

QCC, Worcester State receive MBI grants to diversify, educate life science workforce

[By Kevin Koczwara](#)

Two Worcester colleges and a magnet school have received grants from the Massachusetts Biomedical Initiatives incubator to fund programs to help increase the diversity in the life sciences workforce and help solve some of the industry's future workforce needs.

Quinsigamond Community College, Worcester State University, and the Mass Academy of Math and Science each received Increasing Diversity in STEM Challenge grants. QCC also received a Workforce Challenge Grant. The grants reimburse recipients for program funding spent during 2023. MBI didn't specify the grant amounts.

"The work these programs are doing is vital to ensuring a healthy, vibrant, and diverse life sciences workforce," Jon Weaver, president and CEO of Worcester-based MBI, said in a press release on Monday. "Industry and academia often speak different languages but have common goals. The focus of MBI's Challenge Grants is to help translate, promote collaboration, and create

opportunities for new and diverse populations to join the growing industry.”

QCC received funding to support diversification in STEM through accessible early college courses, youth exposure to STEM and STEM careers, and adult learning programs. Its second grant will fund a new 18-hour, stand-alone cell culture module, which will be added to its 10-week biomanufacturing technician program.

Worcester State received funding to support its STEM enrichment through hands-on experience for middle and high schoolers, adult learners, and families.

Mass Academy of Math and Science, a magnet school in Worcester, received money to support its free creative engineering and design afterschool program for elementary and middle school students.

A report from international real estate brokerage [CBRE in 2022 ranked Worcester the 15th](#) best market in the US for life sciences research talent. The Massachusetts Biotechnology Council, a not-for-profit life sciences trade group in Cambridge, [predicts 40,000](#) new life science jobs will be created by 2024, which means there is a need for programs that help educate and secure a steady and diverse workforce to fill those vacancies.