



MASSACHUSETTS LIFE SCIENCES CENTER
COOPERATIVE RESEARCH MATCHING GRANT SOLICITATION

Solicitation No. 2008-MLSC-03

Massachusetts Life Sciences Center
<http://www.masslifesciences.com/>

Solicitation Issued:	February 11, 2008
Bidders' Conference:	April 4, 2008
Answers to Questions Posted:	April 11, 2008
Letter of Intent Due:	April 18, 2008
Responses Due:	May 23, 2008

Massachusetts Life Sciences Center
Cooperative Research Matching Grant Solicitation
Solicitation No. MLSC-2008-03

The Massachusetts Life Sciences Center (MLSC) is requesting applications for matching grants to conduct cooperative R&D projects involving Massachusetts-based research institutions and companies in areas related to the life sciences.

Academic institutions and non-profit research institutions (such as academic health centers) affiliated with a Massachusetts college or university are eligible to apply for funding.

The MLSC is authorizing up to \$12 million to be awarded through its matching grant solicitations. The funds will be roughly divided equally among the three solicitations, with the MLSC Board reserving its right to shift resources among solicitations. Under the Cooperative Research Matching Grant Solicitation, the Massachusetts Life Sciences Center will provide an award up to \$250,000 per year for each selected project, for up to 3 years. Each grant must be matched on at least a 1:1 basis by the industrial sponsor.

Applications (electronic and hard copy) must be received at:

**Massachusetts Life Sciences Center
c/o John Adams Innovation Institute
Massachusetts Technology Collaborative
Solicitation No. MLSC-2008-03
Cooperative Research Matching Grant Solicitation
75 North Drive
Westborough, MA 01581
Attn: Beth Nicklas
mlsc@masstech.org**

no later than 3:00PM on Friday, May 23, 2008.

Introduction

The overarching goal of matching grants provided by the Massachusetts Life Sciences Center (MLSC) is three-fold: expand life science research, promote economic growth, and improve health outcomes in the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth is interested in furthering advances in life sciences that may lead to new medical applications such as medical devices, drugs and drug delivery systems, and new therapies and diagnostics.

The first three matching grant solicitations undertaken by MLSC will be directed primarily toward investigators involved in life sciences research, including bio-engineering sciences and technologies, at university-affiliated research centers in the Commonwealth. The phrase “life

sciences” refers to any of the branches of natural science dealing with the structure and behavior of living organisms. While the matching grant solicitations are open to all areas of life science research, MLSC encourages proposals related to stem cells, RNAi, genomics, proteomics, image analysis, and bioinformatics as well as associated research tools and production technologies.

The principal objectives of the Cooperative Research Matching Grant Solicitation are to increase industry-sponsored research at colleges, universities, and affiliated research institutions in Massachusetts and facilitate access to scientific discoveries and inventions that will lead to beneficial medical applications.

This solicitation addresses the problem that industry support for research in colleges, universities, and affiliated research institutions, particularly in life sciences, has not increased significantly even though the need for greater translational research has expanded. In general, the low level of industry support reduces the ability of colleges, universities, and affiliated research institutions to expand research activities. Perhaps more importantly, active industry involvement in research at these institutions is needed to facilitate the flow of scientific discoveries and inventions to businesses in Massachusetts. Additional resources are needed to induce faculty and industry sponsors to undertake cooperative research projects that have significant scientific merit and commercial potential.

Solicitation Requirements

Who can apply for funding?

Eligible organizations include Massachusetts universities, colleges, and non-profit research institutions affiliated with universities and colleges (see Appendix B: *Eligible Research Institutions*). The project must be led by an eligible principal investigator and be undertaken in collaboration with a Massachusetts-based industrial sponsor. Projects may have multiple industry sponsors.

To be eligible, the principal investigator(s) must:

- Have a full-time or part-time faculty position at a college or university in Massachusetts.
- Have been a principal investigator (PI) on at least one major independent research grant (R01 or equivalent) provided by NIH or other federal agency, or have a distinguished research record in industry.

The industry sponsor(s) must:

- Have an R&D and/or manufacturing facility in Massachusetts that is involved in activities directly related to the proposed research.

