Amendment 5

PROPEL Grant Solicitation

Notice of Funding Opportunity No. 2025-NEMC-03

Posted October 9, 2026

I. The last paragraph in Section 2.2.2 (Eligible Expenses) of the NOFO is deleted in its entirety and is replaced with the following:

Grant funded expenses must be incurred after the submission window deadline and prior to the contract end date. Contracts will typically be 12 months in length and awardees may maintain one (1) active contract awarded under this NOFO at any given time. Eligible services that have been invoiced or paid for and completed prior to the closing date of the applicant's submission window are not eligible for reimbursement with PROPEL grant funds. Applicants may, at their own risk, choose to pay for eligible services after the closing date of the submission window; however, Applicant assumes risk of all costs if it is not selected for an award. If a deposit on a service is a commitment to purchase, deposits made prior to the closing date of the submission window are not eligible for reimbursement.

2. Section 4.1 (General Information) of the NOFO is modified by deleting subsection (9) in its entirety and replacing it with the following:

9. MassTech reserves the right to amend the Agreement at any time prior to execution.

Grant Solicitation for PROPEL

NOFO No. 2025-NEMC-03

(as amended 10/9/2026)

Massachusetts Technology Collaborative

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http://www.masstech.org

Procurement Team Leader:	**Marcelle Durrenberger**
Date Issued:	**5/28/2025**
Informational Webinar:	**6/10/2025**
Questions Due for 1st Q&A File:	**6/12/2025**
Answers Posted in 1st Q&A File:	**6/17/2025**
Questions Due for Updated Q&A File:	**Rolling**
Answers Posted in Updated Q&A File:	**Rolling**
Applications Due:	**Rolling**
1st Submission Deadline (optional):	**7/8/2025**

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

The Northeast Microelectronics Coalition Hub, a division of the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative ("Mass Tech Collaborative" or "MassTech") is issuing this Grant Solicitation for PROPEL, (NOFO No.2025-NEMC-03) (the “Solicitation” or “Notice of Funding Opportunity [NOFO]”) to solicit responses from qualified companies (“Applicants”) interested in receiving grant funding to advance manufacturing and/or operations (the "Project"). Applicants will be competing against each other for grant funding and the submissions of all Applicants shall be compared and evaluated pursuant to the evaluation criteria set forth in this NOFO.

MassTech will be the contracting entity on behalf of the Northeast Microelectronics Coalition Hub (NEMC) for the purposes of this NOFO, and (except where the specific context warrants otherwise), the Northeast Microelectronics Coalition Hub and Mass Tech Collaborative are collectively referred to as Mass Tech Collaborative or MassTech.

1.2 Mass Tech Collaborative and NEMC

The Massachusetts Technology Collaborative is an independent public instrumentality of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts chartered by the Commonwealth to serve as a catalyst for growing its innovation economy. MassTech brings together leaders from industry, academia, and government to advance technology-focused solutions that lead to economic growth, job creation, and public benefits in Massachusetts. For additional information about MassTech and its programs and initiatives, please visit the MassTech website at www.masstech.org.

The NEMC Hub is a network of 250+ organizations, including commercial and defense companies, leading academic institutions, Federally Funded Research & Development Centers (FFRDCs), and startups concentrated in eight Northeast states: Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont, New Jersey, and New York. Established in 2023, the NEMC Hub is one of eight regional Microelectronics Commons Hubs acting on a shared mission to expand the nation’s global leadership in microelectronics and accelerate domestic semiconductor prototyping. As a division of MassTech, the NEMC Hub fosters a vibrant, connected ecosystem to provide sustainable lab-to-fab enablement, boost education and workforce development, and spur new jobs.

For more information about the NEMC Hub and its programs and activities, please visit the website at https://nemicroelectronics.org.

2. THE GRANT

2.1 Grant Overview

To develop a nascent semiconductor invention into a technology that can be used by widely typically necessitates a decade or more in time, requires capital investments of more than $100M per technology, and falls outside the timeframe that private capital investors will consider. To enable the growth of such new ideas into transformative technologies, as part of a broader initiative, the NEMC Hub is launching the next round of its PROPEL Program to support startups and small companies. This support will help reduce the expertise and capital needed to advance novel technologies, maturing them to a point where

venture capital or commercial entities are more able to invest in them.

A variety of existing programs, services, and resources presently form a network of support for startups in the Northeast. However, more must be done to enable this network to assist an even greater number of deep-tech ventures in launching and overcoming the high costs of scaling their technologies. The NEMC Hub will augment existing options and develop new resources through the PROPEL Program.

