

## Massachusetts COVID Intrapreneur Challenge II

# Innovations to Support Re-opening

## Request for Applications

We seek intrapreneurs who wish to develop products and services to support the re-opening of the Commonwealth. We invite them to participate in a 5-week business acceleration program to help them do so.

**Intrapreneurs** are innovators at existing companies aiming to grow their company's revenues by bringing new goods and services to market.

We welcome any innovation that can support one or more of the following re-opening directives, as well other directives found at <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/reopening-when-can-my-business-reopen>

- Retail stores – curbside pickup and indoor browsing
- Restaurants – outdoor and indoor seating
- Banks
- Childcare
- Construction
- Churches
- Hair salons
- Office spaces
- Funeral homes (limited capacity)
- Beaches (with restrictions)
- Golf and driving ranges
- Parks
- Recreational day camps
- Outdoor recreational facilities
- Professional sports practice and training
- Outdoor historical spaces
- Hotels (with restrictions)
- Close-contact personal spaces i.e. nail salons, massages, tattoo parlors
- Museums
- Gyms
- Movie theaters

Examples of potential innovations:

1. Touchless payments



2. Adhesive face masks that can be worn by hair salon customers
3. Sanitization monitoring technology
4. Social distance compliance technology
5. Transparent/translucent face masks for hospitality smiles
6. Dining safety
7. Venue capacity monitoring technology

### **Program Overview**

Companies will be selected for a five-week acceleration toward new or expanded capacity to produce goods and services in support of the state's re-opening. Priority will be given to companies that have the potential to deliver solutions 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 August 21, 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 purchasers.

### **Challenge Goals**

1. Foster innovations that will help "lock in" the low rate of COVID infections in Massachusetts achieved through social distancing and other measures
2. Help Massachusetts manufacturers pivot their operations to produce goods and services that can be sold to public and private buyers in Massachusetts and beyond.
3. Support the efforts of the Manufacturing Emergency Response Team (MERT).
4. Preserve and create jobs in Massachusetts.

### **Eligibility**

To participate, companies must:

1. Develop innovations that will preserve or create Massachusetts jobs
2. Be headquartered in Massachusetts
3. Have been operating for at least two years
4. 2019 annual revenue greater than \$250,000



## **Award**

\$25,000 will be awarded to the company whose intrapreneur presents the most compelling plan to produce goods or services in support of re-opening

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 COVID response goods and services to market.

## **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: Monday, June 29

Application deadline: Friday, July 10

Finalists selected: Friday, July 17

Kickoff meeting\*: Wednesday, July 22

Workshop 1\*: Friday, July 24

Workshop 2\*: Thursday, July 31

Workshop 3\*: Friday, August 7

Pitch Event\*: Friday, August 21

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

**For more information, contact us at [COVIDChallengeInfo@leverinc.org](mailto: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 the and 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.