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**Massachusetts and Israel Issue RFP for \$2 Million Program to Finance Joint R&D Projects that Foster Economic Development**

*Bilateral State Agreement Facilitates Technology Commercialization for Life Sciences, Clean Energy and Technology Industries*

BOSTON, MA – Wednesday, September 7, 2011 – Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick, Israel’s Chief Scientist Avi Hasson, the U.S.-Israel Science and Technology Foundation (USISTF), and three Massachusetts economic development agencies announced today that applications are now being accepted under the Massachusetts-Israel Innovation Partnership (MIIP), a formal collaboration between the State of Israel and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to encourage and support innovation and entrepreneurship between Massachusetts’ and Israel’s life sciences, clean energy and technology sectors. The new partnership was first announced at the BIO International Convention in June of this year in Washington DC. Applications are due by February 6th, 2012. For more information or to apply, interested companies should visit <http://www.masstech.org/partnership/>.

The joint solicitation seeks applications for funding for industrial Research & Development (R&D) collaborations between Massachusetts and Israeli companies. The three participating Massachusetts agencies, the Massachusetts Life Sciences Center (the Center), the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative (MTC) and the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center (MassCEC), are committing nearly \$1 million in collective funding for Massachusetts companies that are engaged in cooperative industrial research and development projects with an identified Israeli partner company. The Office of the Chief Scientist will provide up to \$1 million in matching dollars for the corresponding Israeli partner companies. Massachusetts is the first U.S. state to establish such a program with the State of Israel.

“This exciting new program will promote research collaborations, industrial partnerships and commercialization of new technologies, expanding opportunity and job growth both in Massachusetts and in Israel,” said Governor Patrick.

The Partnership comes as a direct result of Governor Patrick's Massachusetts Innovation Economy Partnership Mission, a ten-day trade mission in March that included travel to Israel, where a coalition of the state's leading business executives and senior government officials explored growth opportunities of common interest for Massachusetts' and Israel's innovation industries. During that mission Governor Patrick and Shalom Simhon, Israeli Minister of Industry, Trade and Labor, signing on behalf of their respective states, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in Jerusalem. MIIP has been established to implement the spirit of the MOU's framework. The framework was approved by the Israeli Knesset in July, 2011.

"This partnership serves as another example of the Office of Chief Scientist's mission to implement programs that establish Israel as a hub of hi-tech industry," said Chief Scientist Avi Hasson, Israel Ministry of Industry, Trade and Labor. "We will continue to build international partnerships like the one with Massachusetts that enable Israeli and international companies to engage in joint technology development projects that drive economic growth."

The Partnership is designed to help Massachusetts and Israeli companies accelerate development cycles, and to promote mutually beneficial business-to-business cooperation to enhance opportunities for marketplace success and expand their global reach. It proposes a flexible framework of parallel funding for each participating company, having its R&D expenses supported by its own state according to its respective laws, regulations, rules and procedures.

"Helping businesses move forward with R&D projects through strategic international partnerships is the mission of the U.S.-Israel Science and Technology Foundation," said Ann Liebschutz, executive director at USISTF. "This partnership exemplifies how we are encouraging the U.S. to tap into Israel's zeal for developing highly advanced and in-demand technologies to facilitate the competitiveness of American companies in this challenging global economy."

"This partnership stems directly from the Governor's recent trade mission to Israel," said Susan Windham-Bannister, President & CEO of the Massachusetts Life Sciences Center. "A joint investment program between Massachusetts and Israel will build an even stronger collaboration between two of the world's leading centers for life sciences innovation and provide economic benefits to both states."

"Israel and Massachusetts are both home to world-class academic and research institutions, which have led to numerous technological discoveries and innovative start-ups in clean energy," said MassCEC Executive Director Patrick Cloney. "This partnership will strengthen Massachusetts' relationship with the Israeli clean energy industry, and promote Massachusetts as an international clean energy leader, while providing Massachusetts companies access to the cutting edge expertise of their Israeli collaborators. With partnerships such as this we are on our way to making clean energy a marquee industry in Massachusetts, just like life sciences and IT."

“During the Governor’s recent Trade Mission, we were impressed by the many synergies between the Israeli and Massachusetts technology sectors in areas such as cybersecurity, social media and digital healthcare management,” said Patrick Larkin, Director of the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative’s John Adams Innovation Institute. “We believe this public-private collaboration can serve as a catalyst to energize our state’s entrepreneurs and innovation-led industries to develop new products for global markets and create new economic opportunities for Massachusetts.”

“Massachusetts and Israel are global leaders in the innovation economy and the Governor’s Innovation Economy Partnership Mission produced a partnership that leverages those strengths to create jobs and groundbreaking technologies here at home and abroad,” said Ken Brown, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Office of International Trade & Investment. “The RFP stands out as an example of the work we continue to do to maximize the impact of the mission and ensure it translates into long-term economic development opportunities for the Commonwealth.”

Today there are nearly 100 companies with Israeli founders or Israeli-licensed technologies in Massachusetts. In 2009, these companies employed nearly 6,000 people and generated \$2.4 billion in direct revenue for the state. Local firms exported over \$180 million worth of goods to Israel in 2009. Home to 377 hospitals and 37,000 practicing physicians, Israel is an important market for health-related technologies.

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