistance criteria and desired program outcomes and establish an application process so that technology centers possessing personnel with applicable skills can be chosen to best deliver services to technology-based entrepreneurs within a respective area unless the technology centers are administered by the Maine Technology Institute pursuant to section 15303, subsection 7, paragraph A.