



MTI Phase 0 Program Request for Proposals

The MTI Phase 0 Program is a component of the MTI Business Innovation Program, for use with the SBIR/STTR and other Federally-funded Research & Development (R&D) Programs.

Deadlines:

Applications accepted on a rolling basis, and at least 30 days in advance of targeted federal funding program solicitation deadline date.

Applicants will be notified of review decision within 10 business days of final submission.

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Application Requirements

Online submissions

- Must be one, complete PDF attachment uploaded via **MTI's Online Application Portal**
- Must be received at least 30 days prior to the SBIR/STTR/Federal R&D program deadline.

Application layout

- 1" margins, 12 pt. font, 8.5" x 11" pages
- One cover page may be included as Page 1 of the Application PDF attachment.
- All applications should be presented in a **narrative format** with the use of diagrams, data, tables and charts as needed. Hyperlinks are allowed within the application narrative.
- Applications **must be arranged in the order dictated by the Application Checklist** – See Application Checklist included here on Page 11.

Overview of MTI Business Innovation Program

Purpose

The Maine Technology Institute (MTI) was created by the State Legislature in 1999 to encourage, promote, stimulate and support research and development activity leading to the commercialization of new products and services in the State's technology-intensive industrial sectors to enhance the competitive position of those sectors and increase the likelihood that one or more of the sectors will support clusters of industrial activity and to create new jobs for Maine people (5 MRSA c. 407).

One of MTI's duties is to establish a program to provide technical assistance to small businesses based in Maine, pursuant to the federal Small Business Innovation Development Act of 1982, Public Law 97-219, and the latest reauthorization of the Small Business Reauthorization Act of 2000 (P.O. 106-554) with numerous extensions to 2017 to develop competitive Small Business Innovation Research and Small Business Technology Transfer (SBIR/STTR) applications for submission to any of the federal agencies participating in the SBIR/STTR program. In addition, MTI also supports Maine-based submissions of proposals to other Federally-funded R&D programs, including Broad Agency Announcements (BAAs).

Maine's Seven Targeted Technology Sectors

Projects funded by the MTI must fall within one of Maine's seven targeted technology sectors:

- Advanced Technologies for Forestry & Agriculture
- Composite Materials Technology
- Aquaculture and Marine Technology
- Environmental Technology
- Biotechnology
- Information Technology
- Precision Manufacturing Technology

Goals and Objectives

The Business Innovation Program consists of a suite of competitive grants, loans and equity investment for technology-based start-ups, established companies, and research institutions in Maine. Managed by MTI, an industry-led, state-funded, private non-profit organization, the program's suite of funding options addresses the "funding gap" that often hinders technologies from making the leap from development to commercialization.

The program consists of grants and investments that support early-stage foundational and planning activities, and helps Maine leverage external research and development (R&D) funding such as the SBIR/STTR Program, other Federal R&D programs, and equity capital. MTI funding helps leverage the capital required to develop and market new technologies that create a positive economic impact in Maine.

MTI offers Phase 0 Grants to foster and support the development of competitive proposals from Maine's applicants to Federal R&D programs, including SBIR/STTR Phase I and BAAs.

Confidentiality

MTI maintains the confidentiality of all applications and project reports submitted to MTI, with the exception of the general registration information, including company contact and the size and type of the funding request, as well as the applicant's non-confidential project summary. MTI's Board of Directors, Technology Board members, peer reviewers, other consultants, and staff are all required to sign and adhere to a non-disclosure agreement and conflict of interest policy statement – both forms are available at: www.mainetechnology.org

Phase 0 Grant Awards

Phase 0 Grant awards are provided on a rolling basis, for up to \$5,000 per application. Complete Phase 0 payment is contingent upon project completion, which includes the complete submission of the corresponding Federal R&D program application – MTI may require repayment of Phase 0 funding if a recipient fails to meet all the terms and conditions of the Phase 0 agreement.

Who is Eligible to Apply?

