Request for Proposals:

Accelerating Clean Transportation For All Round 2
(ACT4ALL 2)

Date of Issue: February 16, 2024

Proposals Due: May 31, 2024

All proposals must be submitted to:

CleanTransportation@MassCEC.com

## 1. PROGRAM SUMMARY AND GOALS

The Massachusetts Clean Energy Technology Center ("MassCEC") seeks applications under the second round of the Accelerating Clean Transportation for All Program ("ACT4All 2") that pilot innovative, equitable, and broadly replicable clean transportation adoption and deployment program models. The ACT4All 2 program will further the Commonwealth's climate and equity goals by addressing inequities in the clean transportation sector. ACT4All 2 aims to explicitly increase access to clean transportation technologies and modalities and decrease health impacts and related burdens from the existing transportation system for overburdened and underserved communities in Massachusetts.

Under ACT4All 2, MassCEC seeks to fund projects that demonstrate innovative, equitable, and replicable:

1.      Electric vehicle ("EV") charging accessibility models;
2.      Regional public transportation decarbonization projects; and
3.      Projects that expand access to economic opportunities through education, training, and demonstrations of emerging technologies.

Under each topic area (collectively, the "Topic Areas"), MassCEC aims to meet the twin goals of increasing access and reducing burdens.

Pilot projects funded under ACT4All 2 may aid in determining the method and parameters for potential full-scale programs. MassCEC expects that pilot projects funded through this Request for Proposals ("RFP") can be scaled up and easily replicated as new sources of funding are identified.

## 2. 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.

## 3. BACKGROUND

The transportation sector in Massachusetts is responsible for 37% of statewide greenhouse gas ("GHG") emissions, more than any other single sector.[1] In order to meet the Commonwealth's ambitious climate goal of net-zero by 2050, the state must develop equitable and accessible decarbonization pathways within the transportation sector. The Clean Energy and Climate Plan for 2050 ("CECP") lays out clean transportation goals, including strategies to reach a 34% reduction in transportation emissions below 1990 emission levels.[2]

However, new and innovative clean transportation technologies are not equally accessible to all residents of the Commonwealth just as existing transportation burdens, such as air quality impacts, are not felt equally. As the CECP highlights, "communities of color, low-income neighborhoods, indigenous populations, and neighborhoods with high percentages of residents with limited English proficiency face disproportionately higher exposure to pollution, public health, and climate risks, and bear a higher energy burden when compared with other neighborhoods."[3] ACT4All 2 aims to address these historic inequities through innovative clean transportation projects and community partnership models.

ACT4All 2 Topic Areas are informed through stakeholder engagement to identify high-priority areas for intervention and support. Launched in early 2022, the first round of Accelerating Clean Transportation For All ("ACT4All") resulted in the deployment of about $5 Million in funding across ten (10) awarded clean transportation projects. The first round of ACT4All includes projects that focus on e-bike incentives, vehicles-for-hire and carsharing electrification, high-mileage/low-radius fleet emissions reductions, and broadening the EV consumer base. Priority populations participating in and benefitting from these projects include low- and moderate-income taxi drivers, homeless veterans and Medicaid recipients, Quincy's Asian community, low- and moderate-income and older adults in Cape Cod and Worcester, and residents of color in the Pioneer Valley, among others.

Under ACT4All 2 Topic Areas, MassCEC intends to build on program success and continue to catalyze equitable and inclusive decarbonization pathways in the transportation sector.

## 4. PROGRAM CLIMATE & EQUITY GOALS

**Climate and Equity Goals**

MassCEC recognizes the increased barriers-to-access for Priority Populations (see definition below) and the historic challenges of ensuring equitable benefits in public programs. To that end, MassCEC seeks proposals that can speak to these challenges and considerations with program delivery models that effectively reach overburdened and underserved communities. Further, MassCEC seeks proposals that demonstrate scalability and efficiency in reaching Priority Populations in recognition of the scale of emissions reductions necessary to reach the Commonwealth's climate goals.

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[1] See the Massachusetts Clean Energy and Climate Metrics: https://www.mass.gov/info-details/massachusetts-clean-energy-and-climate-metrics

[2] See the CECP report here: https://www.mass.gov/info-details/massachusetts-clean-energy-and-climate-plan-for-2050#clean-energy-and-climate-plan-for-2050-

[3] See the CECP report here: https://www.mass.gov/info-details/massachusetts-clean-energy-and-climate-plan-for-2050#clean-energy-and-climate-plan-for-2050-

Successful projects proposed under the ACT4All 2 Program will meet the following core goals:

- Demonstrate scalable and equitable paths to decarbonization in the transportation sector;
- Maximize GHG emissions reductions, health, and economic benefits in overburdened areas and increase clean transportation access for underserved populations;
- Demonstrate efficient and effective program delivery, community partnership, and/or implementation models that both reach and meaningfully include Priority Populations; and
- Represent the diversity of Massachusetts communities, from a geographic, demographic, and socioeconomic lens.

**Definitions**

To that end, MassCEC seeks to ensure equitable benefits to underserved and overburdened groups, or **Priority Populations.** For the purposes of this RFP and in accordance with the Program goals, MassCEC defines "Priority Populations" to include the following:

- "Environmental Justice Populations" (or Environmental Justice Communities ("EJCs")) or as defined by the Massachusetts Department of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) Environmental Justice Policy;[4]
  - o "Environmental Justice (EJ) Population" means (A) a neighborhood that meets 1 or more of the following criteria: (i) the annual median household income is not more than 65% of the statewide annual median household income; (ii) minorities comprise 40% or more of the population; (iii) 25% or more of households are English isolated or lack English language proficiency; or (iv) minorities comprise 25% or more of the population and the annual median household income of the municipality in which the neighborhood is located does not exceed 150% of the statewide annual median household income; or (B) a geographic portion of a neighborhood designated by the Secretary as an environmental justice population in accordance with law.
    - "Minority" refers to individuals who identify themselves as Latino/Hispanic, Black/African American, Asian, Indigenous people, and people who otherwise identify as non-white.
    - "Low-income" means median household income at or below 65% of the statewide median income for Massachusetts, according to federal census data.
    - "English isolation" refers to households that are English Language Isolated according to federal census forms, or do not have an adult over the age of 14 that speaks only English or English very well.
  - o Environmental Justice Map Viewer: https://arcg.is/1i9Hqn0
- Residents of "Gateway Cities," meaning municipalities with:[5]

