



Request for Proposals:
Heat Pump and HVAC Training Network
(Community College Heat Pump and HVAC Workforce Training, Equipment, and
Planning Grants)
MASSCEC-WFD-12042024

Date of Issue: January 6, 2025
Proposals Due: February 19, 2025
Anticipated Available Funding: up to \$14,280,000.00
(additional funding may be added as resources become available)

All proposals must be submitted to
rfpworkforce@masscec.com
by 11:59 pm on February 19, 2025

1. SUMMARY

During the 2024 State of the Commonwealth address, Governor Maura Healey announced a commitment to launch additional HVAC training programs at Community Colleges across the state. Through this Request for Proposals (“RFP”), the Massachusetts Clean Energy Technology Center (“MassCEC”) is offering the Heat Pump and HVAC Training Network program, providing Community College HVAC Workforce Training, Equipment, and Planning Grants (“Community College Heat Pump and HVAC Training Grants”). The Community College Heat Pump and HVAC Training Grants will increase access to modern, relevant training equipment and infrastructure and provide direct funding and technical assistance support to community colleges that can establish or upgrade HVAC training centers to build and scale career pathways that help Massachusetts residents access and advance in HVAC mechanic and technician occupations.

Massachusetts is a global leader in clean energy and home to the highest-earning clean energy workers in the country. Since 2010, the clean energy industry has grown by 80%, adding 48,000 new workers.¹ Massachusetts has committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions – first cutting emissions by 50% by 2030 and then achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 — policies that will further cement the state’s leadership in decarbonization and drive clean energy job growth at a rapid pace for decades to come. MassCEC’s [Powering the Future, A Massachusetts Clean Energy Workforce Needs Assessment](#) projects that the state’s decarbonization plan will require the clean energy workforce to expand by at least **29,700 full-time equivalent (FTE) workers by 2030, or the equivalent of 38,100 workers spending some or all of their time on clean energy projects.**

Across clean energy sectors, Energy Efficiency, Demand Management, and Clean Heating and Cooling Sector is by far the largest, representing over 70% of the current clean energy workforce. The table below captures the projected employment needs through 2030 and beyond. Within Energy Efficiency, Demand Management, and the Clean Heating and Cooling Sector, Heating, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Mechanics and Installers are among the occupations projected to grow the most.

Massachusetts aims to install 500,000 heat pumps by 2030, and it recently joined a New England coalition awarded \$450M to expand heat pump adoption, tackle climate change, and advance environmental justice through a grant from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).² The Massachusetts Clean Energy Workforce Needs Assessment identified HVAC/R technicians as a top-ten fastest-growing occupation and among two occupations at a severe risk of causing a workforce bottleneck to building retrofit and decarbonization efforts; impacting the Commonwealth meeting its climate goals.³ Recent job posting data confirms the need for more trained HVAC workers and outpaced anticipated annual openings.

¹ “2023 Massachusetts Clean Energy Industry Report,” <https://www.masscec.com/reports/industry-2023/>.

² [Massachusetts Climate Report Card - Buildings Decarbonization | Mass.gov](#), <https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/massachusetts-benefit-450-million-grant-community-driven-solutions-cut-climate>

³ <https://www.masscec.com/resources/massachusetts-clean-energy-workforce-needs-assessment>

Energy Efficiency, Demand Management, and Clean Heating and Cooling	2022 Employment	2030 Projected Employment*	2035 Projected Employment	2040 Projected Employment	2045 Projected Employment	2050 Projected Employment
	74,305	92,212	99,808	101,287	107,592	115,181

The Community College Heat Pump and HVAC Training grants are designed to help Massachusetts Community Colleges establish or upgrade on-site training centers while offering funds for staffing capacity, training seats, and enhanced wrap-around support services. This initiative will support clean energy employers in meeting their workforce needs while providing high-quality training and support opportunities for residents across the Commonwealth. Applicants are eligible to apply for training implementation grants composed of several key components, detailed in section 3 and based on the allocation table provided in Attachment 6. Depending on the type of request, applicants may apply for between Thirty Thousand Dollars (\$30,000.00) and One Million Two Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$1,200,000.00).

Details about the range of acceptable funding requests across the various component options are outlined in Section 6: Eligible Funding Uses.

Details about the application process are outlined in Section 8: How to Apply.

Funds for planning grants and Components A, B and C of this program will be expended from funding provided to MassCEC by the Department of Energy Resources. Funds for Component D of this program will be expended from Workforce Equity funding.

The application process for this funding opportunity is intended to be streamlined to support community college participation. As part of the contracting process and program launch with community colleges awarded funds, MassCEC intends to support community colleges with workforce technical assistance and grantee support opportunities throughout the term of the agreement.

