



Request for Proposals:  
Commonwealth Hydropower Program  
Round 13  
RFP FY2024-CH-R13

Date of Issue: March 25, 2024

Proposals Due: April 25, 2024

Total Funding Available: \$300,000

All proposals must be submitted to:

[hydro@masscec.com](mailto:hydro@masscec.com)

## I. SUMMARY

The Massachusetts Clean Energy Technology Center (“MassCEC”) seeks applications to its Commonwealth Hydro Program (the “Program”) to facilitate greater energy production and reduced environmental impacts from hydropower facilities that are eligible for the Massachusetts Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard (“MA RPS”).

The Program provides grant funding of up to Three Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$300,000) per project. Through the provision of this support, the Program seeks to increase the output, longevity, and ecological acceptability of hydropower facilities that are qualified for the MA RPS, or have a strong likelihood of attaining qualification, as further explained herein. Applicants’ facilities must also be licensed by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (“FERC”), have an order from FERC indicating that they are non-jurisdictional to FERC, or have a determination from FERC that they are a “qualifying conduit hydropower facility” in accordance with FERC Order 800.

## II. ABOUT MASSCEC

MassCEC is a 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.

## III. PROGRAM GOALS AND DESCRIPTION

The Program provides funding for construction projects, new technology deployment, relicensing, and feasibility studies for eligible hydropower generation facilities. Applicants may request funding in the following activity areas:

- 1) Upgrade of existing hydropower facilities, including but not limited to:

- a) turbine replacement or refurbishment;
  - b) installation or upgrade of automated controls;
  - c) replacement of wooden flashboards with rubber skirt/inflatable crest gate systems; and
  - d) enhanced fish or eel passage (in conjunction with measures to increase generation).
- 2) Existing hydropower facilities that are engaged or will soon be engaged in the FERC relicensing process and are considering means to increase efficiency, increase capacity, and reduce environmental impacts, including but not limited to:
- a) Installation of minimum flow turbine on bypass reach;
  - b) Installation of turbines that reduce fish passage injury and mortality;
  - c) Closer-spaced and/or self-cleaning trash racks; and
  - d) Upgrades that increase levels of dissolved oxygen downstream of facility.
- 3) Development of new hydropower facilities that are eligible for FERC conduit exemptions or FERC determinations that facilities are Qualifying Conduit Hydropower Facilities.
- 4) Deployment of advanced hydropower technologies, including but not limited to technologies that enable:
- a) Fish-friendly hydropower;
  - b) In-stream hydrokinetic power; and
  - c) Hydropower operational flexibility.
- 5) Feasibility studies for facilities described in (1-3) above.

Maximum possible grant amounts will be capped at the lesser of Three Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$300,000) or fifty percent (50%) of actual costs.

#### IV. ELIGIBILITY

Each Applicant must demonstrate compliance with the following minimum criteria:

Criteria	Description
<b>Eligible Applicant</b>	An Eligible Applicant must be a commercial, industrial, institutional, non-profit or public entity. The Applicant must demonstrate long-term site control over the project location and the rights to the water used to power the system. If the Applicant does not own the dam or conduit associated with the project, a letter of support from the dam or conduit owner is required. Note that once an Applicant has been awarded a grant and executed a grant agreement with

