



Notice of Funding Opportunity for Massachusetts Tech Connect Internship Program

NOFO No. 2025-JAII-05

Massachusetts Technology Collaborative
75 North Drive
Westborough, MA 01581-3340
<http://www.masstech.org>

Procurement Team Leader:	William Fuqua
Date Issued:	1/27/2025
Informational Webinar:	2/7/2025
Questions Due:	2/14/2025
Answers to Questions Posted:	2/19/2025
Responses Due:	2/24/2025 by 5:00PM EST

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

The Innovation Institute, a division of the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative ("MassTech Collaborative" or "MassTech") is issuing this Grant Notice of Funding Opportunity for Massachusetts Tech Connect Internship Program, (NOFO No.2025-JAII-05) (the "NOFO") to solicit responses from qualified organizations ("Respondents") interested in receiving pilot program grant funding to enhance or build their capacity to place students from community colleges and other associate degree granting institutions in technology and innovation sector internships (the "Project"). Respondents will be competing against each other for grant funding and the submissions of all Respondents shall be compared and evaluated pursuant to the evaluation criteria set forth in this NOFO.

MassTech Collaborative will be the contracting entity on behalf of the Innovation Institute for the purposes of this NOFO, and (except where the specific context warrants otherwise) the Innovation Institute and MassTech Collaborative are collectively referred to as MassTech Collaborative or MassTech. MassTech Collaborative will enter into an **Operating Funds Grant Agreement** with selected Respondents containing certain standard provisions (the "Agreement") located [HERE](#).

1.2 MassTech Collaborative and the Innovation Institute

MassTech Collaborative is an independent public instrumentality of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts chartered by the Commonwealth to serve as a catalyst for growing its innovation economy. MassTech Collaborative brings together leaders from industry, academia and government to advance technology-focused solutions that lead to economic growth, job creation, and public benefits in Massachusetts. For additional information about MassTech Collaborative and its programs and initiatives, please visit our website at www.masstech.org.

Established in 2004 as a division of MassTech Collaborative, the Innovation Institute works to support key industry clusters and to improve conditions for growth in the Commonwealth's Innovation Economy. The Innovation Economy can be described as the economy that transforms knowledge into new ideas, ways or patterns of thinking, products, processes and services that fuel economic growth, create employment and wealth, and generate significant improvements in the region's standard of living. The Innovation Institute provides targeted, expert services, often accompanied by investments, to support the growth and enhance the competitiveness of key industry clusters in the Commonwealth's knowledge economy. For more information about the Innovation Institute and its activities and investments, please visit the website www.masstech.org/innovation-institute.

2. The Grant

2.1 Grant Overview

Careers in the tech and innovation sector offer dynamic opportunities for economic advancement and personal growth. However, tech careers are less accessible for students without a four-year degree despite increasing demand for skilled workers from across the industry and growth of "middle skill" jobs that do not require a bachelor's degree.¹ Tech and Innovation sector internships offer students a concrete pathway into the industry and strengthen the Commonwealth's tech talent pipeline by ensuring

¹ [Missed Opportunities, Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce, 2024.](#)

that foothold is in Massachusetts. Community colleges and other associate-level programs are an underutilized source of tech talent and serve a population of students for which the traditional four-year degree pathway into the industry may not be an option for a variety of reasons.

This funding opportunity intends to provide flexible resources to community colleges, other associate degree granting institutions, and their partners to develop a pilot program to support securing tech and innovation sector internships for associate level students in Massachusetts. The goal is to help address both employer willingness and awareness to take on associate-level interns while also addressing barriers that may prevent interns from completing an internship. Funding can be used for a wide range of purposes, including but not limited to wage stipends, wrap around services to help interns succeed during the internship, and organizational infrastructure to facilitate internship placements.

A total of \$400,000 is available for this NOFO. MassTech anticipates making multiple awards in the range of \$100,000-\$200,000.

Grantees will have two years to spend the funds.

Respondents are encouraged to demonstrate a commitment of cash and in-kind contributions to the proposed project, but match funding is not required to apply.

2.2 Grant Requirements and Guidance

Eligible Respondents must be non-profit or public sector organizations doing business in Massachusetts.

Eligible respondents must partner with a community college or associate degree granting institution if they are not one themselves.

Respondents are asked to submit a written proposal to communicate their proposed project and how it will successfully place community college/associate-level students in tech and innovation sector internships.

Proposals are due by February 24, 2025, at 5:00 p.m. A MassTech review team will review proposals and may subsequently request further information from applicants.

