



Launch
Tennessee

LaunchTN Phase II SBIR Matching Grant Awarded



September 2024



Winter Innovations Secures LaunchTN SBIR Matching Grant

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For Immediate Release

Knoxville, TN – Winter Innovations Inc. is excited to announce the award of a \$300k Phase II SBIR Matching Grant from Launch Tennessee (LaunchTN). This funding represents another significant milestone in advancing Winter Innovations' novel two-part needle device, designed to improve stitching in orthopedic ligament and tendon surgeries.

This latest grant adds to Winter Innovations' growing list of successful awards, including Phase I National Science Foundation (NSF) and LaunchTN grants in 2021 and a Phase II NSF grant in 2024. The company has now secured over \$1.6M in total SBIR grant funding.

SBIR funding has played a crucial role in the development of EasyWhip[®], Winter Innovations' innovative suturing device. Previous Phase I awards facilitated major research milestones, including the acquisition of a third U.S. patent and the publication of two peer-reviewed articles in the *Arthroscopy, Sports Medicine, and Rehabilitation* journal. The ongoing Phase II NSF grant supports efforts to optimize the two-part needle, demonstrate its advantages in common procedures, and expand the device family to offer comprehensive solutions for surgeons, paving the way for broader adoption.

Led by co-founders Lia Winter and Preston Dishner, Winter Innovations will utilize the LaunchTN Matching Grant to further advance their research and pursue commercialization activities beyond the scope of the federal SBIR grant. Dishner explained, "This funding will support team growth, the development of complementary products, and manufacturing initiatives, all of which are essential to bringing our innovations to the broader orthopedic market."

"We're incredibly proud to be part of the LaunchTN portfolio and are deeply grateful to receive this competitive Matching Grant," commented Winter. "LaunchTN has been instrumental in the growth of our business, and this award will help us move closer to our goal of improving patient outcomes in orthopedic surgeries."

About Launch Tennessee and the SBIR/STTR Matching Fund:

As a public-private partnership, LaunchTN is uniquely positioned to provide direct investment, while also supporting collaboration among founders, investors, researchers, the private sector and government. The SBIR/STTR Matching Fund, administered by LaunchTN (via the State of Tennessee), aims to advance the development and commercialization of innovative technologies by matching successful Tennessee applications to the SBIR/STTR programs and other competitive federal commercialization programs.

About Winter Innovations:

Winter Innovations is dedicated to developing simple, impactful tools for often overlooked surgical areas. Its flagship product, EasyWhip[®], is a two-part needle that addresses long-standing challenges in ligament and tendon surgeries. EasyWhip[®] improves suturing efficiency, enhances biomechanical security, and offers unparalleled versatility, all of which can improve outcomes for more than 1 million patients undergoing soft tissue surgeries each year. Building on its strong early growth, Winter Innovations is now expanding the EasyWhip[®] product family to meet broader needs in sports medicine, foot & ankle, and beyond.

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