



GRANT SOLICITATION

FY21 Seaport Economic Council - BlueTech Tech & Innovation Grant Opportunity

Solicitation No. 2021- JAI-02

**Massachusetts Technology Collaborative
75 North Drive
Westborough, MA 01581-3340
<http://www.masstech.org>**

Solicitation Issued: March 19, 2021

Team Leader: James Byrnes

Applications Due: 3PM EST May 26, 2021

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

The Innovation Institute, a division of the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative ("Mass Tech Collaborative" or "MassTech") is issuing this Grant Solicitation for a BlueTech Tech and Innovation Grant opportunity (Solicitation No. 2021-JAII-02) (the "Solicitation"). MassTech is soliciting responses from qualified firms ("Respondents") interested in receiving grant funding for projects that will increase technology-industry participation in the blue economy through the development of new products and technology infrastructure that supports growth in the Marine Economy (the "Project"). The maximum grant award is likely to be \$500,000 and the average is expected to be \$250,000. Respondents will be competing against each other for grant funding and the submissions of all Respondents shall be compared and evaluated pursuant to the evaluation criteria set forth in this Solicitation; a single Respondent may be selected.

Mass Tech Collaborative will be the contracting entity on behalf of the Innovation Institute for the purposes of this Solicitation, and (except where the specific context warrants otherwise), the Innovation Institute and Mass Tech Collaborative are collectively referred to as Mass Tech Collaborative or MassTech. Mass Tech Collaborative will enter into a Grant Agreement and Statement of Work with selected Respondents containing certain standard provisions (the "Agreement"), located [HERE](#).

1.2 Mass Tech Collaborative and the Innovation Institute

Mass Tech Collaborative is an independent public instrumentality of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts chartered by the Commonwealth to serve as a catalyst for growing its innovation economy. Mass Tech Collaborative brings together leaders from industry, academia, and government to advance technology-focused solutions that lead to economic growth, job creation, and public benefits in Massachusetts. For additional information about Mass Tech Collaborative and its programs and initiatives, please visit our website at www.masstech.org.

Established in 2004 as a division of Mass Tech Collaborative, the Innovation Institute works to support key industry clusters and to improve conditions for growth in the Commonwealth's Innovation Economy. The 'Innovation Economy' can be described as the economy that transforms knowledge into new ideas, ways or patterns of thinking, products, processes and services that fuel economic growth, create employment and wealth, and generate significant improvements in the region's standard of living. The Innovation Institute provides targeted, expert services, often accompanied by investments, to support the growth and enhance the competitiveness of key industry clusters in the Commonwealth's knowledge economy. For more information about the Innovation Institute and its activities and investments, please visit the website at www.masstech.org/innovation-institute.

2. GRANT OVERVIEW

2.1 Intent

Following up on the success of the original [Seaport Economic Council Grand Challenge](#), the Innovation Institute is similarly releasing this new funding opportunity in an effort to encourage entrepreneurs and technology firms to work with nonprofits, research institutions, municipalities, or other public authorities on the deployment of new and novel technology and business solutions to address important opportunities in the Marine Economy.

While the Innovation Institute welcomes proposals that leverage the strength of Internet of Things ("IoT") technologies to improve our marine and coastal communities, this solicitation will accept applications that advance any "Tech & Innovation" solutions that address this goal.

2.2 Background

The Innovation Institute at MassTech has been the lead agency to assist the Seaport Economic Council (SEC) in its efforts to support Innovation Grants for projects that promote job creation and economic growth in the maritime sector. The Innovation Institute supported the "Innovation" category of the SEC's Grant Program, by sponsoring the SEC Grand Challenge in 2018, and is now sponsoring this BlueTech "Tech & Innovation" Grant opportunity. This work aligns with SEC's mandate to help Massachusetts' 78 coastal communities develop and improve local assets to facilitate economic growth.

