

Is your Maine-based company developing a product or service where the State of Maine as an institution could be an early adopter customer, beta-tester, or pilot phase participant?

As part of the implementation of the 10 Year Economic Development Strategy, the Department of Economic & Community Development (DECD) announces the “Early Adopter Program” pilot program. “Early adopters” are the first customers to adopt a new product and/or technology before much of the population does. They’re often called "lighthouse customers" because they serve as a beacon of light for the rest of the population to follow, which will take the technology or product mainstream.

The Early Adopter Program is intended to help Maine companies in developing innovation solutions and determine product-market fit. It is also intended to help the State of Maine find innovative approaches to its work. The program can be used for early adoption testing, beta-testing, or piloting concepts and products.

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| **Contact** | *Communication regarding this Program must be sent to the email address provided below:***Contact Information:** BizAwards.decd@maine.gov  |
| **Submitted Questions Due** | *Questions will be accepted through October 15th at 4:00 p.m. ET for October 30th submissions. Questions must be submitted to the email address provided above.* |
| **Application Submission Deadline** | **Submission Deadline:** October 30, 2021, no later than 4:00 p.m. ET**Submit to:** BizAwards.decd@maine.gov  |
| **Presentations** | Presentations will be scheduled individually the first- or second-week week of December 2021. Up to three companies will be selected to present annually. |

In this pilot year, Maine DECD will host annual opportunities for up to three selected Maine companies to present an idea for a time-limited project to the appropriate State agency or office to be an early adopter, beta-tester, or pilot customer for that company’s product and/or service. A committee of appropriate representatives from DECD and other appropriate State of Maine agencies will select up to three companies annually from the submitted project applications for presentation participation. Selection will be based upon those applications that best fit the program goals by demonstrating through the initial application that:

* The product and/or service is appropriate for the program based on innovation (new enough to be considered an innovation), feasibility (far enough along in development to be implemented) and legality; **and**
* The logistics of the proposed project, the direct expense to the State of Maine (which can be no more than $10,000), and the potential benefit to the participating company and/or the State of Maine.

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| **Strong Project** | **Weak Project** |
| New product or service | Product or service already on the market  |
| Product or service development enough to be deployed | Product still in theoretical phase |
| Legal | Illegal |
| Project deployment is fairly straightforward | Project deployment will be complicated and protracted |
| Company will learn something concrete through the project | Company simply wants to be a State vendor |
| State agency can potentially benefit from this product or service | State agency has no real use for this product or service |
| Project deployment will require little outlay of State funding to be successful | Project deployment will take a large effort and outlay of State funding to be successful |

*Projects deemed eligible but not selected to present in the year for which they applied have the option of reapplying in future years. A feedback session with DECD will be made available to those applicants whose project was not selected for presentation, upon request.*

The three selected companies will then have an opportunity to present their idea to a committee made up of DECD staff and one or more subject matter expert representatives from the targeted State of Maine agency or division. Other committee members may be brought in based on the scope of the projects proposed. This committee will determine whether a presented project is selected for an agreement with the State of Maine based on the same set of criteria used to determine acceptance to present. All, some or none of the presenting companies may be selected by the committee to move forward with an Early Adopter project agreement.

The Early Adopter Program is intended to help Maine companies in developing innovation solutions and determine product-market fit. It is also intended to help the State of Maine find innovative approaches to its work. Program participants selected for acceptance into the program will enter into a time-limited agreement with the State of Maine**. Participation in the Early Adopter Program does not guarantee long term vendor relationships with the State of Maine and is not an alternative to the RFP process.**

DECD will pilot this process for a year, and will adjust the program, expand or terminate the program, based on the learnings during the pilot year. The length of agreements with individual companies will be determined on a case-by-case basis, depending on the agreed upon project scope.

