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**Collaborative Workspace Program
Competitive Round through the
Community One Stop for Growth**

**Program Information and Guidelines
FY2023**

Collaborative Workspace Program – Community One Stop Guidelines_

I. INTRODUCTION

A. About the Program

Through the Collaborative Workspace Program, MassDevelopment awards matching grants for the planning, development, and build-out of different types of collaborative workspaces. These grants are made possible by St. 2016, Ch. 219, (*"An Act Relative to Job Creation and Workforce Development"*), championed by Governor Baker and enacted by the legislature, which authorized funding for this program.

Collaborative workspaces are shared work environments that catalyze community, inspiring collaboration, exploration and experimentation among and between local entrepreneurs, artists, designers, scientists, inventors, and small business owners. Collaborative workspaces provide users with access to resources, ideas and networks. These spaces are critical to the growth of the Massachusetts innovation economy, and the proliferation of entrepreneurial activity that they support fosters economic health in their host communities.

B. What's New in FY2023

The FY2023 program will accept proposals exclusively through the [Community One Stop for Growth](#) – which is a single application portal and collaborative review process for several state grant programs that make targeted investments based on a housing and economic development continuum.

EOHED administers the Community One Stop for Growth application in partnership with the Department of Housing & Community Development and MassDevelopment. The round will open on December 15, 2021 when prospective applicants will be able to submit an **Expression of Interest**, through March 18, 2022, outlining projects to receive feedback and suggestions on the best path for submitting proposals through a **Full Application** for funding consideration.

II. PROGRAM FEATURES AND REQUIREMENTS

A. Program Highlights

Maximum Award	Up to \$100,000 for fit-out grants, or up to \$15,000 for seed grants.
Total Funds Available	<i>Subject to state budget appropriation</i>
Grant use	Fit-out: Grants for fit-out (improvements to owned or leased buildings) and equipment purchases. Seed: Grants for predevelopment and feasibility work performed by third party consultants. Grants must be matched 1:1. This match must be in the form of financial contributions, non-state grants, loans,

	free/discounted rent, donated building improvement materials, equipment, or other quantifiable (and certifiable) contributions to the project.
Project Duration	Project timeline should be no longer than one (1) year.
Project focus examples	Renovations, equipment purchases or feasibility work to support existing or proposed collaborative workspaces, including coworking spaces, makerspaces, shared kitchens, arts-related collaborative workspaces, accelerators or venture and innovation centers.
Eligible communities	Any community within the Commonwealth.
Eligible lead applicant	Applicants may be the operator of the collaborative space or the owner of a building that will host a collaborative space. Applicants should be able to describe their existing or potential membership community and anticipated economic impacts with a specific focus on how they do or will support people underserved in the innovation community, especially those from diverse backgrounds, economically distressed backgrounds or other communities of need. Applicants that have received state funding from other state agencies, such as the Massachusetts LifeSciences Center or the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center, should be aware that preference may be given to applicants that do not have access to other potential state funding sources.

B. Eligible Applicants and Projects

Through the Community One Stop, building owners hosting collaborative workspaces and/or operators of Collaborative Workspaces registered with the Secretary of State can apply for up to \$100,000 in matching fit-out grant funding, or up to \$15,000 in matching seed grant funding. This will be a HIGHLY competitive application process. In reviewing applications and project budgets, MassDevelopment may award less than the requested amount. Applicants should apply only for funding for which they can show a demonstrated mission critical need that will provide essential benefits for their member/user community.

Funding availability for approved spaces will be reserved for a limited time with the possibility of an extension period to be granted at the sole discretion of MassDevelopment and contingent upon demonstration by the awardee of significant progress or extenuating circumstances that justify the extension.

All grantees will be required to submit detailed annual reports to MassDevelopment quantifying membership, outcomes, partnerships and impacts of the project by July 15th of every year.

C. Elements of Proposal

To be considered, an applicant must complete and submit an application. Applications should be succinct

and responsive to the questions. Only one grant application should be submitted per applicant. If an applicant has previously received a grant under the Collaborative Workspace Program, the previous project must have been completed, funds must have been fully disbursed and an annual report detailing the previously completed project must have been received by MassDevelopment prior to July 15, 2022.

