

§15303. Duties of institute

1. Fiscal agent for public investments in private research and development. The institute is the fiscal agent of the State for all funds appropriated or allocated to the institute. Fiscal duties include the disbursement of funds through grants to private companies, targeted technology incubators and nonprofit research laboratories. Other duties include the accounting, evaluation and monitoring of all activities of the institute and all programs funded in whole or in part by grants from the institute. The institute may fund necessary precursors to commercialization of products and services, including the development of new technologies and processes, the development of product concepts and the manufacture of prototypes.

[PL 1999, c. 401, Pt. AAA, §3 (NEW).]

2. Targeted technology boards. The institute shall work directly with and provide staffing to targeted technology sectors to stimulate and manage the research and development grant process in private companies through technology-specific boards, which are subsidiaries of the board consisting of private sector representatives, scientists and others determined appropriate by representatives of the targeted technology sectors. If the institute's board determines it necessary, the institute shall provide start-up organizational and development grants to those targeted technology sectors. Each technology board may establish goals and objectives for its sector based on state economic development goals, establish research and development priorities, help companies network with each other and advise them on funding opportunities and on the availability of other support services, prepare criteria by which to evaluate proposals, solicit and receive competitive funding proposals, arrange for peer reviews and screen proposals and select those to be forwarded to the board for final evaluation. The board may delegate, based on conditions it determines appropriate, partial or full regranting authority to those technology boards that have demonstrated capacity to execute grants that are likely to lead to commercialization of a new technology or product.

[PL 1999, c. 401, Pt. AAA, §3 (NEW).]

3. Measures of performance. The institute shall develop quantifiable measures of performance to which it will hold all grantees accountable, including, but not limited to, the number of new jobs created by the grant, the amount of sales generated, the number of patents produced and the amount of corporate income taxes paid, and shall require all grantees to report regularly to the institute on those measures during the grant period and for 5 years following the end of the grant period.

[PL 1999, c. 401, Pt. AAA, §3 (NEW).]

4. Adoption of bylaws. The institute shall adopt bylaws, through the board, consistent with this chapter for the governance of its affairs.

[PL 1999, c. 401, Pt. AAA, §3 (NEW).]

5. Employees. The institute shall fix, through the board, the compensation of all employees of the institute.

[PL 1999, c. 401, Pt. AAA, §3 (NEW).]

6. Cooperation with associated organizations and the University of Maine System. The institute, in implementing its powers and duties:

A. Shall foster strategic considerations of economic development in the allocation of resources among the targeted technology sectors and promote activities that cut across technologies and achieve competitive advantages for Maine; [PL 1999, c. 401, Pt. AAA, §3 (NEW).]

B. Shall ensure that the institute's programs reflect the policies as described in the State's science and technology plan developed by the Maine Science and Technology Foundation and consult with the Maine Science and Technology Foundation in the formation of those programs; [PL 1999, c. 401, Pt. AAA, §3 (NEW).]

C. Shall collaborate with the University of Maine System on the development and annual update of an outcome-based 5-year technology plan that integrates private sector commercialization in the targeted technologies with university-sponsored research and development; [PL 1999, c. 401, Pt. AAA, §3 (NEW).]

D. Shall coordinate its priorities with the applied research and development efforts of the University of Maine System insofar as those efforts are in the targeted technologies and encourage, when possible and appropriate, companies and research laboratories receiving funds from the institute to establish joint ventures with the university system; and [PL 1999, c. 401, Pt. AAA, §3 (NEW).]

E. Shall cooperate with the Department of Economic and Community Development, the Maine Manufacturing Extension 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. [PL 2017, c. 109, §3 (AMD).]

[PL 2017, c. 109, §3 (AMD).]

6-A. SBIR technical assistance program. The institute shall establish a program to provide technical assistance to small businesses based in the State, pursuant to the federal Small Business Innovation Development Act of 1982, Public Law 97-219, to develop competitive small business innovation research, or SBIR, proposals for submission to any of the federal agencies participating in the SBIR program.

A. The technical assistance program may include, but is not limited to, small grants to hire grant writers, networking with scientists and other successful SBIR awardees, seminars on agency-specific solicitations and grant writing. [PL 1999, c. 608, §12 (NEW).]

B. The institute shall conduct a program to inform small businesses of the federal SBIR program and the state program in order to ensure that all firms have the opportunity to participate in these programs. [PL 1999, c. 608, §12 (NEW).]

C. The institute shall establish eligibility requirements and award selection criteria to serve as the basis for technical assistance funding under this program. [PL 1999, c. 608, §12 (NEW).]

This subsection is in effect if, and as long as, federal financial participation is available pursuant to the federal Small Business Innovation Development Act of 1982.

[PL 1999, c. 608, §12 (NEW).]

6-B. Maine Biomedical Research Board.

[PL 2021, c. 36, §11 (RP).]

6-C. Administer funds. The institute shall administer the Maine Technology Capacity Fund established under section 15303-A.

[PL 2003, c. 20, Pt. RR, §6 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 20, Pt. RR, §18 (AFF).]

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; [PL 2017, c. 109, §4 (NEW).]

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; [PL 2017, c. 109, §4 (NEW).]

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; [PL 2017, c. 109, §4 (NEW).]

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 [PL 2017, c. 109, §4 (NEW).]

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. [PL 2017, c. 109, §4 (NEW).]

[PL 2017, c. 109, §4 (AMD).]

SECTION HISTORY

PL 1999, c. 401, §AAA3 (NEW). PL 1999, c. 608, §12 (AMD). PL 2001, c. 196, §10 (AMD). PL 2003, c. 20, §RR6 (AMD). PL 2003, c. 20, §RR18 (AFF). PL 2017, c. 109, §§3, 4 (AMD). PL 2021, c. 36, §11 (AMD).

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