	MassCEC, that entity is referred to as the Grantee.
<b>FERC Status</b>	<p>Subject facilities must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Have a FERC license or exemption and be in substantial compliance with its conditions (the need to amend a license or exemption to accommodate the proposed project will not disqualify the facility);</li> <li>▪ Have a FERC order indicating the facility is non-jurisdictional to FERC (the proposed project must not jeopardize this status, as determined by MassCEC in the sole exercise of its discretion);</li> <li>▪ Have a FERC determination that the facility is a Qualifying Conduit Hydropower Facility; OR</li> <li>▪ Be seeking a license or exemption under one of the following conditions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ on a canal system where environmental conditions are managed by the canal system operator under an existing FERC license; OR</li> <li>○ likely be eligible for a conduit exemption (the determination that a facility is likely eligible for a conduit exemption shall be at MassCEC’s sole discretion).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>MA RPS Status</b>	<p>Facilities must be qualified for the MA RPS, or demonstrate a strong likelihood of gaining qualification. See: <a href="#">Massachusetts RPS Regulations</a>. In most cases, this will entail certification by the Low Impact Hydropower Institute (“LIHI”). (Note that for facilities authorized under a FERC conduit exemption or that have a FERC determination as a Qualifying Conduit Hydropower Facility, LIHI certification is not required for MA RPS qualification.) Applicants must be familiar with LIHI’s criteria for certification and how those criteria apply to their facilities. See: <a href="http://www.lowimpacthydro.org">www.lowimpacthydro.org</a>. To help MassCEC understand the likelihood of LIHI certification and MA RPS qualification, the application requirements include consultations with the Massachusetts Department of Fish and Game (“DFG”). For all applications, such consultations must be documented by a letter from DFG.</p>
<b>Facility Size, Type and Location</b>	<p>Useful Life: Applicants proposing to rehabilitate or upgrade existing facilities must affirm that the project will have a useful life of at least twenty (20) years and/or that plans and financing are in place to make additional repairs to achieve this useful life.</p> <p>Location: Facilities that are located within the service territory of an electric distribution company that pays into the Massachusetts Renewable Energy Trust are eligible. If the Applicant’s facility is located within the service territory of Massachusetts Municipal Lighting Plant (“MLP”) or interconnects with an MLP, the MLP must have executed a Renewable Energy Trust Fund Membership agreement with either MassCEC or the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative. For more information regarding eligible MLPs, see: <a href="http://www.masscec.com/municipal-lighting-plant-communities">http://www.masscec.com/municipal-lighting-plant-communities</a></p>

<b>Eligible Dams</b>	Dams associated with proposed projects must be intact (i.e., must not have been breached). Projects requiring new dams are ineligible.
<b>Minimum Technical Requirements</b>	Hydroelectric turbines and generators may be either new or refurbished. However, all equipment should be accompanied by warranties and service support options, which may be subject to MassCEC approval.  Grantees must self-report annual generation data to MassCEC for five (5) years after completion of project construction.
<b>Related Parties</b>	The Applicant must procure services from contractors using commercially responsible procurement mechanisms, and to the greatest extent practicable, using competitive procurement procedures. Furthermore, the Applicant is required to notify MassCEC in the event that it intends to or has entered into an agreement for goods or services with a related party. For purposes of this solicitation, a related party is any entity that shares any common ownership with Applicant. In the event Applicant is given an award, MassCEC must approve the use of any related party in writing prior to awardee using MassCEC funds to pay for the expenses associated with such related party.

**V. ESTIMATED TIMELINE**

<b>RFP Released</b>	March 25, 2024
<b>Questions due to MassCEC via email to hydro@masscec.com</b>	April 4, 2024
<b>Questions with Answers Posted to MassCEC Website</b>	April 11, 2024
<b>Proposals Due</b>	April 25, 2024
<b>Interviews or Site Visits of Top Applicants by MassCEC</b>	May 2024
<b>Selection Announcement</b>	June 2024

**VI. HOW TO APPLY**

- **Commonwealth Hydro Application Form**
- **Attachment A: Lead Applicant’s Signature and Acceptance Form**

Optionally, Applicants are encouraged to complete the [30-second self-assessment](#) as part of the Certification Program for the [Supplier Diversity Office of Massachusetts \(SDO\)](#).

- MassCEC is interested in understanding the composition of its applicant and awardee pool in the Program. Applicants who choose to complete the SDO self-assessment tool are encouraged to provide a screenshot or printout of the results page with their application packages to support

MassCEC’s effort to collect data regarding the applicant and awardee pool for the Program. While this is not currently a Program requirement, applicant submission of the SDO questionnaire will help MassCEC better understand the composition of our applicant base today and may influence the selection of projects in the future.

The completed Application and all other documentation (including the project budget) should be submitted to [hydro@masscec.com](mailto:hydro@masscec.com) in a single PDF file with an additional copy of the project budget in a separate Excel file. “Commonwealth Hydro Application – [Company Name]” must appear in the e-mail subject line.

## VII. SELECTION CRITERIA

All projects will be evaluated with respect to the criteria discussed in this section. MassCEC reserves the right to reject without further consideration any applications that, in its sole judgment, fail to meet the threshold requirements.

