

LAUNC[H]ARTFORD

JULY 1, 2020 TO JUNE 30, 2021

# Request for Proposals



# Proposal Submission & Evaluation Timeline:

February 14, 2020: Letters of Intent to submit a proposal due

February 28, 2020: Proposals due

March 1-11, 2020: Proposals reviewed by Launc[H] board and follow-up questions developed.

March 16-30, 2020: Applicant response period for Board questions

April 1-15, 2020: Board final review and development of Year 4 slate of proposals created

April 30, 2020: Approval of Year 4 slate from CTNext expected; applicat notifications made

May-June 2020: Contracts executed for selected Year 4 programs

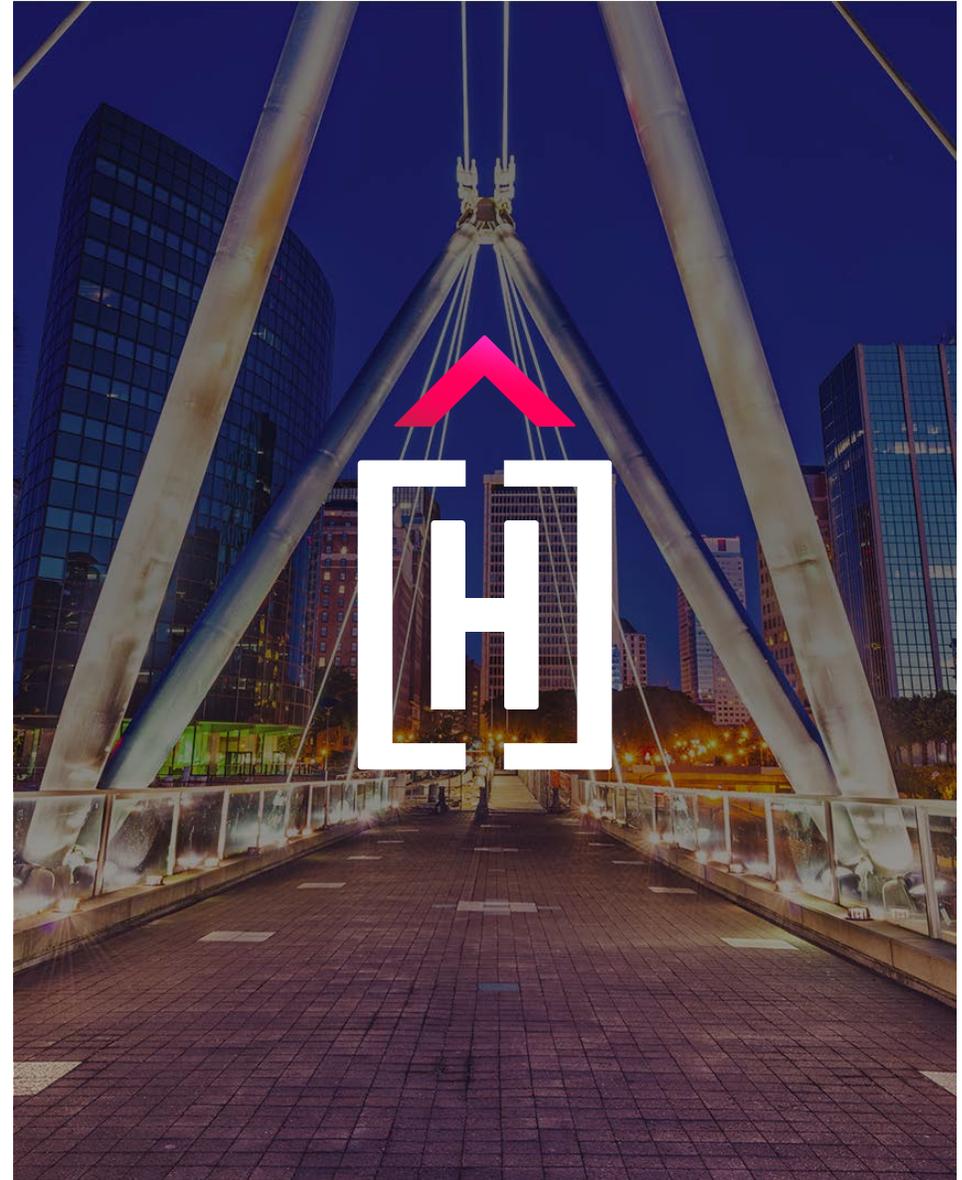


## Background

On June 6, 2017, the communities of Hartford and East Hartford were designated as an Innovation Place by CTNext, a subsidiary of Connecticut Innovations. Innovation Place designation comes with the opportunity to receive up to \$2M per year in matching funding from CTNext for programs and investments made that advance the community's strategy for improving conditions for entrepreneurs and innovators within the region.

