Accelerating Clean Transportation For All Round 2 (ACT4All 2) Questions and Answers

as of May 16th, 2024

Funding:

1. What is the maximum funding available in this solicitation?
   a. Project awards will be a maximum of $1 million. However, an Applicant can submit a supplementary budget demonstrating the necessity for funding up to $1.5 million.
2. Is the maximum possible grant size $1.5 million per project per entity that applies to the program?
   a. Individual project awards are anticipated to be between $500,000 and $1 million. This funding is per application submitted by an Applicant Team. Applicant Teams can choose to additionally submit a supplementary budget demonstrating how the project would meaningfully change with a total budget of $1.5 million.
3. How many awards will be made in this round of funding?
   a. MassCEC anticipates making between 5 and 7 awards, but the number of awards is dependent on the applications received.
4. Will there be further rounds of ACT4All after ACT4All 2?
   a. At the moment, MassCEC does not have funding set aside for further rounds of the ACT4All program, although that may change in the future. We encourage interested parties to join our Mailing List (select "Clean Transportation") to be notified of future programming.
5. How will MassCEC decide to award the supplementary budget versus the standard $1 million funding cap for a project?
   a. Applicant Teams should apply for the supplementary budget if they feel that additional funding will make a *meaningful* difference in the outcome of the project (i.e. more Priority Populations served, more community-based organizations included in the Applicant Team, etc.). Applicant Teams should demonstrate the project's scalability and necessity for the additional funding in the project narrative. Applicants submitting a supplementary budget must also submit a budget workplan for the standard award level of up to $1 million. MassCEC will take both budget tables and the application materials into consideration. Submitting a supplementary budget does not guarantee an award at the higher funding amount. MassCEC has ultimate discretion over the total amount awarded to a team that applies for the supplementary budget.
6. What is the timing and distribution of awarded funding (e.g., are funds awarded based on completion of project milestones)? Could you please confirm that if this is a reimbursement based contract, does payment have to be paid by the organization prior to seeking reimbursement, or will an approved invoice be sufficient for payment?
   a. Funding is distributed on a milestone basis for completion of milestone deliverables. Applicants should propose a reasonable payment schedule in Attachment C – Project Workplan and Budget Template to ensure that funding is distributed as needed.

Awarded applicants will work with MassCEC during the contracting process to finalize the payment schedule.

7. For sites or regions that do not have sufficient existing incentive funds, what level of funding is MassCEC willing to provide?
    a. For sites that do not qualify for utility Make Ready funding, such as Municipal Light Plants, charging stations and installation costs would be considered as eligible expenses. All expenses should be detailed in Attachment C – Project Workplan and Budget Template.

Applicant Eligibility:

8. Can a Regional Planning Agency apply as a regional application with several municipalities?
    a. Yes. MassCEC encourages the formation of Applicant Teams for the ACT4All 2 Program.
9. Are churches with large social service programs eligible?
    a. Yes, churches are eligible to apply for ACT4All 2.
10. Are for-profit organizations/business excluded from applying to any specific Topic Area?
    a. No. All Topic Areas are open to all Applicants, including for-profit organizations and businesses. Only the Financial Assistance Grants are not open to for-profit entities.
11. If a municipality has already received a grant from MassCEC this year, is it eligible to apply to this program as well? If it is not eligible as a Lead Applicant, could it still participate as part of a project team?
    a. Any entity, regardless of previous awards made through MassCEC, is eligible to apply for the ACT4All 2 Program either as a Lead Applicant or as part of an Applicant Team. Project applications should be materially distinct from current projects funded by MassCEC.
12. Can organizations apply as a Lead Applicant and also be a sub-applicant on a different application?
    a. Yes, organizations can be part of multiple Applicant Teams and can be a Lead Applicant for applications and part of an Applicant Team for other applications.

Application Requirements:

13. In Attachment B – Project Narrative, 6. Applicant Team Commitment and Qualifications, please confirm that we can add rows for more than one staff member from the same organization.
    a. Yes, Applicants can add additional rows as necessary to list the full Applicant Team.
14. In Attachment B – Project Narrative, 6. Applicant Team Commitment and Qualifications, please confirm that each organization can have more than one response to "*Identify either individual's or organization's experience working with Priority Populations*" (one for each staff member identified).
    a. Yes, each organization can list Priority Population experience for each staff member, or once for the entire organization.
15. Regarding the Signed Letter of Intent, should Teams that have multiple Applicant Team Partners submit multiple letters of intent (signed by both the Lead Applicant and Applicant Team Partner), or does it need to be one letter (signed by the Lead Applicant and each of the Applicant Team Partners)?

a. Lead Applicants should submit one (1) Letter of Intent. This letter must be signed by each participating organization and must lay out each team member's roles and responsibilities, including a description of resources to be committed to the project.

Eligible Expenses:

16. Are vehicle leases available in this program?
    a. This will be determined on a case-by-case basis. Please attend our office hours to determine if vehicle leasing would be considered under ACT4All 2.
17. Can an RTA and partners get support for investigations?
    a. Because the goal of the program is to deploy and operate clean transportation technologies, MassCEC's funding cannot be used solely for conducting a study or investigation. However, a study or investigation can be one part of a larger project that includes technology deployment.
18. Can this funding be used for Development Engineering?
    a. All technologies funded under this Program must have reached a Technology Readiness Level of 9 and a Commercial Readiness Level of at least 7. MassCEC's goal is to fund pilot and demonstration projects rather than technology development. For additional questions on this, please visit MassCEC's ACT4All 2 Office Hours.
19. Can the funding be used to install EV chargers at multiple locations?
    a. Yes. Successful project ideas are innovative, replicable, scalable, and equitable. To that effect, projects with multiple proposed site locations would be eligible for funding.
20. Is the purchase of an EV an eligible expense under ACT4All 2?
    a. The purchase of an EV would be an eligible cost under ACT4All 2; however, the application should identify if and how the project will be innovative in its use of the EV and related EVSE.
21. Are there any restrictions on types of equipment or services that can be funded?
    a. All technologies included in an application must have achieved a Technology Readiness Level of 9 and a Commercial Readiness Level of at least 7[1]. Please see Section 5 and 6 of the RFP for additional project and budget requirements and eligibility.
22. What terms will MassCEC allow for when paying external contractors? For example, can the Lead Applicant reimburse or pay a building owner directly for work being done by a contractor at their site?
    a. So long as work being done, i.e. by a contractor at a building site, is for the purposes of the ACT4All 2 project, then yes, the Lead Applicant can reimburse for that work. In most cases, to qualify for inclusion in the project budget or use as a cost share, an expense must:
        i. Be uniquely associated with the clean transportation component of the proposed project;
        ii. Be justified as to why it is a necessary and reasonable part of the project; and
        iii. Be incurred after the execution of an agreement with MassCEC.

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

Financial Assistance Grants:

23. Can teams that include for-profit businesses apply for the Financial Assistance Grant?
    a. For-profit entities are not eligible to receive a Financial Assistance Grant, however, non-profits, community-based organizations (CBOs), and municipalities and towns are eligible. Because individual entities submit Financial Assistance Grant applications and not Applicant Teams, only the entity applying for Financial Assistance must be eligible. More than one Applicant Team member may submit a Financial Assistance Grant application.

24. Can Applicants include hours spent completing a Pre-Application Concept Paper as part of the budget for the Financial Assistance Grants?
    a. Applicants are not required to submit a budget for the Financial Assistance Grants, however they will be required to submit a statement of need. The funds are intended to support any resources needed to develop an ACT4All 2 application and can be spent at the organization's discretion.

25. Does the Lead Applicant for the Financial Assistance Grant have to be the same Lead Applicant in the case of an Applicant Team?
    a. No. The organization that applies for a Financial Assistance Grant does not have to be the Lead Applicant for the ACT4All 2 proposal. For example, a CBO may partner with a for-profit organization on a project and apply for a Financial Assistance Grant, but the CBO does not have to be the Lead Applicant.

26. My company is located in a state other than MA. Am I still eligible for a financial assistance grant?
    a. Yes, any eligible entity (non-profits, community-based organizations, and towns and municipalities) can apply for a financial assistance grant regardless of company location. However, the proposed project must be located within Massachusetts.

27. Are there any other documents you would require outside of the financial assistance grant application? Does MassCEC need 501c3 tax ID number?
    a. No additional documentation is necessary to apply for a financial assistance grant.

28. Does being awarded the Financial Assistance Grant bind organizations to submitting an application as a Lead Applicant? Would organizations be eligible for the Financial Assistance Grant if they plan to be sub-applicants on another organization's application?
    a. See answer to Question 17

Additional Resources:

29. Will MassCEC be providing a list of organizations for potential Applicants to team or connect with?
    a. MassCEC will not be providing a comprehensive list of interested parties. We encourage potential applicants to join and introduce themselves on the ACT4All 2 Slack Channel to network with other interested Applicants and organizations to find partners. Interested

Applicants are also encouraged to attend Topic Area-specific Group Networking sessions.

RTA Decarbonization Session
Expanding Access to Economic Opportunities Session
EV Charging Station Access Session

30. Are there examples of past applications that were accepted that are available to use as resources?
    a. Please refer to the ACT4All Round 1 Press Release for a full list of previously awarded projects and their funding amounts.

Stakeholder Engagement:

31. Has MassCEC communicated with regional transport agencies regarding electric buses etc.?
    a. Yes, MassCEC conducted extensive stakeholder outreach, including to RTAs, prior to releasing this solicitation.

Project Eligibility:

32. Can Applicants submit more than one application under the same topic?
    a. Applicants may be part of more than one Applicant Team and can submit applications for more than one Topic Area, or multiple applications under the same Topic Area. Please note that all applications and project ideas should be distinct from one another if applying under the same Topic Area.
33. For how long are EVSE or transit buses required to operate?
    a. Awarded Applicants will be expected to provide 12 months of data and reporting from initial technology/training/project launch. However, Applicants should demonstrate if/how they plan to sustain the project at the end of the grant term.
34. Is there a program implementation manual specific for EV chargers?
    a. There is no statewide implementation manual for EV charging, however, the development of such a manual could be included in the scope of a potential project. Additionally, all charging station projects are expected to adhere to the Massachusetts State Appliance Standards Database (SASD) for eligible charging stations.
35. For projects that involve the installation of EV chargers, are there any equipment or networking requirements?
    a. There are no specific EV charging station requirements for ACT4All 2 projects, however, if the project intends to utilize the utility Make-Ready funding, then applicants should check to see if there are any EV charging station requirements under that program.
36. The Q & A response dated 4/26/24 mentions that all charging station projects are expected to adhere to the MA State Appliance Standards Database (SASD) for eligible charging stations. Is it a requirement that vendors be on the database? If a vendor isn't currently listed, should they initiate the process to be added to the MA SASD?
    a. Per Massachusetts state regulations, all charging stations installed in the state after January 1, 2023 must be listed on the MA SASD. All charging stations deployed through ACT4All 2 pilot projects must be certified through the MA SASD. If a vendor is not

currently certified, they should take the necessary steps to certify the proposed technology prior to submitting an ACT4All 2 application, or should include documentation that they have initiated the certification process.