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State Seeks Agency to Lead 2008 21st Century Jobs Fund Competition Peer Review Process

Governor Jennifer M. Granholm and Michigan Economic Development Corporation President and CEO James C. Epolito today announced a request for proposals (RFP) issued by the Strategic Economic Investment and Commercialization Board (SEIC Board) to administer the independent peer review process for a second round 21st Century Jobs Fund Commercialization Competition.

“The 21st Century Jobs Fund is the cornerstone of the most comprehensive and aggressive strategy in the nation to transform our economy, grow new high-tech companies and create good-paying jobs for our citizens,” Granholm said. “Just as we are working to create jobs today, this is an important part our plan to create jobs tomorrow.”

The peer review service provider will oversee the evaluation of proposals based on commercialization merit, scientific and technical merit, management team strengths and the ability to leverage additional funding. Other duties would include managing applications, assigning reviewers to specific proposals, scoring proposals through the MEDC’s electronic award management system, and making recommendations for funding. Preference will be given to organizations that can demonstrate the ability to recruit experts from, but not limited to, Michigan that possess Michigan expertise, national perspectives and global views to the process and manage conflicts of interest between applicants, reviewers and the SEIC Board.

“The SEIC Board is focusing its resources in this year’s competition on finding the most competitive funding opportunities for sustainable technology businesses with near-term job creation potential,” Epolito said. “The peer review service provider will be an important part of our efforts to identify companies that diversify Michigan’s economy and create jobs.”

The RFP is available online at www.TheMEDC.org/peerreview along with specifics on the application process. Proposals must be submitted electronically and are due no later than 5:00 p.m. EST on April 16, 2008.

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Questions regarding the RFP may be submitted to contracts&grants@michigan.org. Questions must be received by email no later than 2:00 p.m. EST on April 4, 2008.

The SEIC Board is responsible for administering grants and loans to support competitive-edge technology investments under the 21st Century Jobs Fund. The first round of funding resulted in 78 organizations receiving \$126.3 million in awards.

The 21st Century Jobs Fund is a \$2 billion, ten-year initiative proposed by Governor Jennifer M. Granholm, approved by the Michigan Legislature, and administered by the MEDC to accelerate the diversification of Michigan's economy. The fund invests in competitive-edge technologies in the targeted sectors of life sciences, alternative energy, advanced automotive materials and manufacturing, and homeland security/defense. For more information on the 21st Century Jobs Fund and the MEDC, visit www.TheMEDC.org.

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