2. ABOUT MASSCEC

The Massachusetts Clean Energy Technology Center (MassCEC) is a quasi-state economic development agency dedicated to accelerating the growth of the clean energy sector across the Commonwealth to spur job creation, deliver statewide environmental benefits and to secure long-term economic growth for the people of Massachusetts. MassCEC works to increase the adoption of clean energy while driving down costs and delivering financial, environmental, and economic development benefits to energy users and utility customers across the state.

MassCEC’s mission is to accelerate the clean energy and climate solution innovation that is critical to meeting the Commonwealth’s climate goals, advancing Massachusetts’ position as an

international climate leader while growing the state’s clean energy economy. MassCEC is committed to creating a diverse, equitable, and inclusive organization where everyone is welcomed, supported, respected, and valued. We are committed to incorporating principles of diversity, equity, inclusion, and environmental justice in all aspects of our work in order to promote the equitable distribution of the health and economic benefits of clean energy and support a diverse and inclusive clean energy industry. MassCEC strives to lead and innovate in equitable clean energy and climate solutions.

3. PROGRAM GOALS AND DESCRIPTION

Heat Pump and HVAC Training Network, Community College HVAC Workforce Training, Equipment, and Planning Grants, goals:

This solicitation is intended to help build job training and support capacity at community colleges to fill gaps in the HVAC and heat pump mechanic and technician workforce. These funds will enable community colleges to:

- **Establish or upgrade HVAC and heat pump training centers** by securing modern equipment and infrastructure resources for programming.
- **Broaden access to HVAC and heat pump technical training** and expand the talent pipeline for employers seeking qualified HVAC mechanics and technicians.
- **Develop and nurture new relationships with HVAC and heat pump businesses** to develop job placements and identify avenues for career growth.
- **Create new and/or expand technical and job readiness training opportunities** to provide the skills necessary to attain placement in HVAC and heat pump mechanic and technician occupations.
- **Establish and grow wraparound and retention support services** to address potential barriers to entry and advancement in HVAC and heat pump mechanic and technician occupations.

Potential Barriers: For the purposes of the solicitation, MassCEC has identified potential barriers to entry and participation in the HVAC and Heat Pump Mechanic and Technician workforce (“Potential Barriers”) to include, but not be limited to:

- Lack of awareness of the occupation and associated work practices;
- Childcare and/or other caregiving costs;
- Transportation costs;
- Vehicle and/or public transportation access;
- Lack of a driver’s license;
- Lack of a high school diploma or GED;
- Tool/equipment purchase costs;

- Training fees, tuition, or other educational costs;
- Access to Internet and computers or other connective devices;
- Opportunity costs of time spent in training or educational programs;
- Housing and/or food insecurity;
- Lack of support systems providing guidance and raising awareness to make training/educational programs and job opportunities more accessible and achievable;

Requirements and Considerations when Applying for Implementation Grants:

It is anticipated that applicants for Strand A: Implementation grants will include and address all of the components detailed below. If funding is not needed for a particular component, applicants should address the existing capacity or alternative braiding funding in their application narrative.

Component A: Equipment, Installation, and Program Design Costs to Establish or Upgrade HVAC and Heat Pump Training Centers

Establishing a New HVAC & Heat Pump Training Center:

Community colleges that do not currently have a physical HVAC training center on their campus are eligible to apply for funding for equipment purchases, installation, and site work to upgrade existing spaces to meet the requirements of an HVAC and heat pump training facility, along with funding program and curriculum design. No more than 55% of the funds in this component can go to sitework or leasing costs. Applicants who must lease space to develop a program should address the lease terms and plans for program sustainability in their application.

Applicants must demonstrate that the training centers will be equipped to provide instruction on heat pumps and mini-split installation and maintenance. This includes hands-on instruction in a lab setting on ground and air source heat pumps and mini-split technologies, in addition to a theoretical foundation of these technologies as part of classroom instruction.

As part of a separate solicitation, MassCEC will contract with a consultant to design a universal curriculum for heat pumps and mini-split technologies. This curriculum will be shared as a resource for community colleges awarded funding. This resource will support contextualized ESOL and align with a broader framework for HVAC instruction. It will also provide sequencing for the resources to be used within a new entrant HVAC technician training program and as a standalone upskilling opportunity for current technicians.

Upgrading an Existing HVAC & Heat Pump Training Center:

Community colleges with existing training centers are eligible for funding for additional equipment or infrastructure to expand their training capacity, especially as it relates to heat pump and mini-split installation.

Component B: Staffing Capacity Support

Participating community colleges are eligible to apply for funding to cover staff costs that are related to establishing or upgrading HVAC & heat pump training centers, as well as associated training programming. Staff funding is designed to enable community colleges to add key capacity needed to support the build-out of the HVAC training center and associated programming, providing career pathway training, navigation, or preparedness. Funding for a case manager to support program participants through initial intake, training, placement and retention can come from both Component B and Component D.