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[4] See the state's definition of Environmental Justice here: https://www.mass.gov/doc/environmental-justice-policy6242021-update/download

[5] Find a list of Massachusetts Gateway Cities here: https://massinc.org/our-work/policy-center/gateway-cities/about-the-gateway-cities/

- - A population greater than 35,000 and less than 250,000;
    - A median household income below the state average; and
    - A rate of educational attainment of a bachelor's degree or above that is below the state average.
- Renters (primarily residential);
- Rural communities, meaning areas that:[6]
    - Meet at least one of three federal rural definitions at the sub-county level (Census Bureau, Office of Management and Budget, or Rural-Urban Commuting Area Codes); and/or
    - Have a population less than 10,000 people and a population density below 500 people per square mile; and/or
    - Have an acute care hospital in the town that meets the state hospital licensure definition of a small rural hospital (SRH) or is a certified Critical Access Hospital (CAH).
- Older adults referring to: [7]
    - Persons aged 60 and older.
- Persons with disabilities referring to: [8]
    - Any condition or impairment of the body or mind that limits a person's ability to do certain activities or restricts a person's participation in normal life activities, such as school, work, or recreation.
- People employed in the fossil fuel industry, including:[9]
    - Electric power generation,
    - Transportation,
    - Industry, and
    - Agriculture.
- Communities underserved by public transit; and
- Communities or individuals disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, by the fossil-fuel based energy system, or other environmental hazards (e.g., air quality or heat).

MassCEC recognizes that this is a non-exhaustive list and that the identification of underserved and overburdened groups may not be the same for each Topic Area. **Under each Topic Area, MassCEC seeks**

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[6] For the complete definition of "rural communities" see the MA State Office of Rural Health Rural Definition: https://www.mass.gov/doc/rural-definition-detail-0/download#:~:text=A%20municipality%20in%20Massachusetts%20is,below%20500%20people%20per%20square

[7] As defined by the U.S. Census Bureau (2019): https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=older%20adults&tid=ACSST1Y2019.S0102

[8] For the complete definition of the term "disability" see *The impacts of climate change on human health in the United States: A scientific assessment. Chapter 9: Populations of Concern: https://health2016.globalchange.gov/downloads#populations-of-concern*

[9] For a complete list of fossil fuel industries and sectors see the Environmental Protection Agency's Sources of Greenhouse Gas Emissions: https://www.epa.gov/ghgemissions/sources-greenhouse-gas-emissions

**proposals that explicitly identify which Priority Populations will be served, a clear engagement strategy, and a rigorous approach to measurement and verification of project impacts**.

## 5. PROJECT ELIGIBILITY

Please see below for eligibility and requirements based on Topic Areas, Applicant, and other funding sources. The proposed project must predominantly benefit Massachusetts residents and any equipment or infrastructure installed as part of the project must also be located in the Commonwealth, though Application Team member(s) may be located outside Massachusetts.

### ELIGIBLE TOPIC AREAS

Funding eligibility under this RFP is limited to projects in the following Topic Areas:

1. **Electric Vehicle Charging Station Access**
   Under this Topic Area, MassCEC seeks pilot projects that provide innovative, equitable, replicable, and scalable solutions that maximize EV charger benefits in an equitable manner. Projects will demonstrate Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment ("EVSE") procurement, operation, and ownership models and effectively reach and benefit identified Priority Populations. Projects under this Topic Area should seek to provide access to EVSE for residents of multi-unit dwellings, apartment complexes, low- to moderate-income housing, renters, or residents without a dedicated driveway or garage. Projects under this Topic Area may also provide supplementary access to EVs.

2. **Regional Transit Authority Decarbonization**
   This Topic Area aims to facilitate the decarbonization of Regional Transportation Authorities ("RTAs"), particularly those that serve EJCs, Gateway Cities, and/or Rural areas. Projects under Topic Area 2 should seek to reduce vehicle emissions associated with RTAs, expand access to clean transportation options for underserved and overburdened communities, and/or decrease reliance on single-occupancy vehicles. The goals of Topic Area 2 may also be met through Transportation Management Association ("TMA") decarbonization and development of mobility hubs.

3. **Expanding Access to Economic Opportunities**
   This Topic Area aims to expand access to clean transportation careers and decrease existing employment burdens for Priority Populations, such as low- and moderate-income communities, workers in fossil fuel industries, and individuals in EJCs. Under this Topic Area, MassCEC seeks to pilot projects that provide increased access to economic opportunities for Priority Populations, expand access to clean transportation careers, and develop capabilities to better reduce transportation and workforce burdens for individuals in Priority Populations.

MassCEC will also consider pilot projects that do not fit within the predefined Topic Areas but do increase clean transportation access and decrease burdens from transportation for Priority Populations while reducing emissions as outlined in the CECP.

Detailed descriptions of all Topic Areas may be found in **Appendix 1**.

## ELIGIBLE TECHNOLOGIES

All technologies included in proposed pilot programs for any Topic Area (Appendix 1) must have achieved a Technology Readiness Level of 9 and a Commercial Readiness Level of at least 7.[10]

The projects and technologies must be designed, installed, and/or operated in a manner consistent with applicable federal, state, and local regulations and permitted, inspected, and approved by the applicable authorities having jurisdiction.

## ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Applicants are encouraged to form teams comprised of several entities (each an "Applicant Team"), which will work together on the proposed projects, with one (1) entity designated as the lead (the "Lead Applicant"). The Lead Applicant will contract directly with MassCEC and, if awarded, will ultimately be responsible for meeting all contract obligations and lead the Applicant Team in meeting such obligations. Applicant Teams may include public and private entities. Applicant Teams should include all entity types necessary to conduct the proposed project.

**Applicant Teams are strongly encouraged to include a team member that is trusted by and/or operates within a Priority Population community(s) and will further the team's ability to reach the equity-related goals under ACT4All 2. Outreach-focused team members can include organizations such as a community-based organization, transportation or climate advocacy organization, a regional planning council, a public housing authority, etc.**

Entities may submit more than one (1) Application and be part of more than one (1) Applicant Team.

