



New Jersey Commission on Science, Innovation and Technology

Notice of Funding

for

Clean Tech Research and Development (R&D) Voucher Program

1. INTENT/SUMMARY

This grant opportunity is issued by the New Jersey Commission on Science, Innovation and Technology (CSIT) in collaboration with the New Jersey Economic Development Authority (NJEDA), seeking applications from qualified Applicants for a pilot Clean Tech Research and Development (R&D) Voucher Program (Program) to support early stage companies in the State.

2. PROGRAM SUMMARY

The Clean Tech R&D Voucher Program has a total budget of \$435,000 for Voucher awards. Funding for the Program is provided by the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (NJBPU). The Program will be implemented by CSIT and NJEDA, and technical support will be provided at participating University Facilities (University Facilities).

The goal of the Program is to support New Jersey-based early stage clean tech/clean energy company efforts to accelerate development and innovation of clean technologies to transform new discoveries from research stage into commercially viable technologies, leading to industry and investor interest.

The objectives of the program are to:

1. Improve awareness, access to and utilization of New Jersey's world-leading university and federal laboratory equipment, facilities and Makerspaces
2. Subsidize access to research and development equipment, facilities and Makerspaces for small NJ-based companies that are developing innovative technologies in the clean energy/clean tech space

Voucher Amounts and Expiration

The Program will subsidize the cost of access to any New Jersey participating University and Federal Laboratory Facility for Companies to access equipment and facilities for clean energy/clean technological research and development. An asset map listing NJ University and Federal Laboratory Facilities will be available on the CSIT webpage.

- Companies with ten (10) full-time employees (calculated on an FTE full time equivalent basis-working 35hrs per week) or less will receive a Voucher equaling 75 percent of the cost of the service and Facility access
- Companies with eleven to fifty (11-50) full-time employees (calculated on an FTE full time equivalent basis-working 35hrs per week) will receive a Voucher equaling 50 percent on the cost of service and Facility access

Each eligible applicant can apply for multiple Vouchers up to a cap of \$15,000 in the aggregate over any twelve (12)-month period.

Each approved Voucher will be valid for a period of three (3) months (starting from date of the execution of the Voucher Agreement). Any unused approved Voucher amounts will be cancelled after the three (3) month period and returned to the Program budget for future use. A Voucher recipient may, without cost, request a one-time extension of time to use a voucher of up to an additional three (3) months on the approved Voucher, with each such request to be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Scope

The Program is intended for early-stage NJ based companies developing or testing clean technologies intended to avoid emissions of, or recapture, greenhouse gases and/or criteria pollutants, or to enable such avoidance or recapture in the following target areas:

- Chemicals/Advance Materials
- Energy Distribution/Storage
- Energy Efficiency
- Energy Generation
- Green Buildings
- Transportation
- Waste Processing
- Water and Agriculture

All Projects submitted to the Program, for which the Voucher is being sought must be between a minimum technology development level of TRL 1 (*Basic research*) and maximum of TRL 7 (*Full-scale, similar (prototypical) system demonstrated in relevant environment*), based on the Department of Energy definitions (Attachment A).

Eligible Applicants can receive Vouchers of \$1,000 up to \$15,000 to defray the costs associated with any of the following services or activities in a participating NJ University or Federal Laboratory Facility:

1. Use of Facility equipment and technicians for testing and development
2. Training in preparation for independent use of the Facility equipment

The Vouchers are intended for specific, early-stage clean tech/clean energy-related development projects (Projects). All requests should be specifically related to the particular Project for which the Voucher is sought. The following uses are ineligible under the Program:

- Manufacturing of products for sale or commercial use

4. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Each Applicant to the Clean Tech R&D Voucher Program must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- Companies registered to conduct business in NJ at the time of application (current tax clearance certificate indicating Commission on Science, Innovation and Technology)
- Companies with no more than 50 full-time employees (calculated on an FTE full time equivalent basis-working 35hrs per week) at time of application
- 100% of Project work for which the Voucher is being sought has to be conducted in NJ
- Minimum of one (1) full-time employee working in NJ at time of application (calculated on an FTE full time equivalent basis – 35 hrs. per week)
- Applicant must obtain a signed approval letter from a participating NJ University or Federal Laboratory facility confirming that the facility is capable and willing to provide the services that will be supported by the Voucher
- Applicant company must be developing or testing clean technologies intended to avoid emissions of, or recapture, greenhouse gases and/or criteria pollutants, or to enable such avoidance or recapture in the following target areas:
 - Chemicals/Advance Materials
 - Energy Distribution/Storage
 - Energy Efficiency
 - Energy Generation
 - Green Buildings
 - Transportation
 - Waste Processing
 - Water and Agriculture

5. REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

All applications to the Clean Tech R&D Voucher Program **must** include the following documentation:

1. Completed online application (via CSIT Portal)
 - a. Signed Application Certification
 - b. Completed CSIT Legal Debarment Questionnaire
2. Summary of most recent internal payroll (detailing information on each employee of the company; # of hours worked per week and primary work location)

3. Current employee information as appropriate for applicable company structure and staffing - i.e. most recent Federal 941, NJ WR-30 (W2 employees) or 1099 (contractors), Shareholder Agreement or K-1
4. Current NJ tax clearance certificate (listing New Jersey Commission on Science, Innovation and Technology). See https://www16.state.nj.us/NJ_PREMIER_EBIZ/jsp/home.jsp. All certificates that do not specifically list CSIT will be rejected
5. Approval letter from participating NJ University or Federal Laboratory Facility

6. APPLICATION AND EVALUATION PROCESS

Applications to the Program shall be submitted via CSIT's online application Portal. Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis as long as Program funds are available. Access to the Program Portal will begin on April 5th, 2021 and instructions to access the portal can be found on the CSIT webpage (<https://www.njeda.com/csit/>).

- i. All companies wishing to apply must begin their application by completing the Intake portion of the application which includes questions concerning the Applicant, proposed scope of work, type of facilities for which access is being requested, and if known, the NJ University or Federal Laboratory at which such facilities are located, and program eligibility information. CSIT will review the Intake information and forward project technical requirements to the Program's University and Federal Laboratory review committee
- ii. The University and Federal Laboratory review committee; consisting of representatives from each participating University and Federal Laboratory Facility, will review Intake Forms of each applicant on a rolling basis and direct the application to relevant Facility which the Applicant intends to work with or the most suitable Facility to conduct work
- iii. Facility staff will contact each Applicant to submit a detailed Project proposal describing the intended scope of work. The Applicant and the participating Facility will review the scope of work and if the participating Facility agrees to the work, the Applicant will complete the Facility's application process and sign any relevant forms with the University or Federal Laboratory. The Facility will then issue an approval letter to the Applicant for the CSIT program detailing the services to be provided and the cost before application of a voucher
- iv. The Applicant will then finalize their application with all required documentation attached, including the Approval letter from the participating Facility
- v. All submitted applications will be reviewed for document completeness and compliance on a rolling basis. Following the completeness review, applicants with missing documentation will receive an email notification from CSIT to re-submit any missing or incomplete required documentation by an Extension Time.
 - o Applicant's should submit missing documentation electronically to csit@njeda.com with the email subject line "Clean Tech Seed Grant Program-Missing Documentation Submission-[Company Name]"
 - o After the Applicant's Extension Time, any application that does not include ALL of the documents specified or contain documents that have not been

completed will be considered incomplete and will not be evaluated. Only complete applications will be evaluated and scored

- vi. Once an application has been reviewed and approved, the Voucher funds are reserved for three (3) months from the date of the Voucher reservation approval letter. During this period, the Applicant and the Facility must execute a Voucher Agreement with CSIT detailing out the terms and conditions of the Voucher and complete the Voucher use at the respective Facility. A Voucher reservation may be extended for one three-month period if requested prior to expiration. Such extensions will be granted based on a case-by-case basis
- vii. At the end of the Voucher period, the Applicant will submit to CSIT a completion report detailing the scope of work achieved during the Voucher
- viii. The participating Facility will send quarterly invoices to CSIT referencing the voucher ID number detailing the services provided to approved companies and the amount to be paid to the Facility under the applicable voucher or vouchers

PLEASE NOTE: The online application will enable applicants to provide an electronic Application Certification by uploading a signed PDF. However, if an applicant prefers not to provide an electronic Application Certification, the applicant may:

- i. Mail a hard copy of the signed Application Certification postmarked by the application deadline to CSIT at:

Commission on Science, Innovation and Technology
Attn: Judith Sheft (Executive Director)
36 W State Street
PO Box 990
Trenton, NJ 08625

AND

- ii. Email CSIT with the subject line: “MAILED Application Certification Clean Tech Seed Grant Program” indicating that the certification document has been mailed. Only the signed CSIT Application Certification should be mailed; the rest of the application must be submitted through the online system.

