Heat Pump & HVAC Training Network for Community Colleges RFP

Pre-Application Webinar

January 29, 2026

MASSACHUSETTS CLEAN ENERGY CENTER®

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Strategy, External Engagement and Research

Student and Young Adult Pathways

Training and Small Business Support

AGENDA

- Background Information
- Eligibility
- Program Strands
- Funding Details
- Selection Criteria
- Application Process & Timeline
- Office Hours & Networking
- Additional Resources
- Q & A Throughout

Community College Heat Pump & HVAC Training Network RFP Overview

SCAN FOR RFP

$6.6 MILLION IN AVAILABLE FUNDING*

ESTABLISH OR UPGRADE HEAT PUMP AND HVAC TRAINING CENTERS

ADD STAFF CAPACITY AND TRAINING SEATS

ESTABLISH AND GROW WRAPAROUND AND RETENTION SUPPORTS

BUILD AND SCALE CAREER PATHWAYS IN HEAT PUMP AND HVAC CLIMATE-CRITICAL FIELDS

**additional funding may be added as resources become available*

MASSCEC'S WORK BY FOCUS AREA

EMERGING CLIMATETECH

We help new climate-focused businesses grow faster by backing a vibrant community of researchers, startups, and established industry players - creating an ecosystem where they connect and thrive.

ACCELERATING DECARBONIZATION

We tackle barriers to widespread use of clean energy and climate technology in buildings, transportation, and the grid.

LARGE SCALE DEPLOYMENT: OFFSHORE ENERGY

We're building a cutting-edge offshore energy industry, marshaling world-class ports while addressing supply chain and workforce development challenges.

CLEAN ENERGY & CLIMATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

We're growing a diverse and talented clean energy workforce by supporting a dynamic network of community-based organizations, labor, training providers, schools and employers committed to a sustainable future for all.

Background Information:
HVAC & Heat Pump Training Network for Community Colleges

Funding Source: Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources and MassCEC Equity Workforce Funding

Initial Context: The Administration has identified Community College training as a priority area.

Program Goal: Build Capacity for the Massachusetts Community College System to provide expanded access to Heat Pump training (Air and Ground Source) for both new entrants and incumbent workers.

Additional Background Information:

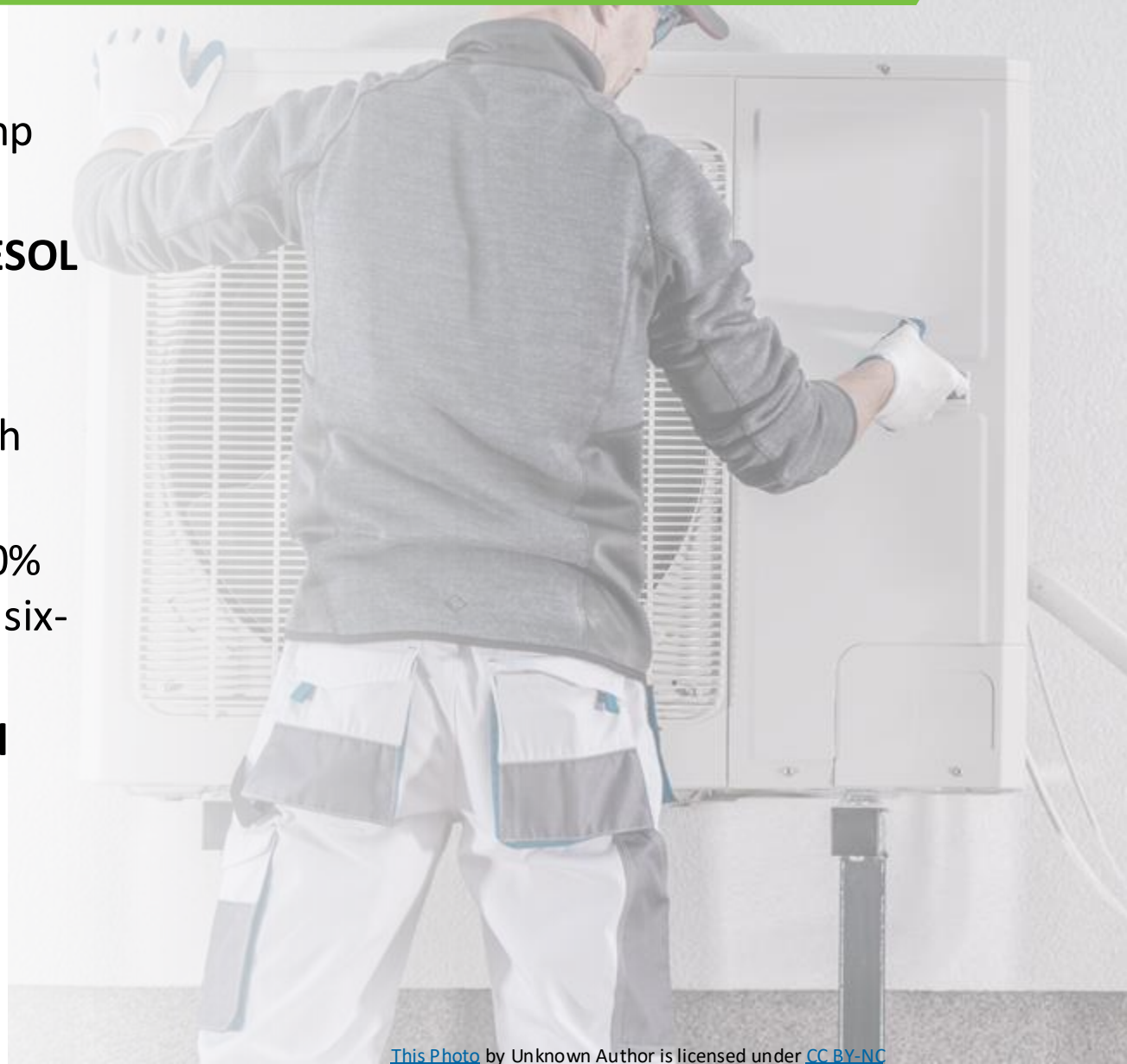
- Massachusetts has set a goal for 500,000 Heat Pump Installations by 2030.
- Lack of HVAC/R technicians are a “severe risk” for bottlenecks in heat pump Installations.
- Proven Model: Maine surpassed its heat pump install goal of 100,000 two years ahead of schedule and leveraged its community college system to train the workforce needed for rapid expansion