## PROJECT INELIGIBILITY

Projects that encourage greater reliance on fossil fuels and/or increase gas- or diesel-powered vehicle-miles traveled ("VMT") are not eligible for funding under this RFP. Projects that replicate funding structures employed by other Massachusetts state programs are not eligible for funding under this RFP unless an Applicant Team, particularly ones with an equity focus, or Priority Population is not currently well represented in the existing funding opportunity and the proposed project aims to demonstrate a program design or delivery approach that would mitigate such representation gaps.

## 6. BUDGET

Individual awards: **$500,000 - $1,000,000** depending on the pilot program size and use case demonstrated.

Additional Funding Requests: **Up to $1,500,000 for a maximum total award**

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[10] As identified by the NYSERDA TRL/CRL Calculator - http://files.masscec.com/innovate-clean-energy/NYSERDA-TRLCalculator.xlsm

If an Applicant Team feels that their proposed project scope necessitates a higher level of ACT4All 2 funding, Applicant Teams may demonstrate the pilot program's scalability and apply for additional funding above the One Million Dollar ($1,000,000) cap, for a maximum award total of One Million Five Hundred Thousand Dollars ($1,500,000). For the higher-level funding request, Applicants must provide two (2) Budget Overviews and two (2) Milestone and Deliverables tables, found in *Attachment C: Project Workplan and Budget Template*, one (1) each at the standard award level and one (1) each at the higher funding request to demonstrate the scalability. The Applicant Team may submit additional documentation (e.g. Attachment B: Project Narrative) if they determine more detail is needed to convey the proposed project at a higher funding scale.

Applicants should only apply for funding above the One Million Dollar ($1,000,000) cap if additional funding would <u>materially</u> change the scope of the project and would result in a <u>significant</u> increase in benefits to Priority Populations. MassCEC may, at its sole discretion, raise the award cap to up to One Million Five Hundred Thousand Dollars ($1,500,000) total, based on review of available resources and applications received.

MassCEC encourages Applicant Teams to identify additional sources of funding that increase the scale of the initial deployment and ensure ongoing sustainability of the projects.

Applicant Teams should plan for a two (2) to three (3) year project term from the contract execution date and at least twelve (12) months of data collection and reporting from initial technology, training, and/or project launch.

## BUDGET ITEMS

In most cases, the following items **are** considered allowable expenses as part of project budgets:

- Staff time (both Lead Applicant and Applicant Team labor as it relates to the proposed project);
- Fringe benefits (including but not limited to health insurance, 401K plans or similar or other staff benefits);
- Capital costs (including but not limited to vehicles, technology, hardware, software, and infrastructure purchases);
- Marketing and educational costs (printing materials and promotional mailers, website or social media hosting costs, event costs and space rental, surveys, etc.);
- Community engagement costs (translation services, compensation for Priority Population participants);

In most cases, the following items **are not** considered allowable expenses:

- Ineligible costs for <u>for-profit</u> entities:
  - Mark-ups (either on invoices from awardee or invoices paid by awardee for consultants or contractors the awardee or an Applicant Team member hired);
  - Telephone/cell phone;
  - Profit or Overhead (including, but not limited to, telephone, electricity, rent for office/lab space, and general administrative staff within an applicant organization);

- o Meals;
- o Fringe benefits (including but not limited to health insurance, 401K plans or similar or other staff benefits); and
- o Travel (other than required in-person events and site-visits for the project).
- Real estate purchases and related expenses;
- Project costs that are eligible for funding under existing state, utility, and federal programs;

It is MassCEC's policy not to compensate for general organizational administration, overhead, or general-purpose expenses including materials or facilities that are <u>not</u> uniquely associated with a MassCEC-funded project. To qualify for inclusion in the project budget or use as cost share, an expense must:

- Be uniquely associated with the clean transportation component of the proposed project;
- Be justified as to why it is a necessary and reasonable part of the project; and
- Be incurred after the execution of an agreement with MassCEC.

MassCEC specifically intends the ACT4All 2 Program to complement, rather than duplicate, other clean transportation programs operated by the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources ("DOER"), Department of Environmental Protection ("DEP"), Department of Transportation ("DOT"), and utility companies. **However, ACT4All 2 funding can be used as complimentary or gap funding to cover costs that are not covered by or are ineligible for the above programs.** These Applicants should demonstrate that funding will be leveraged with other sources without duplicative effect.

Projects awarded under the ACT4All 2 Program may be ineligible for future funding opportunities offered by MassCEC and/or state funding opportunities for the same or materially similar scope of work.

## COST SHARE

There is no minimum cost share requirement for Lead Applicants.

- Lead Applicants that are <u>for-profit entities</u> are expected to provide cost share. The cost share structure should ensure the award value is passed on to participants of the project and the award value is not a financial benefit to the Lead Applicant.
- Lead Applicants that are <u>public or not-for-profit entities</u> are not expected to contribute cost share, but may choose to do so if necessary.

MassCEC reserves the right to negotiate cost share based on Application Team composition and expectation that for-profit entities provide cost share. **Both the total requested budget and proposed for-profit cost share will factor into MassCEC's evaluation of proposals under the ACT4All 2 Program.**

Applicants can propose both cash and in-kind contributions. Cash cost share is where an actual cash transaction occurs which can be documented in the accounting system. Examples of cash cost share payments for the purposes of this RFP include, but are not limited to:

- Payment for materials or equipment directly related to deploying technology; and
- Payment for services provided by contractors and consultants for general and administrative tasks, outreach, or education and training.