Maine entrepreneurs and Maine-based companies requesting funds to prepare SBIR/STTR Phase I applications and other Federal R&D program proposals, to develop, transfer and advance technologies into the commercial market, are all eligible to apply for Phase 0 funding. A Maine-based company is registered to do business in the State of Maine with definitive plans to create and/or retain quality jobs in Maine based upon the Federally-funded R&D project. Awardees must have a significant base of operations in Maine prior to signing their MTI Phase 0 Agreement. Eligible companies must fit one of the following examples:

- Maine-based companies with no more than 500 employees
- Maine-based entrepreneurs and start-ups
- Companies with a significant base of operations and location in Maine.
- Companies with no current Maine operations must demonstrate a clear plan to locate or base significant operations in Maine.

The corresponding federal funding proposal's research and development projects must:

- Demonstrate a high potential for economic benefit to Maine
- Fall within one of [Maine's targeted technology sectors](#)
- Comply with all the requirements of the Application Instructions

Eligible Projects

Phase 0 funds can be used for both internal and external direct costs associated with the preparation of applications to the SBIR/STTR Phase I and other Federal R&D programs. Eligible costs include: consultant services and/or external resource providers (ERP), consultant/ERP travel expenses, and costs to purchase information such as market reports. All Phase 0 projects must conclude with successful submission of a completed proposal to the targeted Federal R&D program agency, by that agency's stated deadline. At least two weeks prior to the Federal R&D program deadline, all Phase 0 recipients must also submit a draft proposal to the MTI Technical Assistance Program (TAP) team, working with the TAP team to improve the proposal prior to final submission.

Limitations and Restrictions

Only one Phase 0 application per applicant will be considered for each Federal R&D program submission cycle – **SBIR/STTR Phase II applicants are not eligible for MTI Phase 0 funding.**

BAA applicants are only eligible to apply for MTI Phase 0 funding after the company is invited to submit a full proposal. MTI's TAP team also offers BAA white paper support – contact Karen West at: cpmgmt@fairpoint.net or by phone at 207-845-2934 for more details.

Up to 50% of Phase 0 funds may be used to pay applicant personnel, at demonstrated rates not to exceed \$50 per hour. All applicants must also contribute an amount of time equal to or greater than that provided by paid consultants/ERPs.

Application Process

Step 1 – Participation in MTI's Technical Assistance Program (TAP)

Applicants interested in obtaining MTI Phase 0 funding must first contact Karen West, MTI's TAP Team manager, to discuss the proposed technology and fit to the Federal R&D program solicitations. MTI provides pro-bono support through the TAP process to ensure companies develop and submit competitive proposals that meet federal program requirements. The TAP team supports participating applicants from proposal development to final submission.

Step 2 – Receipt and Review of Complete Applications

Applications may now be submitted via MTI's Online Application Portal. To access our Online Portal, please email Lou Simms, MTI's Portfolio Associate at: Lsimms@mainetechnology.org.

All applications submitted online must be in the form of one, complete PDF attachment containing all items listed in the "Application Checklist" on the final page (11) of this Application Instructions document. The Application PDF should be itemized in the order of the Application Checklist.

Incomplete applications, applications that exceed page limits, and any other applications that do not comply with the guidelines identified in this Application Instructions document may not be accepted for review.

Step 3 – Phase 0 Review Committee Evaluation

All complete applications will be evaluated by MTI personnel, and a funding decision will be made by review committee evaluation, based on the following criteria:

- Phase 0 objectives, scope of work, and timeline
- Scientific / Technical merit and fit to the Federal R&D program solicitations
- Phase I Objectives and Commercialization potential
- Key personnel and qualifications
- Applicant's Federal R&D program history

Step 4 – Award Notification

MTI will notify the applicant of the funding decision via email, within 10 business days of the final submission. MTI staff may request additional clarifying information, if needed.

Award Process for Phase 0 Recipients

Phase 0 recipients will be e-mailed notice of approval along with the award agreement documents and instructions. Phase 0 award funding is contingent upon execution of the agreement documents. Phase 0 recipients are responsible for accurately completing and returning agreement documents to MTI within 10 business days of receipt. Failure to complete and return the award agreement within 10 business days may result in award forfeiture.

Upon successful execution of the award agreement, 50% of the approved MTI Phase 0 funding will be disbursed to the awarded company (Recipient). Any remaining award funds will be disbursed upon project completion, as specified in the Phase 0 Agreement.

Project Completion and Reporting Requirements

Recipient must provide a draft application to be reviewed by MTI's TAP team at least two weeks prior to submission deadline date for the Federal R&D program announcement.

