

Massachusetts COVID Intrapreneur Challenge

Face Masks: General Use, Non-medical

Request for Applications

Challenge Goals

1. Increase the supply of face masks in Massachusetts to support the state's transition to the "new normal".
2. Help Massachusetts manufacturers pivot their operations to produce face masks that can be sold to public and private buyers in Massachusetts, throughout the US, and internationally
3. Activate Massachusetts intrapreneurs to bring COVID-19 – related innovations to market.
4. Support the efforts of the Manufacturing Emergency Response Team (MERT).
5. Preserve and create jobs in Massachusetts.

Program Overview

Companies will be selected for a five-week acceleration toward new or expanded capacity to produce general use face masks. Priority will be given to companies that have the potential to deliver face masks at scale in a short period of time. During the challenge program, intrapreneurs will develop prototype(s), business plans, market analysis and go-to-market strategies. On July 24, intrapreneurs will present their plans to a panel of experts. This panel will select one team to receive a \$25,000 COVID Intrapreneur Challenge grant award.

Although just one team will win the Challenge, all participating companies will benefit from the COVID Intrapreneur Challenge program. Participants will have access to manufacturing know-how, to various domain experts, to raw material providers, and to prospective large-scale purchasers of face masks.



Award

\$25,000 will be awarded to the company whose intrapreneur presents the most compelling plan for face mask production

Teams will be evaluated on:

- Product/market fit
- Ability for the team and company to execute
- Time to market
- Potential to support Massachusetts COVID response
- Market opportunity outside Massachusetts

Award funding must be used to help bring face mask products to the PPE market.

Eligibility

To participate, companies must:

1. seek to manufacture general use face masks
2. be based in Massachusetts
3. have previously registered with M-ERT as of May 15, 2020

Benefits to Participants

De-risk pivoting – “look before you leap”

- Confidence in product-market fit
- Access to purchasers
- Knowledge of market opportunity
- Access to market research data

Accelerate pivot to PPE production

- Rapid build-measure-learn cycles
- Cohort learning
- Staged, sequenced deliverables

Funding Access

- \$25K award
- Dossier for competitive grant proposals
- “Purchase order-ready”



Timeline

Release RFA: Friday, May 29

Application deadline: Friday, June 12

Finalists selected: Friday, June 19

Kickoff meeting*: Wednesday, June 24

Workshop 1*: Friday, June 26

Workshop 2*: Thursday, July 2

Workshop 3*: Friday, July 10

Pitch Event*: Friday, July 24

**Intrapreneurs must attend each of these sessions. Kickoff meeting will take one hour. Workshops will take up to two hours.*

For more information, contact us at COVIDChallengeInfo@leverinc.org

About Lever

Founded in 2014, Lever is an economic development non-profit focused on innovation-driven job creation. Lever supports entrepreneurs with startup expertise, an investment fund, research, mentors, and access to talent. Lever has helped launch dozens of companies that have attracted more than \$10M in equity investment and have created more than 200 jobs. Lever supports existing companies by helping their intrapreneurs “innovate from within” using proven entrepreneurial methods to generate top-line revenue growth and job creation.

About the Innovation Institute at the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative

The MassTech Collaborative is a quasi-public economic development agency that strengthens the competitiveness of the tech and innovation economy by driving strategic investments, partnerships, and insights that harness the talent of Massachusetts. The Innovation Institute is the division of MassTech that advances its core mission of innovation



and cluster growth across the Commonwealth. Created in 2003, the Innovation Institute intervenes in the economy in the following four ways:

- Conducts research and analysis that improves the state's understandings of unmet needs and opportunities in the innovation economy;
- Serves as convener and key strategic broker on the landscape;
- Manages high-value projects on behalf of the Commonwealth; and
- Makes strategic investments in support of innovation-based economic development.

About the Manufacturing Emergency Response Team

The Massachusetts Manufacturing-Emergency Response Team (MERT) is a coordinated effort comprised of members from academia, industry, and government to address the urgent need for PPE to support healthcare workers on the front-lines of Massachusetts' COVID-19 response. The M-ERT is managed by MassTech and includes partnerships with the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development (EOHED), the Massachusetts Life Sciences Center and the Massachusetts Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MassMEP).

Since the outbreak of the COVID -19 pandemic in Massachusetts, the MERT has been tasked with mobilizing, organizing, and operationalizing the critical path work streams necessary for the Commonwealth's manufacturers to pivot their operations to produce needed materials in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Nearly 750 companies from around the world have submitted their interest to the MERT, including nearly 450 from Massachusetts. Of those, 27 companies have made it through the program, producing nearly 3.5 million items of PPE and other critical materials to date.