Key Program Features

- **Expanded capacity** for statewide HVAC and Heat Pump installation workforce development, emphasizing increased accessibility and alignment with industry needs.
- **A standardized universal heat pump curriculum** and a common HVAC instructional framework
- **Flexibility to support costs associated with both credit-bearing and non-credit training programs**
- **Robust technical assistance by MassCEC** to guide planning and initial implementation by grantees
- Contribution of MassCEC Equity Workforce funding to provide **additional support services, including contextualized English language instruction and support**
- Follow-on opportunities to **leverage federal DOE Training for Residential Energy Contractors formula funding** to cover costs associated with the North American Technician Excellence (NATE) Certification

Anticipated Program Goals and Outcomes

- Development of a **clear framework of industry expectations and priorities** for HVAC and heat pump training.
- Creation of **standardized heat pump training and ESOL HVAC curricular resources** to support both new entrants and incumbent workers.
- Support for at **least 500 additional learners** through new and expanded programs.
- Achievement of **key program outcomes:** at least 80% completion rate, 70% job placement rate, and 60% six-month job retention rate.
- Increase in the Community College system's **annual capacity** for hands-on HVAC training
- Program **sustainability and scaling** plan

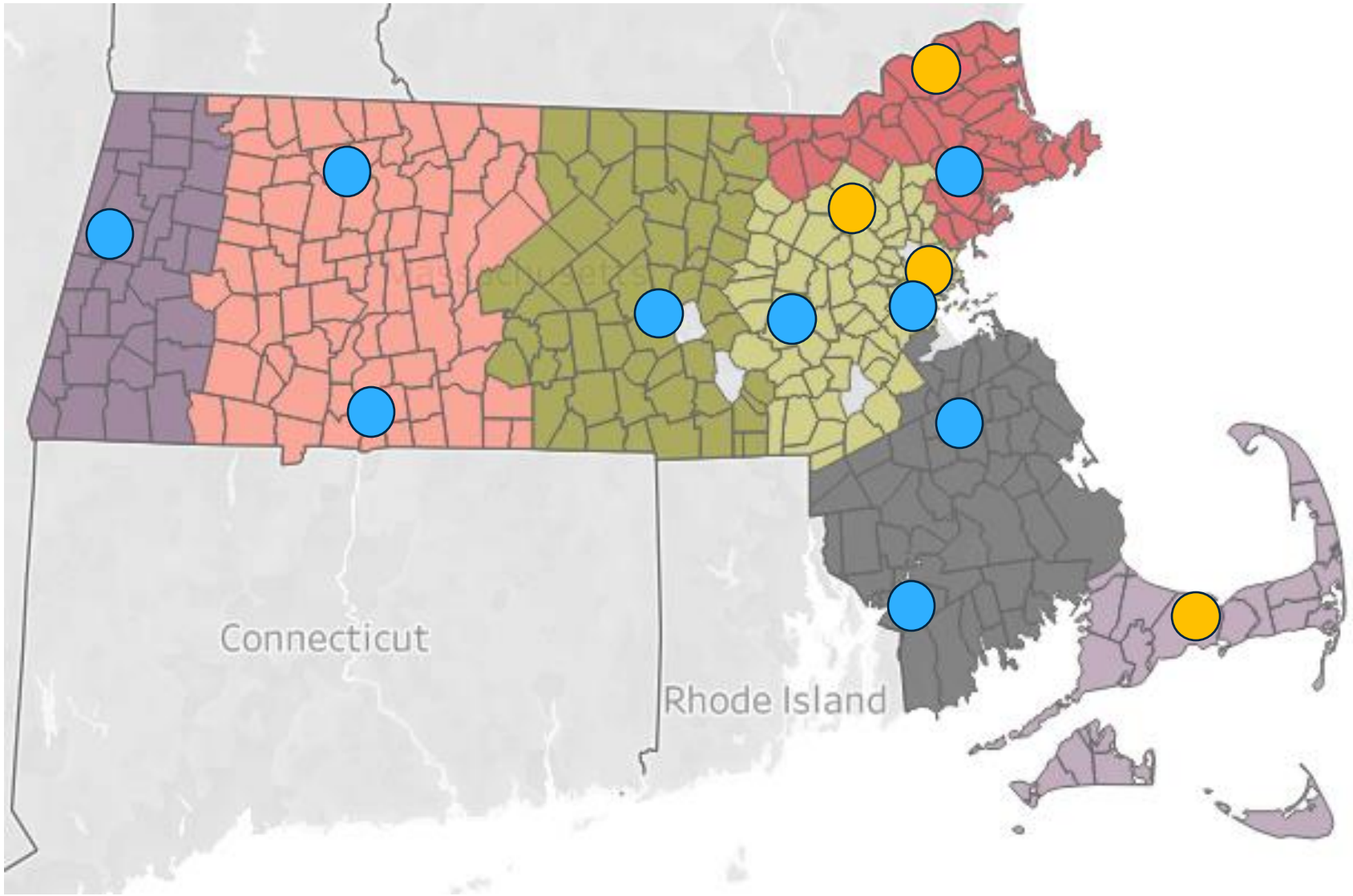


Heat Pump and HVAC Training Network Today

- Planning Awards
- Implementation Awards

Region

- Berkshires
- Cape and Islands
- Central Mass
- Greater Boston
- Northeast
- Pioneer Valley
- Southeast



Q&A

Who is eligible to apply?

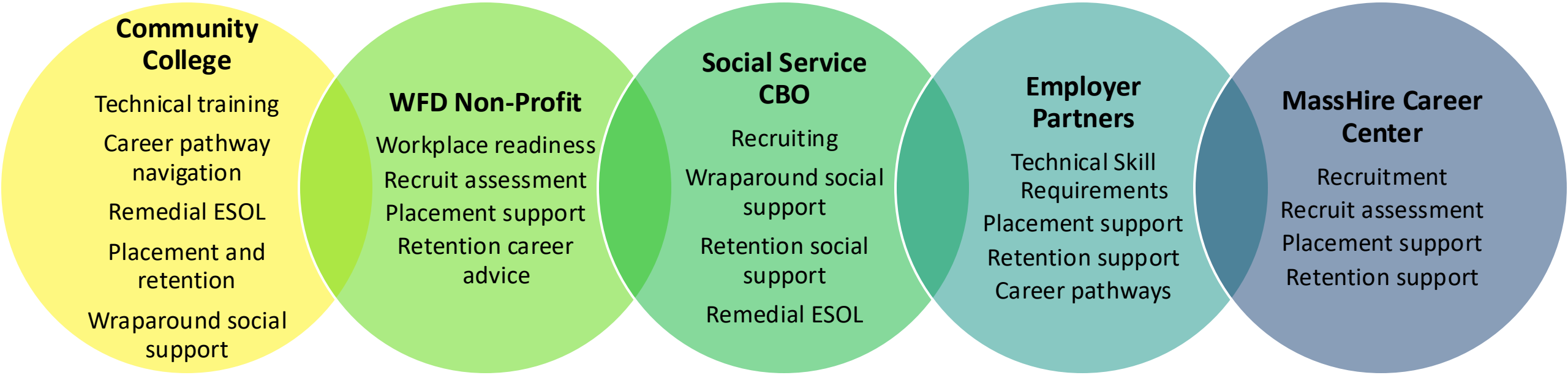
Partnerships are strongly encouraged and can provide a range of expertise and experience to deliver a comprehensive proposal. If applying in partnership, one party should take on the role of leading the application team ("Lead Applicant").