In 2019 the Organization for Economic Co-operation ("OECD") released its report, [Rethinking Innovation for a Sustainable Ocean Economy](#). This report emphasized "the growing importance of science and technology in managing the economic development of our seas and ocean responsibly." In doing so the report highlights a need for new thinking and actions as science, technology and innovation are poised to enhance knowledge and understandings of marine ecosystems and contribute solutions to marine problems, thereby driving solutions that strengthen economic development while preserving and restoring marine resources.

This funding opportunity advances the original intent of the Grand Challenge competition and is aligned with the OECD emphasis on bringing technology to the blue economy. With this offering we are seeking to fund projects and initiatives that establish connectivity between the Commonwealth's broad innovation economy, the nascent marine technology cluster, and the traditional maritime sectors.

Amount

The SEC has authorized the Innovation Institute to award up to \$1,000,000 dollars for this BlueTech "Tech & Innovation" competition. While applicants may apply for up to \$500,000 for high value/high impact awards, the SEC hopes to make multiple awards and encourages applicants to only apply for those resources necessary. While not a threshold requirement applicants seeking maximum funding are advised to include cash and in-kind contributions as demonstration of the applicant's commitment to success and validation from outside parties. All applicants are encouraged to include cash and in-kind match contributions, which will be considered evidence of the projects prospects for success.

2.3 Grant Requirements & Guidance

This opportunity is focused upon improving both the broader economic and environmental challenges within the marine economy. Applicants are encouraged to propose "Tech & Innovation" projects that offer a novel business and technology solution within any one of a range of disciplines like fisheries and aquaculture, maritime monitoring and security, shipping, marine biotechnology, offshore renewable energy and others.

Proposed projects and initiatives should accomplish one or more of the following:

- Increase knowledge about the marine environment;
- Improved research/technology uptake by the market;

- Improved business model innovation;
- Increased diversity and inclusion in the Blue Economy workforce; and
- Increased investment in Blue Economy activities.

Successful applicants will be those teams that present new business and technology approaches to address unmet needs in either emerging BlueTech sectors (marine renewables, blue biotechnologies, seabed mining and aquaculture, etc.) as well as traditional maritime sectors (shipbuilding, maritime transport, coastal tourism, fisheries, etc.).

By drawing upon the collective genius of entrepreneurs and innovators across the Commonwealth the SEC hopes to increase the odds of finding and accelerating revolutionary and impactful solutions to marine economy or coastal community resource challenges.

General Guidelines:

Application Process	Application documents, located in the Appendices, must be filled out in their entirety and submitted to the Innovation Institute at the Mass Tech Collaborative by May 26, 2021.
Types of Grants	Grants are available for capital purchases only. Capital grants may be used for the development of new technology infrastructure, the purchase of equipment, and building improvements, including interior fit-out costs.
Funding	The SEC is expecting to make multiple awards in the range of \$50,000 to \$500,000. The SEC will consider proposals for funding up to \$500,000 in project costs. Applicants requesting amounts at the higher end of this range are required to demonstrate high impact and are encouraged to include both cash and in-kind project support. Proposals seeking higher amounts should also include multiple partners from various types of institutions and/or propose a networked initiative or project.
Eligible Locations	All projects must be Massachusetts-based and should show benefit to one or more of the 78 coastal communities in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Eligible Applicants	<p>Eligible applicants must be a municipality, public authority, nonprofit research or other nonprofit community based organization located within or is at least supported, in writing, by one of the Seaport Economic Council's 78 coastal communities.</p> <p>All applicants must include collaboration with at least one technology firm or entrepreneur/startup.</p>
Duration of Contracts	<p>Any state contributions must be drawn within the fiscal year(s) specified in the contract. Contracts may span multiple fiscal years if the equipment purchased spans multiple fiscal years, but this should be specified up front.</p> <p>Fiscal year is from July 1-June 30.</p>
Match Requirements	<p>While there is no stated match requirement in the solicitation, the amount of cash and in-kind contributions in your proposal will be considered as a way to evaluate the demonstrated commitment of the project team.</p>
Reporting	<p>All projects that receive funding must report at least semi-annually on progress and impacts of the project to the state. Shorter term projects should propose reporting that aligns with the pace of the work and enables the evaluation of and response to progress in an appropriate interval.</p>

2.4 Evaluation Process and Criteria

A team from the Innovation Institute, Seaport Economic Council and the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development will collect and review the applications against the criteria below. This review will then be validated by an external review team with relevant experience in the Marine Economy and BlueTech "Tech and Innovation".