 **PROJECT APPLICATION COVER PAGE**

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| **Maine Company’s Name:** | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| **Company Point of Contact (POC) for Project:** | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| **POC Telephone Number:** | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| **POC Email Address:** | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| **Maine** **Company’s Headquarters’ Street Address:** | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| **Maine Company’s Headquarters’ City/Zip:** | Click or tap here to enter text. |

* No personnel currently employed by any State agency participated, either directly or indirectly, in any activities relating to the preparation of this Application.
* The above-named company is the legal entity that would enter into any resulting contract with the Department if their project is selected.
* The undersigned is authorized to enter contractual obligations on behalf of the above-named company.

*To the best of my knowledge, all information provided in the enclosed Project Application is complete and accurate at the time of submission.*

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| **Name (Print):**Click or tap here to enter text. | **Title:**Click or tap here to enter text. |
| **Authorized Signature:** | **Date:**Click or tap to enter a date. |

**DEBARMENT & PERFORMANCE CERTIFICATION**

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| **Maine Company’s Name:** | Click or tap here to enter text. |

By signing this document, I certify to the best of my knowledge and belief that the aforementioned Maine company and all other parties included in this project:

1. Are not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, and declared ineligible or voluntarily excluded from bidding or working on contracts issued by any governmental agency.
2. Have not, within the past three years, been convicted of or had a civil judgment rendered against them for:
	1. Fraud or a criminal offense in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a federal, state or local government transaction or contract.
	2. Violating Federal or State antitrust statutes or committing embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, or receiving stolen property;
	3. Are not presently indicted for or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a governmental entity (Federal, State or Local) with commission of any of the offenses enumerated in paragraph (b) of this certification; and
	4. Have not had one or more federal, state or local government transactions terminated for cause or default.

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| **Name (Print):**Click or tap here to enter text. | **Title:**Click or tap here to enter text. |
| **Authorized Signature:** | **Date:**Click or tap to enter a date. |

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Responses to the following questions are to be as brief and as concise as possible. No additional documents or attachments should be included relating to these questions.

### Is your company a Maine-based company, registered to do business with the Maine Secretary of State (Yes or No)? Include exact name as registered and explain your company’s commitment and presence in Maine.

Click or tap here to enter text.

### Please provide a link to your company’s website and any other web presence your company has (social media accounts, Amazon or Etsy accounts, etc.).

Click or tap here to enter text.

### What is the product and/or service under development?

Click or tap here to enter text.

### What information are you hoping to obtain, and what customer feedback will you expect, through the pilot with the State of Maine?

Click or tap here to enter text.

### Why do you believe the State of Maine government is a logical early adopter, tester, or pilot case? What area (i.e. branch/agency) of the State of Maine is your target for the project?­­­ Please be clear on how the State of Maine would be a realistic customer of your product and/or service, or how a time-limited pilot project with the State could help you advance your product development or commercialization goals.

Click or tap here to enter text.

### Who are your chief competitors? Are any located within the State of Maine? Are there any other entities offering a similar or competitive solution?

Click or tap here to enter text.

### What is your Total Addressable Market (TAM) and who are your key customers?

Click or tap here to enter text.

### What is the estimate time frame for the project to obtain the information, data and/or feedback you desire? How will you know when that information, data and/or feedback has been obtained?

Click or tap here to enter text.

### What parts of the project will you need the State of Maine to track and monitor to get the information you need? What specific resources will you need from the State for this project? Please include estimated time commitments for any State staff you would need to be involved.

Click or tap here to enter text.

### Will there be costs to the State of Maine for participation (can be up to $10,000)? If so, what are those anticipated costs? Can some or all of those costs be mitigated? Please attach a rough budget (if applicable) for the project.

Click or tap here to enter text.

### Does your company include under-represented communities in the company leadership (Founder team, C-Suite or Board of Directors)? If so, please specify (Person of Color; immigrant, refugee or asylum-seeker; woman; member of a First Nation; LGBTQ+; low-income heritage, other)?

Click or tap here to enter text.

### What else do we need to understand in terms of the benefit of participation in this program to your company and to the State of Maine?

Click or tap here to enter text.