Applicants must be one of the fifteen (15) Massachusetts Community Colleges

- All other private and non-profit education and training organizations interested in building HVAC and heat pump training capacity may apply for funding through one of MassCEC's active solicitations
- Applicants will be expected to disclose any potential conflicts of interest created through partnerships or subcontracts with related family members, current and recent employers, or any other involved parties that may create such conflicts of interest

Page 3 of the RFP

Example of Applicant Partnerships



Thoughtful partnerships strengthen proposals

Program Strands

Strand A: Implementation Grants (Planning Conversion Applicants)
Award Range: $100,000 - $1,200,000
Planning Award Duration: Twelve (12) to Thirty (30) Months*

*An additional year of post-program monitoring and metrics tracking is required, so Applicants should plan and budget for that

Strand B: Additional Training Seats (Prior Implementation Grantees)
Award Range: Up to $500,000**
Planning Award Duration: Twelve (12) to Twenty-Four (24) Months*

**With a maximum per participant tuition/ course fee coverage of $9,000 for new entrant participants and $2,300 for upskilling participants

Cost Share: Not required, but encouraged

Supported by MassCEC technical assistance throughout the process

Strand A: Program Components

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

For CCs without an existing training center to purchase and install equipment, upgrade existing spaces, and develop curriculum. CCs must demonstrate that the training centers are equipped to provide instruction on heat pumps and mini-split installation.

For CCs with an existing training center to expand training capacity, especially as it related to heat pump and mini-split installation.

Component B: Staffing Capacity Support

To add key staff capacity to support the build out or expansion of HVAC training centers and associated programming.

*Funding for a case manager to support participants through initial intake, training, placement, and retention can come from both Component B and Component D.

Strand A: Program Components

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

Programs pursuing non-credit offerings with at least 80% of the technical skills training delivered in-person can apply for funding to cover thirty (30) or more new entrant training seats at a maximum cost of $9,000 per seat. Applicants may also apply to serve a mix of new entrants and upskilling participants.

**Community colleges that offer credit-bearing programs can support tuition costs through MassReconnect and MassEducate.*

Component D: Wrap-around Support Services Funding

To provide participants with stipends, address barriers such as childcare costs, fees to get a driver's license, programs to help individuals get a GED, etc.

Page **4-5** of the RFP for Potential Barriers

Strand B: Program Components

Strand B applicants can apply under <u>all</u> Components except *Component A: Equipment, Installation, and Program Design Costs to Establish or Upgrade HVAC and Heat Pump Training Centers*

Community Colleges interested in **equipment/infrastructure support** should apply under the open Climate-Critical Training, Equipment, and Infrastructure Grants RFP

<u>Deadlines:</u>
February 18, 2026
May 1, 2026

Applicants interested in planning grants should not apply under this solicitation

Community Colleges interested in **planning grants** should apply under the open Equity Training Implementation Grants RFP as a Strand C applicant

<u>Deadlines:</u>
February 18, 2026
May 1, 2026

Training Grants Allocation Chart (For Strand A)

Please see Attachment 6 of the RFP for Specific College Allocation Chart	**Component A:** Equipment, Installation, Sitework, & Program Planning Allocation	**Component A:** Equipment Upgrade Allocation	**Component B:** Staff Capacity Support Allocation	**Component C:** Training Seat Tuition Coverage Allocation	**Component D:** Support Service Allocation	**Total Initial Allocation**
CC <u>without</u> a hands-on HVAC training program	$550,000	NA	$140,000	$255,000	$135,000	$1,080,000
CC <u>with</u> a non-credit program	NA	$80,000	$140,000	$255,000	$135,000	$610,000
CC <u>with</u> a credit-bearing program	NA	$80,000	$140,000	NA	$135,000	$355,000

Colleges may also request up to an additional $200,000 in funding as long as the total proposal does not exceed $1,200,000. Relevant indirect rates and costs will be an allowable cost within relevant categories. The training and support service amounts are intended to support at least 30 learners.

