# Key Dates

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| July 30th | Letter of Interest (required) |
| August 13th | Proposal Deadline |
| August 16th - 17th | Review by TRIP Selection Committee |
| August 18th - 31st | Project Refinement Period |
| September 1st | TRIP Pitch |
| September 28th | CTNext pitch |
| Oct 1st - Oct 29th | Contracting Period |
| November 1st | Project Launch |

# Background on Thames River Innovation Place

In 2017, the Groton and New London region was designated as an Innovation Place by CTNext. Since that time, Thames River Innovation Place (TRIP) has engaged with partners to launch a series of projects aimed at enhancing the region's entrepreneurial ecosystem. With a particular focus on BlueTech/Blue Economy, TRIP has identified 5 Areas of focus to guide these efforts:

- Building a robust entrepreneurial ecosystem
- Serving as a connector, developing partnerships around new initiatives
- Embracing the Thames River as an asset to spark innovation, nurture emerging companies and technologies, and foster regional economic activity

- Lead the region by offering novel and innovative initiatives that will impact growth springboarding the "blue tech" / "blue economy"
- Create a shared sense of place around the Thames River

Projecting into the future, TRIP envisions the Thames River Region maturing into a robust hub for Blue Technology and innovation. Central to this vision is a core of advanced technology in the maritime sector, deeply rooted in our regional history and grounded by industry leaders like Electric Boat, the United States Navy, and the new addition of Orsted and off-shore wind. Surrounding this core exists a host of auxiliary economic activity connected to the Thames River and Long Island Sound. This periphery includes industries such as aquaculture, hospitality and tourism, transportation, research and education, etc.

With this vision in mind, TRIP has identified three categories of projects, defined below, to concentrate its activities over the next funding period. Priority will be given to projects mostly closely aligned with this Blue Tech core, with consideration for projects that impact the periphery and community vibrancy. Additionally, TRIP recognizes that there may be suitable projects that exist outside of these categories and they encourage all interested parties to reach out for an initial exploratory conversation about their idea.

### Category 1: Activate regional Blue Tech Economy {*Core*}
TRIP seeks projects that target economic activity on or around the Thames River and Long Island Sound waterfronts. This may include initiatives that attract BlueTech companies to the region, support innovation and collaboration in this space, break down industry barriers/silos, and strengthen connections to anchors both in and outside of the region.

### Category 2: Unlock Regional Entrepreneurial Potential {*Periphery*}
TRIP seeks projects that support the incubation of new business concepts uniquely suited for the Thames River Region. This may include projects that activate Groton City and downtown New London, projects that grow economic activity connected to water, projects that create entrepreneurship opportunities for underserved communities/communities of color.

## Category 3: Enhance Community Vibrancy

TRIP seeks projects that create a culture of pride amongst residents and build a collective vision for the region. This may include projects that energize the region around blue tech/blue economy, projects that highlight ongoing innovation, or projects that define the Thames River Region as a hub for Blue Technology.

## Submission Requirements

- Project Summary – A description of the project, its objectives, and its main activity components in approximately 200-300 words. This description should address how your project specifically targets the goals of the RFP categories published above and how you see it contributing to advancing their goals.
- Three Unique Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) – Please suggest at least three well-defined, quantifiable, and measurable metrics that are reflective of the projects' core objectives and will serve well as barometers of progress toward those objectives. Each approved project will require quarterly reporting of these three KPIs.
- Project Budget – Complete using **SOW budget template**. Be sure to include, broken out by quarter for the duration of the project: proposed CTNext grant amounts, proposed Cash Match, and combined grant/match project expenses. Please ensure that project expenses are broken down into several rows of reasonable detail.
- Proposed Milestones – Please suggest, at a minimum, one unique draft milestone for each quarter a given project would remain in operation.
- Letters of Cash Match Commitment – Please include a letter(s) of commitment from proposed project partners documenting commitment to provide Cash Match greater than the proposed amount of project grant funding from CTNext. Cash match must meet a minimum threshold of $1.15 to every $1.00 of CTNext funding requested.
- Letters of Good Standing – Three **letters of good standing** from the **Connecticut Department of Labor**, the **Department of Revenue Services**, and the **Secretary of State**. These letters do take

time to process. Please request them as early as possible so that they can be on file.

- Resumes – Please submit a copy of a resume from each project partner's CEO, project manager, or similar project lead demonstrating professional and/or academic qualifications commensurate with the project work to be undertaken.

## Selection Criteria

Proposed Innovation Places projects are evaluated at two stages, first by the TRIP Board of Directors, and second by the CTNext Board of Directors. TRIP is primarily focused on identifying projects that contribute to the vision described in this RFP and have supplied this **strategy memo** to use as a reference. CTNext assesses projects for their alignment with the overall goals and objectives of the Innovations Places Program and have supplied this **guidance for project design**.

## How to Submit

Proposals should be sent to:     director@thamesriverinnovation.org

Materials can be submitted as attachments or, preferably as a link to a shared hosted file such as Google Drive, Dropbox, etc.