



MAINE CLEAN ENERGY INNOVATION CHALLENGE

Issue Date: May 14, 2021

Due Date: June 18, 2021

Challenge: Deployment of innovative clean energy technology in Maine that will help meet the climate and clean energy goals of the state.

Maine Technology Institute:

The Maine Technology Institute (MTI) is an industry-led, publicly funded, nonprofit corporation with the core mission to diversify and grow Maine's economy by encouraging, promoting, stimulating, and supporting innovation and its transformation into new products, services, and companies, leading to the creation and retention of quality jobs in Maine. MTI works across seven technology sectors, recognizing that the greatest innovations occur at the intersection of multiple sectors. As a key "innovator of innovation" and as part of MTI's strategic plan, MTI regularly supports unique initiatives and invest in projects that are in addition to its core program offerings. MTI is issuing this Maine Clean Energy Innovation Challenge in recognition of this unique moment in Maine's energy sector.

Clean Energy Innovation Challenge Purpose and Goals:

The Maine Technology Institute (MTI) has established a \$500,000 grant program to encourage clean energy startups and businesses to propose innovative, scalable solutions that will help meet the climate and clean energy goals of the state. This program will be the second Emerging Technology Challenge administered by MTI, following the initial successful pilot program focused on Maine's forest resources launched in 2019 that resulted in \$1.5 million invested in two natural resource-based technologies.

In recognition of Maine's growing clean energy sector, and the state's ambitious clean energy and climate goals, MTI will award funding to at least two innovative applicants developing advanced clean energy technologies or services. The challenge will leverage statewide initiatives that are currently underway, including the *Strengthening Maine's Clean Energy Economy* report that was issued in November 2020 by the Governor's Energy Office and the Office of Policy Innovation & the Future. That [plan](#) offers a detailed analysis of the momentum within Maine's clean energy economy, and how the sector is emerging as a source of economic growth and workforce opportunities to help the state's recovery from the economic disruption of COVID-19.

Additionally, the Maine Climate Council concluded its 14 months of work in December 2020 and released its four-year climate action plan titled *Maine Won't Wait*. That [plan](#), developed by a 39-member team of leaders, experts and advocates with input from thousands more, suggests climate action steps to create economic opportunities for Maine, such as encouraging the growth of the clean energy economy; creating incentives for consumer, business and industry to invest in energy efficiency; and supporting innovative construction

materials and agricultural systems that rely on Maine timber and farms to build and feed the state into the future. The plan also highlights strategies to ensure our economy and communities are better prepared for the increasing impacts of climate change.

MTI endeavors to help bring to market advanced technologies and services across the clean energy and climate spectrum (energy generation, energy efficiency, clean transportation, energy storage, data or software for energy management and innovative combinations of the aforementioned).

The clean energy sector has been identified as particularly well-positioned for growth within Maine, allowing the state to become a regional, and even global, leader in the sector. Success means bringing the technology to the market, fostering business development, creating high-paying jobs, generating synergies within Maine's existing clean energy industry, and helping achieve the state's clean energy goals.

Eligibility: Eligible companies shall be startups or small businesses engaged in clean energy innovation in Maine, or those currently located elsewhere looking to develop in Maine. Investments will be awarded to technologies or services that advance innovative solutions and have growth potential.

Investment Award: MTI will award grant funding to at least two innovative projects. Award recipients will be required to match their MTI funding with at least an equivalent amount of matching funding (1:1 match minimum). Learn more about matching co-investment funds [here](#).

Proposal Submission Requirements:

Submissions are due by Friday, June 18, 2020 and should be submitted directly via MTI's website. Click [here](#) when you're ready to start. Questions about this Clean Energy Innovation Challenge can be directed to info@mainetechnology.org. Please note that under MTI's Confidentiality Agreement, all materials submitted as part of this Challenge will be kept confidential by MTI and any contractors hired to evaluate the technologies.

Please send the following additional items by the due date:

- Company name, headquarters (City, State, Zip), point person, and CEO name.
- Succinct description of the proposed project and how it meets the challenge stated above and the proposal scoring criteria described below
- Project budget including how MTI funds will be deployed and a list of other sources of funding and financing for the project (match)
- History/track record including years in business, level of technology deployment (Pilot, Demonstration, Small Commercial, Commercial), existing facilities (City, State), total \$\$ invested in company to date (if publicly available), primary investors (if publicly available), and current joint ventures (if publicly announced)
- Market assessment sufficient to assess commercial viability of technology deployment and return on investment (ROI)
- Complete description of technology and technical approach as well as stage of development - please provide a list of key process elements, value proposition/market disruption, existing customers if applicable, key equipment,

estimated scale, CAPEX and OPEX, references to public presentations, literature, patents, and assumptions.

- Project duration and timeline, GANTT chart including key milestones up to and including technology/facility commissioning.
- Number of Jobs (FTEs) for facility operation, previous relationships with Maine (name of contact within Maine), workforce needs/skill

Criteria for Scoring Proposals:

MTI will base its award decisions on the following criteria:

1. **Team Ability**—Who is the team, what are their qualifications, will they be able to achieve success? What experiences do they have with the market?
2. **Technical and Technoeconomic Merit.** Applicant’s technical plan and economic models must show evidence that the technology can perform and be profitable at commercial scale.
3. **Strong Business Case.** Proposals must show how the technology is innovative and responsive to market/customer needs in a way that other technologies are not, identify the market for products manufactured, and describe a timeline for technology deployment. The proposal must also provide sufficient documentation that the company has freedom to practice, and has the necessary intellectual property to ensure project success.
4. **Economic Benefits to Maine.** Proposals should estimate job creation potential from technology deployment in Maine – for pilot/demonstration scale projects, this estimate will be for when/if the technology reaches commercial scale. For commercial-scale technology deployments, projects that include the creation of a minimum of 50 new FTE direct jobs will be scored higher.
5. **Geographic Fit.** Applicants must document their presence in the State of Maine, should they receive an award, following MTI’s Maine-based requirement. Projects to be located outside the state of Maine do not qualify for investment. Projects to be located within economically distressed areas of Maine will be prioritized. This includes the following counties in Maine¹: Aroostook, Androscoggin, Penobscot, Washington, Oxford, Franklin, Somerset, Piscataquis, and Waldo counties.

¹ The list of economically distressed counties in Maine are based on federal economic distress criteria per U.S. EDA economic distress criteria 13 C.F.R § 301.3.