Recipient must provide MTI a complete copy of the final Federal R&D program proposal.

Completion of the project requires the submission to MTI of a final report as outlined in Appendix C of the Phase 0 Agreement, to include a written project summary, along with documentation of the hours expended by internal and external resources for the project.

MTI Phase 0 Application Instructions

Submit your application through MTI's Online Application Portal. To access the Online Application Portal, please email Lou Simms at: Lsimms@mainetechnology.org

Applications submitted online must be uploaded as one, complete PDF attachment including all required items listed below

PLEASE NOTE: MTI does not accept applications submitted via fax, nor does MTI accept incomplete applications, applications exceeding page limits, nor any other submissions that do not comply with the guidelines laid out within this application instructions document.

REQUIRED ITEMS:

1. Registration Information via Online Application Portal

Please Note – “Public Information” submitted in MTI's Online Registration Form may be shared with media or MTI partner organizations (excluding TIN & email addresses, which are used only for MTI's internal operations). MTI treats as confidential all contents of the uploaded application documents. For our confidentiality and conflict of interest policies, please refer to our website at:

www.mainetechnology.org/who-is-mti/technology-boards/

NOTE: On our website you will also find listed all MTI Technology Board reviewers, as well as MTI's Board of Directors. If there are specific individuals whom you would prefer not review your application, please be sure to provide their names in the “Withhold From” field of your Online Registration Information – MTI will withhold your confidential application information from all individuals identified here, and those individuals will not have access to your application materials, other than (a) the public information you provide in the Online Registration Information sections and (b) your Non-confidential project summary. Again, all MTI Technology Board members and MTI's Board of Directors are listed on the MTI website at: www.mainetechnology.org/who-is-mti/technology-boards/.

2. Non-Confidential Project Summary (≤ 100 words) via Online Portal

Applicants submitting through MTI's Online Application Portal will be asked to include a non-confidential project summary, along with their initial registration information. The project summary must be **non-confidential** and must not exceed 100 words. Please note that this summary may be included in subsequent MTI press releases, and may also be provided to members of the public or MTI partner organizations, if so requested. The summary should describe the benefit and feasibility of the project, as well as the project's specific goals. A complete non-confidential summary includes the following:

- a. Identification of the technology
- b. Summary scope of the project
- c. Expected outcome of the project

3. Federal Funding Documentation (no more than 2 pages)

Page 1: On a single page, include the following information:

- a. Name of Agency to which applicants are submitting the Federal R&D proposal
- b. Application Due Date
- c. Topic Title
- d. A copy of the Federal R&D program topic description

Page 2: On a separate page, applicants may include a picture of the proposed technology. This page is optional but recommended, if available.

4. Application Narrative (no more than 2 pages)

In two pages or less, the applicant must identify why MTI funds are being requested, what those funds will be used to accomplish, and what impact they will have on the company's ability to develop a competitive Federal R&D program proposal.

I. Introduction

Provide company background information, including the applicant's primary line of business, facilities (including university facilities), and information regarding commercialization of previous Federal R&D program submissions. Use this space to establish the company's identity and introduce the company's overall goals and strategy.

II. Technical Narrative

- Identify the scientific problem or business opportunity to be addressed in the Federal R&D proposal project.
- Identify the significance and uniqueness of the proposed solution or innovation. How does the approach advance knowledge and create benefits for users? Describe the potential uses of the finished innovation in the commercial marketplace.
- Discuss how the Phase 0 project fits or responds to the Federal R&D program solicitation topic. Applicants are strongly encouraged to contact the corresponding federal agency's topic manager prior to submitting a Phase 0 Application, and insert here a brief summary of the applicant's discussion with the topic manager.
- Identify key project personnel and their roles for both the (a) MTI Phase 0 project and the (b) Federally-funded R&D project. This includes applicant personnel, university faculty or researchers, business administrators and consultants/ERP. **Do not use this space to discuss each individual's qualifications.**
- Identify the scope of work, objectives, specific tasks and timeline specific to the MTI Phase 0 funded proposal. Explain how MTI Phase 0 funding will be used in the process of preparing the Federal R&D program proposal.