The PROPEL Program gives NEMC Hub members with 100 or fewer employees access to grant funds to cover up to 75% of the costs associated with the utilization of various lab-to-fab manufacturing services and third party operations services as outlined below. Grants to individual companies under this program shall not exceed $200,000 for the duration of the project, with the project duration capped at 15 months.

2.2 Grant Requirements and Guidance

2.2.1 Eligible Applicants

To be eligible to receive a PROPEL grant, Applicant organizations must meet the following criteria:

1. Organizations must be a NEMC Hub member.
2. Organizations must have 100 or fewer employees.
    a. Organizations with 50 or fewer employees are eligible to receive a grant subsidy of 75% of the cost of utilizing the service or license provider. 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.
    b. Organizations with 51-100 employees are eligible to receive a grant subsidy of 50% of the cost of utilizing the service or license provider. 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.
3. Organizations must have made $5 Million or less in revenue in the prior year. The “prior year” is defined as the 12 month period prior to the submission deadline.
4. Organizations who have received prior PROPEL manufacturing and/or operations grant(s) will be considered for funding under this NOFO subject to approved use of prior funds. Preference will be given to applicants who have not received prior PROPEL grants.

Preference will be given to proposing organizations and providers headquartered in Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont, New Jersey, and New York. Work must be conducted by a professionally run service provider that can produce invoices.

2.2.2 Eligible Expenses

- **Manufacturing Development**: Grants may be used to fund third party service providers for the following:
    - Prototype Fabrication services
    - Prototype Packaging services
    - Prototype Testing and Analysis services
- **Operations Development**: Grants may be used to fund third party service

providers for the following:

- Design Services
- Patent services: e.g., drafting and filing of patents
- EDA software & training fees: e.g., software licenses
- Cybersecurity provider services: e.g., assessments, software licenses, etc.

Notes:

- Reimbursement for IP technology licenses paid to third parties (e.g., fees paid to universities for licenses under their patents) is not allowed.
- Applicants can request grant funds to cover up to 12 months of a software license, regardless of license duration. Perpetual licenses are not approved expenses.

Grant funded expenses must be incurred after the submission window deadline and prior to the contract end date. Contracts will typically be 12 months in length and awardees may maintain one (1) active contract awarded under this NOFO at any given time. Eligible services that have been invoiced or paid for and completed prior to the closing date of the applicant's submission window are not eligible for reimbursement with PROPEL grant funds. Applicants may, at their own risk, choose to pay for eligible services after the closing date of the submission window; however, Applicant assumes risk of all costs if it is not selected for an award. If a deposit on a service is a commitment to purchase, deposits made prior to the closing date of the submission window are not eligible for reimbursement.

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2.2.3 NEMC Hub & Project Alignment

Projects must meet the following requirements:

- Startup projects are required to support defense or dual use applications, and align with one or more of the Microelectronics Commons six technology areas: 5G/6G, AI Hardware, Commercial Leap Ahead, Electromagnetic Warfare, Secure Edge, and Quantum Technology
- Applicants must demonstrate that they are advancing the goals of the NEMC Hub and lab-to-fab technology transition
- NEMC-Draper Technical Advisory Services - Application-specific integrated circuit (ASIC) design, multi-project wafer (MPW) readiness and backend packaging advisory services must be provided through the NEMC-Draper Technical Advisory Services. For questions and to submit an advisory service request, visit the website **HERE**.
- NEMC Technical Concierge Program – Fabrication services must be provided by organizations in the Technical Concierge program. See the PROPEL application form to review participating organizations.

3. APPLICATION PROCESS AND OVERVIEW

3.1 Application Process

Applicants are cautioned to read this NOFO carefully and to conform to its requirements. Failure to comply with the requirements of this NOFO may serve as grounds for rejection of an Application.

Applications may be submitted to MassTech on a rolling basis, meaning applications can be submitted at any time while the solicitation is open.

The submission windows are maintained on the NEMC website HERE.

All applications submitted in a window will begin review at the same time, preference will not be given to applications submitted at an early date in the submission window. See section 3.4 for details on submission timing.

