



Request for Proposals for Establishing Community WiFi Hotspots in Gateway Cities and the Outer Cape

RFP No. 2021-MBI-01

**Massachusetts Technology Collaborative
[Massachusetts Broadband Institute]
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<http://www.masstech.org>**

Procurement Team Leader:	Michael Baldino
RFP Issued:	December 4, 2020
Questions Due:	December 14, 2020
Answers to Questions Posted:	December 17, 2020
Responses Due:	December 29, 2020 3:00PM

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

Massachusetts Technology Collaborative (“Mass Tech Collaborative” or “MassTech”), on behalf of the Massachusetts Broadband Institute (“MBI”) is issuing this Request for Proposals for Establishing Community WiFi Hotspots (“Hotspot”) in Gateways Cities and the Outer Cape (RFP No.2021-MBI-01) (the “RFP” or “RFP”) to solicit proposals from qualified providers (“Respondents”) to establish and maintain one or more indoor and/or outdoor Hotspots through June 30, 2021 as more specifically described in Section 2 (the “Services”). The initial list of cities and towns that are eligible to receive Hotspots are listed in Section 2. Mass Tech Collaborative may issue one or more addenda to this RFP to add additional towns or cities, which would also include an updated schedule for responding to this RFP, if necessary. Mass Tech Collaborative will post each addendum, as specified in Section 5.2, and will also notify Respondent(s) of each addendum issued after receipt of a Proposal under this RFP.

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

1.2 Mass Tech Collaborative and MBI

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. Mass Tech Collaborative has three primary divisions: The Innovation Institute at the MassTech Collaborative, the Massachusetts Broadband Institute, and the Massachusetts e-Health Institute. For additional information about Mass Tech Collaborative and its programs and initiatives, please visit our website at www.masstech.org.

MBI is the central broadband program for the Commonwealth. MBI was created on August 4, 2008, by Chapter 231 of the Acts of 2008, An Act Establishing and Funding the Massachusetts Broadband Institute (the “Broadband Act”). The primary mission of MBI is to extend affordable, robust, high-speed Internet access to all homes, businesses, schools, libraries, medical facilities, government offices and other public places across Massachusetts, with a focus on the hard-to-serve areas of western and central Massachusetts. For more information about MBI and its programs and activities generally, please visit the web site at www.massbroadband.org.

2. SERVICES REQUIRED

2.1 Overview

The Baker-Polito Administration announced on October 22, 2020, a \$774 million comprehensive Economic Recovery Plan that focuses on getting people back to work, supporting small businesses, fostering innovation, revitalizing downtowns and ensuring housing stability. The Economic Recovery Plan designated MBI to administer programs to expand internet access for people impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Establishing Hotspots in the cities and the towns listed below is a critical component of the Economic Recovery Plan goal of supporting internet connectivity for populations that have financial barriers to internet access. Due to the urgent need to expand internet access, it is a high priority for the Mass Tech Collaborative to partner with Respondents that can stand up Hotspots on an expedited schedule.

Mass Tech Collaborative will provide financial support to the selected Respondent(s) to establish and maintain up to three indoor and/or outdoor Hotspots in each of the Gateway Cities and Outer Cape towns listed below (each a “Eligible Municipality and collectively the “Eligible Municipalities”):

Gateway Cities: Barnstable
Chicopee
Methuen
Peabody
Pittsfield
Quincy
Worcester

Outer Cape Towns: Eastham
Provincetown
Truro
Wellfleet

Interested providers should respond to this RFP with a proposal to provide up to three Hotspots in one or more Eligible Municipalities. Please note however, that a Respondent should only submit one proposal to cover all Eligible Municipalities that the Respondent proposes to serve with Hotspot(s). Prior to submitting a proposal under this RFP, the Respondent should coordinate with local officials to identify an appropriate building location to host each Hotspot. Please note that if a Respondent is selected and awarded a contract under this RFP it may only be for a subset of the proposed Hotspots in the Eligible Municipalities

2.2 Scope of Services

The Selected Respondent shall be responsible for the following tasks and services associated with each proposed Hotspot:

1. Site Acquisition for Hotspot(s) – Identify and secure access to a building or outdoor location to host each Hotspot that satisfies the following criteria:
 - a. Provides adequate space to accommodate users of the Hotspot in a socially distanced manner and in full compliance with COVID-19 guidance issued by the Massachusetts Department of Health (DPH) and COVID-19 orders issued by Governor Baker or DPH;
 - b. Provides adequate parking for Hotspot users (accessibility via public transportation would be desirable, if available in the Eligible Municipality);
 - c. Has adequate space to accommodate at least ten simultaneous users;
 - d. Can be open for Hotspot users during a wide range of times and days. Mass Tech Collaborative has a preference for Hotspots that can have daytime and evening hours and availability on weekdays and weekends; and
 - e. If more than one Hotspot is proposed for an Eligible Municipality, Respondent should consider locations that accomplish geographic diversity and other factors that distinguish and justify the need for more than one Hotspot in an Eligible Municipality.
2. Hotspot Installation and Site Preparation
 - a. Acquire, install and configure equipment that will provide Hotspot internet access. The equipment should be installed in a climate controlled and secure location for an indoor Hotspot. Weatherized equipment should be used for an outdoor Hotspot installation. Mass Tech Collaborative is technology and equipment brand agnostic; and
 - b. Acquire or work with a partner that will provide and set up tables and chairs for users of an indoor Hotspot.
3. Internet Connectivity - Provide Internet connectivity capable of supporting up to 25 simultaneous users at each Hotspot.
4. Maintenance and Technical Support - Provide maintenance for Hotspot equipment and technical support to Hotspot users.
5. Removal of Hotspot Equipment – Respondent will transfer ownership of the Hotspot equipment to Mass Tech Collaborative. If requested by Mass Tech Collaborative, Respondent shall remove

the equipment and any related wiring or cabling from the building at the conclusion of the program, patch any holes caused by the wiring and arrange for the delivery of the equipment to the Mass Tech Collaborative or designee.

The Selected Respondent shall be required to operate the Hotspot through June 30, 2021.

3 PROPOSAL PROCESS

3.1 Proposal and Submission Instructions

Respondents are cautioned to read this RFP carefully and to conform to its requirements. Failure to comply with the requirements of this RFP may serve as grounds for rejection of a Proposal.

- a. All Proposals, including all Required Submissions, must be submitted electronically, in Adobe Portable Document (PDF) format.
- b. Required Submissions- All Proposals must include the items listed below:
 - Proposal Cover Sheet (Attachment A)
 - Proposal, which shall include:
 - A description of the firm responding to the RFP (including descriptions of proposed subcontractors, if any) and the firm's qualifications and prior experience with establishing similar indoor hotspots.
 - A listing of the proposed location for each Hotspot, including address, building description (for each indoor Hotspot), description of space that will be utilized for the Hotspot, parking capacity (on site and in close proximity), handicap accessibility, accessibility by public transportation and details regarding building access and security (for each indoor Hotspot). Clearly indicate whether each proposed Hotspot will be an indoor or outdoor location. If the Respondent proposes more than one Hotspot in an Eligible Municipality, the proposal should address the perceived need and justification for multiple Hotspots. **The Respondent may provide a preliminary listing of potential locations for each Hotspot that can be finalized after submission of the Proposal.** The Respondent should indicate whether each proposed Hotspot location is preliminary or finalized. For each preliminary Hotspot location, Respondent should identify the outstanding issues that require resolution.
 - The proposed approach to providing the Services that provides a technical description of the equipment that will be installed at each proposed Hotspot and the back-end Internet connectivity (i.e. throughput in Mbps) that will be provided to each proposed Hotspot location. Respondent shall provide the number and location of WiFi access points. Respondent shall also describe the approach to Hotspot maintenance, troubleshooting and technical support for Hotspot users. Additionally, Respondents are invited to propose alternative(s) which provide more cost-effective performance than achievable under the stated RFP scope of services in Section 2. Any alternatives proposed by the Respondent shall be in addition to providing an approach that satisfies the requirements of this RFP.
 - A proposed schedule for establishing each Hotspot that identifies major tasks leading to opening of the Hotspot to public users.
 - Proposed approach to providing public health protections for Hotspot users, including cleaning and sanitization of Hotspot space(s) and

layout/enforcement of social distancing protocols and a statement of who will be responsible for these considerations.

- A listing of the proposed hours of operation for each Hotspot.
 - The total not-to-exceed costs for each Hotspot location utilizing the Budget Template ([Attachment C](#)). Budget shall distinguish non-recurring costs for hotspot installation and recurring costs for internet connectivity and maintenance over the period of service ending June 30, 2021. 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. For travel costs, the Mass Tech Collaborative pays the IRS rate per mile.
 - Three references for work previously performed by the Respondent that is substantially similar to the Services. References should include a contact person, address and phone number.
- Authorized Proposal Signature and Acceptance Form ([Attachment B](#)). **By executing the Authorized Respondent's Signature and Acceptance Form and submitting a response to this RFP, Respondents certify that they (1) are in compliance with the terms, conditions and specifications contained in this RFP, (2) acknowledge and understand the procedures for handling materials submitted to the Mass Tech Collaborative as set forth in subsection d. below, (3) agree to be bound by those procedures, and (4) agree that the 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 RFP or upon the Respondent's selection.**
 - Exceptions to the *Services Agreement and Statement of Work*, located at [HERE](#), if any.
- c. Proposals **must** be delivered as follows:

Electronic version submitted to-

proposals@masstech.org (please include the RFP number in the subject heading).

