



New Jersey Commission on Science, Innovation and Technology (CSIT) Clean Tech Research and Development (R&D) Voucher Program Pilot, Round 3

Notice of Funding Availability

The New Jersey Commission on Science, Innovation and Technology (CSIT) expects to launch an online application for the Clean Tech Research and Development (R&D) Voucher Program Pilot, Round 3 at 9:00 am on **Friday, November 17, 2023** at www.njeda.com/csit. Applications will be reviewed and accepted on a rolling basis as long as program funds are available. No fees will be charged for this program.

Comprehensive information about the Clean Tech R&D Voucher Program Pilot Round 3 is available at <https://www.njeda.gov/csit> . Questions concerning this Program and Notice of Funding Availability should be submitted csitcleantech@njeda.gov .

Purpose

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), which are seeking applications from qualified applicants for the Clean Tech Research and Development (R&D) Voucher Program Pilot, Round 3 (“Program”) to support early-stage businesses in the State. 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 the research stage into commercially viable technologies, leading to industry and investor interest in the following target areas:

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

Overview

Clean Tech Research and Development (R&D) Voucher Program Pilot, Round 3 has a total

budget of \$300,000 from rollover funding from the FY23 Board of Public Utility (BPU) budget for voucher awards. The Program will be implemented by CSIT and technical support will be provided at participating university/college facilities, federal lab facilities and makerspaces.

The objectives of the Program are to:

- i. improve awareness, access to and utilization of New Jersey’s world-leading equipment, facilities and makerspaces; and
- ii. subsidize access to research and development equipment, facilities and makerspaces for small New Jersey-based companies that are developing innovative technologies in the clean energy/clean tech space.

Program Details

The Program will subsidize the cost of access to participating New Jersey facilities and makerspaces for businesses to access equipment, labs, and facilities for clean energy/clean technological research and development. An asset map listing New Jersey university/college and federal laboratory facilities will be available on the CSIT webpage (www.njeda.com/csit).

Each approved voucher will be valid for a period of twelve months, starting from date of the execution of the Voucher Agreement. Any unused approved voucher amounts will be cancelled after the twelve-month period and returned to the Program budget for future use. At CSIT’s sole discretion, a one- time voucher extension of up to three months may be approved if requested in writing.

Provided that funding is available, all complete applications that meet the eligibility criteria and are in compliance with the required documentation are eligible for funding.

Eligibility

To be eligible for the Clean Tech Research and Development (R&D) Voucher Program Pilot, Round 3 applicant companies must:

- Be authorized and in good standing to conduct business in NJ, as evidenced by a current NJ Tax Clearance Certificate listing CSIT. All certificates listing another state agency will be rejected.
- Have no more than fifty (50) full-time equivalent (“FTE”) workers (FTE calculated on a 35-hour work week) at time of application.
- Have a minimum of one (1) full time worker (calculated on a 35-hour work week). A worker may be the founder and may be paid or unpaid.
- Have 50% or more of the cumulative hours worked by all workers, founders, and contractors be conducted in NJ (calculated on an FTE basis – 35 hours per week).
- Have less than or equal to five million dollars (\$5,000,000) in prior calendar year sales revenue (excluding grant revenue).

The applicant company must obtain a signed approval letter from a participating facility

confirming that they are capable and willing to provide the services that will be supported by the voucher.

The applicant company must be developing or testing clean technologies intended to avoid emissions of, or recapture of, 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.

To participate a facility must:

- be in a two or four-year college or university (public, state, or non-profit) located in New Jersey, or a federal lab facility or a makerspace located in New Jersey.
- allow outside businesses to utilize research and development facilities on fee-for-service basis; and
- provide a contact person to facilitate requests and participate in Clean Tech R&D Voucher Committee meetings.

All applicant projects must be for a minimum technology development level of TRL 1 (*Basic research*) through a maximum developmental level of TRL 7 (*Full- scale, similar (prototypical) system demonstrated in relevant environment*). Please see below Attachment A for an explanation of these US Department of Energy definitions.

Eligible Uses

Eligible applicants can receive vouchers of \$1,000 up to \$40,000 to defray one hundred percent of the costs associated with any of the following services or activities in a participating New Jersey 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. All requests should be specifically related to the particular project for which the voucher is sought. The following uses are ineligible under this Program:

- Manufacturing of products for sale or commercial use.
- Real estate rental expenses.

Grant Amounts

Eligible applicants can receive vouchers of \$1,000 up to \$40,000. Each eligible applicant

can apply for multiple vouchers up to a cap of \$40,000 in the aggregate over any 12-month period.

