

# MASSACHUSETTS LIFE SCIENCES CENTER



Investing in the State of Innovation

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## **Grant Announcement**

### **STEM Equipment and Supplies Grant Program for High Schools**

**Solicitation No. MLSC-EQUIP-05A**

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Solicitation Issued: May 31, 2016

**Applications Due: October 6, 2016 at Noon**

**Application:** [www.masslifesciences.com/programs/equip](http://www.masslifesciences.com/programs/equip)

## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1. Overview of Program**

Consistent with its commitment to STEM education and workforce development, the Massachusetts Life Sciences Center (MLSC), through this solicitation, seeks to further the development and institution of life sciences training and education programs at Massachusetts public high schools. The program will offer grant funding for the purpose of purchasing life sciences demonstration and training equipment and supplies for practical laboratory and/or training space, further educating students in real-world scenarios that will prepare them for opportunities in the life sciences sector. Funding for teacher professional development is also available to ensure that schools receive the technical training to effectively use the equipment. Furthermore, the program seeks to increase student achievement and student interest in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math), and support the implementation of state STEM standards.

***Priority will be given to proposals with an industry partner engaged in the development and implementation of training programs with demonstrated success in placing students in skilled employment related to the curriculum and training.***

Applicants can request grant funding of up to \$250,000 for equipment and supplies, provided that awards greater than \$100,000 are matched by an industry partner that supports the training program for which the equipment and supplies are needed. Applicants that have not secured matching funds cannot request an award greater than \$100,000 (for equipment and supplies). For schools also seeking funding for professional development, up to \$10,000 can be requested in addition to the amount requested for equipment and/or supplies.

Applicants must meet the minimum threshold requirements detailed in Section 2 in order to be eligible to apply.

### **1.2. About the Massachusetts Life Sciences Center**

The MLSC is an investment agency that supports life sciences innovation, research, development and commercialization. The MLSC is charged with implementing a \$1-billion state-funded investment initiative. These investments create jobs and support advances that improve health and well-being. The MLSC offers the nation's most comprehensive set of incentives and collaborative programs targeted to the life sciences ecosystem. These programs propel the growth that has made Massachusetts the global leader in life sciences. The MLSC creates new models for collaboration and partners with organizations, both public and private, around the world to promote innovation in the life sciences. For more information, please visit [www.masslifesciences.com](http://www.masslifesciences.com).

**2. Eligible Applicant Minimum Criteria**

Applicant must demonstrate compliance with the following minimum criteria:

Criteria	Minimum Requirement
<b>Applicant</b>	<p>An eligible applicant must be located in Massachusetts and be <b>one</b> of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Vocational technical high school as determined by Chapter 74 of the General Laws of Massachusetts or a comprehensive public high school with a Chapter 74 program;</li> <li>B. Public high school (including charter schools) located in one of the 26 “Gateway Cities” as determined by Section 3A of Chapter 23A of the General Laws of Massachusetts. To view a list of these cities visit: <a href="http://www.mass.gov/hed/community/planning/gateway-cities-and-program-information.html">www.mass.gov/hed/community/planning/gateway-cities-and-program-information.html</a>;</li> <li>C. Economically disadvantaged public high school (defined by having at least 25% student participation in one or more of the following programs: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Transitional Assistance for Families with Dependent Children (TAFDC), the Department of Children and Families' foster care program, and MassHealth); or</li> <li>D. Community-based non-profit organization serving high schools that meet any of the above-stated criteria.</li> </ul>
<b>Training Program</b>	<p>An eligible applicant must request funding to purchase equipment and/or supplies to support an education and training program that prepares students for employment in the <b>life sciences</b>. The “life sciences” are defined in the MLSC’s enabling legislation as “advanced and applied sciences that expand the understanding of human physiology and have the potential to lead to medical advances or therapeutic applications.” Requested equipment and/or supplies must be used to support science (e.g. biology, chemistry, physics), technology (e.g. robotics, computer science), engineering, and/or math education and training. <i>Please note: Earth and Space Science, Animal Science/Veterinary Assisting, Forensic Science, as well as Allied Health programs <u>will not</u> qualify for funding.</i></p> <p><b>Applicants may also request funding for professional development for teachers administering such training and using the requested equipment.</b> The goal of the professional development is to increase the effectiveness of the equipment</p>