The duration of this funding will be formalized as part of the contracting process. However, it is anticipated that funding may support staffing costs as part of the planning and implementation timeframe associated with building out or upgrading the site facilities, as well as up to two years of program implementation, in alignment with funding awarded as part of Components C and D below.

Component C: Tuition Costs for Training Seats in Non-Credit Bearing Training Programs

Community colleges that offer credit-bearing certificate programs can support tuition costs through MassReconnect and MassEducate. Community college programs pursuing non-credit offerings with at least 80% of the technical skills training delivered in-person (combined classroom and lab) can apply for funding to cover 30 or more new entrant training seats at a maximum per seat cost of \$8,500. Applicants may also apply to serve a mix of new entrants and upskilling participants. Participant costs for shorter-duration upskilling must be substantially lower and applicants applying for a mix are expected to train greater numbers of learners than those supporting new entrants alone.

In addition to the resources in this RFP, MassCEC will maintain reserve funding for at least an additional 120 training seats. Community colleges with programs that spend down their initial training funds and demonstrate strong completion and placement outcomes will be eligible to request additional funding from this reserve.

Component D: Wrap-Around Support Services Funding

Community colleges can apply for wrap-around support service funding that can be used to provide program participants with stipends, address barriers such as childcare costs, fees to get a driver's license, programs to help individuals get a GED, etc. (See 'Potential Barriers' above), add work-based learning, skill development support (including ESOL and basic skills) and additional funding for staff focused on case management, ESOL, or basic skill instruction. As part of the contracting process, the applicant will need to explain the basis for determining the amount to be made available and how these services will directly support individuals' participation in the Heat Pump and HVAC Training program. Additionally, funds for wrap-around support services should be prioritized to serve learners who come from one or more of the Workforce Equity priority populations:

- Individuals from Environmental Justice (“EJ”) Neighborhoods or low-income communities;
- Members of federally recognized or state-acknowledged tribes;
- Members of underrepresented communities in the clean energy workforce; and
- Current or former workers from the fossil fuel industry (“Fossil Fuel Workers”)

Programs are also encouraged to utilize MassCEC’s [Technical Trades Work and Learning Program](#) or [Clean Energy Internship Program](#) to subsidize on-the-job learning through reimbursed wages for participating employers. MassCEC will collaborate with community colleges to determine which program fits best. Additionally, support service funding can be utilized to support subsidized work experience or on-the-job training.

Strand B- Planning Grants

Community colleges that are not ready to apply for implementation funding through Component A – D may instead request \$30,000 to \$50,000 as part of an initial planning grant. Planning grants are intended to explore, develop, or refine ideas for potential implementation initiatives to support individuals seeking to enter HVAC mechanic and technician occupations. Through the grantee technical assistance process, MassCEC will support community colleges that request planning grants in identifying relevant funding options such as those referenced later in this section.

Key Considerations in Overall Program Design: While by no means exhaustive, the list below highlights relevant design considerations and best practices that community colleges should consider as part of their HVAC program planning process:

- **Identifying and planning for appropriate training space**
 - **Space Requirements-** A minimum space of 1,500 square feet is needed to create a functional training lab, and in most cases 2,000 square feet or larger is preferable. For larger class sizes and to accommodate distinct equipment and instructional areas, 2,500 square feet or larger spaces can provide a more effective learning environment.
 - **Electrical Specifications—**A 200-amp electrical panel is recommended for sufficient power capacity. In most cases, the lab will require at least 220 single-phase power, a common electrical supply configuration used in residential and commercial applications, particularly for equipment that requires more power than standard 120-volt outlets can provide. In some cases, specific equipment may necessitate 3-phase power and greater voltage.
- **Industry-Recognized Credentials and Training—**All HVAC training programs must include training and support for EPA 608 and a state-approved hot-works safety training program. Additionally, programs are strongly encouraged to include the NATE (North American Technician Excellence) certification.
- **Designing and Delivering Quality Training –** If approved for funding, applicants who currently offer or intend to design programming and develop training curricula are

encouraged to reach out to MassCEC and the Massachusetts Association of Community Colleges (MACC) to discuss the availability of quality curricula to use as exemplars or as the basis for customization. As mentioned, MassCEC will contract with a consultant to design a universal curriculum for heat pumps and mini-split technologies that will be shared as a resource. Additionally, skills training should be informed by employer input and differentiated to meet the learning needs of the participant population.