Recently, this initiative was re-branded as Launc[H]artford. The goals of the activity sponsored under Launc[H] remain consistent with efforts made to grow Hartford's innovation ecosystem over the past three years:

- Attracting new businesses, talent and resources to fuel economic growth
- Supporting existing organizations and talent in meeting the demands of the new economy.
- Retaining industry strength and assets by positioning Hartford as a center of excellence and opportunity



# Areas of Focus

Goals of each Launc[H] area of focus, as well as examples of current initiatives are provided below. We hope you will use these as inspiration for additional programs that will help to advance innovation and entrepreneurship in each area:

## MedTech

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Digital technologies are making it possible to improve health and healthcare around the globe. In Hartford—a leading city of both cutting-edge healthcare and health insurance—the opportunity to change the game is even greater. Launc[H] partners came together to create Digital Health CT as the first step in the process of making Hartford the best place to start and grow a digital health company in the country.

## InsurTech

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Hartford and insurance have gone hand-in-hand since the 19th century. But, now more than ever, Hartford's insurance industry is looking forward; seeking input and inspiration from emerging technology companies to help reinvent products and customer experiences. As partners in Launc[H], corporations like Aetna, Cigna, Nassau RE, The Hartford, and Travelers are investing in programs like the Hartford InsurTech Hub, Nassau Re/Imagine, and InsurTech Hartford just to name a few.

## Advanced Manufacturing

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From bicycles and typewriters to furniture, hand tools, and jet engines, Hartford has always been a center of invention for game-changing products. Launc[H] strives to connect our diverse talent pool with the next generation of manufacturing jobs. The city's new Stanley + Techstars accelerator, MakerspaceCT and student-orientated initiatives like Manufacturing in Motion, are just some of the resources we help make available to innovators looking to accelerate our country's fourth industrial revolution.

## Culture

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Exceptional food, music, art, and recreation opportunities are just some of the things that make Hartford a great place to live. Launc[H] seeks to support innovators in these fields by connecting them to resources that will support their growth and patrons who appreciate their contributions to our community.

# Opportunity

Over the last three years, nearly 50 partners have helped to create and grow Launc[H] have made significant progress in creating a visible and increasingly vibrant innovation community in Hartford and East Hartford. In our program's fourth year, we have set our sights on six core priorities for growing Hartford's innovation ecosystem:

1. Increase amount of startup and growth-stage activity in Hartford
2. Curate & connect resources relevant to entrepreneurs in Hartford
3. Attract & activate new sources of investment
4. Help startups and anchors acquire the talent they need for growth
5. Improve connections to social, cultural, and recreational assets
6. Celebrate Success

Programs and projects seeking funding through Launc[H] should be able to be fully executed and show measurable results between July 1, 2020 and June 30, 2021, and be able to demonstrate co-investment from other funders with a ratio of at least 1:1 cash match.



# Submission Process: Begin with Letter of Intent

The proposal process for Launc[H] funding begins with submission of a Letter of Intent (LOI), which is available at [www.launchinhartford.com](http://www.launchinhartford.com).

## [ IMPORTANT ]

Several specific questions are included to help provide Launc[H] staff with a sense of the objectives and scope of the program being proposed. Providing complete answers that correspond with the questions, including the prompts before each field, will help Launc[H] staff understand how the proposed program fits with our overall strategic objectives.

Following a review of your LOI, Launc[H] staff will be in touch to schedule a time to review your LOI, ask any followup or clarifying questions that they may have, and discuss next steps, which may include a request to submit a proposal.



Proposals will be reviewed and evaluated by Launc[H] staff and its Board of Directors, and evaluated on the following criteria:

[ CONTINUED ON NEXT SLIDE ]

[ 01 ]

## Area of Focus

Proposed investments must possess a clear and concentrated area of focus, and should be able to advance the goals of one of the four core elements of the Launc[H] program: InsurTech, MedTech, Advanced Manufacturing, and/or Culture.

[ 03 ]

## Alignment with Launc[H] goals

Program design, as well as key outputs and outcomes must be consistent with specific goals for growth that have been identified by the Launc[H] Board.

