THE FAIRFAX INNOVATION FOR RESEARCH, SCIENCE, AND TECHNOLOGY (FIRST) PROGRAM

GUIDELINES

FAIRFAX CITY
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Fairfax Innovation for Research, Science, and Technology (FIRST) program supports early-stage entities that seek to advance the development or application of emerging technologies. The program is a partnership between Fairfax City Economic Development (FCED) and the Mason Enterprise Center (MEC) Fairfax to provide no-cost office space for a limited time as entities seek to pursue funding through the following sources:

- Research and development grants (e.g., SBIR, STTR, ARPA, DoD Rapid Innovation Fund/BAAs, NIST, NASA Transfer & Research Announcements);
- Establishing pilot programs with major corporations or government agencies; and
- Other relevant opportunities to commercialize a technology that provides economic and societal benefits.

PURPOSE

This program is intended to provide participants the physical address needed for funding applications, while alleviating the financial burden of a lease before substantial funding is received.

HOW IT WORKS

- **Eligibility Verification:** Businesses ensure they meet the eligibility requirements.
- **Application Submission:** Apply with a clear funding plan.
- **Lease Agreement:** Sign an office space agreement for up to 6 months at no cost.
- **Funds Procurement:** Secure funding and transition to a 2-year paid lease.
- **Extensions Information:** Extensions available if funding delays are documented.
- **Additional Information:** Exit program if funding is not secured within the no-cost period.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Business Requirements:

- Proof of funding application plan (e.g., specific source and timeline), with subsequent proof of successful grant submission or contract negotiations early in the no-cost portion of the license term.
- Alignment of research and development goals with FCED key industries and Virginia's priority industries. We recommend applicants review VEDP incentives and VIPC potential funding streams for state-level opportunities.
- Applicants who have completed programs such as I-Corps, ICAP, or other counseling to strengthen funding applications are preferred.
- Applications demonstrate future commercialization potential and economic and societal benefits (see application form for specifics).
- Commit to registering with the City of Fairfax as a business within 30 days of application approval (requirement of occupying the physical space); i.e., business license and commercial use and occupancy permit.