



## Maine Technology Asset Fund 2.5 Program Guidelines

**IMPORTANT NOTICE:** Given the pandemic crisis and associated workflow disruptions in Maine organizations, **MTI will be extending the MTAF2.5 deadline out a month to April 24, 2020.** This will also shift the review and decisioning processes by a month, as well. Please see the updated timetable and feel free to reach out to the listed MTI contacts with any questions.

MTAF 2.5 represents the continuation of a funding round that began in 2018 as the result of allocation of bond dollars by the State of Maine for investment in Research, Development & Commercialization (RDC).

The funds provided under the original Maine Technology Asset Fund 2.0 (MTAF 2.0) program were general obligation bond dollars provided through a public law approved by the Maine Legislature, signed by the Governor in 2016, and subsequently approved by Maine's voters in June 2017:

**Law enacted (April 2016)** "An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue to Stimulate Investment in Innovation by Maine Businesses to Produce Nationally and Globally Competitive Products and Services" LD 1053, Public Law Chapter 479.

**MTI's portion of Question 1: Bond Issue (June 2017):** "\$45,000,000 in funds for investment in research, development and commercialization in the State to be used for infrastructure, equipment and technology upgrades that enable organizations to gain and hold market share, to increase revenues and to expand employment or preserve jobs for Maine people, to be awarded through a competitive process to Maine-based public and private entities, leveraging other funds in a one-to-one ratio"

**Intent and Content Prepared by the Office of the Secretary of State in the "Maine Citizen's Guide to the Special Referendum Election, June 13, 2017":** "Forty-five million dollars (\$45,000,000) would be distributed by the Maine Technology Institute in the form of grants to support infrastructure, equipment and technology upgrades in the following targeted technology sectors: biotechnology, aquaculture and marine technology, composite materials technology, environmental technology, advanced technologies for forestry and agriculture, information technology, and precision manufacturing technology. Funds would be awarded to public and private entities in Maine through a competitive process, and recipients would be required to match these State dollars with an equivalent amount of federal or private funds."

A small portion of the grant monies allocated under the 2018 MTAF 2.0 program (\$2M) has become available for redistribution in 2020. MTI will administer the MTAF 2.5 program in alignment with the mandate outlined in the original bond legislation. Specifically, MTI will look to invest in research, development and commercialization projects that will fund infrastructure, equipment and technology upgrades that enable organizations to "gain and hold market share, increase revenues, and expand employment or preserve jobs for Maine people."

## **Same bond, same process –**

The original MTAF 2.0 program design incorporated feedback from a variety of stakeholders and potential applicants that helped develop program parameters, which will be integrated as part of MTAF 2.5, including the following:

- ✓ A low-barrier 10-slide “pitch deck” to “pre-qualify” applicants and to determine appropriate level of due diligence
- ✓ Scaling due diligence to appropriate funding request level and economic output of request
- ✓ As little prescriptive design, as possible
- ✓ Allow cost share to be used for non-capital expenses

## **Project Goals**

MTI’s objectives are to obtain funding pitches from Maine-based public and private entities to cost-share investments in infrastructure, equipment, and technology upgrades that enable organizations to gain and hold market share, increase revenues, and expand employment or preserve jobs for Maine people. Applicants will be required to demonstrate that the MTI funds will leverage other funds on at least a one-to-one basis and will lead to meaningful economic impacts in the State of Maine.

Through administration of MTAF 2.5 funding, MTI will seek to make strategic investments in entities whose business models support goals reflected in the State of Maine Economic Development Strategy (2020-2029), including those that: 1) stand to increase average annual wage in the State; 2) contribute to increases in value-added production; and 3) attract out-of-state people to Maine’s talent pool.

## **Eligible applicants**

At the time of the potential investment, applicants must be Maine-based organizations or establish a core footprint in Maine. They will need to:

- Be a registered Maine business,
- Have a significant presence in Maine, or
- Have plans to establish a presence in Maine. Typically, any investments approved by MTI will not be disbursed until substantial progress has been made in securing a location and/or activities are underway in Maine.
- Provide a minimum of 1:1 cost sharing for the project

At the time of submission, the applicant must be in compliance with all laws, rules, regulations and ordinances of the United States, the State of Maine, and if awarded, must remain in compliance during the project’s duration.