## 7. SELECTION CRITERIA

In addition to the above minimum eligibility criteria, MassCEC will evaluate Applications competitively on the following primary and secondary criteria:

| Primary Selection Criteria | |
|---|---|
| **Category** | **Criteria** |
| Alignment with Program Goals | 1. Demonstrate scalable and equitable paths to decarbonization in the transportation sector.<br>2. Maximize GHG emissions reductions, health, and economic benefits in overburdened areas and increase clean transportation access for underserved populations.<br>3. Demonstrate efficient and effective program delivery, community partnership, and/or implementation models that reach Priority Populations.<br>4. Represent the diversity of Massachusetts' communities, from a geographic, demographic, and socioeconomic lens (across awards). |
| Innovation and Implementation | 1. Goals, targeted outcomes, and technologies being deployed are clearly defined and aligned with the goals defined in this RFP.<br>2. Applicant identifies potential risks and barriers to the pilot program and strategies to mitigate those risks and barriers.<br>3. Project targets unmet needs, or gaps in similar approaches being implemented in the Commonwealth through innovative technologies or program structures.<br>4. Ability to realize project benefits within the timeline provided. |

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|---|---|
| Equity & Priority Population Benefits | 1. Clear identification of project Priority Populations and clear strategy to reach and prioritize groups.<br>2. Reduction of barriers for users and program participants.<br>3. Quality of solution and level of transformation the pilot program provides for Priority Populations, both in the short and long term.<br>4. Defines and presents solutions to potential challenges in engaging with the intended Priority Population. |
| Replicability & Scalability | 1. Ease-of-administration of solution proposed and ability to implement at-scale.<br>2. Scale of project benefits relative to total budget.<br>3. Efficiency of project benefits on a dollar-per-GHG and dollar-per-participant basis as applicable.<br>4. Technical, financial, and administrative replicability of the procurement and deployment plan, if applicable.<br>5. Consideration of regulatory barriers or risks and feasibility of proposed strategies for mitigation. |
| Applicant Team Commitment and Qualifications | 1. Integration of community-based partner and/or Priority Population representative in project development and implementation.<br>2. Attention to potential capacity and/or resource constraints for community-based and/or Priority Population partners.<br>3. Demonstrated history engaging with Priority Populations and a thorough understanding of population needs.<br>4. Demonstration of Applicant Team collaboration and competency. |
| Monitoring and Verification Plan | 1. Metrics are quantifiable and comparable to baseline data.<br>2. Data can be collected in an accurate, verifiable, and consistent manner.<br>3. Metrics are designed to enable the quantification and verification of benefits to the Priority Populations defined by the project.<br>4. Metrics are designed to enable quantification and verification of emissions reductions. |

| Secondary Selection Criteria | |
|---|---|
| **Category** | **Criteria** |
| Quality of Application | 1. Level of completeness, quality, and detail of Application. |
| Value Demonstration | 1. Number/diversity of project benefits.<br>2. Cost share contribution and proportion of cost share to budget requested, where applicable.<br>3. Support of ongoing training/workforce support requirements. |

## 8. ESTIMATED TIMELINE

This timeline is subject to change at MassCEC's discretion:

| | |
|---|---|
| Release of RFP | February 16, 2024 |
| Informational Webinar | February 27, 2024 @ 12PM ET |
| Questions due to MassCEC via email to *CleanTransportation@MassCEC.com* | Rolling until May 15, 2024 |
| (Optional) Office Hours Online (registration info will be posted on RFP Website) | Ongoing until May 16, 2024 |
| (Optional) Pre-Application Concept Paper Submission | Rolling until April 30, 2024 |
| (Optional) Financial Assistance Grant Application Submission | Rolling until May 15, 2024 |
| ACT4All 2 Applications Due | May 31, 2024 @ 4PM ET |
| Applicant Interviews (at MassCEC's discretion) | June 2024 |
| Notification of Award | July/August 2024 |

## 9. HOW TO APPLY

**To Apply:**

1. **Review this RFP** to develop an understanding of the Program and opportunities, paying close attention to the eligibility requirements in Section 6 of the RFP and goals for each Topic Area in Appendix 1.

2. (*Optional but encouraged*) **Utilize MassCEC's Application Support Resources**. More information can be found below. Resources include:

   a. **Attend the ACT4All 2 informational webinar**. The webinar will be held on **February 27, 2024 at 12PM ET**. If you cannot attend, the webinar will be recorded and posted on MassCEC's Website. Please register in advance for the webinar here.

   b. **Join the ACT4All 2 Slack channel** to begin brainstorming project ideas and forming project partnerships and Applicant Teams.

   c. At any point in the application process, Applicants are welcome to **attend MassCEC's ACT4All 2 Office Hours** to discuss project ideas, teams, eligibility requirements, and any other application related questions.

   d. **Apply for a Financial Assistance Grant** to receive financial support for staff time and resources needed to develop a project concept and complete the ACT4All 2 Application.

   e. **Submit a Pre-Application Concept Paper** to MassCEC by the relevant Pre-Application Review Deadline listed in Section 8 and receive project concept feedback from MassCEC within two (2) weeks of submission.

   f. **Submit questions to MassCEC**. Application questions can be submitted via email to CleanTransportation@MassCEC.com. "ACT4All 2 Application Question" should appear in the subject line. Please submit questions by **May 15, 2024**. Answers will be posted publicly to the ACT4All 2 Program webpage on a biweekly basis.

3. **Compile the following Application documents** prepared by the Applicant Team:
   a. Attachment A: Authorized Applicant's Signature and Acceptance Form
   b. Attachment B: Project Narrative
   c. Attachment C: Project Workplan and Budget Template

     d. <u>Signed Letter of Intent</u> – follow instructions provided in *Attachment B: Project Narrative Section 8* to demonstrate that the Applicant Team has agreed to work together to implement and manage the project.

     e. <u>Optional:</u>

        i. <u>Supplementary Workplan and Budget</u> – follow instructions in *Attachment C: Project Workplan and Budget* to demonstrate the project's scalability at an award value of One Million Five Hundred Thousand Dollars ($1,500,000)

        ii. <u>Original Equipment Manufacturer ("OEM")</u> – provide technology key components spec sheet(s), if applicable

        iii. <u>Letters of Support</u> – from relevant stakeholders not on the Application Team, such as community stakeholders or transportation advocacy groups

        iv. <u>Contract Template comments</u>

4. **Submit all required documents** to CleanTransportation@MassCEC.com by the deadline.

It is the sole responsibility of the Lead Applicant to ensure that this Application is complete and properly submitted, including all necessary attachments, letters or other supporting documentation. At its sole discretion, MassCEC may request supplemental materials from the Applicant Team. MassCEC may request an interview with the Applicant Team and anticipates that, if requested, such interviews would occur over Microsoft Teams or a comparable video conferencing platform.