- **Providing Transparent Career Fit Counseling** – To ensure the long-term success of training participants, potential recruits should be interested and able to work in the target occupation. Recruits should be aware of the job description, duties, work environment, requirements, salary range, and potential career pathway before applying for and enrolling in the program.
- **Designing for Inclusivity and Addressing Barriers** – From the initial outreach all the way through retention services, applicants are encouraged to design programming that mitigates barriers and provides more inclusive training and advancement opportunities for the targeted populations. MassCEC is committed to creating an inclusive and diverse clean energy workforce, so applicants are encouraged to consider engaging individuals from Environmental Justice (EJ) Neighborhoods⁴ and Low-Income Neighborhoods, current and former Fossil Fuel Workers, members of Federally recognized and State-acknowledged tribes, and other underrepresented populations in the program design. Applicants are encouraged to design and budget for programs that can offer strong support services with clear intake assessment and case management practices to determine initial and ongoing needs. Additionally, applicants are encouraged to explore strategic usage of training stipends, paid on-the-job learning, and initial wage subsidies combined with ongoing mentorship and support service during the early period of placements.
- **Designing for Success** – Strong new entrant workforce development programs typically strive for at least 80% participant completion of the program, 70% placement of participants in the target occupation within thirty (30) days after completion, and 60% retention of participants in target occupations twelve (12) months after initial placement. Many HVAC training programs across the state have been able to achieve these metrics or stronger outcome rates. For applicants seeking to serve participants with higher initial barriers, it is helpful to reference any comparable outcome data. In cases where the proposed target rates for a program are lower than 80%/70%/60%, applicants are encouraged to detail strategies and support that can lead to increased outcomes over the performance period of the grant.

Program Outcomes and Metrics:

Grantees will be required to track and report on a subset of outcome metrics using MassCEC templates. Outcome metrics are designed to reflect successful progress to the overall goals of the Community College Heat Pump and HVAC Training Grant funds.

⁴ More information about Environmental Justice Populations can be found at [Environmental Justice Populations in Massachusetts | Mass.gov](#)

As part of this funding, the goal is to enable training participants to obtain, retain, and advance in employment opportunities in HVAC mechanic and technician occupations, especially those involved in heat pump installation and maintenance. MassCEC tracks the participant data and outcomes of training programs using metrics including:

- Projected number of seats made available through grant funding;
- Number of participants that meet MassCEC’s definition of target populations;
- Enrollment rates;
- Credentials or certifications completed as part of training programs;
- Completion rates for individuals enrolled in training programs;
- Placement rates for individuals completing training programs;
- Retention rates for individuals post-placement/promotion for six (6) months; and
- Additional participant information, including but not limited to⁵:
 - Address
 - Demographics (age, race/ ethnicity, gender)
 - Primary/Secondary languages spoken
 - Occupation and place of employment
 - Salary/ hourly wages upon enrollment and completion/ placement

For training programs, completion, placement, and retention rates are typically expected to be eighty (80) percent, seventy (70) percent, and sixty (60) percent, respectively, except in cases where the targeted population is known to experience significantly increased barriers and challenges.

A sample Progress Report is included as Attachment 5: Sample Progress Report for reference to baseline metrics and data to be captured throughout the grant period.

Additional Funding Opportunities

Several additional funding opportunities relevant to this or other programming efforts are listed below.

Massachusetts Workforce Skills Capital Grant Program

[Massachusetts Workforce Skills Capital Grant Program](#) awards grants for the purchase and installation of equipment and related improvements and renovations necessary for installation and use of such equipment to support vocational and technical training.

⁵ MassCEC is committed to working with grantees to protect personal information and, in many cases, can make adjustments, such as collecting a zip code instead of a full address and accepting some information only as aggregate data.

MassCEC Climate-Critical Workforce Training, Equipment and Infrastructure Grants

[Climate-Critical Workforce Training, Equipment, and Infrastructure Grants](#) increase access to modern, relevant training equipment and infrastructure and provide funding across one to two years in direct funding and technical assistance support to organizations that can build and scale career pathways and upskilling that help Massachusetts residents access and advance in climate-critical priority occupations.

MassCEC Equity Workforce Training Implementation Grants

MassCEC's [Equity Workforce Training Implementation Grants](#) increase access to modern, relevant training. The grants provide up to \$1,200,000 across two to three years in direct funding and technical assistance to organizations that can build and scale career pathways leading to climate-critical priority occupations for:

- Individuals from Environmental Justice (“EJ”) Neighborhoods or low-income communities;
- Members of federally recognized or state-acknowledged tribes;
- Members of underrepresented communities in the clean energy workforce; and
- Current or former workers from the fossil fuel industry (“Fossil Fuel Workers”)

See section 4. Definitions below for additional information about these target populations.

4. DEFINITIONS

Environmental Justice Populations: As defined by the Massachusetts Department of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA), are “segments of the population determined to be most at risk of being unaware of or unable to participate in environmental decision-making or to gain access to state environmental resources, or are especially vulnerable”.

- “Environmental Justice (“EJ”) Neighborhood” means a census block group where:
 - Twenty-five percent (25%) of households have an annual median household income that is equal to or less than sixty-five percent (65%) of the statewide median income; or
 - Forty percent (40%) of its population is Minority; or
 - Twenty-five percent (25%) or more of the households lack English language proficiency; or
 - Minorities comprise twenty-five percent (25%) or more of the population and the annual median household income of the municipality in which the neighborhood is located does not exceed one-hundred fifty percent (150%) of the statewide annual median household income
- “Minority” refers to individuals who identify themselves as Latino/Hispanic, Black/African American, Asian, Indigenous people, and people who otherwise identify as non-white (see additional definition below).