All grants require a minimum match equal to the grant amount (details below). Grants may be either 'Fit-out Grants' or 'Seed Grants'. Applicants may apply for one or the other. An applicant may choose to apply for a 'Seed Grant' in this round, and then apply for a 'Fit-out Grant' in a future round (funds permitting) but applicants may not apply for both types of grants in the same application round.

Fit-out Grants: Although grant amounts will vary, the maximum Fit-out Grant amount per collaborative workspace will not exceed One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000.00) and may be smaller.

Fit-out grants can be used to purchase materials and to pay for third-party labor for workspace improvements including, but not limited to, interior fit-out costs, soft costs, and the purchase of equipment.

Seed Grants: The maximum Seed Grant per collaborative workspace is not anticipated to exceed Fifteen Thousand Dollars (\$15,000) and may be smaller.

Seed Grants shall be used for identified predevelopment costs including, but not limited to, third-party costs of feasibility studies, design work, and construction estimates. Documentation of consultant and vendor qualifications, scopes of work, and cost estimates should accompany Seed Grant applications.

Collaborative Workspace grants (Seed and Fit-out) cannot be used for administrative overhead, staff time/payroll, other consultant services unrelated to the project described in the application, educational programming fees, permanent leasing, legal fees, utility or other operating costs.

Match Requirement

All grants must be matched one-to-one. Proposals must demonstrate, to MassDevelopment's satisfaction, that the applicant is able to match the dollar value of the grant with cash, non-state funded grants, loans, free/discounted rent, donated materials, building improvements and/or other quantifiable and verifiable contributions to the project. To qualify toward the match, all non-cash contributions to the project must have been received or committed no earlier than May 1, 2022. Applicants must specify each source of funds included in the match amount, and when it was, or will be, received by the applicant. ***Matches must be received and in-hand before the grant agreement will be executed.***

Forms of eligible matches:

- Funds raised: Cash raised by the operator to fund costs of the project. Funds may be raised from a variety of sources, including online crowd-funding, donations, events, and other sources, but all funds must be documented and set aside for the same project costs for which the grant is sought. Paid invoices demonstrating cash committed to the project may not be dated earlier than May 1, 2022 for matching purposes.

- **Rent Discount:** The amount by which a lease for a space has been discounted below market rate may be counted towards the match, in an amount not to exceed the cumulative discount for a period, starting on July 1, 2022, equal to the shorter of 24 months or the remaining months on the lease. The lease term must extend through at least December 31, 2023. Any matches in the form of rent discount must be documented with a signed lease between unrelated entities in the name of the collaborative workspace with a letter from the landlord verifying the discount and at least three rent comparisons that support the value of the rent discount. **The rent discount cannot represent more than 50% of the required match amount. Applicants that have previously been awarded a cowork grant may not use the same rent discount that matched any previous award.**
- **Donated equipment and materials:** Equipment donated for the use of the members and materials donated for improvements made to the space must be quantifiable and verifiable; applicants must submit a list of the donated items, with a date that said donation was received, and documentation substantiating its value. Final value of the items will be determined by MassDevelopment. Any such donations must have been received on or after May 1, 2022.

Evidence of applicant's ability to raise the match with sufficient time to close and request disbursement of grant funds within the grant period must be provided at the time of application through donation commitment letters, signed leases, bank statements, or other forms acceptable to MassDevelopment.

III. APPLICATION AND EVALUATION

A. Application Components

The Community One Stop for Growth is a single online application portal designed to allow applicants to apply for consideration of multiple sources of funding to support multiple phases and facets of a project. The application is organized into the following sections:

- Core Questions (Sections 1 and 2), plus site information, if applicable,
- Additional Questions (Sections 3 through 7), based on the development continuum and the project components selected by the applicant,
- Additional Questions for Housing Choice Communities (Sections 8), only for communities designated as Housing Choice,
- Certification of Application Submission Authority (Section 9),
- Other Attachments (Section 10), for attachments related to special projects.

A full proposal packet for consideration of Collaborative Workspace Program funding must include complete responses to all applicable questions in the following sections:

Core Questions (Sections 1 and 2), plus site information, if applicable,

- Section 1 - Applicant Information/Background: Identifying information of the applicant,

and partners, if applicable. Applicants may include a discussion of the diversity of ownership/management/workforce of the applicant.

