

# Request for Qualifications for Outreach & Engagement for Statewide Plans Respondents Conference

## ***RFQ No. 2023-MBI-09***

**6/22/23**

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## **Welcome! Please review the following meeting guidelines:**

Please put yourself on mute.

If you would like to ask a question at the end of the presentation please raise your hand.

Feel free to post questions in the chat during the presentation.

This presentation and a recording of the meeting will be posted on the MassTech solicitation webpage.

# Agenda

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1. MassTech Collaborative / MassBroadband Overview and Introductions
2. Statewide Digital Equity Planning (SDEP)
3. RFP Overview
4. Application Timeline(s)
5. Questions

# About MassTech & MBI



MASSACHUSETTS  
TECHNOLOGY  
COLLABORATIVE

## OUR MISSION:

We strengthen the competitiveness of the tech and innovation economy by driving strategic investments, partnerships, and insights that harness the talent of Massachusetts.



### Mission:

*Innovation  
Economy*



### Mission:

*Advanced  
Manufacturing*



### Mission:

*Broadband*



### Mission:

*Digital Health  
and  
Caregiving*



### Mission:

*Cybersecurity*

**MBI's mission** is to make affordable high-speed Internet available to all homes, businesses, schools, libraries, medical facilities, government offices, and other public places across the Commonwealth. MBI works closely with key stakeholders to bridge the digital divide in Massachusetts.

**MBI**

MASSACHUSETTS  
BROADBAND INSTITUTE



at the MassTech  
Collaborative

# What is the Massachusetts State Digital Equity Plan? (SDEP )

The federal State Digital Equity Planning Grant Program (SDEP) provides funding from the Infrastructure Investment and American Jobs Act (IIJA) to develop a Digital Equity Plan (DEP).

## Purpose

- To create a roadmap and measurable targets towards achieving digital equity in Massachusetts.
- Support digital inclusion work.
- Build capacity for existing and future efforts to advance digital equity within the Commonwealth.

**\* Draft Plan for Public comment anticipated completion November 2023**

**\* Plan completion and submission to the U.S. Department of Commerce in February 2024.**

# DEA & BEAD

**“An Eligible Entity cannot have a Five-Year Action Plan that does not address digital equity.”**

To link the plans, states should:

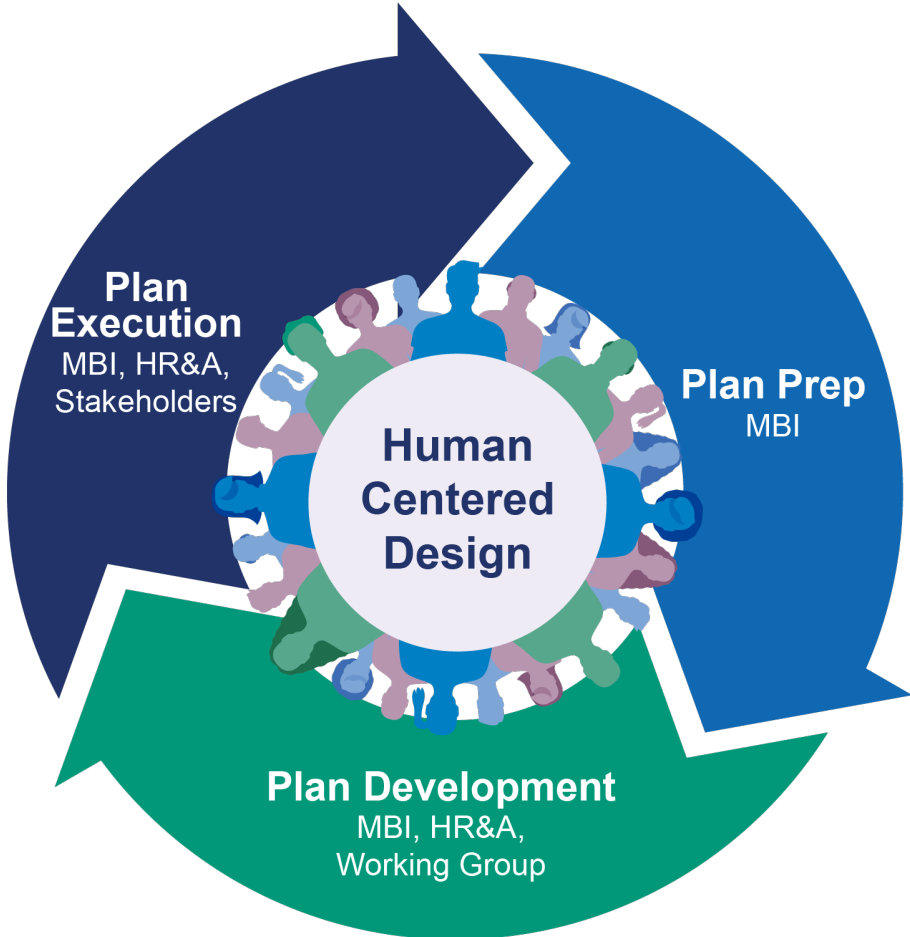
- Ensure continuity between staff developing plans
- Overlap state DEA and BEAD planning teams. At least one person on the 5-Year plan should work on the Digital Equity Plan
- Establish formal, direct communication and collaboration between DEA and BEAD teams



