2017 NearUS Application Rubric

1.) Commercial Potential

Is the target market clearly defined? Does the applicant have a clearly defined market need and a good understanding of who will be its target customers? Does the company have an easy time conveying an attractive buy-in to these customers?

5 - Exceptional	4 - Above Average	3 - Good	2 - Fair	1 - Poor
The company has : - Clearly identified a market need and end users of the product - Relevant target market - Clearly articulated the competitive advantages of the product for customer interaction		The company has : - Identified a market need, target market and end customers but not all - Created a market definition that may have some good data, but is not entirely thought out - A valid competitive advantage statement		The company has : - Poorly identified or not identified the proper target market, market need or potential end customers - Not articulated a clear competitive advantage for customer buy-in

2.) Technology Progress and Scale up Potential

Has the technology been implemented in a demonstrable, replicable setting? Is the technology presented ready for investment or customer use? Does the technology have significant technical barriers to overcome? Does the company have a manufacturing/scale-up plan? If the product is only available for license, will licensors be able to implement the proposed technology?

5 - Exceptional	4 - Above Average	3 - Good	2 - Fair	1 - Poor
The company has : - A prototype that has been fully realized and a demonstration was available - The performance of the technology has been repeated with similar results - Identified risks along with anticipated solutions		The company has : - A bench scale prototype that has been demonstrated - Data of the prototype's performance is available but results are somewhat similar and consistent - An effective, but incomplete, manufacturing strategy		The company has : - Not completed a prototype or demonstration, and performance data is either nonexistent or dissimilar from one iteration to the next - Not considered a scale-up or manufacturing plan

3.) Competitiveness

Has the company clearly identified competitors, barriers to entry and enumerated its competitive advantages?

5 - Exceptional	4 - Above Average	3 - Good	2 - Fair	1 - Poor
The competitive landscape is: - Well understood and the company may have the ability to produce a product with a competitive advantage		The competitive landscape is: - Adequately, but not completely, defined - Not fully understood to develop the company's competitive advantages		The company has: - Done a poor job of identifying appropriate competition - No clearly defined competitive advantage

4.) Funding Potential and Execution

Is the target market sufficiently large and/or is there room for growth of the target market? Will the proposed technology be disruptive in the marketplace and what is the level of risk for the company? Are the management plan and business model appropriate to grow the company? If needed, does it have proper mentors/advisory board established

5 - Exceptional	4 - Above Average	3 - Good	2 - Fair	1 - Poor
The company has: - A market with attractive growth opportunities - A sound management plan - Potentially disruptive tech - Potential to be an attractive investment opportunity		The company: - May operate in an attractive market, but has an incomplete business model or a tech that may not meet all the market needs - May provide a good investment opportunity in the future, but could present a significant risk to investors		The company: - Will not be attractive to investment because it will operate in a small target market - Has a high degree of risk with a low chance of overcoming those risks - Does not have an attractive business model

5.) Commitment and Resources

Has the company already initiated relationships with customers, partners, etc. for the company's advancement? Did the company show a clear effort in the input quality and thorough completion of the application? Did the company identify risks and acknowledge potential solutions? Are the milestones for future iterations/product improvements appropriate expectations to meet in the timeframes mentioned?

5 - Exceptional	4 - Above Average	3 - Good	2 - Fair	1 - Poor
The company has: - Exceptional dedication to be entrepreneurs and carry out the business plan - A complete application that contains appropriate detailed descriptions and strategies - A robust milestones and IP roadmap that can be met with resources proposed - A strong hiring plan with future hires to support roadmap		The company has: - The necessary dedication to be entrepreneurs and carry out the business plan - Several key or potential relationships for the success of the company have been identified and approached - Has demonstrated thought towards future product technical and IP milestones		- Company did not complete multiple sections of the application - No relationships exist and few if any risks have been identified - Does not have a good idea of necessary IP or technical milestones needed - Is severely lacking the technical prowess to pursue the proposed technology plan

6.) Overall

What is your overall impression of the company, proposed technology, market, strategy, and ability to grow into a successful company? How well does this company align with NearUS goals and/or can utilize the NearUS program?

5 - Exceptional	4 - Above Average	3 - Good	2 - Fair	1 - Poor
The company has: - Clearly articulated a need - A well thought out technical and business strategy to address that need - A strong technical competitive edge - Needs a presence in the US and NearUS resources to succeed		The company has: - The potential to be successful, but may need to better identify a market need, business strategy, technical roadmap or go-to market strategy - A technology that does not completely address the market needs - May not have immediate opportunities in the US		The company: - Does not have a clear grasp of the market needs, the strategies need to address the market, how the future of their technology should be steered and/or have a unique competitive advantage - May not be able to be a successful start-up company or utilize NearUS