	<p>grant by ensuring that all recipient schools have teachers that are trained to use the equipment and have access to relevant curricula that deploys the equipment in labs and activities that support learning goals throughout the academic year. In addition, the training should involve all teachers that have interest, whether or not they have the experience needed to integrate the equipment into their classes.</p>
<p><b>Industry Sponsor</b> (for applicants requesting over \$100,000)</p>	<p>An applicant applying for an award of greater than \$100,000 must demonstrate in its proposal that it is partnering with at least one industry sponsor that will match, on a one-for-one basis, any amount over \$100,000 that is awarded by MLSC. Such a match may be in a cash payment or in-kind contribution, such as donations of equipment and supplies, provided that the value of such donations is documented to the satisfaction of the MLSC. Industry personnel time may be counted toward the in-kind match, but must be documented in the form of payroll reports.</p> <p>If an industry partner is also the vendor selling equipment and/or supplies to the applicant, a discount of such purchase can also be considered as part of the match, provided that the vendor can certify that their discount is unique to this grant opportunity and not a discount that would be available to other parties.</p> <p>In addition to this commitment of financial support from an industry sponsor(s), eligible applicants must demonstrate how they are working collaboratively with its partners) in the development and implementation of training, such as identifying skills gaps and ensuring that curriculum meets the needs of industry. The MLSC encourages plans to include employer input in training development, delivery and evaluation. Applicants may partner with existing industry collaborators to meet this requirement.</p>

**3. Equipment and Supplies Eligible for Funding**

Schools can only request reimbursement for supplies and equipment costs proposed in their budget (post-award budget modifications are permissible with MLSC approval). Reimbursement for equipment rental is permissible, as long as it is for an operational lease (lessor is owner of the equipment and there is no finance charge) and not a capital or financial lease (lessee is the owner of the equipment and interest charges apply). Equipment installation and qualification costs are reimbursable, however, indirect costs as well as the maintenance, support personnel, and services costs associated with utilization of the equipment are not.

#### 4. **Purchasing Period**

Through this solicitation, grants will be awarded for Fiscal Year 2017 as well as Fiscal Year 2018. The MLSC will determine which awards to designate for each fiscal year. Applicants will be asked to indicate a preference on their application. For FY'17 awards, all items must be shipped to grant recipients by June 30, 2017. For FY'18 awards, all items must be shipped to grant recipients between July 1, 2017 and June 30, 2018. Funding for professional development costs are not required to be expended within the given fiscal year.

#### 5. **Selection Process and Criteria**

Grant recipients will be selected on a competitive basis according to the criteria discussed below. These criteria will be used to: 1) identify applicants that meet minimum threshold criteria; and 2) compare and select an applicant that best meets the goals of the solicitation and demonstrates a relative higher probability of success in placing well-trained graduates in the life sciences workforce.

For this solicitation, the MLSC is particularly interested in supporting applicants that will further its goal of supporting a trained workforce suitable for employment in the life sciences, as well as the education of students wishing to pursue advanced degrees in STEM subjects. Successful proposals will explain how the requested equipment and supplies will create learning opportunities that are aligned with the needs of the life sciences industry. Proposals should also explain how the requested equipment and supplies will enable the school to provide curriculum, instruction and student learning experiences that promote the 2016 Massachusetts Science & Technology/Engineering (STE) Standards ([www.doe.mass.edu/STEM/review.html](http://www.doe.mass.edu/STEM/review.html)).

MLSC reserves the right to consider only applications that, in its sole judgment, meet the minimum threshold requirements. MLSC staff may contact the applicant to request supplemental information prior to formal review. In addition, MLSC 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.

Criteria	Sub-Criteria
<b>Minimum Threshold</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The applicant meets minimum requirements discussed in Section 2.</li> <li>• The application is complete and responsive to the solicitation's requirements.</li> <li>• The application is submitted prior to the established deadline.</li> </ul>
<b>Major Selection Criteria</b>	<p><u>Priority will be given to:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposals with an industry partner(s) engaged in the development and implementation of training and/or</li> </ul>