MassCEC staff may request supplemental information during the review process. MassCEC may also request an interview with qualified Applicants and/or a site visit. MassCEC may use a technical consultant or convene a panel of external reviewers to assist it in evaluating the applications.

Applications that meet the threshold criteria will be evaluated competitively with respect to the following:

Criteria	Sub-Criteria
<b>Project Characteristics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Descriptions of existing facility and proposed project are clear</li> <li>• Dam is in compliance with dam safety regulations. MassCEC prefers projects at facilities with no safety or other deficiencies, and that are in good condition</li> <li>• Project objectives are clear</li> <li>• Regulatory/licensing status is clearly explained and any new permits or amendments appear reasonable to obtain</li> </ul>
<b>Project Programmatic Benefits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quantity of incremental energy and RECs produced, and any other energy benefits to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts are clearly stated</li> <li>• Timeframe to completion is within three (3) years</li> <li>• The project offers direct economic benefits through tax payments to Massachusetts governmental entities, leases to Massachusetts property owners, increased construction or operation jobs for Massachusetts residents, or increased economic activity for Massachusetts firms, and such benefits are quantified</li> </ul>
<b>Scope of Work, Status and</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work plan is clear and logical</li> </ul>

Criteria	Sub-Criteria
<b>Schedule</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schedule is reasonable for scope of project and meets Solicitation requirements</li> <li>• Budget is consistent with competitive procurement of goods and services</li> <li>• Team is qualified to execute the remainder of the project</li> <li>• Team members who participated in prior MassCEC grant-funded projects did so successfully</li> </ul>
<b>Financial Request</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cost share percentage provided by the Applicant meets or exceeds required minimum</li> <li>• Cost-effectiveness of grant request (\$ requested per incremental kWh/year)</li> </ul>

**VIII. BUDGET**

The Program awards of up to Three Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$300,000) are paid to grantees on a milestone and deliverable basis. Milestones and deliverables are to be memorialized, with target completion dates and scopes of work associated with each milestone, in a detailed workplan.

Grant funds will not be disbursed until initiation of the project, including the execution of a grant agreement and the final approval of the proposed Project Workplan by the Program Technical Consultant and MassCEC staff. Awardees will be notified in writing when each of these steps is complete. Applicants should give careful thought to their cash flow needs and must be prepared to support those needs. The grant agreement will require the Lead Applicant to obtain MassCEC approval for changes or revisions to the Project Workplan or the budget.

Applicants should be aware that, if awarded, the contract will stipulate that if after a period of six (6) months from the date of the award notification, an awardee has not completed an approved Project Workplan, the award may be rescinded at MassCEC’s sole discretion. This does not preclude the awardee from reapplying to the Program in a future funding round. If the project and final project milestones have not been completed within the negotiated timeframe, as reflected in the contract, MassCEC reserves the right to reduce or rescind any remaining award amounts at its sole discretion.

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**ELIGIBLE BUDGET ITEMS**

It is MassCEC’s policy not to compensate for general administration, overhead, or general-purpose expenses including general purpose materials or facilities. Budget items must be:

- Uniquely associated with the proposed project;
- Justified as to why it is a necessary and reasonable part of the project; and
- Incurred after the execution of a grant agreement with MassCEC.

All budget items generally fall into one (1) of three (3) categories: 1) eligible cash expenses; 2) eligible cost share expenses; or 3) other budget items ineligible for grant funding or cost share. It must be clear why each budget item is necessary for the project. The following items are expenses that *may be included* in the project budget:

- Materials, Equipment, Facilities and Supplies: The equipment must be a new purchase. May include parts and equipment supplied to selected applicants as part of a lump-sum contract.
- Transport (*i.e.*, transporting a key piece of equipment): The proposal should document why transportation is required for the project.
- Travel: Allowable for consultants retained by Applicant Teams as a subcontractor only. Subcontractor travel should be included in overall subcontractor hourly rates when reported as a deliverable.
- Direct labor directly related to the Commonwealth Hydro project: For each employee, list the name, title, anticipated number of hours worked and hourly rate, if applicable. Identify the basis for the pay rate used (*e.g.*, actual salary, composite rate, labor distribution report, technical estimate, state civil service rates, etc.). If composite rates are being proposed for a particular position or group category, please state the rate basis as a composite rate. If new hires are proposed, please explain the basis for how you determined their hourly rate. If applicants are selected for award negotiations, they may be required to provide payroll information or a certification statement to verify that the proposed rates are the actual rates being paid to the proposed individuals. If direct is included, only gross wages, employer-contributed Federal Insurance Contributions Act taxes, state unemployment insurance, and Federal Unemployment Tax Act taxes may be included for such labor; fringe benefits on direct labor or Related Party Labor shall not be included. Subcontractor (including project partner or host) Labor directly related to the Commonwealth Hydro project: MassCEC must approve the use of any Subcontractor Labor in writing prior to awardee using MassCEC funds to pay for the expenses associated with such Subcontractor Labor.