**Completed Applications must be received no later than 4:00 PM ET May 31, 2024.**

## PROJECT COLLABORATION SLACK CHANNEL

Potential applicants are encouraged to join the ACT4All 2 Slack platform. The purpose of the ACT4All 2 Slack platform is to convene interested entities to brainstorm ideas, develop partnerships, and eventually collaborate as project partners on an ACT4All 2 Application. After finding project partners, please feel free to take your conversation offline once you've identified a pilot project worth pursuing as a proposal. A link to the collaboration platform can be found here.

## OFFICE HOURS

MassCEC will host open Office Hours for potential Applicants to attend and ask questions. Office Hours are intended to allow prospective Applicants to discuss project concepts, Applicant Teams, program application process, and any other questions relating to the drafting of an ACT4All 2 Application. Office Hours will be held biweekly via Zoom. MassCEC will host open Office Hour group sessions specific to each Topic Area as well as one-on-one sessions. Prospective Applicants are welcome to attend group sessions based on Topic Area and/or one-on-one sessions with MassCEC. Group sessions will be scheduled by MassCEC and the date and time for each Topic Area session will be posted in advance to MassCEC's website. Sign up for Office Hours here.

## FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANT SUPPORT

Applicants will have the opportunity to apply for a Financial Assistance Grant that will offer eligible Applicants Seven Thousand Five Hundred Dollars ($7,500) in funding to aid in the application process. MassCEC will accept Financial Assistance Grant applications from nonprofits, community-based organizations ("CBOs"), and towns and municipalities. MassCEC will have ultimate discretion over

applicant eligibility. **To apply for Financial Assistance, please complete the Financial Assistance Grant Application and submit via email to [CleanTransportation@MassCEC.com](mailto:CleanTransportation@MassCEC.com).**

Grants will be split into two (2) payments:

1. Two Thousand Dollars ($2,000) paid following execution of a Letter of Agreement with MassCEC governing the terms and conditions of the Financial Assistance Grants (document to be provided upon Financial Assistance Application submission); and
2. Five Thousand Five Hundred Dollars ($5,500) paid upon MassCEC's receipt of a completed ACT4All 2 Application.

Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis until **May 15, 2024**, two (2) weeks before the ACT4All 2 application deadline.

## PRE-APPLICATION CONCEPT PAPER

Applicants will have the opportunity to submit a Pre-Application Concept Paper for MassCEC's review prior to the Application submission deadline. The Pre-Application Concept Paper provides the opportunity for Applicant Teams to solicit MassCEC feedback on project concepts and determine base level eligibility for Topic Areas.

**To submit a Pre-Application Concept Paper, please complete the Pre-Application Concept Paper and send via email to [CleanTransportation@MassCEC.com](mailto:CleanTransportation@MassCEC.com).** MassCEC will provide written feedback on Pre-Application Concept Papers within two (2) weeks of Concept Paper submission. One (1) Concept Paper per Applicant or Applicant Team may be submitted. Concept Papers will be accepted on a rolling basis until **April 30, 2024**, one month before the ACT4All 2 Application deadline.

Feedback will not indicate the likelihood that an Applicant will be selected for funding. Addressing some or all review feedback, comments, or suggestions <u>does not</u> guarantee selection for ACT4All 2. MassCEC reserves the right to fund or not fund any Application to the Program.

## 10. GENERAL REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS CONDITIONS

### 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 ("Public Records Law"). Applicant acknowledges and agrees that any documentary material, data, or other information submitted to MassCEC is presumed to be public records. An exemption to the Public Records Law may apply to certain records, including materials that fall under certain categories under a statutory or common law exemption, including the limited exemption at Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 23J, Section 2(k) regarding certain types of confidential information submitted to MassCEC by an applicant for any form of assistance. Applicant acknowledges and agrees that MassCEC, in its sole discretion, shall determine whether any particular document, material, data or other information is exempt from or subject to public disclosure. **Thus, MassCEC urges applicants to carefully consider what documents, materials, data and other information is submitted to MassCEC in connection with 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.

In line with Public Records Law requirements, MassCEC generally considers the following types of information as confidential:

- Proprietary information submitted as part of Attachment C: Project Workplan and Budget (including trade secrets and/or financial information described therein); and

- Certain personal information such as private email addresses and cell phone numbers.

## 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 Applicant Teams, cancel or modify the RFP in part or in its entirety, or change the application guidelines, when it is in its best interests.

This RFP has been distributed electronically using MassCEC's website. It is the responsibility of Applicant Teams 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 Applicant Teams who submit an application 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 either the Grant Agreement or the Services Agreement attached as Sample Agreements to this RFP, which will set forth the respective roles and responsibilities of the parties. The contract to be entered into between MassCEC and a selected Lead Applicant will address maintaining the confidentiality of any proprietary information.

## APPENDIX 1: PROJECT TOPIC AREA DESCRIPTIONS

### TOPIC 1: ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING STATION ACCESS

Access to EV charging infrastructure is a necessary component in advancing EV adoption across the Commonwealth. However, existing charging stations, and corresponding electric vehicles, are not equally accessible to residents. Early adopters of EVs are disproportionately higher income and homeowners who experience fewer barriers to EV ownership, namely access to a garage, driveway, or dedicated parking space ("private parking") to install charging. [11] There are many barriers to electric vehicle supply equipment ("EVSE") access for Priority Populations, including but not limited to:

- upfront cost of infrastructure;
- continuing cost of operation and maintenance;
- burdensome qualification and means-testing processes for incentive programs;
- unfamiliarity with the technology; and
- lack of access to private and public charging infrastructure.

Under this Topic Area, MassCEC seeks pilot projects that provide innovative, equitable, replicable, and scalable solutions to these challenges and effectively reach identified Priority Populations.

It is important to note that there are existing funding sources for EVSE hardware and infrastructure upgrades available through both the state and utilities. Projects under this Topic Area are **not intended to replace the Massachusetts Electric Vehicle Incentive Program ("MassEVIP"),**[12] **or the Utility led Make-Ready Program and EVSE incentive programs.**[13,14] Rather, MassCEC is interested in proposals that complement these programs and build capacity for Priority Populations to take advantage of this funding, if eligible, and ensure that they can successfully operate EVSE after purchase and installation. Successful Applicants will identify how their project will effectively and efficiently prioritize Priority Populations without undue restrictions or administrative burden.