[ 02 ]

## Problem Definition

Proposed programs must demonstrate the ability to address a key obstacle or challenge to growth and development within the identified focus area, and provide clear evidence of the problem, and its affects on the local community, including those served by the program

[ 04 ]

## Understand Community & Stakeholder Needs

The program must addresses a fundamental challenge or pain point for the community, and impacted stakeholders.



[ 05 ]

## Adaptability & Flexibility

The team must demonstrate an interest, willingness, and ability to anticipate and respond to changing conditions that affect program design, delivery, or anticipated outcomes during implementation.

[ 06 ]

## Innovation & Impact

The proposed program must demonstrate the potential to significantly improve a barrier for innovators and entrepreneurs. The proposed program should build upon work currently being done in the community, leverage existing resources in new ways, and/or introduce new assets to community.

[ 07 ]

## Strength of Team

The qualifications, and/or demonstrated track record of success possessed by key members of the project implementation team should be included in the program proposal. Evidence of alignment between the team's expertise and the efforts needed to generate results, should be provided. If the team counts on the assistance of additional advisors, or hired partners, the qualifications of those collaborators should also be addressed.

[ 08 ]

## Technical Feasibility

Proposed programs must be able to be implemented with the resources committed, and the outcomes and impact claimed as a result of proposed activities must be credible.

[ 09 ]

## Matching Investment

A minimum of a 1:1 cash match from other sources against funds requested from Launc[H]. Matching cash contributions should come from either city, federal, or private funds. No state funds are permitted to be counted towards cash match requirements through CTNext's Innovation Places program, which is the source of funds allocated through Launc[H]. In addition, pledges of, and proof of receipt for matching cash contributions to programs must be documented, and submitted as part of regular reporting to Launc[H] and CTNext.



In addition, Launc[H] seeks to support forward-thinking and innovative proposals for funding from organizations, and/or community leaders with a proven track record of:

**[ COLLABORATION ]**

Working collaboratively with community and/or corporate stakeholders

**[ EXECUTION ]**

Planning and executing high quality events and programs

**[ CONSTANT IMPROVEMENT ]**

An interest and investment in improving conditions for innovators and entrepreneurs in Hartford and/or East Hartford

**[ BUILDING ON STRENGTH ]**

A firm understanding of how to, and a willingness to assess and track key project outcomes, collect lessons learned, and build upon progress towards long-term results

## Funding Availability & Disbursement Schedule

While there has been no cap on the amount of funds that can be requested, applicants should be able to complete proposed activities, and spend funds received between July 1, 2020- June 30, 2021. Individual programs have typically received anywhere from \$10,000 to \$500,000 in funding per year, through Launc[H], depending on their scope and impact.

It is also expected that spending and implementation of activities funded through identified sources of match will be completed in that same time period.

It is also highly preferred that proposals received have a demonstrated plan for attaining financial sustainability over time, without continued state funding, and can utilize initial or supplemental funding through Launc[H] to catalyze significant and sustained private investment.

In most circumstances, funding will be disbursed in stages, at regular intervals. An initial funding advance of funds will be issued with the executed contract, followed by a reimbursement of additional budgeted/actual expenses at the conclusion of each quarter: January 2021, April 2021, and July 2021.

Proposed activities must show demonstrable results against their key milestones in order to continue to receive funding according to the schedule listed above. And, all funds must be spent by June 30, 2021.



# Proposal Submission Requirements

Once your Letter of Intent is reviewed by Launc[H] program staff, you may be invited to submit a formal proposal.

Proposals will be submitted via the online portal and will also ask for the following attachments:

1. Organization overview, including services offered, and organizational structure (non-profit, quasi-public, for-profit organization)
2. Organizational chart including members of the team, their roles, and responsibilities related to the provision of fiduciary agent services
3. Resumes or CVs of 1-4 key staff members involved in the program
4. Relevant project experience led by the organization and/or key staff involved
5. Project overview with 4-5 key milestones which will be used to measure the success of the program/project; include targeted completion dates and quantifiable goals for each of the milestones
6. Funding requested, including a clear budget for expenses, by category
7. Description of matching financial and in-kind resources committed to program/project
8. List any special requirements of the Launc[H] leadership to successfully complete the program/project
9. List any local stakeholders who will partner with your organization on this program/project
10. Up to 3 client references, on company letterhead with contact information, and a description of the work performed
11. Option to submit 4-5 photographs with captions of the program venue, events, or other relevant items in support of your proposal

## CTNext / Innovation Places

Launc[H] has been designated as the entity responsible for executing CTNext's Innovation Place program in Hartford and East Hartford. CTNext is self-described as "a public/private network of entrepreneurs, mentors, service providers, and others helping Connecticut's most promising startups succeed and grow."