5. Form B: Budget Summary

Include in Form B a budget for all expenses related to the scope of work outlined within the Phase 0 project. The requested amount in the budget is limited to \$5,000 and is intended for internal and external resources necessary to prepare and submit the Federal R&D program proposal. Supported activities include consultant/ERP services, consultant/ERP travel expenses, and costs to purchase information such as market reports. Other activities may be eligible with MTI approval and applicants are encouraged to contact MTI staff for further information.

Phase 0 proposals require that the applicant commit to a contribution of hours equal to or greater than the total hours proposed for the external resource providers. All eligible and properly documented hours and expenses may be claimed back to the date of the final application submission to MTI.

Access Form B online at: [MTI's Phase 0 program page](#)

Use Budget Form B to indicate:

- Individual names and titles for all applicant personnel and consultants/ERPs providing a labor contribution to the MTI Phase 0 proposal
- Number of hours and hourly rates for all project personnel and consultants/ERPs
- Other eligible project expenses related to the preparation of the Federal R&D proposal

6. Professional Summary (≤ 1 page each)

Submit professional summaries for the primary contact, other project personnel and consultants/ERP. Summaries may not be longer than one page per person and should indicate each individual's relevant education and experience as it pertains to the Phase 0 scope of work.

Form B: Budget Example

An Excel version of this document is available on the Phase 0 page of the MTI website.

Company Name:	
Project ID#:	
Date Submitted:	
Principal Contact:	
Email:	

Project duration can be no longer than 1 month beyond the agency deadline date				Filled Out with Application	Filled out with Final Report
Start Date:		End Date:		Budgeted Expenses Related to the Proposed Project	Actual Expenses Related to the Completed Project
APPLICANT PERSONNEL - MATCHING CONTRIBUTION		Hours	Hourly Rate		
Name/Title:		0	\$0	\$0	
Personnel Subtotal				\$0	\$0
EXTERNAL RESOURCE PROVIDER - PAID BY MTI ACCORDING TO FORM C		Hours	Hourly Rate		
Name/Title:		0	\$0	\$0	
Name/Title:		0	\$0	\$0	
Contractual Services Subtotal				\$0	\$0
MARKET DATA / REPORTS - PAID BY MTI Explain in more detail in the box below.					
List/Describe:					
List/Describe:					
Market Data/ Reports Subtotal				\$0	\$0
TOTAL COSTS				\$0	\$0

Market Data / Reports - Identify who the report will be purchased from and what it contains.

* If you are completing this form in Excel & you require more lines for each item, click on the plus (+) sign on the far left to expose additional lines.

* If this form is being completed as part of the MTI Phase 0 Application process, please enter budget details into the Budget column. DO NOT COMPLETE the Actual Expenses columns.

* If an MTI Phase 0 has been awarded and this form is being submitted as part of a final report, please enter actual project expenses for the project into the Actual Expenses column.

MTI PHASE 0 APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Applications submitted through MTI's Online Portal must be uploaded as one, complete PDF attachment including all necessary items listed below – please title your Application PDF file as follows: “[Your Company Name], [Primary Contact Name], PZ”

- _____ **Online Registration Information:** Please note that the general contact information provided in the Online Application Portal is treated as public information; however, all contents of the uploaded application file, TINs, and email addresses are confidential.
- _____ **Non-confidential 100-word Project Summary:** Submit through MTI's Online Application Portal, along with initial registration information.

PLEASE NOTE: The Federal Funding Documentation should be the opening pages of your Application PDF to be uploaded via MTI's Online Application Portal.

- _____ **1. Federal Funding Documentation (≤ 2 pages):**
 - _____ Name of Agency to which applicants are submitting the Federal R&D proposal
 - _____ Federal R&D program Application Due Date and Topic Title
 - _____ Copy of the Federal R&D program topic description.
 - _____ A picture of the proposed technology is optional but strongly encouraged.
- _____ **2. Application Narrative (≤ 2 pages):** On separate paper, submit project details as outlined within the application.
- _____ **3. Form B - Budget Summary:** Obtain Form B online at: [MTI Phase 0 page](#)
- _____ **4. Professional Summary (≤ 1 page each):** Submit professional summaries for the primary contact and any other key project personnel, including any named consultants/ERP.