Proposal Structure

Proposals should address the following:

1. Introduction

- Provide a brief description of the project for which you are seeking funding. Identify project partners, the targeted group of students, the region of service, and technology and innovation sectors in which interns will be placed. State the total amount of funding requested with a high-level description of how the funds will be utilized.

2. Articulation of Need

- Describe the specific challenges and resource gaps that prevent your organization and its partners from placing more students in tech and innovation sector internships. Communicate how the proposed project directly addresses these needs.
- If existing staff or other resources are utilized for the proposed project, provide an explanation of how the requested funding will change how existing staff or other resources are utilized.

3. Program Structure & Implementation

- Target Market: Describe the target market for the proposed program. What industry(ies) and/or region(s) will you focus on? Who are the students you intend to serve?

- **Program Design:** Provide a comprehensive description of your program design and its objectives. Detail key components of your program such as employer engagement, internship placement, intern cohort development, mentorship, networking, and any other relevant activities. Identify all partners and their roles in program implementation, if applicable.
- **Resources:** Describe any relevant wrap-around services or other resources that will be made available to students as a part of the project being proposed.
- **Evaluation and Feedback:** Detail the methods for monitoring the progress of your program in core activities such as building relationships with employers and placing students in internships as well as any strategies for measuring post-internship performance.

4. Financial Overview & Timeline

- **Project Costs:** Specify the total amount requested for operating expenses. Provide a breakdown of how these operating funds will be allocated across various program components such as personnel, administrative costs, subcontractors, and direct materials.
- **Leveraged Funds (if applicable):** Clearly state the source and amount of any leveraged funds. Leveraged funds can include cash, in-kind contributions, or other resources that are quantifiable. Describe how these resources will contribute to the project, ensuring that the total funding (requested funds plus leveraged funds) covers the entire project cost. You may include letters of commitment from leveraged sources as an appendix to your proposal.
- **Timeline:** Provide a general timeline for the duration of the project. Identify specific milestones that are critical to the project's success.

5. Anticipated Impact

- Explain how the project will enhance the career trajectories of the students involved. What new skills, technologies or resources will the startups gain access to?
- Identify the expected quantitative and qualitative outcomes from the implementation of the project. Provide expected/targeted metrics or indicators.
- Discuss how the project promotes diversity and inclusivity within the tech and innovation sector in Massachusetts.

6. Evidence of Success

- Provide justification for why your organization is qualified to lead the proposed project. Identify key team members or ecosystem partners involved in the implementation of the project and describe their relevant experience.

2.3 Evaluation Process and Criteria

MassTech aspires to identify and support the highest-value opportunities to place more associate-level interns in the Commonwealth's innovation sectors.

Selection of a Respondent to receive funding as set forth within this NOFO may be based on criteria that include but are not limited to:

1. Program Reach
 - Partnerships created between one or more community colleges or associate degree granting institutions and non-profit or public sector organizations.
2. Program Scale
 - Number of interns placed
 - Number of employers engaged

3. Cohort Dynamic
 - Degree to which interns will be part of an identifiable cohort with a group identity, and any associated programming or activities.
4. Sector Focus
 - Clear focus on technology and innovation sectors of relevance to the region of service and target student population. Applicants are expected to explain why they chose certain sectors.
5. Regional Focus
 - Coherent region of service conducive to creating networks of employers and nascent professional networks for interns.
6. Program Sustainability
 - Degree to which the proposed program includes a plan to achieve sustainability beyond the two-year pilot phase, identifying leveraged funds that will make this feasible.

Lack of debarment status by both the state and federal government is also required.

The order of these factors does not generally denote relative importance. The goal of this NOFO is to select and enter into an Agreement with Respondents that will most closely align with MassTech Collaborative's goals in the publication of this NOFO. MassTech Collaborative reserves the right to consider such other relevant factors as it deems appropriate.

MassTech Collaborative shall evaluate each application that is properly submitted. As part of the selection process, MassTech Collaborative may invite finalists to answer questions regarding their application in person or in writing. In its sole discretion, MassTech 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 additional information.

Proposal Evaluation Process

1. Initial Screening: All submissions will undergo an initial screening to ensure they meet basic eligibility requirements and adhere to the guidelines outlined in the NOFO.
2. Detailed Review: Eligible proposals will be reviewed in detail by MassTech. The review team will assess each proposal based on the criteria outlined above.
3. Interviews: MassTech Collaborative reserves the right to contact Respondents to request supplemental or clarifying information as part of the formal review process. The staff may also request an interview with and/or presentation by select Respondents.
4. Notification of Award: Following review, selected Respondents will be notified of an award.

