



Grant Solicitation for the Advanced Manufacturing Training Program

Solicitation No. 2024-CAM-02

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

| | |
|---|----------------------------|
| Procurement Team Leader: | Meghan Abella-Bowen |
| Date Issued: | December 15, 2023 |
| Solicitation Webinar: | January 3, 2024 |
| Questions Due: | Rolling |
| Answers to Questions Posted: | Rolling |
| Final Responses Submission Date: | May 17, 2024 |

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

The Center for Advanced Manufacturing (“CAM”), a division of the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative (“Mass Tech Collaborative” or “MassTech”) is issuing this Grant Solicitation for the **Advanced Manufacturing Training Program** (Solicitation No. 2024-CAM-02) (the “Solicitation”) to solicit responses from qualified organizations (“Respondents”) interested in receiving grant funding to deliver the Advanced Manufacturing Training Grant Program (the “Project”). 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 CAM for the purposes of this Solicitation, and (except where the specific context warrants otherwise), CAM 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 CAM

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.

The mission of **CAM** is to foster the most complete, most connected, and fastest manufacturing ecosystem from innovation through production. CAM increases its impacts on the manufacturing sector by:

- Aligning investments in manufacturing with the state’s vision;
- Leveraging existing programs for increased regional impact;
- Supporting new initiatives from the Advanced Manufacturing Collaborative (AMC);
- Ensuring a deep pipeline for all programs; and
- Tracking outcomes and efficacy of all programs.

For more information about CAM and its programs and activities generally, please visit the web site at <https://cam.masstech.org>.

2. The Grant

2.1 Grant Overview

MassTech is soliciting applications from organizations that can build and scale advanced manufacturing training programs in collaboration with an industry partner that effectively prepare students for high-demand career opportunities in manufacturing careers in Massachusetts.

Grant Initiative Goals and Structure

The goal of the Advanced Manufacturing Training Program is to develop a fully coordinated manufacturing training system that helps meet the needs of industry across the state. MassTech is interested in supporting applicants that will further the goal of developing a skilled advanced

manufacturing workforce. Through this solicitation, MassTech is seeking to seed, enhance, and/or support training programs that address critical skills and talent supply gaps facing the state’s manufacturing industry.

Target Population

The Project will focus on providing training and services to unemployed and underemployed individuals including veterans and underrepresented populations including women and minorities. An unemployed individual is defined as an individual who is not currently employed at the time of enrollment in the program. An underemployed individual is defined as an individual who is earning less than 60% of the Median Household Income (also referred to as Area Median Income) for the Workforce Area in which they reside. The following chart provides the median income level for each Workforce Area. **Please note this chart is a baseline and will be updated at the time of contracting as needed.**

| The following chart provides the median income level for each Workforce Area. | | |
|--|--|--------------------|
| Workforce Area | 60% of USDA/SAIPE County Median Household Income 2021 | |
| | 60% MHI | Hourly Wage |
| Berkshire | \$36,600 | \$17.60 |
| Boston | \$46,300 | \$22.30 |
| Bristol | \$43,700 | \$21.00 |
| Cape and Islands | \$49,800 | \$23.90 |
| Central Region | \$50,700 | \$24.40 |
| Franklin Hampshire | \$46,300 | \$22.20 |
| Greater Brockton | \$59,700 | \$28.70 |
| Greater Lowell | \$67,400 | \$32.40 |
| Greater New Bedford | \$43,700 | \$21.00 |
| Hampden County | \$37,100 | \$17.80 |
| Merrimack Valley | \$52,300 | \$25.10 |
| Metro North | \$67,400 | \$32.40 |
| Metro South/West | \$67,400 | \$32.40 |
| North Central | \$50,700 | \$24.40 |
| North Shore | \$52,300 | \$25.10 |
| South Shore | \$68,800 | \$33.10 |

Source: US Dept of Agriculture Economic Research Service (usda.gov), based on Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE) program of the U.S. Census Bureau.

Not broken out by size of family/household – to determine whether an individual is underemployed, use only the individual income, not household income. MA 2020 Median Household Income (MHI) - published Dec. 2021. Based on 60% MHI for county with the most workers in the region.

