



Request for Proposals – Coordinator, Maine Accelerates Growth Network and CoWorking CoDesign Cohort

**Maine Technology Institute
8 Venture Avenue
Brunswick Landing
Brunswick, Maine 04011**

Contact: Brian Whitney / bwhitney@mainetechnology.org / (207) 582-4790

Introduction and Objective

The Maine Technology Institute (MTI), in partnership with the Maine Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD), seeks a coordinator, on an independent contract basis, to manage the work of the Maine Accelerates Growth (MxG) partner network and the Maine CoWorking CoDesign Cohort in Maine for up to the next three years.

Maine Accelerates Growth

MxG is a network for supporting local and regional entrepreneurial ecosystems in Maine. The network of organizational partners invests community intellectual/knowledge and financial resources into entrepreneurial communities, building regional capacities for replicable events and programs with national and regional best practices data and networks, and establishing a system based on trust, transparency and accountability.

It focuses on the community and cultural aspects of entrepreneurship and innovation, as well as on growth-oriented, innovation-driven entrepreneurs. MxG is a communication and collaboration vehicle that focuses on metrics of the entrepreneurial ecosystem for replicability (aspiration for first, second and third etc. generations of high growth companies).

Maine CoWorking CoDesign Cohort

The CoWorking Cohort participants are owners and managers of collaborative work spaces across the State. Many of the participants have received grant awards through the Maine Coworking Development Fund of the Maine Department of Economic and Community Development. Maine DECD has convened the cohort as a vehicle for communication and collaboration between and among established and emerging collaborative workspaces. The cohort participants have established shared goals for the cohort that, with the support of a coordinator, will be pursued over the next two years.

The ideal candidate or organization will be an experienced, process-oriented, results-focused, skilled project manager with the ability to manage multi-stakeholder, complex initiatives. The individual or organization will be skilled at a facilitative leadership model and motivated by outcomes for the

ecosystem and cohort, not by the success of individual players or organizations. They will be able to work closely in collaboration with MTI and DECD leadership and systems. The ideal candidate will also be motivated and familiar with Maine's business, non-profit, innovation ecosystem and academic communities.

In soliciting proposals, MTI's objectives are to obtain high quality, reliable, collaborative and cost-effective program management services, with a three-year commitment.

Eligible providers

Individuals or organizations must have and maintain a presence within the State of Maine, if not headquartered in Maine. At the time of submission, the service provider must be in compliance with all laws, rules, regulations and ordinances of the United States, the State of Maine, and if selected to provide services, must remain in compliance during the service agreement(s) duration.

Inquiries

Inquiries or notices concerning this RFP should be directed to:

Brian Whitney, President
Maine Technology Institute
8 Venture Avenue, Brunswick Landing
Brunswick, ME 04011

Telephone: (207) 582-4790
Fax: (207) 582-4772
Email: bwhitney@mainetechnology.org

Submissions and Selection Process

Proposals will be evaluated on a rolling basis by MTI, in partnership with DECD, until the position is filled. Proposals may be electronically transmitted, mailed or delivered to the attention of Brian Whitney at the address noted above (see Inquiries). Factors to be considered in evaluating proposals include relevant experience and ability; commitment to inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystem-building; feedback from references; cost; experience with large non-profit clients and a commitment to work with MTI and DECD as integral partners.

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

All providers acknowledge and understand that MTI will not pay for any costs incurred in connection with the preparation or submission of a proposal.

Proposal format

Proposals should not exceed 5 pages. That said, MTI does not endeavor to be overly prescriptive. We are open to innovative and creative proposals that will help us achieve our goals.

References

Please provide the names and contact information of three professional references.

