



## **FAQs on Technology Feedback Forum Program**

### ***Who is the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD) and why is it important for Entrepreneurs to know about MWD?***

The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California is a regional wholesaler and the largest supplier of treated water in the US. The name is usually shortened to the "Metropolitan Water District, or "MWD." It is a cooperative of 14 cities and 11 municipal water districts and one county water authority that provides water to 19 million people in its 5,200-square-mile (13,000 km<sup>2</sup>) service area. It was created by an act of the California Legislature in 1928, primarily to build and operate the Colorado River Aqueduct. MWD became the first (and largest) contractor to the State Water Project in 1960.

Its service areas include parts of Los Angeles, Orange, San Diego, Riverside, San Bernardino and Ventura counties. The district covers primarily the coastal and most heavily populated portions of Southern California; however large portions of San Diego, San Bernardino and Riverside counties are located outside of its service area.

### ***Why it's important for Entrepreneurs to know who MWD is?***

The "know your client rule" is advice for everyone who is looking for a job or looking to do business with a client. Entrepreneurs tend to be overly confident about their product or innovation and skip learning about the clients. No matter how good your product or service is, no one will buy it if they don't want it or believe they don't need it. You need to listen to and clearly understand what your customers really want or need in order to persuade anyone that they want or need to buy what you're offering.

MWD is a wholesaler, not a retailer of drinking water. MWD's operations and approaches may differ from your local water retailer. As a wholesaler, MWD has to comply with a myriad of regulations when it comes to drinking water. MWD's operations revolve around supply reliability, water quality, and infrastructure and water resource management. For example MWD does not cover end user conservation, unless it is done through a competitive process like the Innovative Conservation Program (ICP). To learn more about MWD go to <http://www.mwdh2o.com/>.

### ***How can I sell my product or innovation to MWD?***

The Metropolitan Water District procures goods, non-professional services and professional services in accordance with MWD's Administrative code. Most goods and services are procured through a competitive process. Entrepreneurs are required to register with MWD to receive



information on upcoming opportunities and bids. To register and learn more about MWD's procurement process go to <http://www.mwdh2o.com/Doing-Business/Guidelines/Pages/default.aspx>.

For new unsolicited proposals and request for introductions of emerging technologies, entrepreneurs are encouraged to submit an application to MWD's Technology Feedback Forum (TFF) Program.

### ***What is the Technology Feedback Forum Program (TFF) ?***

The TFF Program offers innovators and entrepreneurs an opportunity to pitch their innovation or technology to MWD, its member agencies, and partners. The primary objectives of the program are to: introduce unsolicited proposals, provide industry feedback to entrepreneurs, and for agencies to discover early stage technologies. Entrepreneurs can also benefit from TFF's innovation network of resources for funding, pilot programs, and assistance in determining technical and market viability.

### ***How can my technology be considered for the Technology Feedback Forum program?***

Entrepreneurs interested in participating in the TFF program are required to:

- Join [h2otechconnect](https://h2otechconnect.intronetworks.com/#) (<https://h2otechconnect.intronetworks.com/#>). This is MWD's Innovation portal
- Complete and submit a [Feedback Forum Application](#) at [www.mwdinnovates.com](http://www.mwdinnovates.com)

### ***What is H2o TechConnect?***

H2o TechConnect is the "Linked In" of water that connects the water industry, entrepreneurs, university innovators, investors, service providers, mentors, technology corporations, public agencies, economic development professionals and other key players in global innovation. H2O TechConnect is a community that connects with each other, provides opportunities, shares ideas, provides resources, discusses funding, provides solutions, forms partnerships and, most importantly, helps each other. There are many success stories in the TechConnect Community with connections made, partnerships, and technologies, discovered, vetted, piloted, and funded.

### ***Is there an application deadline for the TFF?***

Applications for the Technology Feedback Forum Program will be accepted on a quarterly basis. Deadlines for applications will be at the end of each quarter as follows: March 31, June 30, September 30 and December 31.



### ***What happens after I submit the application?***

All TFF program applications received will undergo an initial review for responsiveness to determine that the applicant thoroughly complied with the application and instructions. Those applications deemed non responsive will be returned and can be resubmitted. Applicants who have not fully completed the applications will be informed within two weeks after submitting the application.

Responsive applications will be evaluated for potential agency use and market viability by industry experts. This process may take between 4-6 weeks following the quarterly deadline date depending on the number of applications received. All applications will be reviewed in the order received.

### ***What are the possible outcomes for TFF applicants?***

Depending on the Technology Readiness Levels, TFF applicants may receive:

- Valuable industry feedback from experts. The feedback can range from a technical aspect of the technology to the viability of the product to enter the market.
- A referral to a technology incubator or accelerator
- An invitation to explore trials
- Procurement of the product

### ***Can I submit more than one application?***

We recommend that applicants submit one application for each technology or innovation. An organization may submit more than one application at a time if each application is for a different technology or innovation. However, if more than one proposal is submitted by an applicant, Metropolitan will select a single proposal to move through the process.

### ***What type of technologies are water agencies looking for?***

Many opportunities for innovation and efficiency exist for municipalities. Among those considered are new technologies that reduce energy use, increase operational efficiency, capture nutrients, and increase water reuse. A sample wish list for MWD can be found at <http://www.mwdinnovates.com/wish-list.html>.

### ***Is there funding available through the TFF process? Will Metropolitan fund the development of my new technology?***

No. The TFFP process is designed to help innovators pitch new technologies and unsolicited proposals to Metropolitan for evaluation and feedback. However, as part of the feedback process, Metropolitan may refer applicants to partners with funding expertise.



***Will the Metropolitan Water District sign a non-disclosure agreement?***

No, the Metropolitan Water District does not sign non-disclosure agreements as part of the TFFP.

***What are Technology Readiness Levels (TRL)?***

Technology Readiness Levels (TRL) are a type of measurement system used to assess the maturity level of a particular technology. Each technology is evaluated against the parameters for each technology level and is then assigned a TRL rating based on the projects progress. There are nine technology readiness levels. TRL 1 is the lowest and TRL 9 is the highest. Please see the attached table.

***Does the TFF program accept all TRL levels?***

The TFFP preference is to consider technologies that are between TRL 7-9. However, as part of MWD's H2oTechHub services, technologies that are between 3-6 will also be considered so that these technologies can also be referred to services that provide a pathway to commercialization.

***How can I contact the TFF program with other questions?***

The MWD-H2oTECHHUB team can be contacted about the TFF program by email at [h2otechhub@mwdh2o.com](mailto:h2otechhub@mwdh2o.com) or by phone at 213.217.7620.

***How do I know if my technology/innovation complies with California Water Regulations?***

Links to help you determine if your technology or innovation meets California regulations: [California Regulations](#).

***I have read this Feedback Forum Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and understand the processes and timelines.***