Funding Availability

Approximately \$2.4M is available for this grant program. MassTech anticipates awarding four (4) to twelve (12) grants, not to exceed \$600,000, to provide workforce development training programs, services, and resources to address employer demand for talent. The Advanced Manufacturing Training Program is a key component of the Healey-Driscoll Administration’s

[MassTalent initiative](#), a new strategy for connecting employers to skilled, diverse workers in Massachusetts.

Application Timeline

The program is accepting applications on a rolling basis through June 30, 2024, or until available funds are committed.

Contract Duration

Contracts will be issued for a period of up to 12 months. MassTech reserves its right to extend the contract terms beyond a 12 month period based upon availability of funding, consistent service delivery, and program performance.

2.2 Grant Requirements and Guidance

Program Eligibility

Lead applicant must be a Massachusetts legally organized:

- Community Based Organization (CBO), including CBOs relying on a fiscal agent.
- Community College, College, or University
- Massachusetts Secondary School including comprehensive high schools and high school with an Innovation Pathway designation. Vocational Schools may apply, but they must explain why they are utilizing Advanced Manufacturing Training grant funds versus Career Technical Initiative funds for training.
- Non-profit entity
- For-profit entity
- MassHire Workforce Board and/or Career Center
- Municipality
- Workforce Development Organization

Lead applicant role

The lead applicant must:

- Have current or planned operational capacity to deliver the proposed program within the period of performance.
- Have operational and fiscal capacity to manage public funds.
- Have a commitment to work collaboratively with CAM to ensure that the program meets the needs of industry for both training and placement, and work towards planned outcomes.
- Collaborate with CAM in leveraging the MassMakes marketing and branding collateral to support the development of a statewide manufacturing training marketing campaign and strategy.
- Collect and report all required data and participate in the overall evaluation of the program.

Program Requirements

The Advanced Manufacturing Training program is intended to build job training capacity to fill gaps in the workforce for advanced manufacturing sectors. Proposed programs must include at a minimum:

- Planned training programs that address direct hiring needs as identified by industry partners and/or labor market data.
- Overall total instructional hours should be a minimum of 100 hours and maximum of 350 hours

- per program (occupational training).
- For budget-planning purposes the cost per student shall not exceed \$8,000 per proposed student/employment outcome. This amount includes all expenses required to obtain an employment outcome including, but not limited to:
 - Recruitment and outreach strategies to reach underemployed and unemployed individuals.
 - Intake and eligibility assessment process that increases the potential that:
 - Individuals selected to participate in the program are willing and able to work.
 - Individuals selected to participate demonstrate aptitude, skills, and/or interest in a manufacturing career.
 - Case management and wrap around supports – including connections to support services as needed to decrease barriers to participation and completion (e.g., transportation funds, childcare support, work-related tools/uniforms, student stipends, etc.)
 - Career awareness and job placement
 - Develop, implement, and execute the training program(s) that result in an industry recognized credential
 - At least one (1) industry partner that:
 - Ensures the program is responding to direct hiring needs in the proposed target occupation,
 - Provides curriculum and/or training input, and
 - Commits to use the proposed program as a potential source of candidates to meet their hiring needs.
 - Training cohort(s) of a minimum of 10 students preferred.
 - Outcome Goals: A strong proposal will have the components required to achieve at least an 80% completion rate and 70% job placement rate (measured upon 30 days retention) of participants that completed training.

Allowable Costs

Funds may be used for costs associated with delivering education and training activities, and/or other services to support, prepare, and place participants in a manufacturing job. Allowable cost may include but are not limited to:

- Staff time devoted to the program, including outreach, recruitment, intake, eligibility assessment, data management, case management, wrap-around and support services, job placement, and retention services.
- Staff time for partnership and program coordination, job development, and placement.
- Staff time devoted to program reporting.
- Marketing, communication, and outreach activities related to recruitment for the program done in concert with MassMakes.org and MassTech.
- Curriculum development.
- Training delivery, including classroom, online, and formal on-the-job training, and/or sub-contracting with a training provider.
- Cost of licenses associated with delivery of digitally enabled training.
- Cost associated with testing and credentialing.
- Support services needed to ensure participants' success (e.g., transportation, childcare, uniforms, tools, etc.).

- Participant training stipends.

Grant Reporting

Eligibility Data Collection:

The grantee will be required to collect and maintain the following documentation for each participant:

- Documentation of the participant's employment status at time of enrollment.
- Participant registration form, using a required form provided by MassTech.
- Documentation of training and support services provided to trainee.