### *Topic Area Goals*

Under this Topic Area, MassCEC seeks to maximize EV charger benefits in an equitable manner by demonstrating models of EVSE procurement and ownership that meet the goals below:

- Demonstrate innovative business or procurement models for EVSE ownership and operation that can be replicated and scaled across the state;
- Expand the user base and accessibility of EVSE, including increasing access for residents that face the largest barriers to EVSE and EV adoption and have been historically underserved;

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[11] See link for more information: https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1556831822000454

[12] See link for MassEVIP information: https://www.mass.gov/how-to/apply-for-massevip-multi-unit-dwelling-educational-campus-charging-incentives

[13] See link for Eversource programs: https://www.eversource.com/content/residential/save-money-energy/clean-energy-options/electric-vehicles/charging-stations

[14] See link for National Grid programs: https://www.nationalgridus.com/Residential-EV-Charging-Infrastructure-Program

- Demonstrate meaningful and thoughtful engagement with and inclusion of community-based organizations and Priority Population representatives through replicable community partnership models;
- Build capacity for property owners and managers to purchase and operate future EVSE independently and on a larger scale; and
- Demonstrate actualized benefits of EVSE adoption, such as quality of life benefits and air quality benefits, for Priority Populations.

### *Anticipated Priority Populations*

For the purposes of this Topic Area, Priority Populations may include but are not limited to:

- Low-income and moderate-income residents;
- Residents of public housing complexes;
- Residents of multi-unit dwellings;
- Residents in Environmental Justice Communities;
- Residents in Gateway Cities;
- Renters; and
- Other forms of housing developments in which residents do not have access to and/or decision-making power over private parking spaces.

### *Examples of Potential Projects*

Below are examples of projects that would meet the goals of this Topic Area. **An Applicant submitting a proposal replicating these project concepts WOULD NOT be guaranteed an award under ACT4All 2. Applicants are welcome to submit projects that are not represented here but still meet Topic Area goals.**

- **Minimize EVSE operation and maintenance costs at income-qualified housing through joint procurement.**
    - **Equitable:** Consultant assists a cohort of Community Development Corporation ("CDC") partners in EVSE procurement.
    - **Innovative:** Navigate a group-purchase model for EVSE, specifically focusing on reducing ongoing operation and maintenance through economies of scale. Additionally, train CDC staff to understand the ongoing staff requirements to ensure minimal down-time of equipment.
    - **Replicable/Scalable:** Builds capacity and models replicable regional or larger scale technical assistance while addressing potential hidden costs for funding-limited entities.

- **Guarantee EVSE utilization and revenue at housing authorities through EV carsharing and vehicle-to-grid technology.**

- o **Equitable:** A housing authority partners with an EV rideshare company and a vehicle-to-grid technology partner to bring accessible EVSE and EV services to low-income residents.
- o **Innovative:** Utilize MassEVIP and utility Make Ready funding to install EVSE. Pilot an EV rideshare program that ensures utilization of EVSE and takes advantage of cost savings and revenue available through utility off-peak charging incentive programs, which is then used to cover operations and maintenance after the end of the pilot project term.
- o **Replicable/Scalable:** Models an EVSE/EV business model that can be replicated and scaled at additional housing authorities and identifies an alternative revenue stream.

- **Demonstrate a community led EVSE installation project paired with a supplementary education and outreach campaign to promote EV and EVSE utilization.**
    - o **Equitable:** EVSE is installed at community-based organizations, facilities providing public services, and other community gathering spaces based on community input to increase EVSE accessibility for Priority Populations.
    - o **Innovative:** EVSE installations are paired with an educational campaign led or supported by EVSE site hosts to raise awareness for the infrastructure and educate the community on EV/EVSE operation.
    - o **Replicable/Scalable:** Models a community-led EVSE installation project in community-selected spaces while providing a complementary educational outreach and awareness campaign that can be replicated and scaled.

*Other Research Questions to Address in Proposed Projects*

- How can projects report on emissions benefits and quality-of-life benefits?
- How can increased access to EVSE facilitate EV use and adoption among low- and moderate-income individuals, renters, or residents without a dedicated parking space?
- How can the administrative burden of procuring and managing EVSE be mitigated? How can the process be simplified and streamlined?
- What training or services need to be in place to support staff members with limited EVSE experience in navigating EVSE procurement, installation, operation, and management?
- How can the challenges of operating and maintaining charging stations be addressed in the pilot project and in a scaled-up program?
- How can the project ensure EVSE utilization and in turn emissions reductions?

*Required Reporting & Metrics*

Applicants must include planned reporting on the following metrics in the proposals, at a minimum and if applicable:

- Number and locations of charging stations being operated and maintained;
- Estimated emissions benefits in metric tons of $CO_2$ equivalents ("MTCO$_2$e");

- Quality of life benefits (e.g., EVSE owner and resident cost savings, resident satisfaction, access to alternative modes of clean transportation, reduction in air and noise pollution);
- Workforce benefits (jobs created, staff trained);
- EVSE purchase, maintenance, and operation costs;
- Grid impacts (kWh consumed/day, kW max per site, demand management opportunities, state incentive program participation opportunities, demand response opportunities), if applicable;
- Vehicle miles traveled ("VMT"), if applicable;
- Leveraged funds; and
- Number of communities/residents served through the project.

## TOPIC 2: REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY DECARBONIZATION

To meet the ambitious climate goals of the Commonwealth's CECP, at least 27,000 medium- and heavy-duty EVs need to be operating on the road by 2030. However, as of 2022, Massachusetts had only 162 electric medium- and heavy-duty ("MHD") on-road vehicles registered, indicating a strong need to accelerate the transition to MHD zero-emission vehicles ("ZEVs").[15] To address this gap, Topic Area 2 aims to facilitate the decarbonization of Regional Transportation Authorities ("RTAs"), particularly those that serve EJCs, Gateway Cities, and/or Rural areas. Proposed projects should seek to reduce vehicle emissions associated with RTAs, expand access to clean transportation options for underserved and overburdened communities, and/or decrease reliance on single-occupancy vehicles. The goals of Topic Area 2 may also be met through Transportation Management Association ("TMA") decarbonization and development of mobility hubs.

