



Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection Waste Reduction Innovations Grant Grant Guidelines

I. Introduction and Background

The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) provides grants to businesses, organizations, and institutions in Massachusetts that are taking initiatives to expand opportunities for waste reduction, reuse and recovery.

The 2030 Massachusetts Solid Waste Master Plan sets a goal to reduce the amount of waste disposed in the Commonwealth by 30% below the 2018 baseline, or 1.7 million tons by 2030. MassDEP established a Recycling Market Development Workgroup to provide input into the development of the Recycling Market Development Action Plan. Investments to drive new waste reduction applications, technologies, and recycled content products will help to grow critical materials management infrastructure to support waste reduction in Massachusetts. The MassDEP Waste Reduction Innovations Grant (WRIG) will award applications with demonstrated positive environmental, social, and economic impacts that address one or more of the following goals:

- Save valuable resources from entering the waste stream.
- Enable new or expanded supply chains that extend the use of materials.
- Expand opportunities for recycling and reuse operations and support their sustainability.
- Replace systems relying on single use, disposable items with reusable and sustainable options.
- Create the potential to establish substantial regional reuse/recycling capacity for new and difficult to manage waste materials.
- Enhance existing reuse/recycling infrastructure which will significantly improve efficiencies and economics within Massachusetts.
- Increase the quality, performance and value of recovered materials beyond existing practices.

MassDEP's authority to establish WRIG is granted under M.G.L. c.25A § 11F(d), 310 CMR 19.303(2)b and the Declaration of Trust. Article 2.1 of the Declaration of Trust allows for "trust" funds to be used for grants to businesses to enhance waste reduction and recycling programs.

Funding Categories

WRIG seeks to award applicants in two different categories:

Start Up and Pilot Projects (Category 1): Investments in pilot-scale projects that have significant potential for commercialization in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. MassDEP is interested in supporting innovations that have demonstrated success outside of bench-scale laboratory environments and are ready to move from initial development to commercialization.

Innovative Capital Investment (Category 2): Capital infrastructure, specifically new technology or equipment that does not exist in the Commonwealth. This category aims to invest in capital projects that will make significant infrastructure changes to enable diversion of waste at scale.

Expected Awards

MassDEP anticipates awarding up to \$6 million in awards through this application, contingent on the number and quality of applications received and funding availability.

- Contingent on applications received, MassDEP intends to award up to 10 Category 1 Projects ranging between \$50,000 and \$100,000 per project.
- Contingent on applications received, MassDEP intends to award two to four Category 2 Projects ranging between \$500,000 and \$2 million per project.

II. Eligibility Requirements

Applicants must meet all eligibility requirements to be considered for an award. Note that these requirements are specific to this grant application round and may vary from other applications. Please review the requirements carefully, as ineligible applications will be disqualified and will not be evaluated. The Commonwealth makes no guarantee that any grants will be awarded to any applicant. In addition, MassDEP may issue partial grant awards based on multiple factors including, but not limited to, evaluation and scoring of applications, the total number of applications and funding requests received, and funding availability.

Applicant Requirements for Both Categories

- Applicant must have a location in Massachusetts at the time of contracting and all grant awards should provide a direct, measurable economic benefit to Massachusetts. Any equipment funded by MassDEP must be used exclusively in Massachusetts and must remain in the state and be used for its funded purpose.
- Applicant must be a company or corporation (for-profit or non-profit) properly licensed to do business in the Commonwealth at the time of contracting, including being registered with the Secretary of State's office.
- Applicant must have no active unresolved higher level enforcement actions against them.
- Applicant must complete the project within the required timeline from the time of full contract execution (up to 18 months for Category 1 awards and up to 36 months for Category 2 awards).

Category 1 Eligibility

MassDEP is interested in supporting innovations that have demonstrated success outside of bench-scale laboratory environments and are ready to move from development to commercialization.

Material Requirements

An applicant may apply for Category 1 funding for any material.

