

# Illinois Manufacturing Innovation Voucher Program

## Empowering Illinois Manufacturers to Invest in R&D, Technology, and Innovation

The Illinois Manufacturing Innovation Voucher Program helps small and mid-sized manufacturers (SMMs) in Illinois obtain external technical assistance to solve technology adoption challenges. This competitive matching grant program is designed to remove hurdles in funding and know-how so SMMs can embrace new technologies in their products and processes – **providing Illinois manufacturers a competitive advantage.**

Eligible companies may be awarded up to \$25,000 in matching grant funds to be used to access third party expertise in the areas of R&D and technology adoption.

### Why this is important?

- Small and mid-sized manufacturers (SMMs) are 99% of Illinois manufacturers
- SMMs are cornerstones of Illinois communities across the state, representing over 12,000 companies
- SMMs are lagging in productivity growth and innovation, the drivers of global competitiveness
- SMMs often lack the necessary internal resources to adopt advanced technology and modern business practices that are necessary for them to grow and/or sustain the future of their organization

Process Step	Purpose	Time Commitment
Complete application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensure program fit and eligibility</li><li>• Provide clarity of problem and business case</li><li>• Clarity of technological needs and parameters</li><li>• Provide budget of project</li></ul>	Up to 4 hours. No cost.
Funding award decision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Up to 50% cost support for project</li><li>• Award not to exceed \$25,000</li></ul>	Decision determined within 10 business days of submission
Project implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Finalize contracts</li><li>• Implement project in scope of work</li><li>• Payment of 50% of project cost to IMEC</li><li>• Post-project assessment</li></ul>	Dependent on project
Impact survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Assess results in cost savings, investments, sales, and jobs created/retained</li><li>• Survey 9-12 months after project completion</li></ul>	15 minutes + prep

**Applications are accepted on a rolling basis.**

### Eligibility:

- Existing Illinois manufacturer with between 5 and 500 employees
- Funded projects must be conducted in Illinois
- Recipients must provide a cash match of 50 percent of the total project cost, up to \$25,000. For example, under the matching requirement, a company that receives the maximum award of \$25,000 must contribute \$25,000.
- Funding assistance must be approved before project is initiated

Proposed projects should be practical in nature. The acquired knowledge from external technical assistance should help resolve a minor technological issue or outline possible solutions for a more complex problem. It is expected projects will be completed within a 6-9 month period.

**Vouchers can be used to:**

- Access research or scientific expertise, including preparatory work for research and development
- Develop and explore new technologies
- Commercialize new or enhanced products, including prototyping, piloting, testing, and product validation
- Implement new technologies
- Attain consultation regarding product or service development and/or production or technology
- Perform product tests and industrial experiments
- Conduct feasibility and cost-benefit research
- Contract intellectual property legal consultation
- Acquire metrology, standardization, and certification for new products

**Vouchers or matching funds cannot be used for ordinary and necessary business expenses or any of the following:**

- Any expenditure of time by in-house personnel of the applicant
- Standard training
- Software purchases or basic software, web, or application development
- Capitalized equipment
- Routine testing or maintenance
- General marketing or sales activities
- General business advice, consulting, or basic professional services
- Costs associated with applying for grants and programs
- Costs of internships or support for students
- Entertainment or hospitality costs

**Reporting requirements:**

- Post Project Completion Report
- Impact survey, administered approximately nine months after project completion

*To apply for this program, please visit: [www.imec.org/innovation](http://www.imec.org/innovation)*

*For additional information, please submit an email to IMEC at [InnovationVouchers@imec.org](mailto:InnovationVouchers@imec.org).*