

CHAPTER 1160

MINNESOTA TECHNOLOGY, INC.

1160.09 AGRICULTURAL UTILIZATION
RESEARCH INSTITUTE.
1160.091 PROJECT OUTREACH.

1160.115 SMALL BUSINESS GROWTH
ACCELERATION PROGRAM.

1160.09 AGRICULTURAL UTILIZATION RESEARCH INSTITUTE.

[For text of subs 1 and 1a, see M.S.2006]

Subd. 2. **Duties.** (a) In addition to the duties and powers assigned to the institutes in section 1160.08, the Agricultural Utilization Research Institute shall:

- (1) identify development opportunities for agricultural products;
- (2) implement a program that identifies techniques to meet those opportunities;
- (3) monitor and coordinate research among the public and private organizations and individuals specifically addressing procedures to transfer new technology to businesses, farmers, and individuals;
- (4) provide research grants to public and private educational institutions and other organizations that are undertaking basic and applied research to promote the development of emerging agricultural industries;
- (5) assist organizations and individuals with market analysis and product marketing implementations;
- (6) to the extent possible earn and receive revenue from contracts, patents, licenses, royalties, grants, fees-for-service, and memberships;
- (7) work with the Department of Agriculture, the United States Department of Agriculture, the Department of Employment and Economic Development, and other agencies to maximize marketing opportunities locally, nationally, and internationally; and
- (8) leverage available funds from federal, state, and private sources to develop new markets and value added opportunities for Minnesota agricultural products.

(b) The Agricultural Utilization Research Institute board of directors shall have the sole approval authority for establishing agricultural utilization research priorities, requests for proposals to meet those priorities, awarding of grants, hiring and direction of personnel, and other expenditures of funds consistent with the adopted and approved mission and goals of the Agricultural Utilization Research Institute. The actions and expenditures of the Agricultural Utilization Research Institute are subject to audit. The institute shall annually report by February 1 to the senate and house of representatives standing committees with jurisdiction over agricultural policy and funding. The report must list projects initiated, progress on projects, and financial information relating to expenditures, income from other sources, and other information to allow the committees to evaluate the effectiveness of the institute's activities.

(c) The Agricultural Utilization Research Institute shall convene a Renewable Energy Roundtable, the purpose of which shall be to further the state's leadership on bioenergy issues.

(i) The Renewable Energy Roundtable shall consist of one representative appointed by the commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, one appointed by the commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Commerce, one appointed by the chancellor of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities, and one appointed by the president of the University of Minnesota. The appointees must have expertise relevant to bioenergy.

(ii) The board shall oversee the activities and shall provide staff to assist the Renewable Energy Roundtable.

(iii) The Renewable Energy Roundtable will engage professionals and experts from private, government, academic, and nonprofit entities across the state to identify bioenergy op-

portunities and collaborate with a broad group of interested parties to identify future alternative courses of action the state can take to sustain a long-term competitive position in renewable energy through the year 2025. The Renewable Energy Roundtable will consult, advise, and review projects and initiatives funded by the state as directed by the administration and the legislature.

[For text of subs 3 to 13, see M.S.2006]

History: 2007 c 45 art 1 s 57

1160.091 PROJECT OUTREACH.

[For text of subs 1 to 6, see M.S.2006]

Subd. 7. [Repealed, 2007 c 13 art 2 s 8; 2007 c 133 art 2 s 13]

1160.115 SMALL BUSINESS GROWTH ACCELERATION PROGRAM.

Subdivision 1. **Establishment; purpose.** The small business growth acceleration program is established. The purpose of the program is to (1) help qualified companies implement technology and business improvements; and (2) bridge the gap between standard market pricing for technology and business improvements and what qualified companies can afford to pay.

Subd. 2. **Qualified company.** A company is qualified to receive assistance under the small business growth acceleration program if it is a manufacturing company or a manufacturing-related service company that employs 100 or fewer full-time equivalent employees.

Subd. 3. **Applications for assistance.** A company seeking assistance under the small business growth acceleration program must file an application according to the requirements of the corporation. A company's application for small business growth acceleration program assistance must include documentation of the company's overall plan for technology and business improvement and prioritize the components of the overall plan. The application must also document the company's need for small business growth acceleration program funds in order to carry forward the highest priority components of the plan.

Subd. 4. **Fund awards; use of funds.** (a) The corporation shall establish procedures for determining which applicants for assistance under the small business growth acceleration program will receive program funding. Funding shall be awarded only to accelerate a qualified company's adoption of needed technology or business improvements when the corporation concludes that it is unlikely the improvements could be accomplished in any other way.

(b) The maximum amount of funds awarded to a qualified company under the small business growth acceleration program for a particular project must not exceed 50 percent of the total cost of a project and must not under any circumstances exceed \$25,000 during a calendar year. The corporation shall not award to a qualified company small business growth acceleration program funds in excess of \$50,000 per year.

(c) Any funds awarded to a qualified company under the small business growth acceleration program must be used for business services and products that will enhance the operation of the company. These business services and products must come either directly from the corporation or from a network of expert providers identified and approved by the corporation. No company receiving small business growth acceleration program funds may use the funds for refinancing, overhead costs, new construction, renovation, equipment, or computer hardware.

(d) Any funds awarded must be disbursed to the qualified company as reimbursement documented according to requirements of the corporation.

Subd. 5. **Service agreements.** The corporation shall enter a written service agreement with each company awarded funds under the small business growth acceleration program. Each service agreement shall clearly articulate the company's need for service, state the cost of the service, identify who will provide the service, and define the scope of the service that

will be provided. The service agreement must also include an estimate of the financial impact of the service on the company and require the company to report the actual financial impact of the service to the corporation 24 months after the service is provided.

Subd. 6. Reporting. The corporation shall report annually to the legislative committees with fiscal jurisdiction over the Department of Employment and Economic Development:

(1) the funds awarded under the small business growth acceleration program during the past 12 months;

(2) the estimated financial impact of the funds awarded to each company receiving service under the program; and

(3) the actual financial impact of funds awarded during the past 24 months.

History: 2007 c 135 art 2 s 18