



NEMC PROPEL Grant Program Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) Q&A

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This document contains answers to questions submitted during the June 10, 2025 Informational Webinar and via email.

Go to PROPEL Program website for all NOFO detail and rolling deadlines:

<https://nemicroelectronics.org/PROPEL-program>

1. ELIGIBILITY

• **Who is eligible to apply?**

To be eligible, an applicant must be a company registered to do business in the United States. The company must have 100 or fewer employees. Additionally, applicants must be members of the Northeast Microelectronics Coalition (NEMC) Hub at the time of application submission. Please refer to the NEMC website for more information regarding membership <https://nemicroelectronics.org/membership>.

• **Are companies that have received a previous PROPEL grant ineligible to apply?**

Previous awardees are eligible to apply if the requested funds apply to products or projects that were not covered by previous PROPEL Grant awards. During the review process, PROPEL awardees will be assessed for their use of the prior award(s). Note, while previous PROPEL grant awardees are eligible to apply, award priority will be given to first-time applicants to the PROPEL program.

• **Does our project need to fall into a specific technology area?**

Yes, the project must align with one of the six Microelectronics Commons Technology Areas: <https://www.cto.mil/ct/microelectronics/commons/>

- Commercial Leap-Ahead Technologies

- 5G/6G Communications
- Artificial Intelligence (AI) Hardware
- Electromagnetic Warfare
- Secure Edge/Internet of Things (IoT)
- Quantum Technology

2. APPLICATION PROCESS AND DEADLINES

• **What is the deadline for proposal submission?**

The PROPEL Program operates on a rolling basis with multiple review cycles in 2025. The deadline for the first cycle is July 8, 2025, at 11:59 PM EST. Subsequent deadlines are planned for September and December 2025, and additional windows may be added contingent on funding availability.

• **If we submit to a later window, is there a risk that the funds will have run out?**

Yes. Applications are reviewed in batches after each submission window deadline. Submission windows are subject to change depending on the funds awarded per round. The program may close once all available funds have been awarded.

• **What is the required timeline for becoming a member of the NEMC Hub?**

Your company must have submitted an application for NEMC Hub membership by the time you submit your PROPEL grant application.

• **Can we submit an application in one window and, if not funded, have it considered for a later window?**

An application that is not selected for an award in one cycle will not be automatically carried over and reconsidered. You must formally resubmit the application in a subsequent cycle.

- **What is the page limit for the proposal?**

The recommended page limit is 1-2 pages for the proposal. This excludes the budget template, W9, and vendor quotes which will be uploaded as attachments in the application.

- **Can we get feedback on our application before we officially submit it?**

No, a formal preview of applications is not available. However, you may submit clarifying questions about the program requirements to proposals@masstech.org.

- **Where should we send additional questions?**

All inquiries must be sent to the official email address: proposals@masstech.org with the following subject line: "Questions – NOFO No. 2025-NEMC-03".

3. FUNDING AND USE OF FUNDS

- **What is the maximum award amount?**

The award total is not to exceed \$200,000, with a maximum of \$100,000 for manufacturing services and a maximum of \$100,000 for operations services.

- **Is the grant a lump sum or a reimbursement?**

The grant is structured as a reimbursement. Awardees must first incur and pay the service provider for eligible project expenses and then submit invoices with proof of payment to MassTech for reimbursement.

- **How can the grant funding be used?**

Grant funds must be used to pay for services from third-party vendors or providers. The funds cannot be used for the applicant's internal costs or self-performance (e.g., employee salaries, internal equipment). Eligible expenses include, but are not limited to, costs for prototype development at a foundry, characterization

services, testing, or other specialized third-party services that advance the project.

- **Is there a cost-share or matching requirement?**

Yes, there is a required cost share that depends on the size of the applicant company:

- Companies with 50 or fewer full-time equivalent (FTE) employees must provide a 25% match. The grant will reimburse up to 75% of eligible project costs.
- Companies with 51 to 100 FTEs must provide a 50% match. The grant will reimburse up to 50% of eligible project costs.

- **What can be counted toward the cost share?**

The cost share must be a cash contribution from the applicant company toward the total eligible project costs. It is the portion of the third-party invoice that the applicant pays itself and is not reimbursed by the grant.

- **Can funds be used for services paid for before the grant award?**

Services are eligible for reimbursement as of the applicant's proposal submission date. Services that have been invoiced or paid for and completed prior to the applicant's proposal submission date are not eligible for reimbursement with PROPEL grant funds.

Applicants may, at their own risk, choose to pay for eligible services after the applicant's proposal submission date; applicant, however, assumes risk of all costs if they are not selected for an award. If a deposit on a service is a commitment to purchase, deposits made prior to the applicant's proposal submission date are not eligible for reimbursement.

Grant funded expenses must be incurred after the applicant's proposal submission date and within 15 months from that date.

- **Are there specific service or license providers applicants are required to use to be eligible for this grant?**

No, all services selected must be included in the eligible expense list, but applicants can select any third-party professional service or license provider to provide those services. Preference will be given to applicants working with service providers that are NEMC members, but this is not a requirement.

- **Do the third-party service providers have to be located within any specific geographic area?**

No, there are no geographic restrictions on the location of third-party service providers.

Applicants are encouraged to use Northeast-based vendors when possible, but may use other vendors if the required capability is not available within the Northeast.

all must be addressed in a revised proposal. Feedback may be given at NEMC's discretion.

- **What is required after the grant is awarded?**
Awardees must execute a grant agreement with MassTech and will be required to submit regular progress and financial reports throughout the 15-month grant period.

4. SCOPE OF PROPOSALS

- **Can a proposal include multiple activities?**

Yes, a single application can include requests for funding for multiple, distinct project activities (e.g., using two different third-party vendors for separate tasks), provided the total request does not exceed \$200,000 (with a maximum of \$100,000 for manufacturing services and a maximum of \$100,000 for operations services) and all activities are clearly defined.

- **Can a company submit more than one application?**

A company is limited to one submitted or under review proposal at a time. Selected applicants are limited to one PROPEL award, so the proposal should include all relevant requests.

If the proposal is not selected for funding, it may be resubmitted in a subsequent window. If the applicant has been notified of deficiencies,