- **Section 2 - Project Information:** In this section, applicants will provide general project information, such as the project name, description, leadership and the ability to execute the project, timeline and anticipated outcomes. Applicant will indicate the category of funding for which they would like the project to be considered in question 2.1, which will drive additional questions. The applicant is encouraged to discuss any plans to utilize diverse/minority contractors or consultants for work related to the project. Those applying to the Site Preparation, Buildings and Infrastructure categories must complete the Site Information questions, which include identification of the specific site, ownership, and zoning.

Additional Questions (Sections 3 through 8), based on the development continuum and the project components selected by the applicant in Section 2, Question 2.1,

- **Section 6 – Building Additional Questions:** This section is where applicants will provide detail about the specific capital building project for which funding is requested. Includes detailed scope(s) of work, public purpose, details about the property, planned use, and budget. Additional questions are required for Collaborative Workspace Program questions.

Certification of Application Submission Authority (Section 9),

- **Section 9 - Certification of Application Submission Authority:** Signature page certifying the authority to submit the application on behalf of the applying entity, and attesting that all responses are true and accurate.

Other/Optional Attachments (Section 10),

- **Section 10 - Other/Optional Attachments:** This section allows submit other attachments to support the application, including other site images, partner letters or support letters. Please note that these items will generally not be scored or assessed as part of the formal evaluation of the proposal.

IMPORTANT: The sections outlined above relate only to the Buildings category. Applicants may be required to complete other sections of the Community One Stop application, depending on the other categories they may have selected. Please review the instructions for the One Stop carefully.

B. Application Evaluation and Scoring Overview:

1. MassDevelopment staff will determine if all statutory and program guidelines are met;
2. A Review Committee will independently review and score the applications;
3. Reviewers may request additional information from any or all relevant sources during the application review process;

MassDevelopment will consider the following criteria when reviewing applications. While a

particular application may not satisfy every criterion, applications will be reviewed based on the totality of the facts and circumstances. Review criteria will be used to assess the likelihood that the use of the requested funding will advance a project towards increased public benefits:

- **Clarity, Purpose and Users of the Space**

Applications will need to clearly articulate their purpose, functionality, users, internal leadership, and capacity to execute a collaborative workspace project.

- **Ecosystem Analysis and Partnerships**

Applications will need to show an understanding of the local and regional innovation ecosystem and how the space fits into that ecosystem with clear partnerships and support.

- **Goals of the Project**

Applicants will need to demonstrate a clear understanding of the value of the proposed project and expected outcomes in addressing the needs and opportunities of their user community.

- **Economic Impact**

Applicants will need to clearly articulate anticipated outcomes of their project, including job growth, economic opportunity and business growth, and how the project will support the host municipality by enhancing innovation, entrepreneurial activity and creativity. **Outcomes related to equitable opportunity demonstrating the inclusion of, and programming for, a diverse community of users will be strongly considered.**

- **Project Execution**

Applicants will need to convincingly demonstrate the ability to execute the project and operate a collaborative workspace, and will be required to provide detailed information about both the ability to execute the project, and the project itself, including scopes of work, timeline, budgets, matching funds, and other relevant documents.

C. Award Decisions

Applicants that are approved for funding will receive a commitment letter outlining the grant amount and any conditions of the award. All awards are subject to annual state budget appropriation and contingent upon full execution of a contract. Applicants that are not recommended for funding during the round will also be notified in writing, and invited to request feedback about their proposal, if interested.

D. Additional Information

- All applications must be submitted electronically. The online application portal, *IGX*,

can be accessed at <https://eohed.intelligrants.com>. An online webinar outlining the use of the system is available on the site. The application form template and link to the portal will also be available on the EOHED webpage.

- It is the responsibility of the applicant to be aware of all requirements and deadlines, and to ensure that their application is complete and submitted on time. All applications will be logged as to date and time received and kept on file as public record. Late submissions will not be considered.
- MassDevelopment reserves the right to request additional information from the applicant or external sources as may be necessary in order to complete the application review. **MassDevelopment also reserves the right to recommend partial grant awards**, as deemed appropriate.