Activities that ARE Eligible for Funding include, but are not limited to:

- **Staff time** devoted to the program for general operating activities needed to launch and continue the program *(ex. outreach and recruitment, wraparound support services, retention services, etc.)*
- **Subcontracting** with training providers for curriculum delivery or with vendors providing specific services
- Purchasing or leasing of **venue space**, and **other direct startup costs** needed for training delivery
- Training **stipends and subsidized wages**
- **Supporting services** to address barrier reduction *(ex. transportation reimbursements, daycare subsidies, etc.)*

Note that Strand B applicants have no specific component allocations but should follow guidance for eligible funding uses

Activities that are NOT Eligible for Funding include, but are not limited to:

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

Q&A

Strand A & Strand B - Training Outcomes

SUCCESSFUL APPLICATIONS WILL INCLUDE.....

Milestone(s) that indicate successful completion for individual participants (i.e. Offramps)

- Attainment of industry recognized credentials/licenses
- Case management that successfully removes barriers for participants
- Placement into a clean energy occupation
- Job retention for at least one year post program completion
- Increased wages for Incumbent Workers

Description of plans to engage relevant partners to provide offramps to participants

- Employer partners – comprehensive placement strategy that includes dedicated job development staff through the leader applicant or partner (letters of support/MOUs provided where applicable)

Strand A – Equipment Outcomes

SUCCESSFUL APPLICATIONS WILL INCLUDE...

Initial Vision of Equipment

- Description of capacity building supported by equipment funding
- Steps to select, procure, and integrate new capacity

Impact of Equipment

- Description of how equipment will improve your program
- Existing training/curriculum/training opportunities
- Identify programmatic gaps and needs that will be addressed

Key Considerations in Overall Program Design

Identifying and Planning for Appropriate Training Space

- **Suggested Space requirements:** A minimum space of **1,500 square feet** is needed to create a functional training lab, and in most cases **2,000 square feet** or larger is preferable.
- **Electrical specifications:** A **200-amp electrical panel** is recommended. In most cases, the lab will require at least 220 single-phase power.
  - Some simulators and equipment can run on a standard 120-volt outlets can provide, but in other cases, specific equipment may necessitate 3-phase power and greater voltage.

Industry-recognized Credentials and Training

- Must include training and support for **EPA 608** and a **state-approved hot-works safety training program**.
- Programs are strongly encouraged to include the **North American Technician Excellence (NATE) certification**.

Designing and Delivering Quality Training

- Applicants are encouraged to reach out to **MassCEC** and the **Massachusetts Association of Community Colleges (MACC)** to discuss the availability of quality curricula to use as basis for customization.
- MassCEC is contracted with a consultant to develop **universal curriculum** for heat pump and mini-split technologies to be used as a resource.
- Skills training should be informed by **employer input** and **differentiated to meet the learning needs** of the participants.

Page **7-9** of the RFP

Key Considerations in Overall Program Design

Providing Transparent Career Fit Counseling

- Potential recruits should be **interested and able to work in the target occupation.**
- Recruits should be aware of the **job description, duties, work environment, requirements, salary range, and potential career pathway** before application and enrollment.

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Designing for Inclusivity and Addressing Barriers

- Applicants are encouraged to consider engaging individuals from **EJ Neighborhoods and Low-Income Neighborhoods, current and former Fossil Fuel workers, members of Federally-recognized and State-acknowledged tribes, and underrepresented populations** in program design.
- Design and budget for programs that offer **strong support services** with clear intake assessment and case management practices.
- Explore strategic usage of **training stipends**, **paid on-the-job learning**, and **initial wage subsidies** combined with **ongoing mentorship and support services**.

Designing for Success

- Strong new entrant workforce programs typically strive for at least **80% participant completion**, **70% placement** of participants in target occupation within thirty (30) days, and **60% retention** of participants in target occupations twelve (12) months after initial placement.
- In cases where proposed target rates are lower than 80%/70%/60%, applicants are encouraged to detail strategies and support that can lead to increased outcomes over the grant period.

Key Considerations in Overall Program Design

Employer and Industry Engagement

- Applicants should maximize engagement with employer partners across the program, designing for their involvement at multiple junctures and using their guidance to ensure that proposed programming or equipment and infrastructure investment align with current industry demands

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Outcomes, Budget, Leveraged Resources, Sustainability

- Applicant proposes strong outcomes, a program design that can achieve these outcomes, and data collection practices that support effective outcome tracking
- Applicant proposes milestones, timelines, and resource allocations that align with programming and participant needs
- Proposed budget results in a reasonable per-participant cost for the type of intensity of programming (i.e. training new entrants versus training incumbent workers)

Equipment Investment's Impact on Training (Strand A)

- Proposed program contributes to increasing the availability, quality, or effectiveness of Heat Pump and HVAC training
- Proposed program maximizes the increase of climate-critical skilled workers by increasing the number of students able to participate in an existing program or creating a new program to meet demonstrated demand
- Proposed program demonstrates commitment to increasing access to environmental justice and disadvantaged communities, and populations historically underrepresented in the target occupation

Q&A

Application Process

Review the RFP and all forms and attachments to understand the opportunity, requirements, and MassCEC's objectives.