Given the scale of potential ACT4All 2 awards and the availability of existing funding streams through the federal and state DOT, **MassCEC expects that Applicants will propose innovative project concepts or gap funding that complement, rather than duplicate other funding sources**. MassCEC is interested in projects that seek to decarbonize RTA fleets, expand clean transportation services, and/or demonstrate innovative clean transportation models that benefit Priority Populations and are scalable and replicable. Proposals may include one or multiple RTAs. Proposals under Topic Area 2 may also include funding for mechanic and operator training to prepare RTA staff for maintaining, operating, and charging MHD zero-emission vehicles.

### *Topic Area Goals*

Under this Topic Area, MassCEC seeks to demonstrate innovative models of RTA decarbonization and clean transportation access that meet the goals below:

- Demonstrate business or procurement models for RTA decarbonization and clean transportation options that can be replicated and scaled within the RTA and across the state;
- Demonstrate regional collaboration of RTAs;
- Expand access to clean transit options for communities that have been overburdened by transportation air pollution and/or underserved by diverse transportation options in the Commonwealth;
- Demonstrate meaningful and thoughtful engagement with community-based organizations and Priority Population representatives through community input and partnership models;
- Encourage innovative clean transportation solutions that may not be included in traditional RTA service;
- Build out the infrastructure needed to support RTA full fleet decarbonization;
- Provide decarbonization planning support and workforce training for RTAs to build capacity for and confidence in eventual full fleet decarbonization.

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[15] See Tracking CECP Implementation Dashboard here: https://www.mass.gov/info-details/massachusetts-clean-energy-and-climate-metrics

For the purposes of this Topic Area, Priority Populations may include, but are not limited to:

- Low- and moderate-income communities who would benefit from access to clean public transportation;
- Environmental Justice Communities;
- Gateway Cities;
- Rural communities who lack access to sufficient clean public transportation services or have limited transportation options; and
- Older adults and/or persons with disabilities that prevent them from operating a passenger vehicle.

*Examples of Potential Projects*

Below are examples of projects that would be eligible under this Topic Area. **An Applicant submitting a proposal replicating these project concepts WOULD NOT be guaranteed an award under ACT4All 2. Applicants are welcome to submit projects that are not represented here but still meet Topic Area goals.**

- **Provide equitable, clean, and community-responsive public transportation service via an on-demand electric shuttle or van service.**
  - **Equitable:** An RTA partners with a community-based organization to conduct outreach and gather feedback on transit needs in a Rural area.
  - **Innovative:** Based on community feedback, the RTA pilots an on-demand or paratransit electric shuttle or van service for Priority Populations in their service area.
  - **Replicable/Scalable:** Learnings are scalable across RTA service territory with imbedded data collection to support use case.

- **Pilot a community-driven mobility hub at an existing RTA transit stop to address transit accessibility through first-mile/last-mile solutions.**
  - **Equitable:** An RTA partners with a micromobility technology provider, EVSE manufacturer, and community-based organization or advocacy group to pilot a mobility hub at a community-selected RTA bus stop or transportation hub in an EJC or Gateway City.
  - **Innovative:** Based on community feedback, the project installs in-route EVSE for the RTA's electric buses alongside public access EVSE and a first-mile/last-mile micromobility solution, such as an e-bike share station.
  - **Replicable/Scalable:** This project pilots an innovative mobility hub solution that can be replicated across other locations within the RTA service territory or by other RTAs in the state.

- **Neighboring RTA collaboration to strategically site and install shared in-route EVSE infrastructure along RTA service territory borders.**
    - o **Equitable:** A few bordering RTAs partner to address electric transit accessibility along shared service territory borders for residents of EJCs and Gateway Cities.
    - o **Innovative:** Models collaboration between bordering RTAs and results in a regional study on in-route charging infrastructure needs along the borders of the RTA service territories. Based on the findings of the study, the RTAs partner with the utilities to install shared in-route EVSE at strategic locations in EJCs and Gateway Cities to extend the reach of electric transit to Priority Population residents.
    - o **Replicable/Scalable:** Encourages RTA collaboration and models shared in-route charging structures that can be replicated along additional RTA borders.

*Other Research Questions to Address in Proposed Projects*

- How can RTAs deploy innovative clean transportation solutions to address transit deserts and increase available clean transit options for Priority Populations in their service territories?
- What barriers need to be addressed for the project to be sustained independent of grant funding? How will the project continue operating after the end of the project term?
- How will this pilot project prioritize benefits to Priority Populations in the service area?
- How can projects report on emissions benefits and quality-of-life benefits? What are the metrics of success for RTA electrification projects (e.g., increases in ridership, reduced operational costs)?
- How can RTAs collaborate to strategically site regional EVSE infrastructure that would enable expanded electrified routes? What would be the ownership model for this infrastructure?
- What are the procurement opportunities (e.g., group procurement) and challenges (e.g., lack of supply) to RTA electrification and how can they be addressed in the pilot project? How could they be addressed in a larger-scale program?

*Required Reporting & Metrics*

Applicants must include planned reporting on the following metrics in the proposals, at a minimum and if applicable:

- Program throughput (number of ZEVs procured, EVSE procured, vehicle miles traveled ("VMT") number of communities served, number of average riders, transit mode shift);
- Emission benefits: magnitude of potential emissions reductions, timing of potential emissions reductions, and path to scale (GHGs as well as PM and NOx, noise pollution dB);
- Reduction in emissions in metric tons of $CO_2$ equivalents ("$MTCO_2e$") relative to project cost;
- Costs and savings (ZEV costs, EVSE costs, infrastructure and installation costs, maintenance costs, insurance costs, cost savings/revenue generated);
- Grid impacts (kWh consumed/day, kW max per site, planned and actual vehicle charge rate, vehicle load profiles, demand management opportunities, state incentive program participation opportunities, demand response opportunities), if applicable;

- Priority Population impacts (reduction in air and noise pollution, number of communities impacted by garage and route location, workforce benefits such as jobs created or employee upskilled); and
- Leveraged funds.

