Introduction
Communities across the Commonwealth want, and need, to fully participate in Massachusetts’ nationally-leading innovation economy. The goal of the Collaborative Workspace Program is to accelerate the pace of new business formation, job creation, and entrepreneurial activity in communities, by supporting infrastructure that fuels community-based innovation.

Collaborative workspaces are working environments that catalyze serendipity and community; and inspire 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, connections to ideas and networks, all which spur growth within a community. These spaces are critical to growth of the Massachusetts innovation economy, because the proliferation of small establishments and entrepreneurial activity drives overall economic health in communities.

The Collaborative Workspace Program makes grants for the planning, development, and build-out of collaborative workspaces. These grants are made possible by the support of the legislature for Governor Baker’s “Opportunities for All” bill, which included funds for TDI CoWork and Innovation Infrastructure. With this solicitation, we are excited to announce a new partnership with the Barr Foundation that gives us additional funds to make grants specifically for arts-related collaborative workspaces to complement our broader state funding.

Guidelines
MassDevelopment will accept grant applications for collaborative workspace projects across the state, in both Gateway Cities and non-Gateway municipalities. Grants can be used for the fit-out of spaces, to purchase equipment, as well as pre-development work that will lead to the development of new collaborative workspaces.

Summary Details of the Grant

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<tr>
<th>Types of grants</th>
<th>Fit-out: Grants for fit-out and building improvements and equipment purchases.</th>
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<td>Seed: Grants for pre-development and feasibility work.</td>
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<th>Eligible Locations</th>
<th>Existing or proposed spaces may be located or planned in any municipality of the Commonwealth.</th>
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| Eligible Spaces | Existing or proposed spaces including but not limited to: co-working spaces, venture and innovation centers, maker |
spaces and arts-related collaborative workspaces.

Spaces should be able to describe their potential membership community and resulting economic impacts.

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<tr>
<th>Eligible Applicants</th>
<th>Applicants may be the operator of the collaborative space or the owner of a building that will host a collaborative space. Preference will be given to applicants that have a proven track record of developing and operating collaborative spaces. Spaces that have received state funding from other state agencies, such as Mass Life Sciences Center or Mass Clean Energy Center, should be aware that preference may be given to spaces that do not have access to other potential state funding sources.</th>
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| Maximum Grant Award | **Fit-out:** Up to $250,000  
**Seed:** Up to $25,000 |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|

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<th>Match Requirement</th>
<th>All grants must be matched one-to-one. This match must be in the form of non-state grants, loans, free/discounted rent, donated building improvement materials, equipment, or other quantifiable (and certifiable) contributions to the project.</th>
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<th>Duration of Contract</th>
<th>All grant funds must be drawn down by June 30, 2018.</th>
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**Grant Details**
Requires completion and submission of either a [Fit-out application](#) or [Seed application](#). Applications should be succinct and responsive to the questions.

All grants require a minimum match equal to the grant amount (details below). Grants may be either 'Fit-out Grants' or 'Seed Grants'. Applicants can apply for one or the other, and may choose to apply for a 'Seed Grant' first, and then re-apply for a 'Fit-out Grant' in a future round.

**Fit-out Grants:** Although grant amounts will vary, the maximum Fit-out Grant amount per collaborative workspace is not anticipated to exceed Two Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars ($250,000.00) and many will be smaller.

Fit-out grants can be used for labor and materials for building improvements including interior fit-out costs, soft costs and the purchase of equipment.
**Seed Grants:** Up to Twenty-five Thousand Dollars ($25,000) may be made available for grants to support certain pre-development costs, as requested by grant applicants.

Seed Grants can be used for 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 the application.

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 or other quantifiable (and certifiable) contributions to the project. All non-cash matches must have been received or incurred no more than 6 months before the application deadline. Applicant 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 before the grant agreement will be fully 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 project for which the grant is sought.

- Rent Discount: The amount by which a lease for a space has been discounted below a market rate may be counted towards the match in an amount not to exceed the cumulative discount for a period equal to the shorter of 60 months or the remaining months on the lease. Any matches in the form of rent discount must be documented with a signed lease in the name of the collaborative workspace and either a letter from the landlord amending a signed lease verifying the discount or at least three rent comps that support the value of the rent discount.

- Donated equipment and materials: Equipment donated for the use of the members and materials donated for improvements made to the space. Matches must be quantifiable and verifiable; applicants must submit a list of the donated items and documentation substantiating its value. Final value of the items will be determined by MassDevelopment.
Evidence of applicant’s ability to raise the match must be provided at the time of application through donation commitment letters, signed leases, bank statements or other forms deemed appropriate by MassDevelopment.

Review Criteria
Grant applications will be reviewed by a panel of representatives of MassDevelopment and the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development as well as external reviewers. The following criteria will be used in the review of the proposals:

1. Clarity, Purpose and Users of the Space
   Applications will need to clearly articulate the purpose, functionality, users, internal leadership and capacity to execute a collaborative workspace project.

2. 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.

3. 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 the user community.

4. Economic Impact
   Applicants will need to have clearly projected results of their program including job growth, economic opportunity and business growth and how the program will support the innovators within the community enhancing innovation, entrepreneurial activity and creativity.

5. Project Execution
   Applicants will need to provide detailed information about the project including scopes of work, timeline, budgets, matching funds and other relevant documents.

Timeline
MassDevelopment will accept proposals under this RFP beginning on the date of publication through the close of business on June 30, 2017.

MassDevelopment anticipates that grant awards will be announced in August 2017.

Questions about this solicitation must be submitted to MassDevelopment in writing no later than May 26, 2017 to cowork@massdevelopment.com. Answers will be posted on MassDevelopment’s website by May 31, 2017.

MassDevelopment will work with grantees to have Grant Agreements signed by September 30, 2017 and require grantees to complete their projects and receive full disbursement of grant funds by June 30, 2018.
Reporting
Please note that all grantees will be required to submit detailed semi-annual and annual reports to MassDevelopment quantifying membership, outcomes, partnerships and impacts of the project on or shortly after June 30th and December 31st of every year. A form of the report will be sent with the commitment letter and grant agreement.