In 2016, CTNext expanded to new initiatives helping key places in the state become magnets for talent, supporting entrepreneurship in higher education, and focusing more on growth-stage companies." Innovation Places "seeks to support entrepreneurs and leaders developing places that will attract the talent high-growth enterprises need. It weaves together entrepreneurship support and relationship-building with physical planning and development."



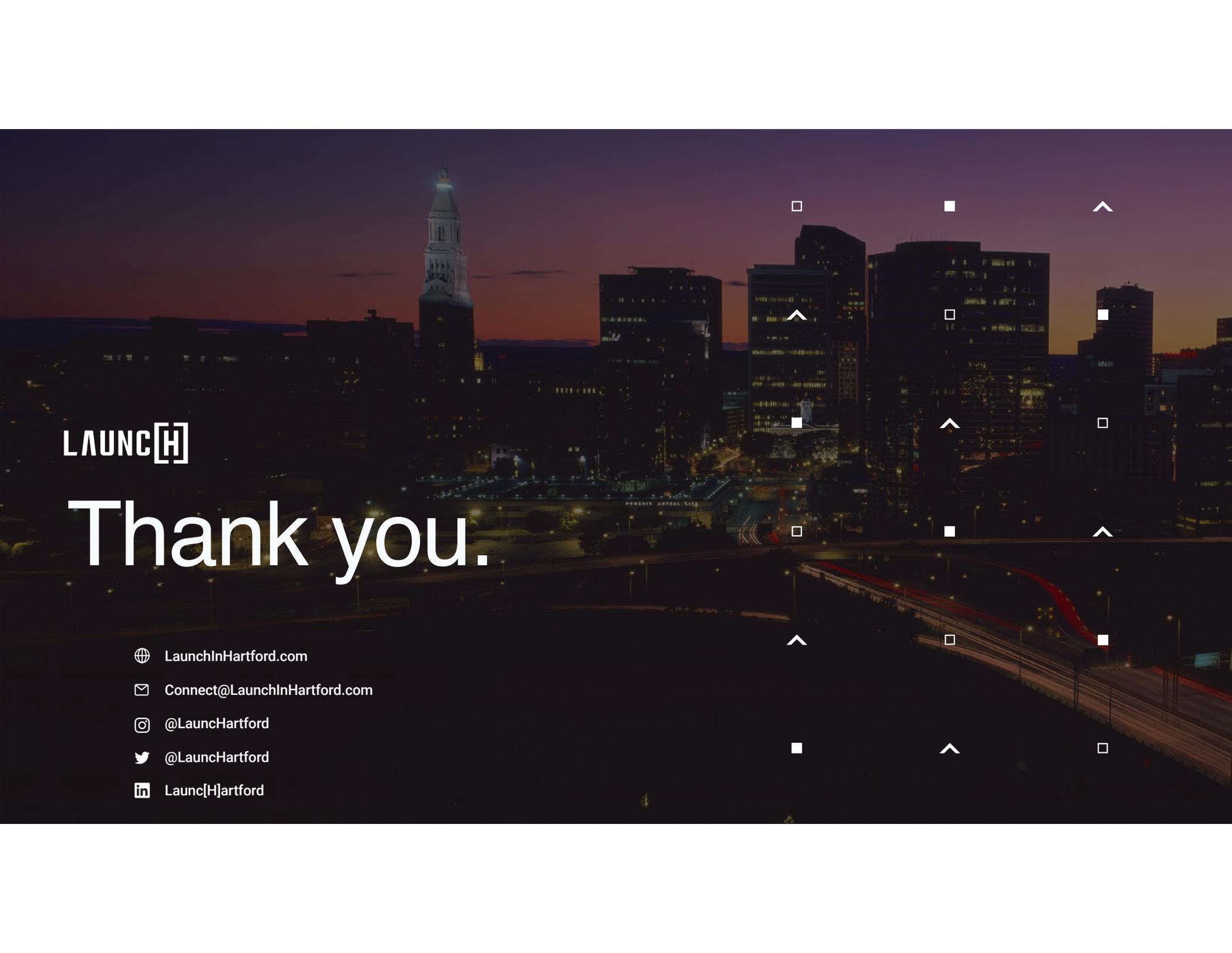


Letters of Intent and Proposals  
must be submitted via the online  
portal.

For assistance, contact:

Jessica Fayle  
Jessica@LaunchinHartford  
860-728-2146





LAUNC[H]

Thank you.

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