Applicants are encouraged to consider MassCEC's [Clean Energy Internship Program](#) to find additional team members to assist with the project. For example, a project milestone may include the hiring of an intern in line with the commencement of any term of the tri-annual MassCEC Internship Program.

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## COST-SHARE REQUIREMENT

Awardees must provide cost share equivalent to at least fifty percent (50%) of the grant amount awarded. At least twenty percent (20%) of awardees' *required* cost share must consist of cash contributions as defined below. However, applications may include additional cost share of any kind (cash or in kind) over and above the minimum requirement. For example:

- If an Applicant Team requests a Two Hundred Thousand Dollar (\$200,000) grant, then the Applicant Team must demonstrate that it will provide at least One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000) in cost share toward the project.
- Of this One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000), at least Twenty Thousand Dollars (\$20,000) must be in the form of cash contributions.
- Any additional cost share contributions in excess of the One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000) requirement may be of in kind, cash, or any combination of the two (2).

All cost share must be used directly for the project during the awardee's contract period.



Cash cost share is an actual cash payment between the Lead Applicant and a vendor or service provider, or the equivalent thereof, and must be supported by documentation. Examples of cash cost share payments for the purposes of this RFP include, but are not limited to:

- Payment, in whole or in part, for materials or the use of equipment directly related to the demonstration project on the part of the Lead Applicant or other members of the Applicant Team; and
- Payment, in whole or in part, for services provided by contractors and consultants on the demonstration project (for monitoring or to assist in installation/maintenance for example).

Cash cost share contributed by members of the Applicant Team apart from the Lead Applicant may be provided in the form of a waived fee or a discount of a marketed product; however, such contributions must be documentable in the form of a Project deliverable.

In kind cost share may include direct labor of project team members at reasonable rates as well as services and materials used for the project; for example, use of equipment provided by a project partner.

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## INELIGIBLE BUDGET ITEMS

The following items should not be included in the project budget:

- Administrative expenses;
- Overhead (including, but not limited to, telephone, electricity, rent for office/lab space);
- Miscellaneous office equipment and supplies, equipment and supply costs associated with general business operations, or equipment and supplies not related to the Commonwealth Hydro project;
- Postage (including packaging and shipping materials);
- Printing; and
- Fringe benefits (including but not limited to health insurance, 401K plans or similar or other staff benefits).

## IX. CONTACT INFORMATION FOR QUESTIONS

All questions regarding the Program and this RFP should be directed to: [hydro@masscec.com](mailto:hydro@masscec.com) no later than April 4, 2024. "Commonwealth Hydro Solicitation 13 Questions" must appear in the subject line. Responses to questions will be posted on the RFP page by April 11, 2024.

## X. GENERAL REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS CONDITIONS

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### NOTICE OF PUBLIC DISCLOSURE

As a public entity, MassCEC is subject to Massachusetts' Public Records Law, codified at 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.

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#### 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 modification of the application, negotiate with all qualified Applicants, cancel or modify the RFP in part or in 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. It is the responsibility of Applicants to 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 submit an application based on an out-of-date RFP document.

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#### 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 either the Hydro Feasibility or Hydro Construction template agreement as applicable, which will set forth the respective roles and responsibilities of the parties. These template agreements can be found on MassCEC's website here: <https://www.masscec.com/program/commonwealth-hydropower>

ATTACHMENT 1: AUTHORIZED APPLICANT’S SIGNATURE AND ACCEPTANCE FORM

**Commonwealth Hydro**

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 has read and understands 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: \_\_\_\_\_