Priority will be given to projects supported by industry sponsors that are not publicly traded and have less than 50 employees and less than \$10 million in annual revenue.

What types of projects and activities are eligible for funding?

Research & development projects ranging from basic research to pre-clinical studies (including target validation) are eligible for funding. Clinical trials are ineligible for funding under this solicitation.

How much funding is available?

The MLSC is authorizing up to \$12 million to be awarded through its Matching Grants Program. The funds will be roughly divided equally among the three solicitations, with the MLSC Board reserving its right to shift resources between solicitations. The maximum award is \$250,000 per year for each selected project, for up to 3 years. Disbursement of funds is contingent upon demonstrated progress towards project objectives. Grant funds will be disbursed quarterly on an advance payment basis.

What are the cost sharing requirements?

The industry sponsor(s) must match the MLSC grant in the ratio of at least 1:1. At least 30 percent of the match must be cash. In-kind match is restricted to materials, reagents, supplies, equipment, and software that are provided to the research institution (valued at cost) and are essential for the conduct of the proposed research.

What are the limitations?

The limitations that apply to this grant are the following:

Institutional Limitations

- No more than two proposals for grant awards may be submitted by an eligible research institution during any submission cycle.
- Each proposal must contain a letter of support from the highest-level administrator responsible for research (e.g., Provost, Vice or Associate Provost for Research, Chief Academic Officer, etc.) confirming that the proposal aligns with the priorities of the academic institution.

Cost Limitations

- Allowable costs include:
 1. Direct costs:
 - a. Salaries and benefits of the principal investigator(s)
 - b. Salaries and benefits of research support personnel, including post-doctoral fellows and graduate students
 - c. Research materials, reagents, supplies, and software provided to the research institution (valued at cost)
 - d. Purchase and care of laboratory animals
 - e. Research equipment (limited to 10 percent of total project costs)
 - f. Travel essential for research and interactions with industry sponsor
 2. Indirect costs will be allowable at the NIH-approved rate, or as periodically calculated, consistent with appropriate federal guidelines of generally accepted accounting principles and as charged to other grants.

- Costs incurred prior to the grant award are not eligible for funding.
- Legal costs associated with the protection or licensing of intellectual property are not eligible for funding.
- Grant funds may be used only for the costs of project activities at eligible research institutions in Massachusetts. The industry funding used to match the MLSC grant must also be used to support project activities at eligible research institutions based in Massachusetts. However, industry funding that exceeds the match requirement can be used to support project activities outside of the Commonwealth.

What are the reporting requirements?

All funding recipients must submit quarterly, annual, and final reports. The reports should summarize the activities undertaken, any barriers encountered, and the progress made in achieving the project's objectives. The reports should identify any invention disclosures during the period and identify any technology transfer and commercialization activities. For multi-year projects, an updated project plan and yearly budget must accompany the annual report and be submitted not later than 30 days prior to grant anniversary or completion date.

Award recipients will also be required to participate in the development of case studies and supply non-confidential information that will be used by the MLSC as part of its ongoing evaluation efforts. In addition, all funding recipients will be required to be available to meet annually with other grant recipients, to meet periodically with MLSC staff or its agents, and to cooperate in any evaluation of this program.

Application, Review and Award Process

How do I apply for funding?

Applicants for a MLSC Cooperative Research Grant are strongly encouraged to submit a non-binding Letter of Intent, signed by the highest-level administrator responsible for research (e.g., Provost, Vice or Associate Provost for Research, Chief Academic Officer, etc.). **Applicants are advised to submit the Application Cover Sheet (pages 1-3 of Appendix A) as the Letter of Intent electronically by 3:00 pm on Friday, April 18, 2008 to mlsc@masstech.org.**

Applicants are required to complete and submit a formal application for funding (see attached Appendix A - Application Form and Instructions).

Applications (electronic and hard copy) must be received at:

**Massachusetts Life Sciences Center
c/o John Adams Innovation Institute
Massachusetts Technology Collaborative
Solicitation No. MLSC-2008-03
Cooperative Research Matching Grant Solicitation
75 North Drive
Westborough, MA 01581
Attn: Beth Nicklas
mlsc@masstech.org**

no later than 3:00PM on Friday, May 23, 2008.