Attend MassCEC informational webinar, office hours, and/or utilize other informational resources offered.

Contact MassCEC with questions and/or to discuss your idea(s) via email at HVACTrainingNetwork@masscec.com.

Submit all completed forms and attachments, adhering to word limits, format requirements, and other instructions listed within the RFP and each attachment, by email to HVACTrainingNetwork@masscec.com by the deadline with "Community College Heat Pump and HVAC Training Grant Application" in the subject line.

Application Deadlines

Strand A

March 18, 2026 @11:59pm

Strand B

Rolling through **May 15, 2027**

Application Packet

A COMPLETED APPLICATION PACKET INCLUDES:

- **Attachment 1:** Authorized Applicant Signature and Acceptance Form
- **Attachment 2:** Application Form
- **Attachment 3:** Proposed Program Budget and Schedule
- **Attachment 4:** Sample Cost-Reimbursement Grant Agreement
- **Attachment 5:** Sample Progress Report
- **Attachment 6:** Maximum Allocation Chart

Responses must adhere to the **instructions** within each attachment.

Attachments 1 and 2 must be submitted as separate documents in PDF or Word format.

Attachment 3 must be submitted as an Excel file with all tabs filled out.

At least two Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) or Letters of Support from employer partners must be attached and may be submitted attached to Attachment 2 or as separate documents.

Additional attachments will **not** be considered during review and scoring.

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Attachment 3: Proposed Program Budget and Schedule

THE FOLLOWING TABS OF ATTACHMENT 3 MUST BE COMPLETED:

- **Program Budget**
  - Personnel Costs & Fringe
  - Direct Programmatic Costs
  - Indirect Costs – *Please provide an explanation if different from the federal de minimus and submit documentation. Also include information about how your indirect is calculated.*
  - Matching Funding (optional)
  - Please provide narrative explanations
- **Proposed Project Schedule:** Please refer to the 'Example Project Schedule' included on that tab.
- **Go or No-Go:** Includes metrics for participants enrolled, program completion rate, placement rate within thirty (30) days of program completion, retention rate at six (6) months of placement, and average starting wage. Metrics broken out by cohort.

Example Project Schedule:

Timeline	Phase
May 2024	Contract Initiation
May 2024-July 2024	Program and Marketing Materials
April 2024-August 2024	Recruitment and outreach for FY25
September 2024-May 2025	Cohort 1 (FY25) Training
March 2025-June 2025	Employment Placement for FY25 students
April 2025-January 2026	Retention Services and Tracking of FY25 Cohort
March 2025-June 2025	Recruitment and outreach for FY26
September 2025-May 2026	Cohort 2 (FY26) Training

Example:

Cohort	Participants Enrolled	Completion Rate	Placement Rate within 30 days of completion	Retention Rate at 6 months	Average Starting Wage
1	30	24 (80%)	21 (70%)	18 (60%)	$50,000
2	30	24 (80%)	21 (70%)	18 (60%)	$50,000
3	30	24 (80%)	21 (70%)	18 (60%)	$50,000

Application Timeline

RFP Release	**January 8, 2026**
Questions Due via HVACTrainingNetwork@masscec.com & Answers Posted to MassCEC Website	Ongoing through March 18, 2026 Ongoing through May 15, 2027
Pre-Application Webinar	January 29, 2026, 1-2 PM
Pre-Application Office Hours	Tuesday, February 10, 2026, at 12PM Thursday, February 19, 2026, at 5:30 PM Tuesday, March 10, 2026, at 12PM
Proposals Due	**March 18, 2026**, by 11:59pm (Strand A) **May 15, 2027,** by 11:59pm (Strand B, rolling)
Additional Applicant Questions / Interviews	As needed
Notification of Award	June 2026 if received by March 18, 2026, Twelve (12) weeks from submission for rolling applications
Contracting of Awardees	Four (4) to six (6) months from deadline applied