Entities that received MTAF 2.0 funding are not eligible for consideration during the MTAF 2.5 round.

## **Timetable**

The following timetable, **which is subject to change**, will guide the process to assure a timely response for all parties:

|   |                             |
|---|-----------------------------|
| Issuance of request for proposal  | February 17, 2020           |
| Deadline for written proposals  | On or before April 24, 2020 |
| MTI Pitch Deck Reviews; Selection of Finalists; Requests for/Receipt and Review of Additional Due Diligence Materials from Applicants | May 2020                    |
| Final Funding Decisions   | June 8, 2020                |

## Submissions and Proposal Format

Applicants will need to register for MTI's on-line portal [here](#).

**The portal will open beginning on February 17, 2020.**

- Applicants will be asked to provide MTI with basic company/project information and will also be asked to specify who should and shouldn't review the materials due to potential conflicts of interest.

Project requests shall not exceed \$500,000 per entity, although smaller requests are welcome and encouraged.

Applicants must demonstrate how the MTAF 2.5 funds will help them:

- Gain and hold market share
- Increase Revenues (preference for revenue sources outside Maine)
- Expand employment
- Preserve jobs

Funds must be used for infrastructure – capital construction, improvements, or equipment costs.

Project or recipient must be associated with research, development and commercialization innovation continuum.

Project or recipient must be within, or at intersection of, one or more of Maine's seven technology sectors (biotechnology, aquaculture and marine technology, composite materials technology, environmental technology, advanced technologies for forestry and agriculture, information technology, and precision manufacturing technology).

Submissions will take the form of a 10-slide pitch deck.

Decks should include:

- Why applicant meets all program parameters?
- What applicant will do with the award and cost-sharing?
- How will it lead to maximizing the impacts associated with one or more of the four required economic outputs (For example: How will it enable organizations to gain and hold market share, increase revenues, and expand employment or preserve jobs for Maine people?)?

- What is the timeline for the project and projected economic outputs?
- What is the estimated cost of the project and how much will the applicant seek from MTAF 2.5?
- How is the project associated with the research, development and commercialization continuum?
- Who is on the applicant's team?
- Why is MTAF 2.5 the right source of capital for the project?

**Proposals must be received by MTI no later than 5:00 PM EST on April 24, 2020 and must be uploaded to MTI's on-line portal.** Timely delivery of the proposals is the sole responsibility of the applicant. Proposals received after the stated date/time will not be considered. All applicants acknowledge and understand that MTI will not pay for any costs incurred in connection with the preparation or submission of a proposal.

## Selection process

Proposals will be evaluated by MTI's internal review team. The team will select finalists who will then be asked to submit additional due diligence materials. Those requested materials will likely include:

- ✓ Financials - the most recently completed year's financials, including income statement (P&L) and balance sheet; current year-to-date financials; cash flow statements; and projected annual financials for the period of the proposed project and economic outputs
- ✓ Inputs or data leading to projections of economic outputs
- ✓ Project budget by line item
- ✓ Detailed Scope of Work (SOW)
- ✓ Details of the organization and project team

MTI will also ask applicants for some statistics about their organization (which will be kept confidential) including number of employees, revenues, and industry by NAICS code. MTI may also ask for deidentified or aggregate compensation levels, as well, to fully understand economic impact. If the proposed project is a highly complex or technical one, applicants should also likely be prepared to provide technical details and/or data backing up milestones of the scope of work.

Projects that meet the program parameters and have potential for the strongest demonstrable program outputs will be selected for grant awards. MTI will look at the "Return on Investment" (ROI) – or amount requested balanced against the projected economic outputs.

Beyond the required outputs criteria, MTI will use a portfolio approach to decision-making, balancing various factors in its award decisions including the following:

- ✓ geography
- ✓ business attraction with business retention
- ✓ far-to-market with near-to-market economic outputs
- ✓ big bets with sure bets
- ✓ company maturity level

While cost-share does not have to be identified at time of application, the applicant may capture funds expended for the proposed project as cost-share from the time of application submission if the funds expended are from a private or Federal source (non-State funds).

MTI reserves the right to reject any and all submissions without the right of recourse by proposers.

## **Inquiries**

Inquiries or notices concerning this RFP should be directed to:

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Responses to questions received will be posted as Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) on [www.mainetechnology.org](http://www.mainetechnology.org).