

# Patrick Administration Announces Recipients of Collaborative Workspace Grants to Support Creative Industries in Massachusetts

BOSTON - Thursday, December 4, 2014 - Housing and Economic Development Secretary Greg Bialecki and MassDevelopment President and CEO Marty Jones today announced that the New Bedford Economic Development Council (EDC) and Gateway City Arts (GCA) in Holyoke are the first recipients of collaborative workspace grants from the Transformative Development Fund, which was created through the Economic Development Legislation signed into law by Governor Deval Patrick on August 13.

"Collaborative workspaces inspire communities of innovation," said Housing and Economic Development Secretary Greg Bialecki. "These shared environments are hubs of economic activity, and are a very important part of our overall growth strategy."

The collaborative workspace grants provide for-profit and nonprofit entities with the funds necessary to start, sponsor and operate collaborative workspace environments that promote innovation, creativity and interaction between and among tenants. Through this program, the collaborative workspace proposals can access a pool of \$2 million in matching grants for building improvements, fit-out, equipment procurement and the expansion or renovation of existing spaces.

"The Transformative Development Initiative and TDI Cowork Grants support the creative forces in Gateway Cities that fuel growth through multi-sector collaboration," said MassDevelopment President and CEO Marty Jones. "Both the New Bedford EDC and Gateway City Arts in Holyoke can catalyze business innovation through the establishment of co-working labs and makerspaces."

The New Bedford EDC and the co-working operating company Groundworks, LLC received a \$150,000 grant for interior fit-out costs, accessibility compliance and professional fees associated with the creation of a 4,000 square foot co-working space that will bring new activity to a currently underutilized building in the historic Quest Center, creating strong ties between the residential neighborhoods and downtown New Bedford. Workspace amenities will include open desk seating, sharable conference room and equipment. Special events will encourage cross-sector collaboration and networking; programs will also be offered in Spanish and Portuguese. The location of this co-working space, anticipated to be open by the second quarter of 2015, will complement the existing activity at the Quest Center Business Incubator, which connects businesses with financing, planning and counseling tools.

"I am pleased that the Patrick Administration and MassDevelopment recognize the value in making catalytic investments such as this to encourage innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship in urban centers like New Bedford," said New Bedford Mayor Jon Mitchell. "New Bedford will use the funding to support a project to create a well-designed, functional co-working space in an unfinished area of a City-owned business incubator managed by the New Bedford Economic Development Council."

GCA of Holyoke will receive a \$5,000 seed grant to enhance its existing program by growing a community of makers who will transform ideas into prototypes, refine collaborative work equipment and programming needs and develop the business plan for expansion. These funds will support GCA in creating a sustainable makerspace program that will provide its members with access to an Innovation Resource Network and extend GCA's reach to surrounding communities.

"An Act to Promote Economic Growth in the Commonwealth," signed by Governor Patrick in August, provided for the creation of a Gateway Cities Transformative Development Fund, which will bring growth and opportunity to Gateway

Cities by enabling equity investments and technical assistance to support transformative development in these communities. MassDevelopment, the state's finance and development agency, is tasked with managing the various components of the Fund as part of the Transformative Development Initiative (TDI).

"This is another great example of how Holyoke is abuzz with innovative and entrepreneurial activities in our downtown," said Holyoke Mayor Alex Morse. "I congratulate GCA on its effort to make a democratized maker space, available to stakeholders throughout Holyoke and beyond, and thank MassDevelopment for its great work to provide this assistance."

Interested parties can still apply for TDI Cowork grants via a rolling application process with information available [here](#). Grants will apply to construction, improvements, or equipment for new spaces or for existing facility expansions. Collaborative workspaces often feature open floor plans, community meeting spaces, and other features to encourage connections between tenants. Some have become headquarters for small and innovative businesses and created focal points for economic clusters, as MassDevelopment found in a 2013 report the Agency commissioned on makerspaces.

MassDevelopment, the state's finance and development agency, works with businesses, nonprofits, financial institutions, and communities to stimulate economic growth across the Commonwealth. During FY2014, MassDevelopment financed or managed 314 projects generating investment of more than \$2.9 billion in the Massachusetts economy. These projects are expected to create more than 6,300 jobs and build or rehabilitate more than 1,600 residential units.

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