Activity Requirements

Activity requirements are flexible as they relate to the applicant's pilot project, including:

- Processing activities, which include recycling, composting, and other reclaiming activities that aggregate, dismantle, densify, shred, bale, or otherwise process materials that are separated

and diverted from solid waste disposal. For Category 1, this may include internally generated materials already on site.

- Manufacturing activities, which include those activities that manufacture products with materials that are separated and diverted from solid waste disposal.
- Reuse activities that use a material again, either in its original state or with refurbishment, for its original purpose or for a non-traditional purpose.
- Application or development of technology which eliminates the generation of a material, not including substitution.

Eligible expenses include:

- Equipment or other capital costs.
- Staff or consultant time directly relevant to the proposed project.
- Feasibility studies or design work.
- Marketing costs.

Ineligible activities and expenses include:

- Recovering energy from the combustion of a material or creating a fuel, with the exception of activities defined as "conversion" in 310 CMR 16.02.
- Academic tuition.
- Administrative and overhead expenses.
- Collection or hauling activities.
- Brokering activities.

Category 2 Eligibility

MassDEP is interested in supporting capital projects for new equipment or technology that are not prevalent in the Commonwealth to expand recovery, reuse, and recycling operations.

Material Requirements

Eligible targeted materials for Category 2 include:

- Textiles.
- Container glass.
- C&D materials including but not limited to wood, gypsum wallboard, and asphalt shingles (but not mixed C&D processing).
- Bulky items like furniture, carpet, and residential plastics.
- Lithium batteries from households.

Activity Requirements

MassDEP seeks to fund new equipment or technology that is not prevalent in the Commonwealth.

Eligible grant-funded activities include equipment or other capital costs for:

- Processing activities, which include recycling, composting, and other reclaiming activities that aggregate, dismantle, densify, shred, bale, or otherwise process materials that are separated and diverted from solid waste disposal.

- Manufacturing activities, which include those activities that manufacture products with eligible materials.
- Reuse activities that use an eligible material again, either in its original state or with refurbishment, for its original purpose or for a non-traditional purpose.

Ineligible activities and expenses include:

- Recovering energy from the combustion of a material or creating a fuel, with the exception of activities defined as "conversion" in 310 CMR 16.02."
- Academic tuition.
- Administrative and overhead expenses.
- Staff or consultant time.
- Exclusive use of internally generated materials already onsite.
- Feasibility studies or design work.
- Marketing costs.
- Collection or hauling activities.
- Brokering activities.

Definitions under 310 CMR 16.00: Site Assignment for Solid Waste Facilities are available on MassDEP's website at <https://www.mass.gov/doc/310-cmr-1600-site-assignment-for-solid-waste-facilities>.

Category 1 Evaluation Criteria:

Applicants must meet the grant eligibility requirements to be considered for evaluation and review. Ineligible applications will be disqualified and will not be evaluated. MassDEP will evaluate applications based on the criteria identified below:

Project Description and Operation (20 points)

- Does the applicant clearly define the goals and scope of the project, the proposed operation/activity, and its expected benefits? Do the project goals appear to be realistic and achievable?
- Does the applicant describe how the investment will be used to increase the quality of materials, quantity of materials diverted, and/or advance new markets in the Commonwealth?
- Does the applicant clearly identify:
 - The facility address for the proposed project activity (site address)?
 - The layout and process of existing and new operations, as applicable?
- Does the applicant provide a clear and accurate description of the requested funding and how this will contribute to the project?

Timeline (10 points)

- Did the applicant include estimated dates for each step of the grant-funded activities and when deliverables would be completed?
- Is the timeline sufficiently detailed to include all necessary steps of the project?
- Is the project timeline realistic and can the project be completed within the 18-month grant period?
- Does the timeline describe the applicant's ability and capacity to successfully meet the project goals?