3. APPLICATION PROCESS

3.1 Application and Submission Instructions

Respondents are cautioned to read this NOFO carefully and to conform to its requirements. Failure to comply with the requirements of this NOFO may serve as grounds for rejection of an application.

- a. All applications must be submitted electronically to proposals@masstech.org. Please include the NOFO number in the subject line.
- b. Required Submissions: All applications must include the items listed below:

- Application Cover Sheet ([Attachment A](#))
 - Application, which shall include:
 - A description of Respondent (including descriptions of proposed subcontractors, if any) and Respondent's qualifications to perform the Project.
 - The details of Respondent's proposed Project, as further outlined in Section 2.2.
 - The total not-to-exceed costs for the Project based on projected hours, proposed hourly rates, as well as any other appropriate costs, in the Budget Template ([Attachment C](#)). List additional fees, overhead charges or reimbursable expenses, if any. As a general policy, the MassTech Collaborative does not pay mark-ups on reimbursables or out-of-pocket expenses. MassTech Collaborative also does not pay for word processing, overtime or meals. For travel costs, MassTech Collaborative pays the IRS rate per mile.
 - Authorized Application Signature and Acceptance Form ([Attachment B](#)), which contains specified certifications by Respondent. Please read the certifications carefully before signing.
 - Applicant's W-9
 - Exceptions, if any, to the **Operating Funds Grant Agreement**, located [HERE](#).
- c. Any and all responses, applications, data, materials, information and documentation submitted to MassTech Collaborative in response to this NOFO shall become MassTech Collaborative's property and shall be subject to public disclosure. As a public entity, the MassTech Collaborative is subject to the Massachusetts Public Records Law (set forth at Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 66). There are very limited and narrow exceptions to disclosure under the Public Records Law. If a Respondent wishes to have the MassTech Collaborative treat certain information or documentation as confidential, the Respondent must submit a written request to the MassTech Collaborative's General Counsel's office no later than 5:00 p.m. fourteen (14) business days prior to the required date of Application submission. The request must precisely identify the information and/or documentation that is the subject of the request and provide a detailed explanation supporting the application of the statutory exemption(s) from the public records cited by the Respondent. The General Counsel will issue a written determination within ten (10) business days of receipt of the written request. If the General Counsel approves the request, the Respondent shall clearly label the relevant information and/or documentation as "**CONFIDENTIAL**" in the Application. Any statements in an application reserving any confidentiality or privacy rights that is inconsistent with these requirements and procedures will be disregarded.

3.2 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 MassTech Collaborative's website frequently for updates to the schedule.

Task	Date:
NOFO Released	1/27/2025
Informational Webinar	2/7/2025 @ 12:00 p.m. EST

Questions Due	2/14/2025 @ 5 PM EST
Question and Answer File Posted	2/19/2025 @ 5 PM EST
Applications Due	2/24/2025 @ 5 PM EST
Notification of Award	End of March 2025

3.3 Questions

Questions regarding this NOFO must be submitted by electronic mail to proposals@masstech.org with the following Subject Line: "Questions – NOFO No. 2025-JAII-05". All questions must be received by 5:00 p.m. EST as specified above 2/14/2025. Responses to all questions received will be posted on or before the above date to MassTech Collaborative and Commbuys website(s).

3.4 Informational Webinar

An informational webinar will be held on 2/7/2025 at 12:00 p.m. To register, please sign up on this [registration page](#). MassTech Collaborative will post summary responses to procedural questions and issues addressed during the webinar on the MassTech Collaborative and the Commbuys websites.

4.0 GENERAL CONDITIONS

4.1 General Information

- a) If an Application fails to meet any material terms, conditions, requirements or procedures, it may be deemed unresponsive and disqualified. The MassTech Collaborative reserves the right to waive omissions or irregularities that it determines to be not material.
- b) This NOFO, as may be amended from time to time by MassTech Collaborative, does not commit MassTech Collaborative to select any organization(s), award any grant funds pursuant to this NOFO or pay any costs incurred in responding to this NOFO. MassTech Collaborative reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to withdraw the NOFO, to engage in preliminary discussions with prospective Respondents, to accept or reject any or all Applications received, to request supplemental or clarifying information, to negotiate with any or all qualified Respondents, and to request modifications to Applications in accordance with negotiations, all to the same extent as if this were a Request for Information.
- c) On matters related solely to this NOFO that arise prior to an award decision by the MassTech Collaborative, Respondents shall limit communications with the MassTech Collaborative to the Procurement Team Leader and such other individuals as the MassTech Collaborative may designate from time to time. No other MassTech Collaborative employee or representative is authorized to provide any information or respond to any questions or inquiries concerning this NOFO. Respondents may contact the Procurement Team Leader for this NOFO in the event this NOFO is incomplete.
- d) The MassTech Collaborative may provide reasonable accommodations, including the provision of materials in an alternative format, for Respondents with disabilities or other hardships. Respondents requiring accommodations shall submit requests in writing, with supporting documentation justifying the accommodations, to the Procurement Team Leader. The MassTech Collaborative reserves the right to grant or reject any request for accommodations.
- e) Respondent's Application shall be treated by the MassTech Collaborative as an accurate statement of Respondent's capabilities and experience. Should any statement asserted by Respondent prove to be inaccurate or inconsistent with the foregoing, such inaccuracy or inconsistency shall constitute sufficient cause for Mass Tech Collaborative in its sole discretion to reject the Application and/or terminate of any resulting Agreement.