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Marine Economy Impact: Overall ecological or environmental impacts of the proposed project.
- Technical Merit:
 - Technology Innovation
 - Business Innovation

- Direct Commercial & Enterprise impacts:
 - Growth potential of the commercial market that is being addressed
 - Projected enterprise creation or impact in the form of additional revenues (e.g., business expansion(s) and new jobs)
 - Business expansion opportunities of other MA companies in the supply chain
 - Regional economic development/ multiplier effects (i.e. impact on broader MA business ecosystems)
- Prospects for Success
 - Qualifications of the team
 - Strength of Partnerships
 - Demonstrated Commitment (evidence of in-kind or cash contributions)

The order of these factors does not generally denote relative importance.

Mass Tech Collaborative shall evaluate each Application that is properly submitted. As part of the selection process, Mass Tech Collaborative may invite finalists to answer questions regarding their Application.

Lack of debarment status by either the state or federal government is also required.

3. APPLICATION PROCESS

3.1 Application and Submission Instructions

Respondents are cautioned to read this Solicitation carefully and to conform to its requirements. Failure to comply with the requirements of this Solicitation may serve as grounds for rejection of an Application.

- a. All Applications must be submitted in writing, in Microsoft Word format, electronically.
- b. Required Submissions- All Applications must include the items listed below:
 - Application Cover Sheet (**Attachment A**)
 - Application, which shall include:
 - A description of the firm responding to the Solicitation (including descriptions of proposed subcontractors, if any) and the firm's qualifications to perform the Project.
 - The proposed approach to providing the Project. Additionally, Respondents are invited to propose alternative(s) which provide substantially better or more cost-effective performance than achievable under the stated Solicitation scope of services.
 - Provide the total not-to-exceed costs for providing the Project based on projected hours, proposed hourly rates, as well as any other appropriate costs, in the Budget Template (**Attachment C**). List additional fees, overhead charges, or reimbursable expenses, if any. As a general policy, the Mass Tech Collaborative does not pay mark-ups on reimbursables or out-of-pocket expenses. Mass Tech Collaborative also does not pay for word processing, overtime or meals. For travel costs, Mass Tech Collaborative pays the IRS rate per mile.

- Three references for work previously performed by the Respondent that is substantially similar to the Project. References should include a contact person, address and phone number.
 - Authorized Application Signature and Acceptance Form (**Attachment B**), which contains specified certifications by Respondent. Please read the certifications carefully before signing
 - Exceptions to the *Grant Agreement and Statement of Work*, located at [HERE](#), if any.
- c. Applications **must** be delivered electronically to proposals@masstech.org (please include the Solicitation number in the subject heading).
- d. Any and all responses, Applications, data, materials, information and documentation submitted to Mass Tech Collaborative in response to this Solicitation shall become Mass Tech Collaborative's property and shall be subject to public disclosure. As a public entity, the Mass Tech Collaborative is subject to the Massachusetts Public Records Law (set forth at Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 66). There are very limited and narrow exceptions to disclosure under the Public Records Law. If a Respondent wishes to have the Mass Tech Collaborative treat certain information or documentation as confidential, the Respondent must submit a written request to the Mass Tech Collaborative's General Counsel's office no later than 5:00 p.m. fourteen (14) business days prior to the required date of Application submission set forth in Section 3.2 below. The request must precisely identify the information and/or documentation that is the subject of the request and provide a detailed explanation supporting the application of the statutory exemption(s) from the public records cited by the Respondent. The General Counsel will issue a written determination within ten (10) business days of receipt of the written request. If the General Counsel approves the request, the Respondent shall clearly label the relevant information and/or documentation as "**CONFIDENTIAL**" in the Application and **shall only include the confidential material in the hard copy of the Application**. Any statements in an Application reserving any confidentiality or privacy rights that is inconsistent with these requirements and procedures will be disregarded.