- “Low-income” means median household income at or below sixty-five percent (65%) of the statewide median income for Massachusetts, according to federal census data.
- To see census block groups that meet the Environmental Justice definition, see Environmental Justice Map Viewer⁶.

Federally Recognized and State-Acknowledged Tribes: Defined by the US Department of the Interior Bureau of Indian Affairs as a federally recognized tribe that is an American Indian or Alaska Native tribal entity that is recognized as having a government-to-government relationship with the United States, with the responsibilities, powers, limitations, and obligations attached to that designation, and is eligible for funding and services from the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Massachusetts’ Commission on Indian Affairs (MCIA)⁷ assists Native American individuals, tribes, and organizations in their relationship with state and local government agencies, and more information can be obtained from their website and office support line.

Fossil Fuel Workers: Current and former workers from the fossil fuel industry, including but not limited to oil and propane dealer employees, including fuel delivery truck drivers; oil, gas, and propane heating technicians, sales, and administrative staff; gas station attendants; gas station equipment repair staff; gasoline car repair staff, and natural gas pipeline contractors.

Gateway City: Defined by the Massachusetts Legislature as twenty-six (26) mid-size urban centers that anchor regional economies around the state that face social and economic challenges but retain many assets with unrealized potential. These communities are municipalities with a population greater than 35,000 and less than 250,000 with a median household income below the Commonwealth’s average, and rate of educational attainment of a bachelor’s degree or above that is below the Commonwealth average.

- These communities include: Attleboro, Barnstable, Brockton, Chelsea, Chicopee, Everett, Fall River, Fitchburg, Haverhill, Holyoke, Lawrence, Leominster, Lowell, Lynn, Malden, Methuen, New Bedford, Peabody, Pittsfield, Quincy, Revere, Salem, Springfield, Taunton, Westfield and Worcester.

Low/Moderate Income Initiatives: Initiatives that serve low and/or moderate-income populations. “Low income” generally is defined as earning 60%-65% of the statewide median income. “Moderate income” varies more; defined as earning 60%-80% to 80%-120% of statewide median income. If your organization uses another definition for low/moderate income than above, please provide your definition on the application form.

⁶ <https://mass-eoeaa.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=1d6f63e7762a48e5930de84ed4849212>

⁷ <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/indian-affairs>

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion Initiatives: Targeted support to disadvantaged business entities (DBE) such as Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprises (MWBE), underrepresented founders, or underrepresented clean energy workers, etc.

5. ELIGIBILITY

Applicants must be one of the fifteen (15) Massachusetts community colleges.

All other private and non-profit education and training organizations interested in building HVAC and Heat Pump training capacity may apply for funding through one of MassCEC’s active solicitations including the [Climate Critical Training, Equipment and Infrastructure RFP](#), [Equity Workforce Training and Implementation RFP](#), or [Equity Workforce Planning and Capacity RFP](#).

- Applicants will be expected to disclose any potential conflicts of interest created through partnerships or subcontracts with related family members, current and recent employers, or any other involved parties that may create such conflicts of interest and to detail the review and selection processes used by the Applicants to ensure selection of the best parties to perform the related work.

6. FUNDING AVAILABLE AND ELIGIBLE FUNDING USES

MassCEC anticipates awarding a maximum of \$14,280,000. MassCEC may increase or decrease funding at its sole discretion based on available funding.

Grant Strand	Award Range	Cost Share Requirements	Duration Options
Strand A: Community College Heat Pump and HVAC Training and Equipment and Implementation grants	\$100,00-\$1,200,000 See attachment six for allocation guidelines	Not required, but encouraged	Twelve (12) to Thirty (30) months award. (an additional year of post-program monitoring and metrics tracking is required after the proposed project is complete, so Applicants should plan and budget for that obligation.)
Strand B: Planning Grants	\$30,000-\$50,000	Not required, but encouraged	Six (6) months to One (1) year award.

Applicants intending to designate thirty (30) percent or more of the proposed budget to subcontractor expenses or have instances of a single subcontractor receiving \$50,000 or more must provide the detailed budget for subcontractors using a copy of the provided budget template, Attachment 3: Program Budget, Organizational Budget, and Proposed Project Schedule.

At MassCEC's discretion, applications for Community College Heat Pump and HVAC Training and Equipment and Implementation grants that need further development prior to implementation may be offered a planning grant or a capacity grant, and if funding is available, an opportunity to reapply in a later round of this program or other relevant MassCEC funding opportunities. Successful grantees will receive grant payments in amounts determined by the contract and terms agreed to by MassCEC and selected Applicants. The sample agreement is provided as a resource, and MassCEC reserves the right to present Awardees with grant agreements that differ from the examples provided. Applicants will have an opportunity to clarify specific budget needs in their application.