- f) Costs that are not specifically identified in the Respondent's response and/or not specifically accepted by MassTech Collaborative as part of the Agreement will not be compensated under any contract awarded pursuant to this NOFO.
- g) MassTech Collaborative's prior approval is required for any subcontracted services under any Agreement entered into as a result of this NOFO. The selected Respondent will take all appropriate steps to assure that minority firms, women's business enterprises, and labor surplus area firms are used when possible. The selected Respondent is responsible for the satisfactory performance and adequate oversight of its subcontractors. Subcontractors are required to meet the same requirements and are held to the same reimbursable cost standards as the selected Respondent.
- h) Submitted responses must be valid in all respects for a minimum period of sixty (60) days after the deadline for submission.
- i) MassTech Collaborative reserves the right to amend the Agreement at any time prior to execution. Respondents should review the Agreement as they are required to specify any exceptions to the Agreement and to make any suggested counterproposal in their Application. A failure to specify exceptions and/or counterproposals will be deemed an acceptance of the Agreement's general terms and conditions, and no subsequent negotiation of such provisions shall be permitted.

4.2 Posting of Modifications/Addenda to NOFO

This NOFO has been distributed electronically using the MassTech Collaborative and Combuys websites. If MassTech Collaborative determines that it is necessary to revise any part of this NOFO, or if additional data is necessary to clarify any of its provisions, an addendum will be posted to the websites. It is the responsibility of each potential Respondent to check the MassTech Collaborative, the Innovation Institute and Combuys websites for any addenda or modifications to the NOFO. The MassTech Collaborative accepts no liability and will provide no accommodation to Respondents who submit a response based on an out-of-date NOFO.

Attachment A
Application Cover Sheet

Name of Respondent			
Mailing Address	City/Town	State	Zip Code
Telephone	Fax	Web Address	
Primary Contact for Clarification		Primary Contact E-mail Address	
Authorized Signatory		Authorized Signatory E-mail Address	
Legal Status/Jurisdiction (e.g., a Massachusetts Corporation, LLC, LLP, etc.)		Respondent's EIN and, if applicable, UEI number	

Attachment B
Massachusetts Technology Collaborative
Authorized Respondent's Signature and Acceptance Form

The undersigned is a duly authorized representative of the Respondent listed below. The Respondent has read and understands the NOFO requirements. The Respondent acknowledges that all of the terms and conditions of the NOFO are mandatory. By executing this Authorized Respondent's Signature and Acceptance Form, Respondent certifies that they (1) are in compliance with the terms, conditions and specifications contained in this NOFO, (2) acknowledges and understands the procedures for handling materials submitted to the MassTech Collaborative as set forth above, (3) agrees to be bound by those procedures, and (4) agrees that the MassTech Collaborative shall not be liable under any circumstances for the disclosure of any materials submitted to the MassTech Collaborative pursuant to this NOFO or upon the Respondent's selection.

The Respondent understands that, if selected by the MassTech Collaborative, the Respondent and MassTech Collaborative will execute an Agreement specifying the mutual requirements of participation. The undersigned has either (*please check one*):

- specified exceptions and counter-proposals to the terms and conditions of the [Operating Funds Grant Agreement](#), or
- agrees to the terms and conditions set forth therein

The undersigned acknowledges and agrees that the failure to submit exceptions and counter-proposals with this response shall be deemed a waiver, and the Agreement shall not be subject to further negotiation.

Respondent agrees that the entire bid response will remain valid for sixty (60) days from receipt by the MassTech Collaborative.

I certify that Respondent is in compliance with all corporate filing requirements and State tax laws.

I further certify that the statements made in this response to the NOFO, including all attachments and exhibits, are true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Respondent: _____
(Printed Name of Respondent)

By: _____
(Signature of Authorized Representative)

Name: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____

Attachment C
Budget Template

SEE EXCEL SPREADSHEET