



Education and Workforce Development Grant Program

SOLICITATION

Website/Application: www.masslifesciences.com/programs/workforcegrants

Application Opens: October 20, 2025

Applications Due: February 23, 2026 at 5:00 p.m.

Award Notifications: June 2026

Grant Effective Date: July 1, 2026

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1. Introduction

1.1. Program Overview

The Massachusetts Life Sciences Center (MLSC) seeks to develop, enhance, and expand life sciences education programs serving learners from elementary school through post-secondary, throughout the Commonwealth, to ensure that the industry has a robust workforce pipeline.

The Education and Workforce Development Grant Program offers four distinct tracks:

1. *Elementary and secondary education (grades 3-12).*

Grant funding for public schools, districts, and non-profit organizations to support applied learning that provides students with both technical skills development relevant for life sciences careers and increases awareness of career opportunities. Grants are intended for purchasing life sciences equipment, materials, supplies, technology, and providing teachers with professional development. Funding will enable teachers to educate students in real-world scenarios that prepare them for career opportunities in life sciences. Funding for professional development will ensure that educators receive the technical training needed to effectively use newly acquired equipment and technology.

2. *Out-of-School Time (OST) education for K-12 students.*

Grant funding for non-profit organizations to implement new or expanded educational programming offered beyond the traditional school day, focused on life sciences and predominately serving underrepresented and/or low-income youth. Investments made through this program seek to a) reinforce, complement, and supplement life sciences education offered by public schools, b) provide students with new technical and professional skills development relevant for careers in the life sciences, c) expose students to state-of-the-art life sciences equipment, tools, and technologies, d) catalyze and grow innovative programming serving under-resourced communities, and e) increase awareness of life sciences career opportunities.

3. *Post-secondary education and training.*

Grant funding for academic institutions and non-profit organizations offering life sciences industry-aligned certificate and degree programs. Grants are intended for the purchase and installation of equipment, materials, supplies, technology, and lab renovation that will enable training programs to effectively prepare students for high-demand career opportunities in the life sciences. MLSC is particularly seeking to seed, enhance and/or expand training programs that address critical skills and talent supply gaps facing the state's life science industry. Furthermore, MLSC will prioritize investment in programs that serve underrepresented populations.

4. *"Gamechanger" workforce development projects.*

Grant funding for any academic institution, municipality, or non-profit organization seeking to launch a new program/initiative or substantially enhance an existing one. Grants are intended for large-scale and high-impact projects with several industry partnerships and private matching funds. MLSC will prioritize funding for transformational programs that serve a significant number of learners and increase access and opportunity for low-income communities (e.g. Gateway Cities).

1.2. About the Massachusetts Life Sciences Center

The Massachusetts Life Sciences Center (MLSC) is an economic development and investment agency with a mission of supporting the growth and development of the life sciences in Massachusetts. Through public-private funding initiatives, the MLSC supports innovation, education, research and development, commercialization, and manufacturing activities in the fields of biopharma, medical device, diagnostics, and digital health. As a quasi-public agency, MLSC also offers programs that fund innovation-driven economic and workforce development initiatives in Massachusetts. The MLSC's mission is to accelerate medical

breakthroughs, scientific education, research opportunities, and workforce expansion through a global ecosystem of private and public alliances.

For more information about the MLSC, please visit www.masslifesciences.com.

2. **Eligibility Criteria**

Applicant must demonstrate compliance with the following minimum criteria:

Criteria	Minimum Requirement
Applicant	All applicants must be non-profit organizations located in Massachusetts, and education/training must occur within Massachusetts. - Elementary and secondary education applicants must be at least <u>one</u> of the following: - Vocational technical high school as determined by Chapter 74 of the General Laws of Massachusetts or a comprehensive public high school with a <i>life sciences</i> Chapter 74 program (e.g. biotechnology); - Public middle schools or high schools* (including charter schools) located in one of the following “Gateway Cities” as determined by Section 3A of Chapter 23A of the General Laws of Massachusetts: Attleboro, Barnstable, Brockton, Chelsea, Chicopee, Everett, Fall River, Fitchburg, Haverhill, Holyoke, Lawrence, Leominster, Lowell, Lynn, Malden, Methuen, New Bedford, Peabody, Pittsfield, Quincy, Revere, Salem, Springfield, Taunton, Westfield, and Worcester. - Public high schools, middle schools, and elementary schools (including charter schools) with a student population of at least 25% classified as “low income” by the by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE).* - Non-profit curriculum provider, with a presence in Massachusetts, delivering life sciences curriculum and teacher professional development to schools that meet any of the above-stated criteria. Any equipment requested on behalf of partner schools must be delivered to and remain housed at the schools. * For schools belonging to a district, the district must be the applicant and only one application can be submitted per school district. Districts must submit applications that reflect district-wide resource needs and promote curriculum alignment. - Out-of-School Time (OST) applicants must be a non-profit organization with a presence in Massachusetts or public school/district (meeting criteria in Section 1 above) delivering OST programming relevant to the life sciences. - Post-secondary education and training applicants must be a higher educational academic institution (public or private) or non-profit organization delivering post-secondary life sciences training. Please note that MLSC will not award more than 2 projects from the same institution per grant round. <i>Gamechanger</i> applicants must be an academic institution, municipality, or non-profit organization.