# Statewide Engagement Approach

People/Population Focused

Geographically Dispersed



6 7 Regional listening sessions & population focus groups

# Impacted/ “Target” Populations for Engagement (Section 2.1)

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- Low-income households
- Aging individuals
- Incarcerated individuals
- Veterans
- Persons of Color
- Indigenous and Native American persons
- Members of racial, ethnic, and religious minorities
- Individuals with disabilities
- People with language barriers, including low levels of literacy
- Women
- LGBTQI+ persons
- Rural inhabitants
- Persons otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty or inequality, including but not limited to: disconnected youth, individuals in recovery, individuals with past criminal records

# Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for Community Engagement

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- The Massachusetts Broadband Institute (MBI) is requesting services and qualifications from community-based organizations to plan and facilitate activities that support a human-centered engagement process for the SDEP, as well as future implementation activities. We will be accepting applications and awarding funds on a rolling basis
- The purpose of the Request For Qualifications (RFQ) is to pre-qualify entities that have established community trust to support MBI in gathering information about the lived experiences of impacted communities enduring the digital divide.



# Funding and Timeline

MBI expects to make \$250,000 in awards under this RFQ.

- Individual respondents may apply for up to \$15,000.
- Respondents representing networks of partners that propose to subcontract within those networks may apply for up to \$40,000.

Services for Category I: SDEP Outreach & Engagement  
Must be completed by 11/30/23

Services for Category II: Ongoing Engagement  
Will occur between 11/2023- 6/2026

**\*Applicants can apply for one or more Categories & Activities\***

# Categories of Service

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## Category I: Activities & Purpose(s)

**Activity #1** - Stakeholder Engagement to Support Regional Listening Sessions MBI seeks community-based organizations to undertake stakeholder engagement activities to recruit individuals within the Target Populations to participate in the statewide planning processes regional listening sessions that MBI will facilitate.

**Activity #2** - Event or Focus Group Execution MBI seeks organizations to plan and execute small scale events or focus groups with members of one or more of the Target Populations for the purpose of gathering key information, input, and lived experiences from those populations.

**Activity #3** - Surveying of Covered Populations MBI seeks organizations to support the distribution of MBI's statewide Digital Equity Survey. Specific activities under this scope of services could include hosting a in person or online group survey session, translation/interpretation as needed, phone banking, live surveying at events, or other activities that would increase the response rate among Target Populations to MBI's survey.

# Categories of Service cont'd

## Category II: Ongoing Engagement (pre-qualification)

**Activity # 1:** Services could include hosting group information/feedback sessions on the DEA/BEAD programs, facilitating 1:1 interviews, online / asynchronous review and collaboration, translation/interpretation as needed, and other activities that would yield community driven input on MBI's ongoing activities

### Strategic points for engagement & timeframes

- Public comment period for the DEA plan (Approximately Nov '23 – Feb '24)
- Public comment period for the BEAD materials (Approximately Nov '23 – Dec '23)
- Program launch for DEA & BEAD implementation (Approximately March '24 – June '24)
- Mid-program evaluation (Approximately June '24 – June '25)
- End of program evaluation (Approximately June '25 – June '26)

# MBI Supports for Services

MBI will support selected Respondents with specific content and technical assistance to execute the services described above. Materials provided by MBI will include:

- Predeveloped survey translated into appropriate languages
- Community Meeting Script and Facilitation Guide
- Notetaking Form
- Eventbrite Setup and Language for Registration
- Focus Group Outreach List Template
- Video and Photo Release
- Sample Social Media Outreach Language
- Agenda and Run of Show Template
- Tech & Logistics Guide for Hybrid Sessions

# Eligible Expenses

Funds awarded through this RFQ may be applied to eligible outreach and material expenses, including but not limited to:

- Staff time to engage in outreach and engagement activities to increase participation in the planning efforts by covered populations.
- Staff time to execute any planned outreach activities, including events, focus groups, or surveying.
- Direct costs related to outreach and engagement (print materials, paid social media posting, translation of content, etc.).
- Direct costs related to event facilitation (space rental, food/refreshments, A/V equipment, childcare, transportation, etc.)
- Staff time or hiring of subcontractors to provide translation and interpretation services.
- Material incentives such as gift cards, raffle items, etc., not to exceed a total of 15% of any proposed budget, or \$30/participant, whichever is less and should only be proposed when deemed necessary to achieve the expected outcomes proposed.
- Indirect costs (not to exceed 10% of the proposed budget or Respondent's federally approved rate whichever is less)
- Subcontracting of funds to partner organizations.

# Submission Requirements (Budget Template) Cat. 1

Budgeting			
Applicant Information			
Applicant:		Procurement No.:	
Budget Period:		Title of Proposed Project:	
Address:		MTC Funding Requested:	
		Total Project Cost:	
Cost Elements			Total Project
I. Direct Labor			
<i>name/title</i>	<i>HRS</i>	<i>Rate</i>	
			\$0
			\$0
			\$0
			\$0
			\$0
			\$0
Total Direct Labor			\$0
II. Direct Labor Fringe Cost			Rate (%):
			\$0
II. Subcontractors/Consultants/Contracted Staffing			
<i>Firm name/title or role/type of services to be provided</i>	<i>HRS</i>	<i>Rate</i>	
			\$0
			\$0
			\$0
			\$0
			\$0
Total Subcontractors/Consultants			\$0
III. Direct Materials (provide description and costs basis)			
V. Other Direct Costs ( <i>list type and description such as venue rental costs and cost basis</i> )			
Total Other Direct Costs			\$0
VI. General & Administrative Expense/Overhead			Rate (%):
			\$0
<b>Total PROJECT COSTS</b>			<b>\$0</b>

Budget period should correspond to the estimated length of the time for completing the proposed activities.

Corresponds to respondents proposed direct labor costs

Indicate any subcontractors that organization intends to use.

Indicate expected costs for materials such as flyers, space rental, incentives, etc.



# Anticipated Deliverables (Section 2.3)

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MBI requests the deliverables of proposed activities:

- Final agenda, attendance lists, and number of attendees for each event or session
- Description of outreach activities and number of people reached through these activities
- Documentation of executed surveys
- Written feedback on DEA and BEAD Program plans and documents
- Report of activities executed and lessons learned



# Application Timeframe

The application process will proceed according to the following schedule. The target dates are subject to change. Therefore, Respondents are encouraged to check Mass Tech Collaborative's website frequently for updates to the schedule.

<b>Task</b>	<b>Date:</b>
RFQ Released	June 12, 2023
Bidders' Conference	June 22, 2023 @ 3pm <b>EST</b>
Questions Due	June 30, 2023 @ <b>11:59 PM EST</b>
Question and Answer File Posted	July 11, 2023 @ <b>5 PM EST</b>
Applications Due on a Rolling Basis through	August 31, 2023 @ <b>11:59 PM EST</b>
Notification of Award	On a rolling basis

# EVALUATION PROCESS AND CRITERIA

The Mass Tech Collaborative shall evaluate each Application that is properly submitted in batches on a rolling basis. As part of the selection process, Mass Tech Collaborative may invite Respondents to answer questions regarding their Application in person or in writing. In its sole discretion, Mass Tech Collaborative may also choose to enter into a negotiation period with one or more finalist Respondent(s) and then ask the Respondent(s) to submit a best and final offer.

Criteria Respondents shall be awarded funding as set forth within this RFQ based on their ability to perform the services set forth in selected areas for which the Respondent seeks funding. Additional criteria that MassTech will evaluate may include, but not be limited to:

- Reasonableness of budget.
- Reasonableness of schedule and ability to complete stated work by November 30, 2023. **\*\***(Respondents able to complete all work of Category I by September 30, 2023 will be evaluated more favorably)**\*\***
- Organization's demonstrated ability to work with Target Populations as outlined
- Organization's demonstrated ability to implement outreach activities and produce deliverables as outlined and within the stated period of performance.
- Lack of debarment status by either the state or federal government is also required.

# Questions?

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Questions regarding this RFQ must be submitted by using this link: <https://airtable.com/shrxyi5VHIN4D8eEI>

All questions must be received by 11:59 p.m. EST on June 30, 2023. Responses to all questions received will be posted on or before 5:00 p.m. on July 11, 2023 to Mass Tech Collaborative and COMMBUYS website(s).