Eligible Funding Uses:

For the Community College HVAC and Heat Pump Workforce Training, Equipment and Infrastructure Grants, applicants must use funds to implement workforce development programs that lead to careers in HVAC with trainings that include hands-on knowledge of heat pumps / mini-splits. Grant funds can be used for activities including, but not limited to:

- Staff time devoted to the program, including outreach and recruitment, intake and assessment, training delivery, ESOL support, wraparound support services, job placement services, and retention services, or to general operating activities needed to launch and continue the program;
- Marketing, communications, and outreach activities related to recruitment for the program, such as design costs for marketing collateral, purchasing mass media spots, and website or social media costs;
- Subcontracting with training providers for curriculum delivery or with vendors providing specific training platforms or licensure testing services;
- Purchasing and installing specialized equipment and infrastructure for training;
- Purchase or leasing of venue space, and other direct startup costs needed for training delivery;
- Training stipends and subsidized wages for on-the-job training/initial placements; and
- Supporting services to address barrier reduction, including transportation reimbursements, daycare subsidies, equipment and gear subsidies, or a general fund to support participants on an 'as-needed' basis.

Activities that are NOT eligible for funding include, but are not limited to:

- Purchase of equipment intended for general operating purposes;
- Costs associated with preparing this proposal; and
- Activities that occur before or following the term of an awarded grant.

7. ESTIMATED TIMELINE

This timeline is subject to change at MassCEC’s discretion. Notification of Award timelines may vary based on the number of applications.

Release of RFP	January 6, 2025
Questions due to MassCEC via email to rfpworkforce@masscec.com	Ongoing through February 5, 2025
Questions with answers posted to the MassCEC website	Updated on the solicitation page through February 7, 2025
Pre-Application Webinar	January 22, 2025, 2 – 3 pm
Pre-Application Office Hours	January 14, 2025, 4 – 5 pm January 27, 2025, 11 am – 12 noon February 3, 2025, 11 am – 12 noon
Proposals Due	February 19, 2025, by 11:59 pm
Additional Applicant Questions/ Interviews	As needed
Notification of Award	March 2025
Contracting for Awardees	April 2025

8. HOW TO APPLY

To apply:

1. Review this RFP to understand the opportunity, requirements, and MassCEC’s objectives.
2. Review all RFP forms and attachments.
3. (Recommended) Attend MassCEC informational webinar and/or utilize other informational resources offered (see below – Resources and Support for Potential Applicants).
4. Contact MassCEC with questions and/or to discuss your idea(s) via email at rfpworkforce@masscec.com.

5. Submit all completed RFP forms and attachments by email to rfpworkforce@masscec.com by 11:59 on February 19, 2025, with “Community College Heat Pump and HVAC Training Grant Application” in the subject line.

A complete application packet will include the following:

- Attachment 1: Authorized Applicant’s Signature and Acceptance Form
- Attachment 2: Community College Heat Pump and HVAC Training Grant Application Form
- Attachment 3: Budget Form
- Attachment 4: Sample Grant Agreement Language for Cost Reimbursement Contracts
- Attachment 5: Sample Progress Report
- Attachment 6: Implementation Funding Allocation Chart by School

Attachments 1 and 2 must be submitted as separate documents in PDF or Word format.
Attachment 3 must be submitted as an Excel document.

Attachment 4 is for reference and does not need to be returned unless the applicant is requesting changes to the general terms and conditions set forth within Attachment 4: Sample Grant Agreement Language. Requested modifications to these sections are subject to the review of MassCEC, must be signaled at the point of application submission to be considered during contracting. **If changes are requested to the template grant agreement language, please note that in Section 4.4 of the Attachment 2: Application Form and return an annotated version of Attachment 4, as part of your application packet.** (Note: MassCEC has limited ability to change contract terms.) Attachments 5 and 6 are reference materials that should not be completed and returned.

Attachment 2 asks for anticipated recruitment demographics for program participation. Using the program participant definitions under Section 2.1 and historical recruitment patterns, give the best estimates of the percentages of participants from DEI categories, including EJ Neighborhoods, Low-Income Communities, and Gateway Cities. Please provide figures based on statistics drawn from historical service to the proposed geographic area and target populations.

Attachment 5: Sample Progress Report is included to inform applicants of the required data and metrics to be collected. Additional information under Section 3: Program Goals and Descriptions

Using Attachment 3, provide the program's proposed budget and proposed program schedule.

1.1. Proposed Project Schedule with Milestones and Outcomes

On tab two (2), provide a proposed project schedule. During the fulfillment of the grant, MassCEC responds to timely invoices that provide documentation of deliverables to

disburse grant funds. **Applicants must provide a project schedule proposing chronological program dates, to align with Cost Reimbursement contract structure.**

Complete application submissions will be accepted through **11:59 PM EST on February 19, 2025**. Under no circumstances will MassCEC accept responses past the deadline.