	Note: 1. Past MLSC awardees are eligible to apply but must make a compelling case as to the need for additional funding, particularly if funding is requested for the same program or if a prior award is not fully expended at the time of application submission. To be considered for funding, applicants must be in compliance with reporting requirements and all contractual obligations for any prior award(s) from the MLSC. 2. Multiple eligible institutions/organizations can submit a joint proposal. The application must be authorized by a senior leader (e.g., President, CEO, Executive Director, etc.), for each institution/organization requesting funding (if there are more than one). 3. Applicants are permitted to submit up to two separate proposals for distinct and unrelated projects.
Program	Programs must prepare learners with skills relevant for life sciences careers. 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.” Activities/curricula should seek to enhance skills relating to human biology/biomedical sciences, chemistry, engineering, robotics, and/or computer/data science that will prepare them for life sciences careers in sectors such as biotechnology, pharmaceuticals, medical device/technology, medical diagnostics, bioinformatics, and digital health. Activities related to the following are <i>not</i> eligible for funding: earth and space science, clean energy, climate/environmental science, gardening/botany, animal science/veterinary assisting, and allied health/healthcare (e.g. nursing, medical assisting, etc.). 1. Elementary and secondary education funding must be requested for teacher professional development and/or equipment, supplies, materials, and/or technology to support in-school curriculum that prepares students with skills needed for life sciences careers. Schools must identify the project and inquiry-based curriculum that will be implemented and how the requested equipment will support curriculum implementation and instruction. 2. Out-of-School Time (OST) funding must be requested for programs that occur outside of the traditional school day (e.g. after-school, weekends, school vacation weeks, and summer) and operate entirely within Massachusetts. Programs must serve Massachusetts K-12 students/schools that meet any of the following descriptions: a. Vocational technical high school as determined by Chapter 74 of the General Laws of Massachusetts. b. Public school (including charter) located in one of the following “Gateway Cities” as determined by Section 3A of Chapter 23A of the General Laws of Massachusetts: Attleboro, Barnstable, Brockton, Chelsea, Chicopee, Everett, Fall River, Fitchburg, Haverhill, Holyoke, Lawrence, Leominster, Lowell, Lynn, Malden, Methuen, New Bedford, Peabody, Pittsfield, Quincy, Revere, Salem, Springfield, Taunton, Westfield, and Worcester. c. Public school (including charter) with a student population of at least 25% classified as “low income” by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). d. Tuition-free private school primarily serving low-income/underrepresented students.

	e. Enrolled in the METCO program, funded by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to expand educational opportunities, increase diversity, and reduce racial isolation, by permitting students residing in certain cities to attend public schools in other communities that have agreed to participate. f. Homeschooled residents of a “Gateway City” (as defined above) or a city/town where the public high school(s) has a student population of at least 25% classified as “low income” by DESE. 3. Post-secondary education and training funding must be requested for equipment, supplies, materials, and/or technology to support training that prepares students with skills needed for life sciences careers. Programs must have a focus on skills training for high-demand occupations within the life sciences sector, including but not limited to biomanufacturing, regulatory affairs, data science, facilities management, lab operations, quality control and quality assurance. 4. <i>Gamechanger</i> funding must be requested to enable the creation or enhancement of large-scale workforce development programs/initiatives. Programs must address a clear gap in the ecosystem, increase access to life sciences careers, increase career awareness, provide transformational impact for low-income communities, and serve populations historically underrepresented in the life sciences. Funding can include Capital dollars for construction, renovation, equipment, etc. or operational dollars.
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3. Allowable Costs

Please note: MLSC grants are distributed via reimbursement

Grant recipients can only request reimbursement for approved costs as itemized in their budget. Post-award budget modifications are permissible with MLSC written approval of an amended budget if necessary. The MLSC reserves the right to adjust the requested amount of funding for each proposal. Following execution of the Grant Agreement, funds will be provided on a reimbursement basis to awardees via electronic fund transfer (EFT) upon verification of costs incurred.

