



Investing in the State of Innovation

STEM Equipment and Supplies Grant Program for High Schools

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the STEM Equipment and Supplies Grant Program?

The STEM Equipment and Supplies Grant Program for High Schools enables the purchase of equipment and supplies to train students in life sciences technology and research as well as addresses a funding gap in capital dollars for public and not-for-profit workforce training and educational institutions. The program also seeks to increase student achievement and student interest in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math), as well as support the implementation of state STEM standards.

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).

Applicants may also request up to \$10,000 in funding for professional development for teachers administering such training and using the requested equipment.

What are the eligibility requirements for applicants?

Applicants must be located in Massachusetts and be one of the following:

- Vocational technical high school (as determined by the Chapter 74 of the General Laws of Massachusetts) or a comprehensive public high school with approved vocational technical program;
- Public high school located in a “Gateway City” as determined by Section 3A of Chapter 23A of the General Laws of Massachusetts ([Click here](#) to view a list of Gateway Cities);
- 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
- Community-based non-profit organization serving high schools that meet any of the above-stated criteria.

What qualifies as “life sciences” related equipment and supplies?

An eligible applicant must request funding to purchase equipment and/or supplies to support an education and training program that prepares participants for employment in the **life sciences**. 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, etc.), engineering, and/or math education and training. *Please note: Earth and Space Science, Animal Science/Veterinary Assisting, Forensic Science, as well as Allied Health programs will not qualify for funding.*

Can more than one high school submit a joint application for shared equipment?

Yes, two or more high schools can submit a joint application if some (or all) of the equipment and supplies requested would be shared between the schools. However, the grant amount could not exceed the sum of the maximum amount per school. For example, two schools could request a total grant amount of \$200,000 without needing an industry sponsor, or up to \$500,000 provided that they have secured the necessary industry match. It would need to be clearly described in their application how the sharing arrangement will be implemented.

Please note that one school will need to be identified as the “lead applicant” that will be responsible for approval and submittal of the application and all grant correspondence.

Can a school or organization submit an application with multiple industry partners?

Yes, more than one industry partner can be listed, each contributing to the total industry match. Partners not providing matching funds should still be referenced in the project narrative portion of the application.

When is the application deadline and when will awards be announced?

Applications must be submitted by 12:00 p.m. on October 6, 2016. The MLSC anticipates an announcement of awards on December 16, 2016.

How will funds be provided to awardees?

Grant recipients will be reimbursed by the MLSC for equipment and/or supplies costs. Alternatively, the MLSC can make direct payments to select vendors (to be announced) on behalf of grant recipients.

What costs are reimbursable under this grant?

Grant recipients 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.

Grant recipients can also request reimbursement for teacher professional development costs as described in the proposal.

What timeframe will awardees have to purchase equipment and/or supplies?

For the 2016 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.

How shall the grantee submit request for reimbursement from the MLSC?

If purchasing items from vendors other than those MLSC agrees to pay directly, grant recipients are asked to submit only one invoice itemizing all reimbursable costs. The total amount requested cannot exceed the amount awarded. Any amount (for equipment) that is in excess of \$100,000 must be matched at least 1:1 by the industry sponsor. The invoice must be received by the MLSC (along with all necessary supporting documentation) no later than twenty days beyond the end of the fiscal year.

What constitutes an acceptable industry match?

The industry match can be in the form of cash provided to the grant recipient for the purpose of purchasing equipment and/or supplies, in the form of a donation of equipment and/or supplies, or in the form of personnel time provided by the industry sponsor. If an industry partner is also the vendor selling the equipment and/or supplies to the grant recipient, a discount of such purchases 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.

What supporting documentation will the MLSC require in order to process reimbursement for all applicable costs?

Schools/organizations requesting reimbursement from the MLSC must provide the following:

1. Reimbursement Certification form (invoice template provided by MLSC) signed by an authorized representative that requests an accurate amount payable.
2. A summary of all vendor invoice amounts, totaling the amount requested for reimbursement.
3. Copy of all vendor invoices
4. Proof of payment made to vendors
5. School/organization's W-9 tax form

If the grant recipient is requesting more than \$100,000 (for equipment/supplies), the amount over \$100,000 must be equal to or less than the amount matched by the industry sponsor. Grant recipients must provide proof of the industry sponsor's cash match contribution (this can be a copy of the check(s) or documentation of a wire transfer). If the contribution is in the form of donated supplies or equipment, the market value of such donation must be demonstrated. If the contribution includes personnel time, this must be demonstrated with payroll documentation.

Purchases made from select vendors that MLSC is to pay directly will need to be certified by the grant recipient to validate accuracy and receipt of items billed (for each invoice period).

Are there any reporting requirements?

Following reimbursement of the equipment and/or supplies costs, grant recipients will be responsible for reporting, on an annual basis for a period of three years, on metrics to evaluate the success of the training program(s) such as the 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 the amount of other funds raised or leveraged.

If you have any additional questions, please contact: equip@masslifesciences.com