

15E.351 Business accelerators.

1. The department shall establish and administer a business accelerator program to provide financial assistance for the establishment and operation of a business accelerator for technology-based, value-added agricultural, information solutions, or advanced manufacturing start-up businesses or for a satellite of an existing business accelerator. The program shall be designed to foster the accelerated growth of new and existing businesses through the provision of technical assistance. The department shall use moneys appropriated to the department from the grow Iowa values fund pursuant to section 15G.111, subsection 1, subject to the approval of the economic development board, to provide financial assistance under this section.

2. In determining whether a business accelerator qualifies for financial assistance, the department must find that a business accelerator meets all of the following criteria:

a. The business accelerator must be a not-for-profit organization affiliated with an area chamber of commerce, a community or county organization, or economic development region.

b. The geographic area served by a business accelerator must include more than one county.

c. The business accelerator must possess the ability to provide service to a specific type of business as well as to meet the broad-based needs of other types of start-up entrepreneurs.

d. The business accelerator must possess the ability to market business accelerator services in the region and the state.

e. The business accelerator must possess the ability to communicate with and cooperate with other business accelerators and similar service providers in the state.

f. The business accelerator must possess the ability to engage various funding sources for start-up entrepreneurs.

g. The business accelerator must possess the ability to communicate with and cooperate with various entities for purposes of locating suitable facilities for clients of the business accelerator.

h. The business accelerator must possess the willingness to accept referrals from the department of economic development.

3. In determining whether a business accelerator qualifies for financial assistance, the department may consider any of the following:

a. The business experience of the business accelerator's professional staff.

b. The business plan review capacity of the business accelerator's professional staff.

c. The business accelerator's professional staff with demonstrated disciplines in all aspects of business experience.

d. The business accelerator's professional staff with access to external service providers including legal, accounting, marketing, and financial services.

4. In order to receive financial assistance under this section, the financial assistance recipient must demonstrate the ability to provide matching moneys on a basis of a two dollar contribution of recipient moneys for every one dollar received in financial assistance.