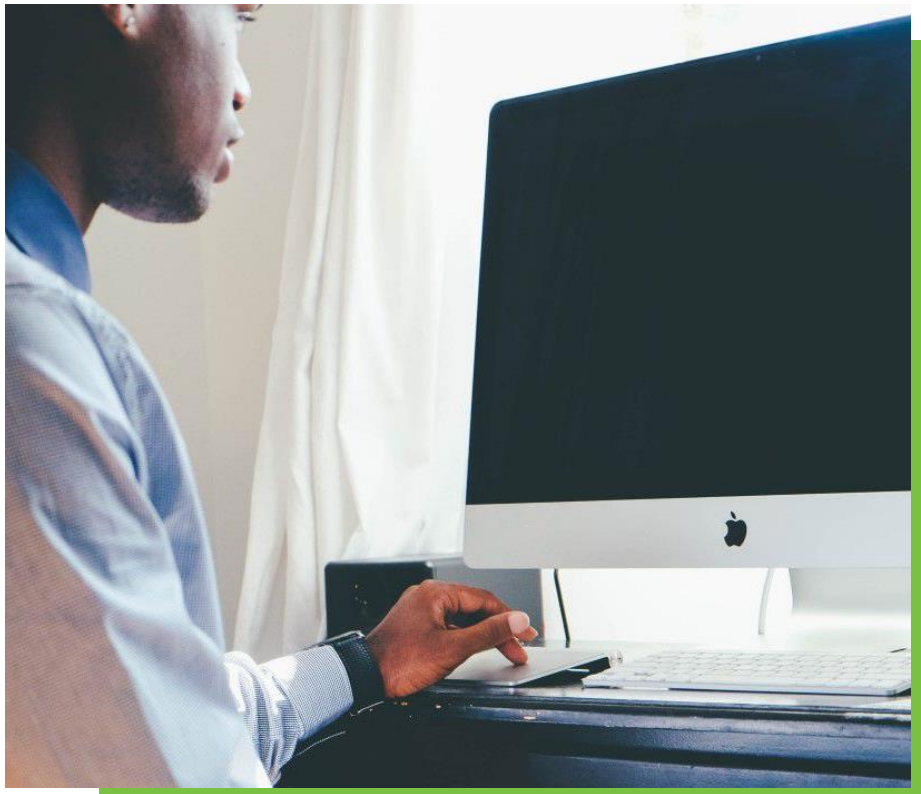
Office Hours & Networking

OFFICE HOURS

Details + Zoom Links are available on the Heat Pump and HVAC Training Network Funding Page

Upcoming Office Hours:

February 10, 2026, 12-1 PM (Zoom registration link)
February 19, 2026, 5:30-6:30PM (Zoom registration link)
March 10, 2026, 12-1 PM (Zoom registration link)



- Join anytime during the one-hour block (drop-in/drop-out model)
- Ask questions and discuss your specific proposals
- Meet other potential applicants to form partnerships