Potential Market Impact (20 points)

- What potential does the applicant's project present in terms of future waste reduction opportunities in Massachusetts? What is the direct waste reduction potential of the proposed project, as well as the total potential of implementing the project at commercial scale?
- Does the applicant describe their ability and capacity to meet the proposal's tonnage goals of project materials?
- Will the project significantly increase the quality or value of the materials processed?
- Will the project open up new market demand that does not currently exist (e.g., for a new material use)?
- Does the applicant identify the buyer(s) or market(s) for the proposed end-products? If available, the applicant should provide copies of letters of commitments/contracts.
- Does the applicant provide the number of people currently employed and describe how many new jobs and what types of job positions will be created through the grant project?

Feasibility (15 points)

- Does the applicant provide the status of any required approval(s) or authorization(s) of the proposed activity by state or local authorities, including any appropriate documentation?

- Are there any barriers or additional steps for the project to proceed and will these prevent the successful implementation of a grant-funded project?
- Has the project technology, approach or process been tested or utilized elsewhere to demonstrate potential for success?

Sourcing (5 points)

- Does the applicant identify the supplier(s) and/or generator(s) of project materials?
- Does the applicant indicate the following: 1) the amount and geographic area for sourcing material; 2) an estimate of the breakdown from commercial and/or residential generators; and 3) an explanation of how the material will be sourced?

Sustainability (15 points)

- Does the applicant have a plan to grow the proposed business and operation?
- Does the applicant explain how they will sustain the project after the grant ends?
- Does the applicant identify revenues from applicable tip fees and sale of commodity/product, capital expenses, operating costs, projected profit margins, etc.?
- Has the applicant identified external investment or other support they have obtained in order to support and grow the proposed grant project?
- Does the applicant exceed the minimum match requirement?

Qualifications (10 points)

- Does the applicant include materials detailing the relevant experience, qualifications and skills of the applicant organization and the principals that will be involved in the grant-funded activity (resumes may be attached)?
- Does this level of experience and qualifications demonstrate the ability to effectively implement and grow the project?
- If applicable, has the applicant successfully implemented similar past grant awards from MassDEP?
- What is the applicant's environmental compliance history?

EJ Community Investments (5 points)

- How will the applicant support diversity and equity through its work, staff, or community involvement?
- How will the applicant support and engage with environmental justice populations?

Category 2 Evaluation Criteria:

Applicants must meet the grant eligibility requirements set forth to be considered for evaluation and review. Ineligible applications will be disqualified and will not be evaluated. MassDEP will evaluate applications based on the criteria identified below:

Project Description and Operation (15 points)

- Does the applicant clearly define the goals and scope of the project, the proposed operation/activity, and its expected benefits? Do the project goals appear to be realistic and achievable?
- Does the applicant describe how the investment will be used to increase the quality of materials, quantity of materials diverted, and/or advance new markets in the Commonwealth?
- Does the applicant clearly identify:
 - The facility address for the proposed project activity (site address)?
 - The layout and process of existing and new operations?
- Does the applicant provide a clear and accurate description of the requested funding and how this will contribute to the project?
- Does the applicant identify the innovative nature of the proposed project?

Timeline (10 points)

- Did the applicant include estimated dates for each step of the grant-funded activities and when deliverables would be completed?
- Is the timeline sufficiently detailed to include all necessary steps of the project?
- Is the project timeline realistic and can the project be completed within the 36-month grant period? (Note: To fit within the grant timeframe, the project should be operational within two years of contract signing.)
- Does the timeline describe the applicant's ability and capacity to successfully meet the project goals?

Potential Market Impact (20 points)

- What amount of additional waste reduction, in tons, will the project achieve?
- Does the applicant describe their ability and capacity to meet the proposal's tonnage goals of project materials?
- Will the project significantly increase the quality or value of the materials processed?
- Will the project open up new market demand that does not currently exist (e.g., for a new material use)?
- Does the applicant identify the buyer(s) or market(s) for the proposed end-products? If available, the applicant should provide copies of letters of commitments/contracts.
- Does the applicant provide the number of people currently employed and describe how many new jobs and what types of job positions will be created through the grant project?