All Applications must be completed and submitted electronically HERE. The proposal summary should be 1-2 pages and must include the following information:

1. **Overview**: Provide a brief overview of the company, the company stage, and summarizes the problem the company is trying to solve.
2. **Technology Innovation & Alignment:** Describe the technology, why it is innovative, and the technology's current state of development. Describe how the technology aligns with the **Microelectronic Commons** areas (see Section 2.2.3).
3. **Project Impact**: Outline the potential impact of the technology on new and existing markets, customers, knowledge creation, and on the microelectronics ecosystem.
5. **Proposed Work**: Describe what manufacturing and operations services the grant would be applied to and the reasons for those selected services. Be as detailed as possible.
6. **Funding Impact:** Describe how the funding could impact or accelerate the company's lab-to-fab transition. Describe how the funding could impact other types of company & technology progress.
7. **Budget**: In the application form, upload a completed budget template and the service provider price quotes supporting the budget.

As a public entity, MassTech is subject to the Massachusetts Public Records Law (set forth at Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 66). Therefore, any and all responses, Applications, information, and documentation submitted to MassTech in response to this NOFO cannot be returned to the Applicant and may be subject to public disclosure. There are very limited and narrow exceptions to disclosure under the Public Records Law. If an Applicant wishes to have MassTech treat certain information or documentation as confidential, the Applicant must submit a written request to MassTech's General Counsel's office no later than 5:00 p.m. ten (10) business days prior to the required date of Application submission. The request must precisely identify the information and/or documentation that is the subject of the request and provide a detailed explanation supporting the application of the statutory exemption(s) from the public records cited by the Applicant. The General Counsel will issue a written determination within five (5) business days of receipt of the written request. If the General Counsel approves the request, the Applicant shall clearly label the relevant information and/or documentation as "CONFIDENTIAL" in the Application. Any statements in an Application reserving any confidentiality or privacy rights that is inconsistent with these requirements and procedures will be disregarded.

By submitting a Proposal, Applicant certifies that they (1) are in compliance with the terms, conditions, and specifications contained in this NOFO, (2) acknowledges and understands the procedures for handling materials submitted to MassTech as set forth above, (3) agrees to be bound by those procedures, and (4) agrees that MassTech shall not be liable under any circumstances for the disclosure of any materials submitted to MassTech pursuant to this NOFO or upon the Applicant's selection.

3.2 Proposal Evaluation Criteria

NEMC will review each proposal using the criteria listed below.

1. **Eligibility & Completeness:** Proposals will be evaluated against the listed eligibility requirements and will be reviewed for completeness
2. **Grant & NEMC Hub Goals Alignment Quality**: Proposals will be evaluated on alignment with the manufacturing and operations grant description, the M**icroelectronics Commons** tech areas, lab to fab transition, and requirements listed in section 2.2.3.
   .
3. **Technology Innovation**: Proposals will be evaluated on the innovativeness of the project
4. **Project Impact**: Proposals will be evaluated for potential impact on new and existing markets, customers, knowledge creation, and the existing microelectronics ecosystem.
5. **Project Feasibility**: Proposals will be assessed for clarity and feasibility of the project. Proposals will include identified services, reasoning for the proposed grant uses, and budget.
6. **Budget Soundness**: Budget will be evaluated for its soundness and if it indicates a commitment to a successful outcome.

The order of these factors does not generally denote relative importance. The goal of this NOFO is to select and enter into an Agreement with the Applicant (s) that will most closely align with MassTech's goals in the publication of this NOFO. MassTech reserves the right to consider such other relevant factors as it deems appropriate.

3.3 Intellectual Property and Contracting

Successful Applicants will be required to enter into a NEMC Sub-performer Agreement with MassTech. Because awards involve the disbursement of funds originating from U.S. Government sources, all awardees will be subject to the Supplemental Intellectual Property & Patent Rights Agreement ("SIPA") attached as an exhibit to the NEMC Sub-performer Agreement. Applicants are cautioned to review the Agreement carefully.

The SIPA does not affect an awardee's existing intellectual property rights, and MassTech does not require that awardees deliver technical data, trade secrets, confidential commercial or technical information, or other intellectual property as part of its performance under an award.

3.4 Application Timeframe

The application process will proceed according to the following schedule. The target dates are subject to change. Therefore, Applicants are encouraged to check MassTech's website frequently for schedule updates.

Applications may be submitted to MassTech on a rolling basis and will be reviewed at least two times per year while the solicitation remains open. Submission windows are maintained on the NEMC website

HERE, the first submission window deadline is July 8, 2025 at 11:59pm.All applications that are submitted before the listed deadlines will move into review at the same time, no preference will be given to applications submitted earlier in the window. As soon as one window closes, the next window is open to receive applications.