	<p>curriculum (e.g. advisory board participation, internships, company visits, guest speakers).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proposals that are seeking equipment and supplies for the implementation of innovative curriculum that engages students in activities-, projects-, and problem-based (APPB) learning, providing hands-on classroom experiences (e.g. Project Lead the Way).</li> <li>Training programs with demonstrated success in placing students in skilled employment related to the curriculum.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Curriculum and Training Program, Audience Targeted, Collaboration with Industry Sponsor, and Evaluation of Outcomes</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarity and reasonableness of equipment and supply purchases for the curriculum and training of the targeted audience of students.</li> <li>Purposeful use of the equipment and supply purchases to advance the implementation of state STEM standards.</li> <li>Effectiveness of industry collaboration in developing and implementing training program that meets the needs of industry.</li> <li>Efforts by applicant to evaluate the success of its training programs by tracking: number of students entering and completing the training program; number of graduates; areas of certification/degree achieved as a result of the training; placement in jobs within the life sciences sector by position; retention of skilled graduates in Massachusetts; and amount of other funds raised or leveraged.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Team and Qualifications</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identification of faculty and/or staff who will be involved in using the equipment and supplies.</li> <li>Qualifications, experience and expertise of such individuals.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Professional Development</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If applicable, a detailed description of the teacher training that will be offered and how it relates to the equipment requested in the proposal.</li> <li>Reasonableness and validity of professional development offerings.</li> <li>Use of registered providers is preferred. With appropriate description and rationale, other providers may be used.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Budget</b> (including match from Industry Sponsor)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An itemized list of equipment and supplies and the estimated cost of such equipment and supplies.</li> <li>If applicable, a detailed breakdown of professional development costs.</li> <li>If applicable, a detailed breakdown and description of the use of funds provided as the industry match.</li> <li>Reasonableness and validity of funding requested.</li> </ul>

## **6. Application Process**

### **6.1. Application and Submission Instructions**

Applications will only be accepted electronically via the MLSC's website: [www.masslifesciences.com](http://www.masslifesciences.com). MLSC recommends that applicants carefully follow instructions and prepare complete, clear, and concise applications. It is the sole responsibility of the applicant to ensure that its application is complete, meets minimum threshold requirements and is properly submitted to MLSC prior to the established deadline.

**Applicants are cautioned to review the MLSC's Public Disclosure policy (Section 7 below) prior to submitting an electronic copy of their application.**

### **6.2. Application Timeframe**

The solicitation process will proceed according to the schedule outlined below. The target dates are subject to change. Therefore, applicants are encouraged to visit the MLSC website frequently for updates. Responses received later than the date and time specified will be rejected or deemed non-conforming. MLSC assumes no responsibility or liability for late delivery or receipt of responses.

<b>Solicitation Posted</b>	<b>May 31, 2016</b>
<b>Application Deadline</b>	<b>October 6, 2016 at Noon</b>
<b>Awards Announced</b>	<b>December 16, 2016</b>

## **7. GENERAL REQUEST FOR RESPONSE CONDITIONS**

### **7.1. Notice of Public Disclosure**

As a public entity, the MLSC is subject to Massachusetts' Public Records Law, codified at Chapter 66 of the Massachusetts General Laws. Thus, except for those documents exempted from disclosure, any documentary material, data, or other information received by the MLSC from an applicant is a public record subject to disclosure. Applicants are advised to review Chapter 66 prior to submitting any information to the MLSC.

Notwithstanding the above, certain kinds of information may be statutorily exempt from public disclosure under the limited exemption at Chapter 23I, Section 3(l) of the Massachusetts General Laws. Specifically, materials that fall under one of the following categories may be determined to be not public records and thus not subject to disclosure:

- Information, documents, or data that consist of trade secrets;
- Information, documents, or data that consist of commercial or financial information regarding the operation of any business conducted by the applicant; and
- Information, documents, or data regarding the applicant's competitive position in a particular field of endeavor.

An applicant may assert a claim of confidentiality for part or all of the information submitted to the MLSC. To make a claim of confidentiality, an applicant must:

- a) Clearly identify the documents, reports, or other information you wish to receive confidential treatment and mark such materials "CONFIDENTIAL". Where a portion of an otherwise nonconfidential document is alleged to be confidential, the confidential portions should be clearly identified and marked.
- b) State the basis for your claim of confidentiality (whether trade secret, commercial or financial information, or competitive position information) and whether disclosure of the information would likely result in substantial harm to your business. If substantial harm would result from disclosure, state what those harmful effects would be and their causal connection to disclosure of the information;
- c) State the period of time for which confidential treatment is desired (e.g., until a certain date, until the occurrence of a specific event, or permanently);
- d) Submit nonconfidential information (including any redacted versions of partially confidential documents) separate from all materials for which you request confidential treatment.

All confidentiality claims are subject to verification by the MLSC. If no confidentiality claim is made when information is received by the MLSC, then it may be made publicly available without further notice to you.

## **7.2. Contractual Requirements**

MLSC intends to enter into an agreement with the selected applicant and reserves the right to amend the Agreement without further issuance of another solicitation.

## **7.3. Waiver Authority**

MLSC reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to waive minor irregularities in submittal requirements, to request modifications of the application, to accept or reject any or all applications received, and/or to cancel all or part of this Solicitation at any time prior to awards.

## **7.4. Disclaimer**

This Solicitation does not commit MLSC to award any funds, pay any 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 its best interest.