Feasibility (15 points)

- Does the applicant provide the status of any required approval(s) or authorization(s) of the proposed activity by state or local authorities, including any appropriate documentation.

- Are there any barriers or additional steps for the project to proceed and will these prevent the successful implementation of a grant-funded project?
- Does the proposed project appear to be achievable?

Sourcing (10 points)

- Does the applicant identify the supplier(s) and/or generator(s) of the project materials?
- Does the applicant indicate the following: 1) the amount and geographic area for sourcing material; 2) an estimate of the breakdown from commercial and/or residential generators; and 3) an explanation of how the material will be sourced?
- Does the applicant identify specific sources or business relationships that will ensure their ability to obtain the material needed to make the project successful?

Sustainability (15 points)

- Does the applicant have a plan to grow the proposed business and operation?
- Does the applicant explain how they will sustain the project after the grant ends?
- Does the applicant identify revenues from applicable tip fees and sale of commodity/product, capital expenses, operating costs, projected profit margins, etc.?
- Has the applicant identified external investment or other support they have obtained in order to support and grow the proposed grant project?
- Does the applicant exceed the minimum match requirement?

Qualifications (10 points)

- Does the applicant include materials detailing the relevant experience, qualifications and skills of the applicant organization and the principals that will be involved in the grant-funded activity (resumes may be attached)?
- Does this level of experience and qualifications demonstrate the ability to effectively implement and grow the project?
- If applicable, has the applicant successfully implemented similar past grant awards from MassDEP?

EJ Community Investments (5 points)

- How will the applicant support diversity and equity through its work, staff, or community involvement?
- How will the applicant support and engage with environmental justice populations?

Environmental Justice Community Investments

MassDEP is committed to advancing equity, diversity, and environmental justice (EJ) through its public investments.¹ The agency seeks to prioritize the direction of these resources to benefit communities

¹ “Environmental justice is based on the principle that all people have a right to be protected from environmental hazards and to live in and enjoy a clean and healthful environment regardless of race, color, national origin, income, or English language proficiency. Environmental justice is the equal protection and meaningful involvement of all people and communities with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of energy,

defined as EJ populations and to address environmental inequities. To that end, MassDEP grant and funding programs include criteria and evaluation parameters that emphasize equity, diversity, and environmental justice, consistent with each program's statutory authority and source of funding. Preference will be given to projects that provide direct benefit to EJ populations. Information on which communities are classified as EJ populations can be found at <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/environmental-justice-populations-in-massachusetts>.

IV. Grant Conditions

If awarded, specific terms and conditions will be outlined in the grant scope and contract.

Cost Match

For Category 1 projects, a minimum financial match of 25 percent is required (e.g. the minimum applicant match amount for a \$100,000 grant request would be \$25,000).

For Category 2 projects, a minimum financial match of 50 percent is required (e.g., the minimum application grant amount for a \$1,000,000 grant request would be \$500,000).

These must be direct contributions from the applicant, exclusive of other state or federal grants or loans. Larger match amounts will be viewed favorably for grant evaluation purposes. The matching contribution must be for eligible expenses as defined for the applicable grant category.

Payment Schedule

Payments for Category 1 projects will be distributed in two stages:

1. Ninety (90) percent of the grant award will be paid on a reimbursement basis, based on submission of receipts for approved expenses, as agreed to in the Scope of Work.
2. The final payment shall be a ten (10) percent retainage payment, payable after all stated goals and deliverables have been met and the applicant submits, and MassDEP accepts, a final report. The report must be received and accepted by MassDEP prior to the end date of the contract.

Payments for Category 2 projects will be distributed in three stages:

1. An initial reimbursement payment(s) will be made based on submission of receipts for approved expenses as agreed to in the Scope of Work.
2. Additional payments will be distributed on a quarterly basis based on performance, such as tonnage of material processed or recovered, over a minimum of one year.
3. The final payment shall be a ten (10) percent retainage payment after all stated goals and deliverables have been met and the applicant submits, and MassDEP accepts, a final report. The report must be received and accepted by MassDEP prior to the end date of the contract.

