



## The Massachusetts Clean Energy Center (MassCEC) Catalyst Program Awards

### Overview

The MassCEC Catalyst Program (“Program” or “Catalyst Program”) awards will be a maximum of \$65,000 each. These grants are given semi-annually to researchers and early stage companies. The program is jointly administered by MassCEC and the Massachusetts Technology Transfer Center (MTTC).

The Program’s primary intent is to stimulate the **commercialization of clean energy technologies developed in the Commonwealth**. Awarded funds are used to demonstrate the feasibility of technologies in specific industry applications in order to obtain increased industry and investor interest. Up to five awards will be granted.

Under the Catalyst Water Challenge, MassCEC will provide funding and technical support for projects at the water-energy nexus that deploy water innovation technologies or innovative combinations of existing technologies. These technologies should demonstrate a strong potential for energy savings and commercialization while providing significant measureable clean water, environmental and/or climate benefits. These awards (up to two additional awards) will also be up to \$65,000 each and will be reserved for promising clean water projects. Applicants to the Water Challenge will follow the same process and timeline as standard Catalyst applicants, with required modifications to the application outlined in the application template. Water Challenge applicants will be evaluated as a stand-alone group, separate from the standard Catalyst applicants.

Eligible applicants include Massachusetts-based Principal Investigators (PIs) and early-stage (as defined below) companies with innovative, commercially viable, clean energy technologies under development. Student teams are welcome to apply. Particular emphasis will be placed on selecting technologies that can be a foundation for new companies or technologies that can improve the competitiveness of existing Massachusetts companies.

For questions, please contact Michele Bernier from the MTTC office at [mbernier@umassp.edu](mailto:mbernier@umassp.edu) or (617) 287-4096.

# Eligibility

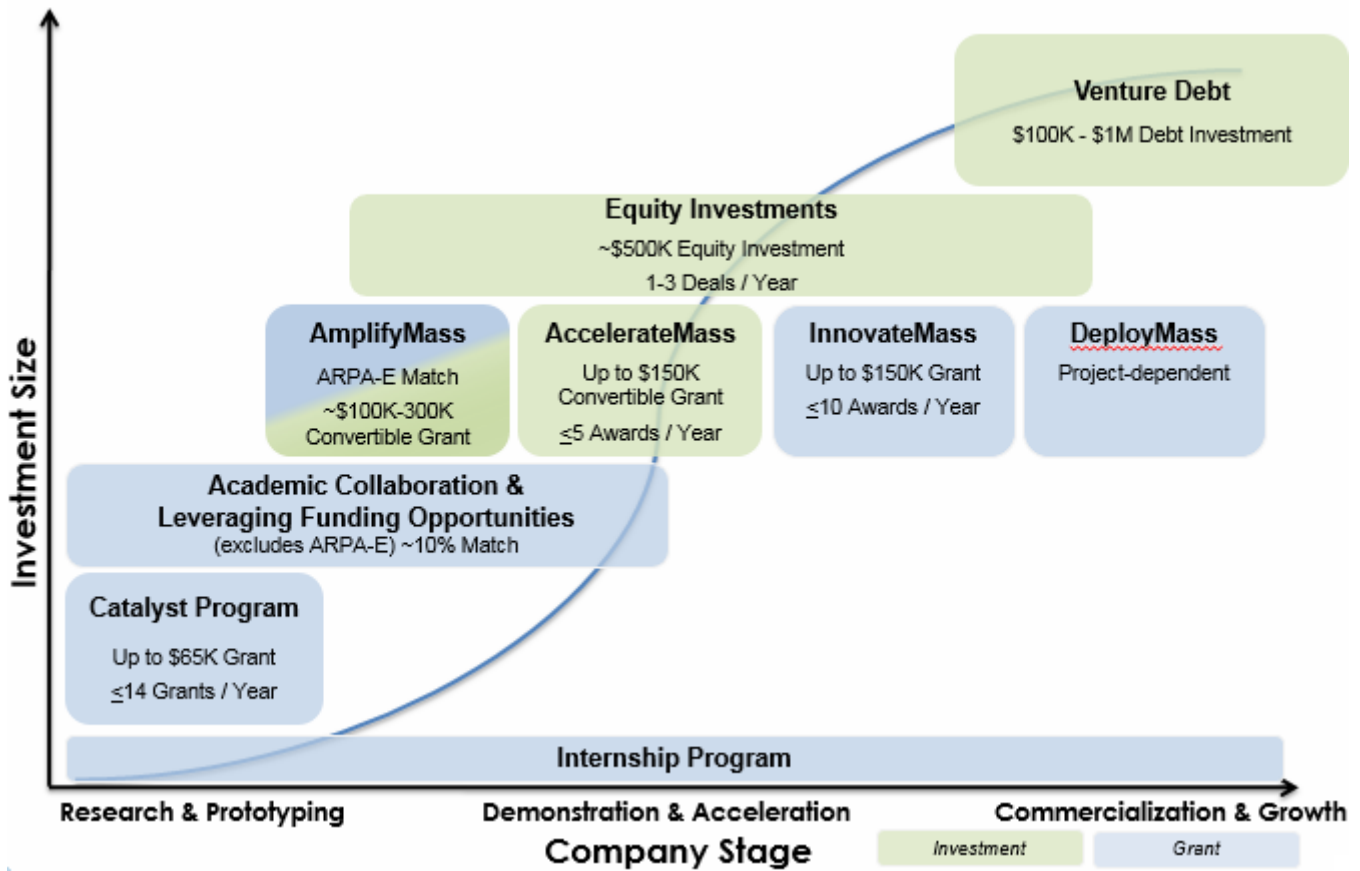
## Applicant:

Eligible applicants must be either a:

- Principal Investigator (“PI”) at a Massachusetts-based nonprofit research institution; or
- Massachusetts-based early stage clean energy company with no more than \$1,000,000 in combined financing, grant funding, and revenues within the past 5 years and have four or fewer full-time equivalent employees.

Applicants may not submit Catalyst Program applications for the same idea or concept more than 3 times, unless there has been a substantial change in the technology or market which advances the case for an award.

Additionally, please note that although applicants are encouraged to apply to multiple MassCEC grant award programs over their development lifecycle, it is standard practice for MassCEC to refrain from awarding two different awards to the same company concurrently. MassCEC programs are designed such that each grant award program generally serves a company at a different stage in its development lifecycle in order to discourage simultaneous application to different programs. However, it is not always clear which program is the best fit for an applicant. In these cases, it is recommended that the applicant reach out to MassCEC staff prior to applying in order to assess which program is the best fit. An illustrative diagram of the various MassCEC grant and investment programs and stages at which they are offered is below.



Also note that there are certain types of MassCEC funding that are available concurrently with other awards, such as the internship program and AmplifyMass. Applicants are welcome to apply to these programs concurrently with any other MassCEC funding opportunity.

*Additional eligibility information for researchers:*

Any researcher or faculty member at a Massachusetts-based nonprofit research organization is eligible to apply. This includes universities, hospitals, research institutes and federal research labs. If from a research organization, the applicant must have Principal Investigator status in their home institution in order to apply for these funds and their technology must be disclosed to the institution. Discussion of your application with a member of your Grants and Contracts Office must take place prior to submitting the application as any funding will flow through their office.

Student researchers may apply, as long as they have a faculty member or researcher who will act as the Principal Investigator and will be responsible for the management of the grant and the reporting requirements.

*Additional eligibility information for early-stage companies:*

The company must have four or fewer employees. It is acceptable for companies to have received funding from other sources including other government agency grant funding, foundation grants, business plan competitions or other private sources so long as total equity and grant funding does not exceed \$1,000,000.

Companies can be student-led; however, if IP has been licensed or intends to be licensed from a university verification of the license or option to license will need to be provided. Non-incorporated entities can still apply but incorporation will be necessary to receive delivery of the award.

**Technology:**

MassCEC is looking for Clean Energy technologies and Water technologies at the water-energy nexus. Please note that technologies related to coal, oil, nuclear power and natural gas (except where used in fuel cells) are not acceptable technologies for MassCEC funding.

Technology regarding software or apps should include unique algorithms. Basic software or new user interface does not constitute novel technology.

For the purposes of this program, Clean Energy technologies are defined as those that contribute to the advancement of one or more of the following clean energy or energy efficiency categories, which includes but is not limited to:

- Solar photovoltaic;
- Solar thermal;
- Wind power;
- Geothermal;
- Wave and tidal energy;
- Advanced hydropower;
- Energy storage;
- Biofuels, including ethanol, biodiesel and advanced biofuels;
- Renewable, biodegradable chemicals;
- Advanced thermal-to-energy conversion;

- Hydrogen;
- Carbon capture and sequestration;
- Energy monitoring;
- Green building materials;
- Energy-efficient lighting;
- Gasification and conversion to liquids fuels;
- Industrial energy efficiency;
- Demand-side management; and
- Fuel cells

For the purposes of the Catalyst Water Challenge, MassCEC seeks to support water innovation technologies that address significant, persistent water challenges, while bringing down the energy costs associated with storing, treating, and transporting water. Applicants should describe a specific water challenge, describe how the applicant’s proposed technology solution addresses the challenge, and provide estimates around energy savings potential.