3.2 Application Timeframe

The application process will proceed according to the following schedule. The target dates are subject to change. Therefore, Respondents are encouraged to check Mass Tech Collaborative's website frequently for updates to the schedule.

Task	Date
Solicitation Released	March 19, 2021
Question & Answer Call	April 14, 2021 @ 1:00PM EST
Questions Due	April 16, 2021 @ 5 PM EST
Question and Answer File Posted	April 22, 2021 @ 5 PM EST
Applications Due	May 26, 2021 @ 3 PM EST
Notification of Award	June 30, 2021

All Respondents will be notified of final decisions via e-mail to the identified Project Director.

3.3 Questions

Questions regarding this Solicitation must be submitted by electronic mail to proposals@masstech.org with the following Subject Line: "Questions – Solicitation No. 2021- JAIL-02". All questions must be received by 5:00 p.m. EST on April 16, 2021. Responses to all questions received will be posted on or before 5:00 p.m. on April 22, 2021 to Mass Tech Collaborative and Comm-Buys website(s).

3.4 Bidders' Teleconference/Webinar

A bidders' teleconference will be held on April 14, 2021 at 1:00 PM EST. All potential respondents interested in participating in the bidders' teleconference must register with Mass Tech Collaborative by 5:00 p.m. on April 9, 2021 in order to obtain the conference call information. To register, please email James Byrnes at Byrnes@masstech.org. Mass Tech Collaborative will transmit the conference call information to all registered bidders 24 hours in advance of the teleconference. Mass Tech Collaborative will post summary responses to procedural questions and issues addressed at the bidders' teleconference on the Mass Tech Collaborative's and the CommBuys websites.

4.0 GENERAL CONDITIONS

4.1 General Information

- a) If an Application fails to meet any material terms, conditions, requirements or procedures, it may be deemed unresponsive and disqualified. The Mass Tech Collaborative reserves the right to waive omissions or irregularities that it determines to be not material.
- b) This Solicitation, as may be amended from time to time by Mass Tech Collaborative, does not commit Mass Tech Collaborative to select any firm(s), award any contracts for services pursuant to this Solicitation, or pay any costs incurred in responding to this Solicitation. Mass Tech Collaborative reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to withdraw the Solicitation, to engage in preliminary discussions with prospective Respondents, to accept or reject any or all Applications received, to request supplemental or clarifying information, to negotiate with any or all qualified Respondents, and to request modifications to Applications in accordance with negotiations, all to the same extent as if this were a Request for Information.
- c) On matters related solely to this Solicitation that arise prior to an award decision by the Mass Tech Collaborative, Respondents shall limit communications with the Mass Tech Collaborative to the Procurement Team Leader and such other individuals as the Mass Tech Collaborative may designate from time to time. No other Mass Tech Collaborative employee or representative is authorized to provide any information or respond to any questions or inquiries concerning this Solicitation. Respondents may contact the Procurement Team Leader for this Solicitation in the event this Solicitation is incomplete.
- d) The Mass Tech Collaborative may provide reasonable accommodations, including the provision of materials in an alternative format, for Respondents with disabilities or other hardships. Respondents requiring accommodations shall submit requests in writing, with supporting documentation justifying the accommodations, to the Procurement Team Leader. The Mass Tech Collaborative reserves the right to grant or reject any request for accommodations.
- e) Respondent's Application shall be treated by the Mass Tech Collaborative as an accurate statement of Respondent's capabilities and experience. Should any statement asserted by Respondent prove to be inaccurate or inconsistent with the foregoing, such inaccuracy or inconsistency shall constitute sufficient cause for Mass Tech Collaborative

in its sole discretion to reject the Application and/or terminate of any resulting Agreement.