Q&A

Additional Opportunities

Clean Energy Internship Program

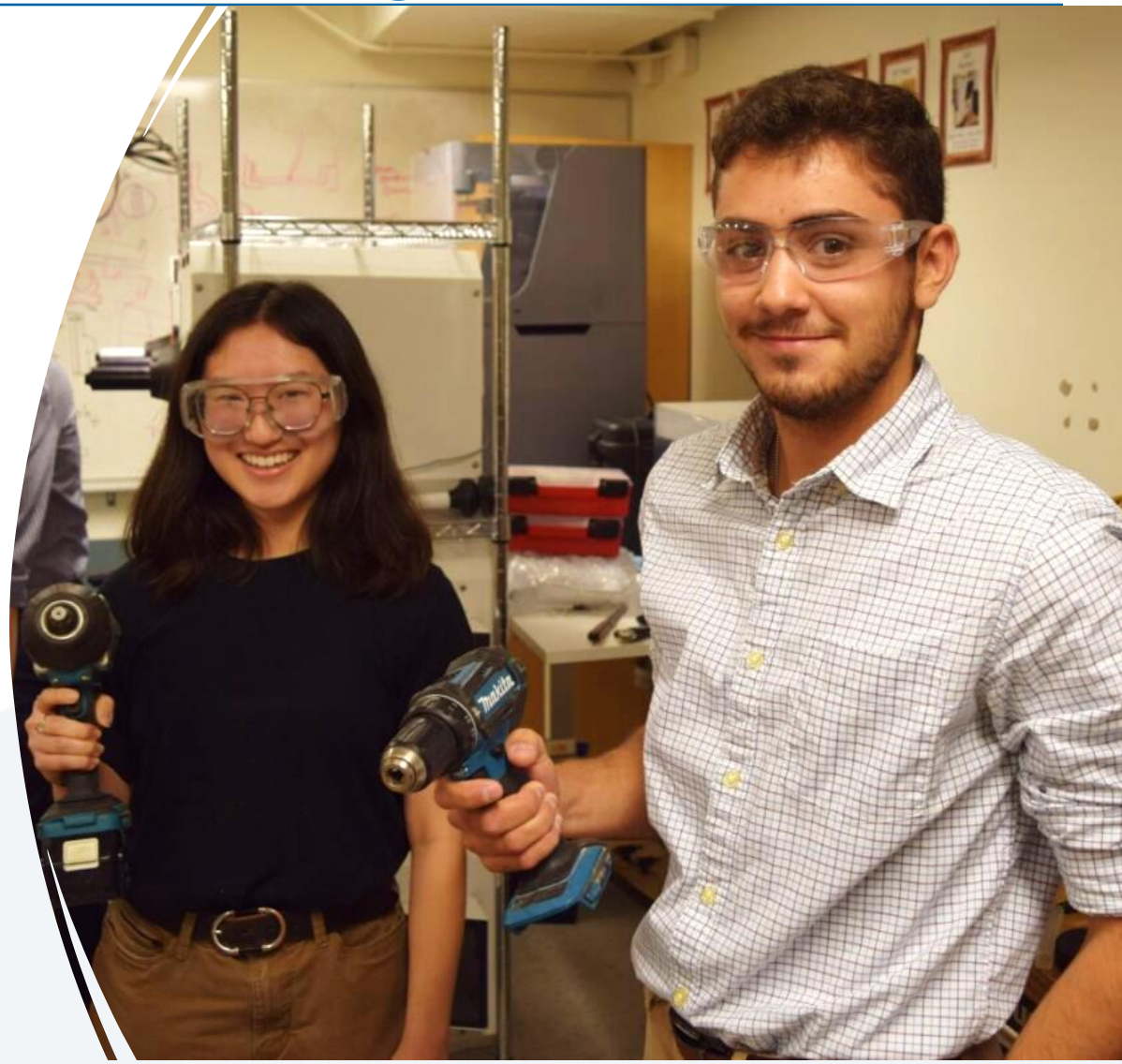
- Tap into a dedicated, enthusiastic workforce that is committed to learning about the clean energy industry.
- Employ students across different majors and training programs.
- MassCEC reimburses for 12 weeks of an intern's work.
- Employers can be reimbursed up to $18 per hour, or up to $4,230 per intern in fall/spring and $8,640 in summer.
- Interns can turn into hires!

Gain valuable work and training experience through the

Construction, Installation, and Maintenance Program

- Vocational high school, After Dark, CTI students, and participants of MassCEC-approved programs are eligible to participate.
- Participants receive valuable paid on-the-job training and work experience as they begin their careers in the fast-growing clean energy sector.
- Get paid for work during the academic year and through the summer.

- Clean energy employers (including construction firms) receive reimbursement for wages (for up to **$8,640** per participant)
- Scan to learn more!



Workforce Training and Small Business Support RFPs

MASSACHUSETTS CLEAN ENERGY CENTER®

MA Residents / Incumbent Workers

Climate-Critical Workforce Training, Equipment, and Infrastructure

Up to $800,000

- Support MA residents with **Career Pathway Training** or **Incumbent Workers** with upskilling
- Funds eligible for **Equipment and Infrastructure**
- Increase **Trainer Capacity**

Deadlines:
February 18, 2026
May 1, 2026

Priority Populations

(EJ Neighborhoods, Fossil Fuel Workers, Federal recognized/State-acknowledged Tribes, MWBEs)

Equity Workforce Training for Job Seekers and Adult Learners

Up to $1.2 Million

- Support individuals from priority populations with **Career Pathway Training**
- Support **Training Preparedness and Pre-Apprenticeships for Adult**
- **Planning or Capacity** to prepare for implementation

Deadlines:
February 18, 2026
May 1, 2026

Climate-Critical Underrepresented Business Support (CUBS)

Up to $800,000

- Support Underrepresented Businesses (**e.g. MWBEs**)
- Core Services, Sector-Specific Services, **Procurement Navigation**
- **Regional Hub and Spoke** Model

Deadline:
April 17, 2026

Community College Heat Pump and HVAC Training Network RFP Webinar

Thank You

Questions can be sent to:
HVACTrainingNetwork@masscec.com