

**Rhode Island School of Design
Rhode Island Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship
“Partnership for Sustainable Development”**

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

The Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) has received funding from the U.S. Small Business Administration for a pilot project aimed at enhancing opportunities for early-stage small businesses and/or product designers and entrepreneurs working in areas of sustainable development and the emerging green economy. RISD has a long history of successfully working with external partners to develop studio-based research leading to innovations in industry and advancements in art and design education. Partnered studios bring together RISD faculty and students with external partners to conduct research on collaboratively identified questions or problems and to develop innovative design solutions leading to the development of new products, processes, services, and communication strategies. Many of these projects have focused on central challenges of sustainable development such as resource management, urban planning, renewable energy, and alternative materials and processes.

The Partnership for Sustainable Development will bring together RISD’s expertise in art and design research and sustainable development with the business development, business acceleration, and mentoring expertise of Brown University’s Rhode Island Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (RI-CIE).

Through this project RISD will collaborate with RI-CIE and one external partner from December 2010 through August 2011. Throughout this nine-month period RI-CIE will provide support in the form of business development and business acceleration assistance, mentoring, networking, and incubator space and material support for the project at the RI-CIE offices at One Davol Square. During this same period RISD and RI-CIE will collaborate with the selected partner to develop a design studio that will be run at RISD in the Spring of 2011 which will explore design concepts, market conditions, branding and other elements of the partner’s proposed project as well as larger issues of entrepreneurship and sustainable development in Rhode Island, the nation, and the world.

Proposals:

We are seeking proposals from potential partners (individuals or companies) who are early stage small businesses and/or in the early stages of development of new products, services, or other commercializeable business concepts that will advance the agenda of sustainable development in Rhode Island and will benefit from the combined technical and art + design/business development expertise of the RISD/RI-CIE collaboration.

Proposals should be in the form of a narrative statement of not more than 1000 words that includes the following elements:

- 1) An overview of the product, service, or business concept under development and how it will contribute to the emerging green economy in the State of Rhode Island.
- 2) A statement of how this project will benefit from the partnership with RISD/RI-CIE at this point in its development, including specifics on the questions and issues that could be explored in the context of a studio course with faculty and students at RISD.
- 3) Names, contact information and brief bios for all principals that will be part of the partner's project team.

Inquiries and final proposals should be submitted by email to:

David Bogen, Associate Provost for Academic Affairs
Rhode Island School of Design
dbogen@risd.edu

Proposal Due Date: November 5, 2010, 4:30 PM est

Criteria for Evaluation:

Proposals will be evaluated by a committee of faculty and research administrators from RISD and representatives from RI-CIE. The criteria for the evaluation of proposals will include:

- Depth, clarity and innovativeness of the proposed project
- Potential of the proposed project to advance the agenda of sustainable development in the State of Rhode Island
- Promise of the proposed product, service, or business concept to advance to the business development/commercialization phase
- Potential for the proposed project to benefit from engagement with the RISD studio/RI-CIE entrepreneurship environment

These criteria are not weighted in any specific proportions and the committee may make further inquiries of and engage in discussions with one or more of the submitters as the committee deems appropriate. The committee will select the proposal (with any modifications) that, in its judgment, best furthers the purposes of the pilot project.

Overview of Sponsoring Organizations:

The Rhode Island School of Design (<http://www.risd.edu>) is an internationally recognized leader in art and design education. Since the early 1970's, RISD has developed a studio based, research model for collaboration with industry, government and educational institutions. For over thirty years companies such as DuPont, DKNY, Windsor Newton, Sikorsky, Microsoft and Toshiba, organizations including NASA, the National Science Foundation and the Department of Energy, and institutions like MIT and Brown University have collaborated with RISD students and faculty in partnerships leading to projects and discoveries that have articulated new ways of addressing art and design challenges.

As RISD seeks to contribute its talent and expertise to the development of sustainable industries for the 21st century, the RISD/RI-CIE Partnership for Sustainable Development will be a valuable

resource for small business development and a critical tool for integrating principles and practices of sustainable design into the educational experience of the next generation of artists and designers.

The Rhode Island Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (<http://www.ri-cie.org>) was launched in April 2008 by Brown University and is funded by Brown, the Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation (RIEDC), Slater Technology Fund, and Rhode Island Science and Technology Advisory Council (STAC) as a center for business and economic development. RI-CIE acts as Rhode Island's hub to connect, accelerate and educate entrepreneurs. The organization's network of services creates an entrepreneurial environment that provides external partners with networking events, office and meeting space, workshops and seminars, and access to faculty and staff who can assist entrepreneurs and small businesses launch companies focused on technology, life sciences, design and other knowledge economy businesses.

RI-CIE's purpose is to create a supportive eco-system that includes a healthy "pipeline" of commercial innovations, providing very early stage business acceleration support and connecting people and organizations throughout the state. This model has proven successful in accelerating new ventures in cities such as Cambridge, Massachusetts and Palo Alto, California where there is a high level of innovation from higher education institutions and strong collaborations between public and private partners.

The U.S. Small Business Administration (<http://www.sba.gov/aboutsba/index.html>) was created in 1953 as an independent agency of the federal government to aid, counsel, assist and protect the interests of small business concerns, to preserve free competitive enterprise and to maintain and strengthen the overall economy of our nation. We recognize that small business is critical to our economic recovery and strength, to building America's future, and to helping the United States compete in today's global marketplace. Although SBA has grown and evolved in the years since it was established in 1953, the bottom line mission remains the same. The SBA helps Americans start, build and grow businesses. Through an extensive network of field offices and partnerships with public and private organizations, SBA delivers its services to people throughout the United States, Puerto Rico, the U. S. Virgin Islands and Guam.