All final requests for reimbursement must be received within 30 days of the contract end date or all remaining grant funds will be forfeited.

climate change, and environmental laws, regulations, and policies and the equitable distribution of energy and environmental benefits and burdens." See Environmental Justice Policy of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (updated June 24, 2021), available at <https://www.mass.gov/doc/environmental-justicepolicy6242021-update/download>.

Site Visit

MassDEP staff reserves the right to visit awarded applicants during and/or after the grant period.

Estimated Grant Timeline

Application opens, and formal question period begins. All questions must be submitted in writing to Joann Lai at Joann.E.Lai@mass.gov .	April 15, 2025
Deadline for questions	June 2, 2025, 11:59 P.M. E.T.
Answers posted to website	June 16, 2025
Application deadline	July 15, 2025, 11:59 P.M. E.T.
MassDEP reviews applications received	August – November 2025
Award finalists announced (pending agreement on grant scope and contract)	December 2025
Grant Contracts finalized and signed	By March 2026
Awarded projects begin	By April 2026

V. How To Apply

MassDEP will be accepting applications online only. Applicants should complete and submit the complete application posted on the MassDEP website.

The deadline to submit a complete application is July 15, 2025, 11:59 P.M. E.T. Submission of an application or parts of an application will not be considered after the deadline.

Sample Timeline (if awarded):

Note: This example is for a Category 2 project. The timeline for a Category 1 project would need to be shorter; i.e. no longer than 18 months from contract signing.

Task	Estimated Completion Date
Establish grant agreement and contract with MassDEP	December 2025 – March 2026
Receive all local government approvals	By June 2026
Complete all required MassDEP permitting	By September 2026
Order equipment for project	October 2026
Install equipment	March 2027 – June 2027
Invoice MassDEP for grant-funded portion of equipment cost	July 2027
Facility and equipment testing	July 2027
Begin full operation	August 2027
Invoice MassDEP for performance-based payments	September 2027 – August 2028
Submit final project report to MassDEP	September 2028

A pro forma consistent with the below template should be submitted to joann.e.lai@mass.gov prior to the application deadline. Any supporting documents should be attached as pdf files and sent via email to joann.e.lai@mass.gov prior to the application deadline.

REVENUE	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
(add line-item description)			
(add additional line item as needed)			
Net Total (+)			
COSTS	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
(add operating costs, cost of sales, etc.)			
(add additional line item as needed)			
Net Cost (-)			
Gross Profit or Net Income Before Taxes			
Taxes on Income			
Net Income After Taxes			
Net Income			

Applicants are advised that materials submitted in connection with a grant application may be subject to disclosure under the Commonwealth’s Public Records Law. Applicants filing information they wish to be kept confidential and exempt from public disclosure as trade secrets should follow the procedures outlined on MassDEP’s website at <https://www.mass.gov/doc/guidance-on-requests-to-maintain-trade-secret-information-confidential>.

Additional Required Documentation

If selected for an award, the applicant will be required to sign and submit the following forms to complete the agreement process.

1. Commonwealth Standard Contract Form (filled out and signed by the applicant). The Standard Contract Form is listed under Contracts on this website: <http://www.macomptroller.org/forms>
2. Commonwealth Terms and Conditions. These Terms and Conditions are incorporated by reference into the Standard Contract Form, and do not need to be executed separately. <http://www.macomptroller.org/forms>
3. Commonwealth W-9 tax information form filled out and signed by the applicant with DUNS number and Federal Tax ID. <http://www.macomptroller.org/forms>
4. Completed Contractor Authorized Signatory Listing Form. www.macomptroller.org/forms

5. Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) form. <http://www.mass.gov/how-to/tips-for-completing-the-electronic-funds-transfer-eft-form>
6. Scope of Work

Applicants are encouraged to review these forms prior to submitting an application.