Program reporting requirements:

- Complete quarterly status reports highlighting program outcomes. The format for this report will be provided to grantees after a contract is awarded.
- Complete quarterly and end of year data report. The report will include:
 - Demographic data on individuals enrolled in training;
 - number of individuals who enrolled in training;
 - number of individuals who completed training;
 - number of individuals who received an industry recognized credential;
 - number of individuals placed in full-time employment/apprenticeship and starting wage;
 - number of individuals who were placed and remain in the job after 30 days;
 - number of businesses engaged.

The quarterly status reports and end of year report shall include all activities and programs related to manufacturing training, the capacity of the training programs, and the alignment of the activities and programs to industry needs. Focus will be placed on identifying best practices in the system, especially the alignment of resources that can be scaled to support training and placement across the state.

2.3 Evaluation Process and Criteria

Applications will be subject to an administrative review to determine compliance with the requirements of this Program. Eligible applicants will then be reviewed and scored by an evaluation team. MassTech staff may contact an applicant to request supplemental or clarifying information as part of the formal review process. In addition, MassTech reserves the right to make no awards, to award less than the applicant requests, and/or to award less than the maximum amount of funds potentially available through this solicitation.

Selection of a Respondent to receive funding as set forth within this Solicitation may be based on criteria that include but are not limited to:

- Clear program design that addresses desired program outcomes and conveys practical evaluation methods.
- Effectiveness of recruitment and outreach strategies.
- Detailed description of your intake, assessment, and case management process.
- Industry letter(s) of support that includes an articulation of goals, roles, and responsibilities of the employer partner(s). Applications that include more than one (1) industry partner will strengthen the application.

- Clear program outline that address occupational skills, safety, work readiness and work experience requirements for entry into the target occupation.
- Applicant shows ability and commitment to students through additional support services, career awareness, and job readiness.
- Number of trainees targeted to go through the program.
- Number of trainees to be placed in employment and retained for 30 days.
- Extent to which training is targeted to veterans and other underrepresented populations.
- Cost per student.
- Budget accuracy and reasonableness.
- Applicants' past performance in operating and administering adult training programs.
- Overall quality of the proposal.

MassTech will evaluate each Application that is properly submitted. As part of the selection process, MassTech may invite finalists to answer questions regarding their Application in person or in writing. In its sole discretion, MassTech may also choose to enter into a negotiation period with one or more finalist Respondent(s) and then ask the Respondent(s) to submit additional information. Lack of debarment status by either the state or federal government is also required.

The order of these factors does not generally denote relative importance. The goal of this Solicitation is to select and enter into an Agreement with the Respondent that will most closely align with MassTech Collaborative's goals in the publication of this Solicitation. MassTech reserves the right to consider such other relevant factors as it deems appropriate.

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 completed and submitted through the online application form located [HERE](#), and must include the items listed below:
 - A description of Respondent (including descriptions of proposed subcontractors, if any) and Respondent's qualifications to perform the Project.
 - The details of Respondent's proposed project should be specified through responses to Application Questions as set forth in the Application linked above, which must provide sufficient description and information to review and evaluate the proposal in accordance with the requirements and criteria set forth in sections 2.2 and 2.3 above. To assist in preparing your responses for the on-line application, a list of the questions can be found in **Attachment C**.
 - The total not-to-exceed costs for the Project based on projected hours, proposed hourly rates, as well as any other appropriate costs, must be set forth in the **Budget Template (Attachment A)** and uploaded. For travel costs, MassTech reimburses up to the IRS rate per mile.
 - The **Authorized Application Signature and Acceptance Form (Attachment B)**, which contains specified certifications by Respondent must be completed and uploaded. Please read the certifications carefully before signing.

- o Exceptions, if any, to the Grant Agreement and Statement of Work, located [HERE](#). Exceptions should be attached to/uploaded **with Attachment B**.
- b. 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, MassTech 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 MassTech treat certain information or documentation as confidential, the Respondent must submit a written request to the MassTech General Counsel’s office no later than 5:00 p.m. fourteen (14) business days prior to either the intended date of Application submission, or the Final Applications Submission Date as 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 MassTech’s website frequently for updates to the schedule.

| Task | Date |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Solicitation Released | December 15, 2023 |
| Solicitation Webinar | January 3, 2024 @ 3:00pm EST |
| Questions Due | Rolling |
| Question and Answer File Posted | Rolling |
| Final Applications Submission Date | May 17, 2024 |
| Notification of Award | Rolling |

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. 2024-CAM-02”. Responses to all questions received will be posted here <https://masstech.org/procurements> and to Commbuys on a rolling basis. Respondents are responsible for periodically checking the website.

