

115TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 5086

To require the Director of the National Science Foundation to develop an I-Corps course to support commercialization-ready innovation companies, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 26, 2018

Mr. LIPINSKI (for himself and Mr. WEBSTER of Florida) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, and in addition to the Committee on Small Business, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To require the Director of the National Science Foundation to develop an I-Corps course to support commercialization-ready innovation companies, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Innovators to Entre-
5 preneurs Act of 2018”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

1 (1) The National Science Foundation Innova-
2 tion Corps Program (hereinafter referred to as “I-
3 Corps”), created administratively by the Foundation
4 in 2011 and statutorily authorized in the American
5 Innovation and Competitiveness Act, has succeeded
6 in increasing the commercialization of Government-
7 funded research.

8 (2) I-Corps provides valuable entrepreneurial
9 education to graduate students, postdoctoral fellows,
10 and other researchers, providing formal training for
11 scientists and engineers to pursue careers in busi-
12 ness, an increasingly common path for advanced de-
13 gree holders.

14 (3) The I-Corps Teams program is successful in
15 part due to its focus on providing the specific types
16 of education and mentoring entrepreneurs need
17 based on the early stage of their companies, however
18 the program does not provide similar support to
19 them at later stages.

20 (4) The success of I-Corps in the very early
21 stages of the innovation continuum should be ex-
22 panded upon by offering additional entrepreneurship
23 training to small businesses as they advance toward
24 commercialization.

1 (5) The excellent training made available to
2 grantees of participating agencies through the I-
3 Corps Program should be made available to all Fed-
4 eral grantees as well as other businesses willing to
5 pay the cost of attending such training.

6 (6) The success of the I-Corps Program at pro-
7 moting entrepreneurship within research institutions
8 and encouraging research commercialization has
9 been due in part to the National Science Founda-
10 tion’s efforts to date on building a national network
11 of science entrepreneurs, including convening stake-
12 holders, promoting national I-Corps courses, cata-
13 loguing best practices and encourage sharing be-
14 tween sites and institutions, and developing a men-
15 tor network.

16 (7) As the I-Corps Program continues to grow
17 and expand, the National Science Foundation should
18 maintain its focus on networking and information
19 sharing to ensure that innovators across the country
20 can learn from their peers and remain competitive.

21 **SEC. 3. EXPANDED PARTICIPATION IN I-CORPS.**

22 Section 601(e)(2) of the American Innovation and
23 Competitiveness Act (42 U.S.C. 1862s–8(e)(2)) is amend-
24 ed by adding at the end the following:

25 “(C) ADDITIONAL PARTICIPANTS.—

1 “(i) ELIGIBILITY.—The Director, in
2 consultation with relevant stakeholders, as
3 determined by the Director, which may in-
4 clude Federal agencies, I-Corps regional
5 nodes, universities, and public and private
6 entities engaged in technology transfer or
7 commercialization of technologies, shall
8 provide an option for participation in an I-
9 Corps Teams course by—

10 “(I) Small Business Innovation
11 Research Program grantees; and

12 “(II) other entities, as deter-
13 mined appropriate by the Director.

14 “(ii) COST OF PARTICIPATION.—The
15 cost of participation by a Small Business
16 Innovation Research Program grantee in
17 such course may be provided—

18 “(I) through I-Corps Teams
19 grants;

20 “(II) through funds awarded to
21 grantees under the Small Business In-
22 novation Research Program or the
23 Small Business Technology Transfer
24 Program;

1 “(III) by the grantor Federal
2 agency of the grantee using funds set
3 aside for the Small Business Innova-
4 tion Research Program under section
5 9(f)(1) of the Small Business Act (15
6 U.S.C. 638(f)(1));

7 “(IV) by the grantor Federal
8 agency of the grantee using funds set
9 aside for the Small Business Tech-
10 nology Transfer Program under sec-
11 tion 9(n)(1) of the Small Business
12 Act (15 U.S.C. 638(n)(1)); or

13 “(V) by the participating
14 teams.”.

15 **SEC. 4. I-CORPS COURSE FOR COMMERCIALIZATION-READY**
16 **PARTICIPANTS.**

17 (a) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out the I-Corps pro-
18 gram described in section 601(c) of the American Innova-
19 tion and Competitiveness Act (42 U.S.C. 1862s–8(c)), the
20 Director shall develop an I-Corps course offered by I-
21 Corps regional nodes to support commercialization-ready
22 participants. Such course shall include skills such as at-
23 tracting investors, scaling up a company, and building a
24 brand.

1 (b) ENGAGEMENT WITH RELEVANT STAKE-
2 HOLDERS.—In developing the course under subsection (a),
3 the Director may consult with the heads of such Federal
4 agencies, universities, and public and private entities as
5 the Director determines to be appropriate.

6 (c) ELIGIBLE PARTICIPANTS.—The course developed
7 under subsection (a) shall—

8 (1) support participants that have completed an
9 I-Corps Teams course;

10 (2) support participants that have made the de-
11 cision to take an innovation to market.

12 **SEC. 5. REPORT.**

13 Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment
14 of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States
15 shall submit to Congress a report containing an evaluation
16 of the I-Corps program described in section 601(c) of the
17 American Innovation and Competitiveness Act (42 U.S.C.
18 1862s–8(c)). Such evaluation shall include an assessment
19 of the effects of I-Corps on—

20 (1) the commercialization of Federally funded
21 research and development;

22 (2) the higher education system; and

23 (3) regional economies and the national econ-
24 omy.

1 **SEC. 6. FUNDING.**

2 From funds otherwise provided to the National
3 Science Foundation, a total of \$5,000,000 shall be made
4 available for fiscal years 2019 and 2020 to carry out the
5 activities described in section 4 and the amendment made
6 by section 3.

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