Task:	Date:
NOFO Released	**5/28/2025**
Informational Webinar	**6/10/2025 @ 11:00 AM ET**
Questions Due for 1st Q&A File	**6/12/2025 @ 5 PM ET**
Answer Posted in 1st Q&A File	**6/17/2025**
Questions Due for Updated Q&A File	**Rolling***
Answers Posted in Updated Q&A File	**Rolling***
Applications Due	**Rolling***
1st Submission Window Deadline (optional)	**7/8/2025 @ 11:59 PM ET**

*Rolling Tasks can be completed at any time while the solicitation is open. See 3.5 for details on the Questions & Answers Process.

3.5 Questions

Questions regarding this NOFO must be submitted by electronic mail to proposals@masstech.org with the following Subject Line: "Questions – NOFO No. 2025-NEMC-03". All questions must be received by 5:00 p.m. EST 6/12/2025, as specified above, to be included in the first Q&A File posted on 6/17/2025. Responses to all questions received will be posted on or before the above date to the MassTech website. Questions can be submitted on a rolling basis while the PROPEL program remains open. New questions and answers will be incorporated into the Q&A document on the MassTech website as needed on a rolling basis.

3.6 Informational Webinar

An informational webinar will be held on 6/10/2025 at 11:00 AM. Potential Applicants interested in participating in the informational session can register HERE. MassTech will post summary responses to procedural questions and issues addressed at the webinar to the MassTech website.

Additional Informational webinars or office hours will be hosted as needed and will be posted on the NEMC website.

4.0 GENERAL CONDITIONS

4.1 General Information

1. If an Application fails to meet any material terms, conditions, requirements or procedures, it may be deemed unresponsive and disqualified. MassTech reserves the right to waive omissions or irregularities that it determines to be not material.
2. This Solicitation, as may be amended from time to time by MassTech, does not commit MassTech to select any organization(s), award any grant funds pursuant to this Solicitation, or pay any costs incurred in responding to this Solicitation. MassTech reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to withdraw the Solicitation, to engage in preliminary discussions with prospective Applicants, to accept or reject any or all Applications received, to request supplemental or

clarifying information, to negotiate with any or all qualified Applicants, and to request modifications to Applications in accordance with negotiations, all to the same extent as if this were a Request for Information.

3. On matters related solely to this Solicitation that arise prior to an award decision by MassTech, Applicants shall limit communications with MassTech to the Procurement Team Leader and such other individuals as MassTech may designate from time to time. No other MassTech employee or representative is authorized to provide any information or respond to any questions or inquiries concerning this Solicitation. Applicants may contact the Procurement Team Leader for this Solicitation in the event this Solicitation is incomplete.
4. MassTech may provide reasonable accommodations, including the provision of materials in an alternative format, for Applicants with disabilities or other hardships. Applicants requiring accommodation shall submit requests in writing, with supporting documentation justifying the accommodation, to the Procurement Team Leader. MassTech reserves the right to grant or reject any request for accommodation.
5. Applicant's Application shall be treated by MassTech as an accurate statement of Applicant's capabilities and experience. Should any statement asserted by the Applicant prove to be inaccurate or inconsistent with the foregoing, such inaccuracy or inconsistency shall constitute sufficient cause for MassTech in its sole discretion to reject the Application and/or terminate of any resulting Agreement.
6. Costs that are not specifically identified in the Applicant's response and/or not specifically accepted by MassTech as part of the Agreement will not be compensated under any contract awarded pursuant to this Solicitation.
7. MassTech's prior approval is required for any subcontracted services under any Agreement entered into as a result of this Solicitation. The selected Applicant is responsible for the satisfactory performance and adequate oversight of its subcontractors. Subcontractors are required to meet the same requirements and are held to the same reimbursable cost standards as the selected Applicant.
8. Submitted responses must be valid in all respects for a minimum period of sixty (60) days after the deadline for submission.
9. MassTech reserves the right to amend the Agreement at any time prior to execution. ~~Applicants should review the Agreement as they are required to specify any exceptions to the Agreement and to make any suggested counterproposal in their Application. A failure to specify exceptions and/or counterproposals will be deemed an acceptance of the Agreement's general terms and conditions, and no subsequent negotiation of such provisions shall be permitted.~~

4.2 Posting of Modifications/Addenda to Solicitation

This Solicitation has been distributed electronically using the MassTech website. If MassTech determines that it is necessary to revise any part of this Solicitation, or if additional data is necessary to clarify any of its provisions, an addendum will be posted to the websites. It is the responsibility of each potential Applicant to check the MassTech website for any addenda or modifications to the Solicitation. MassTech accepts no liability and will provide no accommodation to Applicants who submit a response based on an out-of-date Solicitation.