## TOPIC 3: EXPANDING ACCESS TO ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

MassCEC's 2023 Workforce Needs Assessment anticipates that the state's workforce will need to expand by 37%, or 29,700 jobs, by 2030 to meet the state's decarbonization goals.[16] The clean transportation sector is expected to account for 3,800 of these new jobs, representing a 117 percent growth rate, the largest rate among all clean energy technology sectors. This growth represents an enormous opportunity for the Commonwealth to be purposeful in shaping the quality and diversity of the future workforce.

Expanding access to the clean energy workforce involves providing resources and opportunities for individuals in underrepresented and Priority Populations to enter the workforce. These populations face amplified barriers to entry, ranging from early awareness of careers in the industry, unequal access to training opportunities, and obstacles in career advancement.[17] An equitable and just transition necessitates workforce strategies that provide training within existing fossil fuel communities and expands awareness, access, and engagement within communities that have been historically disadvantaged and overburdened.

MassCEC also supports a suite of broader, existing workforce programs that include the Equity Workforce and Capacity Grants and the Workforce Equity Training Implementation Grants. The grants made under Topic Area 3 are meant to support projects that may exceed the scope or budget of MassCEC's existing Workforce Development programs or might not be competitive under the Workforce Development Team's program selection criteria.  **MassCEC strongly recommends that teams applying to Topic Area 3 submit a Pre-Application Concept Paper and attend ACT4All 2 office hours to avoid overlap with the programs run by MassCEC's Workforce Team.**

### *Topic Area Goals*

MassCEC intends to encourage flexibility and creativity in pilot programs proposed under Topic Area 3. To that end, the central goal of this Topic Area is to increase access to clean transportation options and decrease existing burdens for Priority Populations.

MassCEC seeks proposals that expand, upskill, and increase access to economic opportunities in the Commonwealth. Successful proposals in this topic area will:

- Demonstrate scalable and replicable workforce models based on existing and anticipated needs within the Commonwealth; and
- Enhance the ability of existing workers or result in new and sustainable careers for historically disadvantaged and overburdened communities.

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[16] See the Massachusetts Clean Energy Workforce Needs Assessment
https://www.masscec.com/sites/default/files/documents/Powering%20the%20Future_A%20Massachusetts%20Clean%20Energy%20Workforce%20Needs%20Assessment_Final.pdf

[17] See the Massachusetts Clean Energy Workforce Needs Assessment
https://www.masscec.com/sites/default/files/documents/Powering%20the%20Future_A%20Massachusetts%20Clean%20Energy%20Workforce%20Needs%20Assessment_Final.pdf

*Anticipated Priority Populations*

For the purposes of this Topic Area, Priority Populations may include, but are not limited to:

- Low-and moderate-income communities who would benefit from access to clean transportation;
- Rural communities who lack access to sufficient clean public transportation services;
- Workers in fossil fuel industries that have transferable skills to electrification;
- Individuals in Environmental Justice Communities; and
- Individuals in Gateway Cities.

*Examples of Potential Projects*

Below are examples of projects that would be eligible under this Topic Area. **An Applicant submitting a proposal replicating these project concepts WOULD NOT be guaranteed an award under ACT4All 2. Applicants are welcome to submit projects that are not represented here but still meet Topic Area goals.**

- **A consultant develops an EVSE kiosk for dealerships, providing on-site salesforce training and car buyer resources.**
  - **Equity:** Consultant pilots training materials on car dealerships servicing low-income and Environmental Justice Communities.
  - **Innovative:** Consultant educates car salespeople on fundamentals of EV ownership and EVSE installation/access to better support EV consumers.
  - **Replicable:** Training materials created by the consultant can be utilized at multiple dealership locations while the administrative burden is reduced for future training locations.
- **A cohort of community colleges make a large one-time investment in demonstration electric vehicles and associated equipment to improve the quality of electric vehicle training courses.**
  - **Equity:** Students from Priority Populations enter the workforce with enhanced proficiency and may help attract more EVs in their communities;
  - **Innovative:** The new infrastructure increases the quality of the classes, thereby increasing the proficiency of the Commonwealth's workforce;
  - **Replicable:** Creates a model and presents learnings and use case data that are scalable at other community colleges.
- **A training institution invests in equipment that enhances the ability to train bicycle shop employees, community members, or students on how to repair e-bikes safely.**
  - **Equity:** New or upskilled employees from Priority Populations have higher earning potential or are better positioned to serve Priority Populations.
  - **Innovative:** The bike shop reduces the amount of time it takes for employees to learn how to repair e-bikes.
  - **Replicable:** The training institution writes a report for peer organizations detailing how the investment was effective.

*Other Research Questions to Address in Proposed Projects*

To inform a replicable and scaled-up program, Applicants must address how the proposed project will answer the following:

- How can the project fill an existing or future need within the clean transportation workforce?
- How can the project expand access, diversity, and inclusivity within the clean transportation workforce?
- How can the project monitor and verify benefits?
- How can the project ensure benefits are distributed to Priority Populations?
- How will the project improve the quality of life for Priority Population?
- How does this project meet a demonstrated need in the Commonwealth? What similar projects or programs exist?
- How can the project provide transportation to previously inaccessible jobsites and in turn expand access to economic opportunities?

*Required Reporting & Metrics*

Reporting and data collected from projects may include but are not limited to:

- Total number of training sessions conducted;
- Total number of people trained;
- Completion rate;
- Placement rates thirty (30) days after graduation;
- Retention Rate at six (6) months;
- Average Starting Wage; and
- Leveraged funds.

## TOPIC 4: OTHER

Under this Topic Area, MassCEC seeks demonstrations or pilots that support the Commonwealth achieving climate and equity goals that are not covered by the predefined Topic Areas. Projects should target the needs of Priority Populations not met by other Topic Areas or result in equitable emissions reductions in subsectors/methods unexplored in other Topic Areas. Eligibility under this Topic Area is at MassCEC's sole discretion. Questions on eligibility should be submitted by the question deadline in Section 8, above. **Applicants interested in this Topic Area are encouraged to attend office hours and/or submit a Pre-Application Concept Paper**.