- f) Costs that are not specifically identified in the Respondent's response and/or not specifically accepted by Mass Tech Collaborative as part of the Agreement will not be compensated under any contract awarded pursuant to this Solicitation.
- g) Mass Tech Collaborative's prior approval is required for any subcontracted services under any Agreement entered into as a result of this Solicitation. The selected Respondent will take all appropriate steps to assure that minority firms, women's business enterprises, and labor surplus area firms are used when possible. The selected Respondent is responsible for the satisfactory performance and adequate oversight of its subcontractors. Subcontractors are required to meet the same requirements and are held to the same reimbursable cost standards as the selected Respondent.
- h) Submitted responses must be valid in all respects for a minimum period of sixty (60) days after the deadline for submission.
- i) Mass Tech Collaborative reserves the right to amend the Agreement at any time prior to execution. Respondents should review the Agreement as they are required to specify any exceptions to the Agreement and to make any suggested counterproposal in their Application. A failure to specify exceptions and/or counterproposals will be deemed an acceptance of the Agreement's general terms and conditions, and no subsequent negotiation of such provisions shall be permitted.

4.2 Posting of Modifications/Addenda to Solicitation

This Solicitation has been distributed electronically using the Mass Tech Collaborative and COMMBUYS websites. If the Mass Tech Collaborative determines that it is necessary to revise any part of this Solicitation, or if additional data is necessary to clarify any of its provisions, an addendum will be posted to the websites. It is the responsibility of each potential Respondent to check the Mass Tech Collaborative, the Innovation Institute and COMMBUYS websites for any addenda or modifications to the Solicitation. The Mass Tech Collaborative accepts no liability and will provide no accommodation to Respondents who submit a response based on an out-of-date Solicitation.

Attachment A
Application Cover Sheet

Name of Respondent			
Mailing Address	City/Town	State	Zip Code
Telephone	Fax	Web Address	
Primary Contact for Clarification		Primary Contact E-mail Address	
Authorized Signatory		Authorized Signatory E-mail Address	
Legal Status/Jurisdiction (e.g., a Massachusetts Corporation, LLC, LLP, etc.)		Respondents DUNS No.	

Attachment B
Massachusetts Technology Collaborative
Authorized Respondent's Signature and Acceptance Form

The undersigned is a duly authorized representative of the Respondent listed below. The Respondent has read and understands the Solicitation requirements. The Respondent acknowledges that all of the terms and conditions of the Solicitation are mandatory. By executing this Authorized Respondent's Signature and Acceptance Form, Respondent certifies that they (1) are in compliance with the terms, conditions and specifications contained in this Solicitation, (2) acknowledges and understands the procedures for handling materials submitted to the Mass Tech Collaborative as set forth in section 3.1 d. of this Solicitation, (3) agrees to be bound by those procedures, and (4) agrees that Mass Tech Collaborative shall not be liable under any circumstances for the disclosure of any materials submitted to the Mass Tech Collaborative pursuant to this Solicitation or upon the Respondent's selection.

The Respondent understands that, if selected by the Mass Tech Collaborative, the Respondent and Mass Tech Collaborative will execute an Agreement specifying the mutual requirements of participation. The undersigned has either (*please check one*):

- specified exceptions and counter-proposals to the terms and conditions of the [Agreement](#); or
- agrees to the terms and conditions set forth therein;

The undersigned acknowledges and agrees that the failure to submit exceptions and counter-proposals with this response shall be deemed a waiver, and the Agreement shall not be subject to further negotiation.

Respondent agrees that the entire bid response will remain valid for sixty (60) days from receipt by the Mass Tech Collaborative.

I certify that Respondent is in compliance with all corporate filing requirements and State tax laws.

I further certify that the statements made in this response to the Solicitation, including all attachments and exhibits, are true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Respondent: _____
(Printed Name of Respondent)

By: _____
(Signature of Authorized Representative)

Name: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____

Attachment C
Budget Template

SEE EXCEL SPREADSHEET