1. Elementary and secondary education costs can include equipment, supplies, materials, technology, and professional development relevant to life sciences education (as defined in Section 2 of this solicitation). Professional development costs consist of training fees for instructors and teacher stipends for summer, weekend, or evening training.
2. OST costs can include personnel, transportation, marketing, food, student stipends, equipment, supplies, materials, and technology.
3. Post-secondary education and training costs can include equipment, renovations, lab furniture, supplies, reagents, and technology (including permanent software licenses).
4. *Gamechanger* costs can include personnel, transportation, marketing, stipends, equipment, supplies, materials, and technology.

Installation and warranty/maintenance costs for the new equipment are also reimbursable.

Non-allowable expenses include curriculum access or subscription fees, event or conference registration fees, wages for substitute teachers, travel and lodging expenses, legal expenses, rent and utilities, renting storage space, cloud storage fees, single or multi-year subscriptions, paying off debt, overhead/indirect costs, and activities/items funded by other funding sources.

4. Purchasing Period

With the exception of professional development, all costs must be incurred and items shipped between July

1, 2026 and June 30, 2027. Professional development costs can be incurred through December 31, 2027.

5. **Review Process and Criteria**

MLSC staff will conduct an initial administrative review to determine eligibility of all submitted applications. Eligible applicants will then be reviewed and scored by a panel of external reviewers consisting of life sciences educators and industry professionals. Funding recommendations will then be made to the MLSC Board of Directors based on reviewer feedback and scores. The number of awards will be determined by the quality of the proposals and funding availability.

Grant recipients will be selected on a competitive basis according to the criteria presented 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 this solicitation.

The MLSC is interested in supporting applicants that will further its goal of building a robust and diverse workforce pipeline for the fast-growing life sciences industry. Programs are expected to develop both technical and professional skills, effectively increase awareness of and interest in life sciences careers, and inspire students through hands-on, engaging activities. Successful proposals will explain how the project will create learning opportunities that are aligned with the needs of the life sciences industry.

The 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
Minimum Threshold	• The applicant meets the minimum requirements identified in Section 2. • The application is complete and responsive to the solicitation's requirements. • The application is submitted prior to the established deadline.
Program Description	1. Elementary and secondary education proposals must describe the curriculum to be implemented/expanded and equipment and professional development requested, including the following: • Summary of requested items (per school if more than one) to be purchased and justification for why they are needed. • Number of schools requesting funds (if applicable), estimated/anticipated number of participating students, and number of teachers seeking professional development. Curriculum providers are encouraged to serve no fewer than three schools. • Plan for recruiting students into life sciences electives (if applicable). • Purposeful use of the equipment and training to create engaging curriculum, and advance scientific literacy. • Description of how the requested equipment and professional development will enable school(s) to provide curriculum, instruction and student learning experiences that align with the following Massachusetts Science and Technology/Engineering Learning Standards relevant to the life sciences: LS1, LS3, LS4, PS1, PS2, PS3, ETS1, ETS2, and ETS3. Full description of the standards can be downloaded here: www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/scitech/2016-04.pdf. • Effectiveness of industry collaboration in developing and implementing a program that prepares students with skills needed for life sciences careers

- (high school).
 - Career exploration activities linking equipment and skills training to real world applications and life sciences careers through exposure to professionals (e.g., field trips & site visits, guest speakers, career projects, career fairs, internships/co-ops, etc.).
 - Efforts by the applicant to evaluate the success of its curriculum and training programs by tracking student outcomes.
 - Sustainability plan.
2. OST proposals must describe the curriculum to be implemented/expanded, including the following:
 - Overview of the program curriculum, goals, and objectives (identification of any gaps the program seeks to fill).
 - Summary of requested items to be purchased and justification for why they are needed.
 - Target population, estimated/anticipated number of participating students, and plan for recruiting students.
 - Career awareness/exploration activities identifying real-world application of skills learned in the life sciences industry. May include exposure to life sciences professionals through field trips/site visits, guest speakers, etc.
 - Description of what constitutes successful outcomes.
 - Plan to evaluate the program and track both short and long-term outcomes.
 - Sustainability plan.
 3. Post-secondary education and training proposals must describe the project/program to be implemented/expanded, including the following:
 - Specific credentials, delivery model, and length of program. Priority will be given to programs that seek to train relatively large cohorts.
 - Potential to fill a gap in or accelerate the development of skills in demand by industry in the region in which Applicant is located.
 - Demonstration that the training program is a result of input and advice provided by life science industry professionals (letter of support from at least one life sciences company is required).
 - Summary of items to be purchased and justification for why they are needed.
 - Estimated/anticipated number of students to be served (that will have access to requested equipment).
 - Potential for training to benefit students who are under-represented in the life sciences or economically disadvantaged.
 - Efforts to evaluate the success of the program by tracking student outcomes.
 - Demonstration of dedicated and effective resources to provide career development services to students including providing students with access to career awareness activities and documenting the number of internship placements, connections to life science industry partners, and evidence of job placements in the life sciences upon graduation.
 - Sustainability plan.
 4. *Gamechanger* proposals must describe the project/program to be implemented/expanded, including the following:
 - Clear identification of the gap to be filled and explanation of how the project will close this gap.
 - Anticipated impact of the project on the life sciences ecosystem.
 - Estimated number of individuals to be served annually and demographics of those individuals.