Resources and Support for Potential Applicants:

All applicants are encouraged to work with MassCEC and utilize MassCEC support when preparing an application including attending the pre-application webinar and office hours. Links to helpful resources will be provided on the MassCEC RFP webpage along with the links to the funding opportunity documents.

Electronic Accessibility:

If accessibility to a computer, internet, or software may prohibit you from submitting an electronic application, in general, or by any deadline, or if there are other challenges with accessibility, such as language or writing barriers, alternative options may be discussed, such as video application. Please email rfpworkforce@masscec.com or telephone Elizabeth Youngblood at (617) 315-9355 to discuss accommodations.

9. SELECTION CRITERIA

Community colleges applying for Strand A: Implementation funding as part of this solicitation must submit a complete application, along with all requested attachments. All Proposals will be evaluated using the following criteria:

<p><u>Program Design</u> <u>(Training Delivery,</u> <u>Outreach, Support</u> <u>Services, Placement,</u> <u>Retention)</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Applicants present a comprehensive training plan with vocational and work readiness components designed to meet employer needs and maximize participant success.• Proposed programs provide relevant industry-recognized credentials or licenses and/or articulated higher education credits.• Training delivery models meet the requirements for in-person training, prioritize hands-on learning, and embrace innovative and proven strategies to increase participant success (e.g., on-the-job training and work-based learning).• The program design includes case management and support services tailored to meet participant needs and promote completion, retention, and advancement.• Applicants have a placement strategy that includes dedicated job development staff through the lead Applicant or partner,
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	<p>employer partners, and whenever possible, have provided letters of support or MOUs.</p>
<p><u>Equipment Investment's Impact on Training</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributes to increasing the availability/quality/effectiveness of Heat Pump and HVAC technician training. • Maximizes the increase of climate-critical skilled workers by Increasing the number of students able to participate in an existing program or creating a new program to meet demonstrated demand. • Demonstrates a commitment to increasing access to environmental justice and disadvantaged communities and populations historically underrepresented in the target occupation
<p><u>Employer and Industry Engagement</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicants should maximize engagement with employer partners across the program, designing for their involvement at multiple junctures and using their guidance to ensure that proposed programming or equipment and infrastructure investment align with the current demands of the industry
<p><u>Outcomes, Budget, Leveraged Resources, and Sustainability</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicants propose strong outcomes, a program design that can achieve these outcomes, and data collection practices that support effective outcome tracking. • Applicants propose milestones, timelines, and resource allocations that align with programming and participant needs. • Applicants proposed budget results in a reasonable per-participant cost for the type and intensity of programming the Applicant proposes.

Community colleges applying for Strand B: Planning Grant funding as part of this solicitation must submit a complete application, along with all requested attachments. All Proposals will be evaluated using the following criteria:

<p><u>Initial Vision of Program Design</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicants present a compelling vision of the type of training programming they want to create or augment and substantiate the need for this project. • Applicants clearly outline preliminary steps, including roles and responsibilities of staff and partners, to complete the planning process.
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<p><u>Impact of Program</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicants connect how the proposal will meet the core goals. • Applicants present an initial idea about the scale of the impact and trackable outcomes and metrics that will signal successful impact of the project.
<p><u>Commitment to Maximizing Partnerships, Resources, and TA</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant explains the plans to establish needed partnerships and identify resources to execute the programmatic vision. • Applicants propose milestones, timelines, and resource allocations that align with the proposed project. • Applicant describes a clear plan for how they intend to utilize the TA provided, including information about which staff members on the proposed project will participate in various components of TA.

10. EXPECTATIONS FOR GRANT AWARDEES

In addition to proposing timeline, milestones and deliverables described in the application and agreed upon and finalized upon award, awardees will be expected to satisfy the following responsibilities:

1. Finalize Grant Agreement

Awardees will work with the MassCEC Program Manager to develop and finalize their grant agreement to ensure that the statement of work, milestones and deliverables schedule, payment schedule, and other terms are agreed to and signed off on prior to commencement of project work and disbursements of funding.

2. Attend Awardee Cohort Sessions

Awardees will be required to designate a representative to participate in ongoing virtual meetings and quarterly communities of practice with other community colleges awarded funding as part of this solicitation to check in, promote networking, synergize projects, share best practices, learn about the curricular resources offered, and overall strengthen the quality of the workforce development ecosystem related to community college HVAC and heat pump programming.

3. Consult with MassCEC Workforce Technical Assistance

MassCEC will provide technical assistance through a designated MassCEC staff member with extensive workforce development and occupation-related experience and potentially via the

services of a subcontracted provider ('TA Provider'). Technical assistance will consist of guidance and support during planning and implementation, networking opportunities and partnership development assistance, providing relevant curriculum resources, and promoting continuous improvement to ensure the success and quality of the programs. Technical assistance will be delivered on an ongoing and as-needed basis to be agreed upon between the technical assistance provider and awardee. Applicants are encouraged to consider the staff time required to participate fully when developing plans and budgets for proposed funding components.