3.4 Solicitation Webinar

A solicitation webinar will be held on January 3, 2024 at 3:00pm EST. All Respondents interested in participating in the solicitation webinar must register here: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_34AnqxuxQUKlteCcGT1fKw MassTech will post summary responses to procedural questions and issues addressed at the webinar to <https://masstech.org/procurements> 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 organization(s), award any grant funds 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

Budget Template

SEE EXCEL SPREADSHEET

Attachment B

Authorized Respondent's Signature and Acceptance Form

SEE WORD DOCUMENT

Attachment C

Application Questions

Please answer these questions in the online application

1. Applicant Information:

Organization Name:
Name of Respondent:
Title:
Mailing address/City/State/Zip:
Email:
Telephone:
Legal Status/Jurisdiction (e.g., a Massachusetts Corporation, LLC, LLP, etc.):
Respondents DUNS or UEI number:
Organization Website:
Authorized Signatory Contact Person Name:
Authorized Signatory Contact Person Email:

2. Program Description

Program Name:
Program overview: (3-5 sentences)

3. Total Advanced Manufacturing Training Grant Funds requested

4. Industry Partnerships

Company/Industry Partner Name
Company/Industry Partner City or Town
Company/Industry Partner Contact Name and Title
Company/Industry Partner Contact Email

Additional Company/Industry Partner Name
Company/Industry Partner City or Town
Company/Industry Partner Contact Name and Title
Company/Industry Partner Contact Email

5. Upload at least one (1) letter of support from your manufacturing partner(s).

Letter should include the industry partner's direct hiring needs, how they will inform curriculum design and/or training, and commitment to utilize program as a potential source of candidates to meet their hiring needs.

6. If applicable, list all other partners including, training providers, support services providers, educational partners, etc., that may contribute to this project. Include the following information for each additional partner.

Partner Name
Partner City or Town
Partner Contact Name and Title
Partner Contact Email
Describe the role and responsibility of the partner.

7. Will this be a new training program or an expansion of an existing program?

New

Expansion of an existing program

8. What occupation/role will this training target (select all that apply)

- Automation Technician
- CNC Machine Operator
- Electromechanical Technician
- Electronics Technician
- Maintenance Technician
- Photonics Technician
- Robotics Technician
- Welding
- Other

9. Approximate number of anticipated openings for the occupation at the partner company over the grant period. If proposing multiple occupations, include anticipated openings for each occupation.

10. Current manufacturing workforce needs: What is the current manufacturing labor market demand for the occupational training programs you are proposing? Please provide documentation on how the demand was identified.

11. Average entry level hourly wage or annual salary for each proposed occupation.

12. Describe the proposed duration of the program and individual cohorts (ie. 8-week program, 15 hours/week, 150 hours of training, 3 cohorts of 15 participants)

13. Proposed total number of trainees supported by those funds

14. The Advanced Manufacturing Training Grant program focuses on providing training and services to unemployed and under employed individual, including veterans and underrepresented individuals.

- Please describe your marketing, outreach, and recruitment strategy to engage your target audience.
- Describe the trainee participant selection process, including any formal assessments and any expected employer involvement in the process.
- Describe case management services to be provided to training participants (e. g. Career counseling, training placement, job search, job placement, etc.)? Who will provide case management services and how will services be provided?
- How will industry be engaged to improve placements and overall outcomes? Describe their roles and responsibilities?
- What other support services will be made available to help participants overcome barriers?
- Will your program provide stipends to participants? If yes, what is the stipend amount and how will it be distributed?

15. How will you determine whether a participant has successfully completed a program? What process and tools will be used to determine whether a student satisfies the proposed training program?

16. Have you delivered this program or related programming previously? Please provide any relevant details or metrics.

- Briefly describe your past history in developing and offering manufacturing training programs.
- Provide any past performance outcomes

17. Please provide a program overview that describes the skills and competencies to be covered in each proposed occupational course.

18. Upload Program Budget (See attachment A) and Authorized Signatures and Acceptance Form (See Attachment B)