**Section 540.50 Review of Applications**

a) The Department staff shall screen all proposals to determine that all minimum requirements to the application package have been addressed. All applications will then be grouped by eligible grant categories and reviewed by Department staff and by members of the Council. In addition, outside consultants selected by the individual applicants from Technology Commercialization Centers will review the technical components of applications under the Business Innovation Research category. This review process will begin after the application due date and take no more than 30 days, with grant awards being announced at the end of that period.

b) The following review criteria will be used in reviewing and selecting applications for funding according to the weights specified. Applications for a particular eligible grant category will be comparatively reviewed with all applications for that category and are ranked from highest to lowest based on total points awarded to each proposal.

1) Proposed Activities – The proposals will be reviewed to assure their consistency with the eligible components and exemplary activities as described in Section 540.60. (30 percent weight)

2) Administrative Capacity – The proposals will be reviewed to determine whether the applicant is capable of completing the proposed project successfully based on past experience or previous performance, and the scope of program coordination. (10 percent weight)

3) Economic Development – The proposals will be reviewed to determine the extent to which the proposed activities are projected to result in measurable economic gains such as new business starts, new products commercialized, new jobs created or jobs retained, private sector funds leveraged, or number of businesses served. (30 percent weight)

4) Costs and Match – The Department will review proposals to determine that the costs charged to the program to carry out proposed activities are consistent with required match provisions and state and department administrative cost limits as specified in Section 540.70 of this Part. (30 percent weight)

c) The Technology Commercialization Grants-In-Aid Council will recommend projects for funding from the highest ranking proposals as determined according to the review process of Section 540.50(b) until all available funds are expended.

d) The Department will select projects for funding from among those recommended by the Technology Commercialization Grants-In-Aid Council. Projects will be selected for funding based on the following criteria:

1) availability of funds for the category;

2) applicant's performance on existing grants;

3) proposed economic development activities; and

4) applicant's willingness to negotiate with the department.

e) At least fifty percent of the funds available will be reserved to fund projects under the Business Innovation Research category.

(Source: Amended at 9 Ill. Reg. 15829, effective October 9, 1985)