- d. Any and all responses, Proposals, data, materials, information and documentation submitted to Mass Tech Collaborative in response to this RFP 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 Proposal submission set forth in Section 4.2 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 Proposal and **shall only include the confidential material in the hard copy of the Proposal**. Any statements in a Proposal reserving any confidentiality or privacy rights that is inconsistent with these requirements and procedures will be disregarded.

3.2 Proposal Timeframe

The proposal 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:
RFP Released	December 4, 2020
Questions Due	December 14, 2020 @ 5 PM EST
Question and Answer File Posted	December 17, 2020 @ 5 PM EST
Proposals Due	December 29, 2020 @ 3 PM EST

3.3 Questions

Questions regarding this RFP must be submitted by electronic mail to proposals@masstech.org with the following Subject Line: “Questions – RFP No. 2021-MBI-1”). All questions must be received by 5:00 p.m. EST on December 14, 2020. Responses to all questions received will be posted on or before 5:00 p.m. on December 17, 2020 to Mass Tech Collaborative and Comm-Buys website(s).

4 EVALUATION PROCESS AND CRITERIA

4.1 Process

The Mass Tech Collaborative shall evaluate each Proposal that is properly submitted. As part of the selection process, Mass Tech Collaborative may invite finalists to answer questions regarding their Proposal in telephone conference call, video conference, or via written correspondence over email. In its sole discretion, Mass Tech Collaborative may also choose to enter into a negotiation period with one or more finalist Respondent(s) and then ask the Respondent(s) to submit a best and final offer.

4.2 Criteria

Selection of a Respondent to provide the Services sought herein may be based on criteria that include but are not limited to:

- Demonstrated experience of the Respondent in establishing community-based hotspots
- Reasonableness of the technical approach for each proposed Hotspot location, including:
 - Number of simultaneous users that can use the Hotspot;
 - Amount of Internet bandwidth afforded to each Hotspot user; and
 - Level of maintenance and technical support services.
- Extent of accessibility for each Hotspot, including hours of operation and ease of access (parking, public transportation, handicap accessibility).
- Reasonableness of approach to providing appropriate public health protections, including social distancing of Hotspot users.
- Reasonableness of Respondents’ price proposal.
- Reasonableness of schedule to establish each Hotspot in an expeditious manner that is consistent with the time sensitivity of this program.
- Number of Eligibility Municipalities that would receive a Hotspot. Mass Tech Collaborative will view more favorably Proposals that address the needs of multiple communities.
- Extent to which Proposal effectively identifies and justifies the need for multiple Hotspots in a particular Eligible Municipality, where applicable.
- Lack of debarment status by either the state or federal government.

The order of these criteria does not generally denote relative importance. The goal of this RFP is to select and enter into an Agreement with Respondent(s) that will provide the best value and achieve the Mass Tech Collaborative’s programmatic objectives. Mass Tech Collaborative reserves the right to consider such other relevant factors as it deems appropriate in order to obtain the “best value”.

5.0 GENERAL CONDITIONS

5.1 General Information

- a) If a Proposal 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 RFP, 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 RFP, or pay any costs incurred in responding to this RFP. Mass Tech Collaborative reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to withdraw the RFP, to engage in preliminary discussions with prospective Respondents, to accept or reject any or all Proposals received, to request supplemental or clarifying information, to negotiate with any or all qualified Respondents, and to request modifications to Proposals in accordance with negotiations, all to the same extent as if this were a Request for Information.
- c) On matters related solely to this RFP 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 RFP. Respondents may contact the Procurement Team Leader for this RFP in the event this RFP 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 Proposal 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 Proposal 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 RFP.
- g) Mass Tech Collaborative's prior approval is required for any subcontracted services under any Agreement entered into as a result of this RFP. 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 Proposal. 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.

5.2 Posting of Modifications/Addenda to RFP

This RFP 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 RFP, 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, MBI and COMMBUYS websites for any addenda or modifications to the RFP. The Mass Tech Collaborative accepts no liability and will provide no accommodation to Respondents who submit a response based on an out-of-date RFP.

Attachment A
Proposal 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 RFP requirements. The Respondent acknowledges that all of the terms and conditions of the RFP are mandatory, and that Respondent's response is compliant with such requirements.

The Respondent understands that, if selected by the Mass Tech Collaborative, the Respondent and the 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 RFP, 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