4. Provide Regular Reporting

MassCEC requires awardees to provide regular reports typically timed to coincide with scheduled invoices for payment, with a preference towards quarterly invoices and reports. Awardees will be asked to provide interim progress reports using templated forms and by attaching additional documentation for program-specific deliverables not captured within the templates. The templated reports capture general programmatic and participant data, including but not limited to participant data, employment and wage data, dosage of service, and changes to status that signal progress towards program completion, placement, and retention. As part of the planning and implementation of the build-out of a new or refurbished HVAC training center, awardee will provide copies of bids and quotes for equipment and infrastructure, and final bids and pricing as part of invoicing for cost reimbursement.

Additionally, MassCEC regularly features awardees in social media blog posts, reports, and other media. To facilitate these activities, awardees are encouraged to provide case studies and program insights as part of regular reports as agreed upon in the Scope of Work. Examples of a case study could include a successful training participant and an appropriate accompanying picture, with any applicable additional information, statistics, and photographs.

11. CONTACT INFORMATION FOR QUESTIONS

For all questions on the Community College HVAC Training RFP, please email rfpworkforce@masscec.com.

12. GENERAL REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS CONDITIONS

NOTICE OF PUBLIC DISCLOSURE

As a public entity, MassCEC is subject to Massachusetts' Public Records Law, codified in Chapter 66 of the Massachusetts General Laws. Thus, any documentary material, data, or other information received by MassCEC from an applicant is a public record subject to disclosure. Applicants shall not send MassCEC any confidential or sensitive information in response to this RFP. If confidential information is submitted as part of the application and not clearly marked as

confidential, such information may be made publicly available by MassCEC without further notice to the Applicant.

DISCLAIMER & WAIVER AUTHORITY

This RFP does not commit MassCEC to award any funds, pay any costs incurred in preparing an application or procure or contract for services or supplies. MassCEC reserves the right to accept or reject any or all applications received, waive minor irregularities in submittal requirements, modify the anticipated timeline, request a modification of the application, negotiate with all qualified Applicants, cancel or modify the RFP in part or its entirety, or change the application guidelines when it is in MassCEC's best interests.

This RFP has been distributed electronically using MassCEC's website. Applicants must check the website for any addenda or modifications to an RFP to which they intend to respond. MassCEC accepts no liability and will provide no accommodation to Applicants who apply based on an out-of-date RFP document.

CONTRACT REQUIREMENTS

Upon MassCEC's authorization to proceed with the proposal, MassCEC and the awarded applicant(s) will execute a contract, substantially in the form of the Sample Agreement attached hereto as Attachment 4 that will set forth the respective roles and responsibilities of the parties.

ATTACHMENT 1: AUTHORIZED APPLICANT’S SIGNATURE AND ACCEPTANCE FORM

Community College HVAC and Heat Pump Workforce Training, Equipment, and Infrastructure Grant (the “RFP”)

The undersigned is a duly authorized representative of the Applicant named below. The undersigned has read and understands the RFP requirements and acknowledges and confirms that the Applicant and each member of its team have read and understand the RFP Requirements. The undersigned acknowledges and agrees that all of the terms and conditions of the RFP are mandatory.

The undersigned and each Applicant and each member of its team acknowledges and agrees that (i) all materials submitted as part of the application are subject to disclosure under the Massachusetts Public Records Law, as explained in the RFP; (ii) that the Massachusetts Clean Energy Technology Center (“MassCEC”) has no obligation, and retains the sole discretion to fund or choose not to fund the application set forth herein; and (iii) that MassCEC’s receipt of the application does not imply any promise of funding at any time.

The undersigned and each member of the Applicant’s team understands that, if the Application is selected by MassCEC pursuant to this RFP, the Applicant will execute and deliver an agreement to be provided by MassCEC that shall set forth the terms and conditions, together the respective roles and responsibilities of the Applicant, and each member of its team, and MassCEC, with respect to the project described in the RFP.

I certify that the statements made in this Application, including all attachments and exhibits, are true and correct.

Applicant: _____

(Printed Name of Applicant)

By: _____

(Signature of Applicant or Authorized Representative)

Title: _____

Date: _____

ATTACHMENT 2: APPLICATION FORM

Attached separately

ATTACHMENT 3: PROGRAM BUDGET AND PROPOSED PROJECT SCHEDULE

Attached separately

ATTACHMENT 4: SAMPLE AGREEMENT- COST REIMBURSEMENT

Attached separately

ATTACHMENT 5: SAMPLE PROGRESS REPORT

Attached separately

ATTACHMENT 6: IMPLEMENTATION FUNDING ALLOCATION CHART

Attached separately