	• How the project increases access to life sciences careers. • How the project increases awareness of career opportunities in the life sciences. • Summary of items to be purchased and justification for why they are needed. • Timeline for implementation. • Partnerships with industry (cost-sharing required). • Sustainability plan. All applicants are expected to detail any cash or in-kind matching funds awarded or anticipated. Applicants are strongly encouraged to identify matching funds that leverage MLSC funding. Matching funds should directly relate to the proposal and can include other grants (from state or private entities) or any non-allowable costs covered by the Applicant. <i>Gamechanger</i> grants are required to have matching funds from at least one industry partner.
Team and Qualifications	• Names and titles of all personnel involved in program implementation. • To the extent possible, brief summaries of the qualifications, experience, and expertise of such individuals.
Partnerships	• Applicants must demonstrate how they are engaging with industry or non-profit partners in the development and implementation of their program, such as identifying skills gaps and ensuring that curriculum meets the needs of industry. • Partnerships may include providing internships/apprenticeships, curriculum design, advisory board participation, equipment donations, mentoring, job shadowing, guest speakers, and/or funding support. • Applicants may partner with new or existing industry collaborators to fulfill this requirement.
Budget	• Budgets must be entered into the Excel template provided within the application. • All costs must be itemized and cannot include any unspecified “other” or “indirect” line items. • All items categorized as MLSC costs must be allowable in accordance with Section 3 of this solicitation. • Vendor quotes are required for any single item over \$5,000 for elementary and secondary education and OST proposals and \$10,000 for post-secondary proposals. • Reasonableness and validity of funding requested must be conveyed in the proposal. • Budget should reflect total project implementation costs, identifying MLSC costs separately. 1. Elementary and secondary education proposals can request funding as follows (maximum <i>per school</i>):

		Equipment & Supplies	Professional Development
	High school (new program or reconfiguring lab space)	\$85,000	\$15,000
	High school (upgrades to existing program)	\$65,000	\$12,000
	Middle school	\$30,000	\$6,000
	Elementary school (grades 3-5)	\$15,000	\$3,000
	• Provide a detailed, separate, breakdown of professional development costs, including the names of participating teachers (if available). • If multiple schools are expected to receive equipment and/or professional development, costs must be separated by school and by fiscal year.		
	2. OST proposals can request up to \$30,000 for eligible expenses. • Full-time staff (existing staff) costs are limited to 10% of the overall budget. Other personnel costs are limited to 30% of the overall budget. • Food costs are limited to 5% of the overall budget.		
	3. Post-secondary education and training proposals can request up to \$500,000 per organization. • Applications submitted by multiple entities collaborating on a project can request up to \$500,000 per eligible institution/organization (costs must be identified separately).		
	4. <i>Gamechanger</i> proposals can request up to \$1,000,000 for eligible expenses. • Minimum request is \$750,000. • 1:1 matching funds are required for any amount requested over \$500,000. • Non-capital costs (e.g. personnel, transportation, marketing, stipends) are limited to \$100,000.		

6. Application and Review Process

6.1. Application Submission

Applications will only be accepted through the MLSC's online application portal, accessed via the program webpage: www.masslifesciences.com/programs/workforcegrants. Applicants are required to create an account and complete a user profile before starting the application. It is recommended that applicants carefully follow the online instructions and provide complete and clear responses to all required questions. It is the sole responsibility of the applicant to ensure that its application is complete, meets minimum threshold requirements and is properly submitted to the MLSC prior to the established deadline. Multiple users can be given access to the application. Applicants are asked to review the MLSC's Public Disclosure policy (Section 7 below) prior to submitting their application.

6.2. Program Schedule

The solicitation process will proceed according to the schedule outlined below (target dates are subject to change). Applications cannot be submitted after the date and time specified.

Applications Open:	October 20, 2025
Application Deadline:	February 23, 2026 at 5:00 P.M.
Award Notification:	June 2026
Grant Effective Date:	July 1, 2026

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.

Applicant is responsible for marking information as confidential and 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

Awardees must enter into an agreement with the MLSC for the award, and reserves the right to amend the Agreement without further issuance of another solicitation.

7.3. Waiver Authority

The 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 the MLSC to award any funds, pay any costs incurred in preparing an application, or procure or contract for services or supplies. The 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.