About the Maine Technology Institute

MTI is a publicly financed, private, nonprofit organization created by the Legislature in 1999 to stimulate research and development activity leading to the commercialization of new products, processes and services in the state's seven targeted technology sectors. MTI programs are either loans, equity investments, or grants designed to enhance the competitive position of those sectors and increase the likelihood that one or more of these sectors will support clusters of industrial activity and create quality jobs across Maine. MTI also provides entrepreneurial guidance and mentorship and works to ensure that a complementary system of supports exists to nurture

entrepreneurs and businesses. Additionally, MTI is asked on occasion to administer a variety of research and development-focused bonds and other initiatives on behalf of the State to stimulate private and public-sector investments in research and development infrastructure, equipment, facilities construction and renovation, and to help advance emerging technologies and innovation throughout Maine. For more information visit www.mainetechnology.org

About the Maine Department of Economic and Community Development

The Maine Department of Economic and Community Development works with statewide and local partners, private industry and small businesses to enhance and sustain economic prosperity in Maine. Maine DECD is more than two dozen experts working in a variety of programs providing everything from targeted tax relief to community block grants to tourism marketing. For more information visit <https://www.maine.gov/decd/home>

About Maine Accelerates Growth

The Maine Accelerates Growth network (MxG) accelerates the growth of companies, communities, and talent by funding, creating, and leveraging high impact entrepreneurship and innovation programs and events through a collaborative and complementary network of organizations and individuals propelling prosperity across Maine. It relies on emerging best practices to continuously improve its approach to creating an extraordinary future for Maine. For more information visit: <http://maineacceleratesgrowth.com/>

Scope of Work

In soliciting proposals, MTI's and DECD's objectives are to obtain high quality, reliable and cost-effective project management/coordination services. We are open to innovative configurations (including job sharing, use of interns, use of dedicated volunteers or other configurations) to collaboratively manage this three-year project. This is an aggressive scope and we welcome innovative ways of executing on it; don't let the scope of work limit your creativity. If your strategy can help us achieve our goals, we're open to your proposal.

Key Responsibilities for MxG Include:

- Project management– results, relationships and process in multi-stakeholder, cross-sector initiative
- Create and maintain communication tools like press releases, web site communications, celebration, storytelling – social media and message amplification through coordination and sharing of events, collateral materials and training on the ecosystem for all partners to be confident representing MxG
- MxG committee and task support; scheduling and working to develop agendas and facilitate meetings; keeping lists up to date; attending meetings; taking minutes; and facilitating systems maintenance (google drive, email lists, etc.)
- Strategic membership/organizational partner management – network connection and weaving; regular member/organizational partner communications; ecosystem roles and gap analysis; work plan management; special projects leadership and project leadership; program alignment; cross-program collaboration and inter-program communication
- Support, develop and track outcome/impact metrics re: entrepreneurial ecosystem in Maine
- Review and support the development of budgets and reports to funding agencies/organizations
- Serve as primary contact for stakeholders and the press to connect to the project
- Assist with developing an implementation/sustainability plan; help secure that funding.
- Other duties as assigned.

Key Responsibilities for CoWorking CoDesign Cohort include:

- Collaborate with DECD management staff on cohort strategy and activities
- Coordinate convening meetings and communication between and among cohort members
- Assist cohort with structure and execution of shared tactical goals
- Support trainings and other professional development opportunities for cohort members
- Support collaborative design of cohort as community of best practices that can strengthen the entrepreneurial network and culture of Maine, as well as building a continuous feedback loop on what coworking space owners need for success.
- Coordinate logistics of quarterly meetings to share learning and build relationships
- Assist with co-marketing with DECD and each other collaborative work spaces around Maine

Desired Qualifications:

- Demonstrated organizational and project management skills
- Strong communication skills – interpersonal, public speaking, written communication, and social media
- Experience or familiarity working in economic development, workforce development, network building, facilitation, etc.
- Commitment to a diverse and inclusive economy
- Familiarity with private sector business and development practices; systems-thinking approach, and understanding of entrepreneurial/innovation best practices
- A process-oriented mindset with the ability to oversee and effectively work with companies and other organizations on a varied portfolio of project activities
- The ability to think both creatively and critically
- Knowledge of Maine and regional innovation economy, entrepreneurial programs, workforce development programs, financing and experience working with Maine organizations a plus.
- Ability to be flexible, work under deadlines and as a member of a team
- Ability and willingness to travel throughout the State of Maine
- Organizational capacity and in-kind support to further the work of the entrepreneurial ecosystem a plus.

Budget

The budget for the role is up to approximately \$75,000 per year for up to three years.