If an applicant chooses to mail a hard copy of the application certification, the application will only be considered complete once the original signed CSIT application certification post marked by the application deadline is received by CSIT.

PLEASE NOTE: Due to COVID-19, it may take longer than usual for Applicants to obtain certain State documentation such as the NJ Tax Clearance Certificate. If an Applicant has attempted to obtain the missing NJ Tax Clearance Certificate and has not received it by the extension time, the Applicant may provide correspondence or receipts that demonstrate the attempt to obtain the missing document to enable the application to be deemed complete for

scoring purposes only. The required missing documentation MUST be submitted before any recommendation of an award will be made with respect to that Applicant

7. OTHER TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Voucher awardees will agree that its employees and consultants will conduct 100% of the Project's work in New Jersey for a period of six (6) months from the effective date of the Voucher Agreement; failure to comply will trigger a requirement that the applicant make full re-payment of the grant award within sixty (60) days following such failure of compliance, or as otherwise stated in the Voucher Agreement.

All Voucher awardees must commit to report economic impact data to CSIT upon the completion of Project for a period of one (1) year as will be outlined in the Voucher Agreement and by submitting an Economic Impact Questionnaire provided by CSIT.

All Voucher awardees must commit to participate in future CSIT/NJEDA/BPU alumni activities such as serving as a panel member or participating in interviews about Program experience.

8. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

- CSIT will host an informational webinar on the Clean Tech Seed Grant Program and a recording of the Webinar will be posted on the CSIT's webpage. The Webinar will be hosted in March. Information on registration for the Webinar can be found on CSIT's webpage
- Questions and inquiries concerning this Notice of Funding and the Program should be submitted via e-mail to csit@njeda.com. The subject line of the e-mail should state: "CSIT Clean Tech R&D Voucher Program". Phone calls and/or faxes shall not be accepted
- All questions received and answers provided in response to this Notice of Funding and the Program will be answered in the form of a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document, which will be posted and continuously updated on CSIT's website

9. CONFIDENTIALITY

Applications received will be reviewed only by staff of CSIT, NJEDA and participating University Facilities. All applications submitted will be subject to requests for disclosure, including but not limited to, a request pursuant to the Open Public Records Act ("OPRA"), N.J.S.A. 47:1A-1 et seq. If the applicant believes that information contained in its proposal merits confidential treatment pursuant to OPRA, any such purportedly confidential information submitted to the Authority shall be specifically identified and marked by the applicant.

Attachment A: Technology Readiness Levels (TRL)

TRL 1

Basic Research: Initial scientific research has been conducted. Principles are qualitatively postulated and observed. Focus is on new discovery rather than applications.

TRL 2

Applied Research: Initial practical applications are identified. Potential of material or process to solve a problem, satisfy a need, or find application is confirmed.

TRL 3

Critical Function or Proof of Concept Established: Applied research advances and early stage development begins. Studies and laboratory measurements validate analytical predictions of separate elements of the technology.

TRL 4

Lab Testing/Validation of Alpha Prototype Component/Process: Design, development and lab testing of components/processes. Results provide evidence that performance targets may be attainable based on projected or modeled systems.

TRL 5

Laboratory Testing of Integrated/Semi-Integrated System: System Component and/or process validation is achieved in a relevant environment.

TRL 6

Prototype System Verified: System/process prototype demonstration in an operational environment (beta prototype system level).

TRL 7

Integrated Pilot System Demonstrated: System/process prototype demonstration in an operational environment (integrated pilot system level).

TRL 8

System Incorporated in Commercial Design: Actual system/process completed and qualified through test and demonstration (pre-commercial demonstration).

TRL 9

System Proven and Ready for Full Commercial Deployment: Actual system proven through successful operations in operating environment, and ready for full commercial deployment.