## Schedule for Awards

September 11, 2017	Application Period Opens
October 11, 2017	Proposals Due
December 18, 2017	Applicants Notified of Finalist Status
January 11, 2018	Finalists’ Presentations for Water Applicants
January 18, 2018	Finalists’ Presentations for Cleantech Applicants
February 2018	Finalists Notified of Awardee Status

## Process for Awards

The funds are awarded through an external review process judged by a pool of independent experts. The steps in the process are as follows:

- Proposals are received and distributed to industry experts for review
- Written proposals are reviewed
- Finalists are selected and notified
- Finalists submit a draft presentation to MTTC about their company and intended use of Catalyst funds
- Finalists are coached on presentation content, style and delivery
- Finalists present final presentations and discuss their project with industry experts
- Awardees are notified and feedback is provided to all finalist teams

**Please note: If awarded a Catalyst Award, the company/host institution and award will be disclosed to the public.**

The MassCEC’s Investments team and MTTC staff oversees the process and approves the final recommendations from the external reviewers. MassCEC and MTTC determinations are final and not subject to discussion. **In addition, MassCEC and MTTC reserve the right to withdraw an applicant if the applicant violates any criteria in the application guidelines or does not provide sufficient information in the proposal.**

## Judging Criteria

The reviewers will be asked to consider the following:

- technical merit;
- commercial potential;
- impact of project plan;
- team members; and
- clean energy and/or water impact.

## Uses of Funds

Typical use of Catalyst Program Award funding (maximum \$65,000) include:

- to conduct further defined research on an invention that will lead to proof of concept or prototypes;
- to undertake testing of a technology or material to obtain initial data on performance;
- to develop a more user-friendly software interface;
- to send a material out to independent third party for testing under industrial conditions;
- hire outside expert consultants to validate technology;and
- a limited amount of money by be used toward equipment and supplies.

If the host institution requires overhead for the award, this must be indicated in the budget. Many institutions have waived overhead for this award and checking with the host institution is advised.

**Please note that funds may not be used for the following:**

- basic research;
- legal expenses to advance intellectual property protection;
- publicity expenses (e.g., the development of marketing materials);
- legal and other expenses of business formation and operation;
- attendance at scientific conferences; and
- purchase of computer or other unrelated equipment.

## Timeline

The contract for award winners must be executed within 60 days of notification.

The award will be valid for work to be completed within one year from the date of execution.

In addition, the award recipients must submit a formal interim report and a final report on the research completed, milestones achieved, new technologies disclosed and use of funds. The interim report will be due at the halfway point of the proposed project duration, but no sooner than three months after the project commences. It is also anticipated that throughout the award period the recipient will maintain contact with MassCEC and MTTC on commercialization plans for the technology.

## Funding Proposal Information

Completed proposals must be received by October 11, 2017. Proposals should be concise, yet complete in description. Reviewers with technical and business backgrounds will be carefully selected; however, they may not be familiar with your particular technology. Please provide information that will enable them to judge the technical feasibility and the commercial value of your technology. Do not disclose any proprietary information. Reply e-mail will confirm receipt of your completed proposal.

Proposals that are not received by the closing deadline will not be considered in this solicitation. If you would like to be placed on an e-mailing list for receiving notification regarding other grant solicitations, contact Michele Bernier at [mbernier@umassp.edu](mailto:mbernier@umassp.edu). You may also receive email notifications targeted at startups by subscribing to “Clean Energy Opportunities for Startups and Incubators” or other relevant email lists at <http://www.masscec.com/content/email-updates>.

**Applicants *must* use the pre-formatted template for their application, available at: [www.mttc.org/grants/](http://www.mttc.org/grants/). The template can be downloaded by clicking “Download application for Catalyst Program Awards”.**

Proposals should be:

- Submitted via e-mail to [companycatalyst@masscec.com](mailto:companycatalyst@masscec.com)
- Submitted in MS WORD or PDF Format, using Arial 11 font
- Maximum length of 11 pages for proposal text, maximum length 5 pages for all attachments: (total: 16 pages maximum)
- Maximum file size of 4MB
- Maximum of one file submitted; proposal followed by attachments

For assistance and more details of the proposal process, contact MTTC at 617-287-4096.

MassCEC reserves the right to withdraw any submission at its sole discretion.

## Proprietary Information

Any documentary material, data, or other information received by the MassCEC and MTTC is presumed to be a public record subject to disclosure in accordance with Massachusetts Public Records Law. Exceptions may apply, however please be aware that MassCEC and MTTC cannot guarantee that materials received will be kept confidential. Application materials are shared with a panel of independent reviewers and may be subject to public disclosure requirements in the future. Therefore, applicants should only submit publicly available and other non-confidential information about their technology in the proposal. Generally, technology can be described in broad terms that do not require submittal of proprietary information. The technology's commercial potential is the most important issue for selection for MassCEC and MTTC support. However, limited information on the actual technology or experimental data should be included in the proposal to allow reviewers to assess the maturity and validity of the technology. Discuss any concerns with your technology transfer office or IP attorney, and work with them on the contents of the proposal.

## Proposal Guidelines

Please refer to the Catalyst Program website ([www.mttc.org/grants/](http://www.mttc.org/grants/)) and download the Application for Catalyst Program Awards.