Voucher award funds will be disbursed by CSIT to the eligible applicant after the completion of the scope of work at the corresponding facility, submission of an approved project completion report, and

an expense invoice detailing the costs expended and services provided.

Application Submission and Review Process

The application will open at 9:00 am on Friday, November 17, 2023, at www.njeda.com/csit. Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis as long as Program funds are available. All applications to the Clean Tech Research and Development (R&D) Voucher Program Pilot, Round 3 **must** include the following documentation:

1. Completed online application via CSIT Portal including the following documents included in the application:
 - a. Signed Application Certification;
 - b. Completed CSIT Legal Debarment Questionnaire; and
 - c. Employee Log - listing all current company employees, work address, and number of hours work.
2. Summary of the most recent internal applicant company payroll (detailing information on each employee of the company, number of hours worked per week and primary work location).
3. Current employee information as appropriate for the applicant company's structure and staffing (i.e., most recent Federal 941, NJ WR-30 (W2 employees) or 1099 (contractors), Shareholder Agreement or K-1).
4. Current New Jersey 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 or lists another State agency will be rejected.
5. Approval letter from a participating New Jersey university or federal laboratory facility.

The following steps detail the application submission process:

- i. All companies wishing to apply must begin their application by completing the intake portion of the application. This includes questions concerning the applicant; the proposed scope of work; the type of facilities for which access is being requested; and if known, the university/college, federal lab or non-profit organization at which such facilities are located; and Program eligibility information. CSIT will review the intake information and forward the 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, community college and federal laboratory facility, will

review the intake forms of each applicant on a rolling basis and direct the application to the relevant facility which the applicant intends to work with or to the most suitable facility to conduct the 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. The facility will then issue an approval letter to CSIT detailing the services to be provided and the cost before application of a voucher.
- iv. CSIT will provide the applicant a submission code to finalize their application with all required documentation. The application must be completed within six (6) weeks of the receipt of the submission code from CSIT. If the application is not completed the approval will be cancelled and the funds reserved for that applicant returned to the Program budget.
- 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 a resubmission letter from CSIT to supply any missing or incomplete documentation within ten (10) business days. For NJ Tax Clearance Certificates only, applicants will have up to thirty (30) days to submit it.

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 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 (csitcleantech@njeda.gov) with the subject line: "MAILED Application Certification Clean Tech Research and Development (R&D) Voucher Program Pilot, Round 3" indicating that the certification document has been mailed. Only the signed CSIT Application Certification may 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 is received by CSIT.

Applicants that do not submit, on or before the submission deadline, a New Jersey Tax Clearance Certificate listing CSIT will not be considered for a Program voucher.

Fees

No fees will be collected by CSIT for this Program.

Additional Requirements and Information

As part of the review process, CSIT conducts sister agency checks with the New Jersey Department of Labor (DOL) and Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) on all completed applications. To be recommended for an award, applicants must be in good standing with both DOL and DEP.

At the end of the voucher period, the recipient will submit to CSIT:

- A completion report detailing how the scope of work was achieved during the voucher period;
- Expense invoice detailing the costs expended and services provided;
- Completed employee log - listing all current company employees, work address, and number of hours work.
- Economic impact report – Yearly report that tracks increase in company size, R&D space, workforce, and follow-on funding.
- Employee verification documents – documents that confirms the employment status of employees listed by the applicant (i.e., W2, 1099, offer letter, etc.)
- Updated NJ Tax Clearance Certificate; and
- Program invoice details – the itemized list of budgetary activities undertaken for the pilot project

For up to two (2) years from the date of the project completion, the voucher recipient's employees and consultants who continue working on the project must conduct **all** their work in a New Jersey location.

All voucher recipients must annually report economic impact data to CSIT upon the completion of their project for a period of two (2) years by submitting an Economic Impact Questionnaire provided by CSIT.

All voucher awardees are asked to commit to participate in future CSIT/NJEDA/BPU alumni activities, such as serving as a panel member or participating in interviews about their Program experience.

Once an application has been reviewed and approved, the voucher funds are reserved for twelve (12) months from the date of the voucher reservation approval letter. During this period, the applicant and CSIT must execute a Voucher Agreement detailing the terms and conditions of the voucher and complete the voucher use at the respective facility. At CSIT's sole discretion, a voucher reservation may be extended for one three-month period if requested by the voucher recipient in writing prior to expiration of the voucher.

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, requests 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 must be specifically identified and marked as "confidential" by the applicant.

Additional Information

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Attachment A: Technology Readiness Level¹ (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

¹ TRL levels summarized from Department of Energy (DOE) [Report](#)