In order to be considered, all responses must be prepared in accordance with provisions outlined, including the submission of two originals, containing required signatures, and one electronic copy (in Adobe Acrobat PDF format).

The electronic copy can be submitted via electronic mail to: mlsc@masstech.org

What criteria will be used to evaluate applications?

Applications that meet eligibility requirements will be reviewed by an Initial Review Panel comprised of scientific peers from academia and industry based on the following criteria:

- Scientific merit of proposed research, including novelty of ideas and interdisciplinary nature of research. The research can range from fundamental science to pre-clinical studies, including target validation. Clinical trials are excluded from funding.
- Qualifications and experience of the principal investigator(s) and proposed staff.
- Potential commercial value of discoveries and/or inventions arising from the research.
- Potential for improvement in health outcomes.
- Adequacy of the approach and methodology proposed to carry out the research.
- Adequacy of plans for university-industry interactions.
- Reasonableness of the proposed budget in relation to the proposed research.
- Priority will be given to projects supported by industry sponsors that are not publicly traded and have less than 50 employees and less than \$10 million in annual revenue.
- Value of MLSC funding in increasing industry-sponsored research that would not otherwise have occurred.

A second review will be conducted by a Scientific Advisory Board, comprised of renowned scientists from academia and industry, that will review and validate the work of the Initial Review Panel and may take into consideration the following programmatic criteria:

- Equitable and geographic distribution of available funds among research institutions throughout the Commonwealth.
- Achieving a diverse scientific portfolio.

Who will review the applications?

Each application will first be reviewed by program staff to determine if the proposal meets all threshold eligibility criteria. For example, if the industry match does not equal or exceed the amount requested from MLSC, the proposal will be judged not to have met the threshold eligibility criteria. Applicants that do not meet the threshold requirements of this solicitation will be notified accordingly. Those applications that have met the threshold requirements will advance for consideration to the Initial Review Panel.

The proposal review process is managed by a Scientific Review Officer (SRO) who will recruit, in consultation with the Scientific Advisory Board, qualified members of the Initial Review Panel who will review eligible proposals based on the criteria outlined above. The Scientific Review Officer will then compile a summary report for each application and present these results

to the MLSC Scientific Advisory Panel that will review and validate the results of the Initial Review Panel and make final recommendations to the MLSC Board of Directors. All awards will be subject to final approval by the MLSC Board of Directors.

How will proprietary information be handled?

Referenced in Appendix D - General Terms & Conditions

What is the timetable?

A summary of the timetable for the submission and approval process is presented below:

February 11, 2008	Grant Application Available
April 4, 2008	Bidders' Conference
April 11, 2008	Answers to Questions Posted
April 18, 2008	Non-binding Letter of Intent Due
May 23, 2008	Application due

Applications will be reviewed on a competitive basis. Applicants will be notified whether their project has been approved or rejected by mail shortly following award decisions.

Once the award is approved, a grant agreement must be executed between the successful applicant and the MLSC. Work on the project can begin as soon as all relevant parties have signed the grant agreement.

Who can I contact to answer questions?

Additional information regarding this solicitation will be posted at MLSC's website:

<http://www.masslifesciences.com>

and on the Commonwealth's Comm-Pass website (<http://www.comm-pass.com>). Applicants are advised to check these sites periodically. Answers to questions submitted to MLSC with general applicability will also be posted.

If you have questions, please contact the MLSC Matching Grants Program Coordinator at:

Massachusetts Life Sciences Center
c/o John Adams Innovation Institute
Massachusetts Technology Collaborative
75 North Drive
Westborough, MA 01581
Attn: Beth Nicklas

Telephone: 508-870-0312 ext.1635
Fax: 508-898-9226
Email: mlsc@masstech.org

Disclaimer

This solicitation does not commit MLSC to award a grant, pay costs incurred in preparing an application, or procure or contract for services or supplies. MLSC reserves the right to accept or reject any or all applications received, negotiate with all qualified applicants, cancel or modify the solicitation in part or in its entirety or change the application guidelines, when it is in the best interests of the MLSC.