REQUEST FOR INTEREST (RFI)
Solicitation No. RFI-23-033-HSEO
for
GRID RESILIENCE AND INNOVATION PARTNERSHIP –
TOPIC AREA 3: GRID INNOVATION PROGRAM
U.S. Department of Energy
DE-FOA-0002740

The purpose of the Hawai‘i State Energy Office (HSEO) is to promote energy efficiency, renewable energy, and clean transportation to help achieve a resilient clean energy economy by 2045 (Hawai‘i Revised Statutes §196-71). HSEO is the primary state entity leading this charge. Under the new authority granted by the Hawai‘i State Legislature in Act 122, Session Laws of Hawai‘i 2019, HSEO will carry out the activities and coordination necessary to achieve Hawai‘i’s clean energy transformation.

This solicitation seeks interested project or program applicants (“Partners”) to submit to HSEO, an eligible entity, Concept Papers responsive to the U.S. Department of Energy’s DE-FOA-0002740 for Topic Area 3: “Program Upgrading Our Electric Grid and Ensuring Reliability and Resiliency (Grid Innovation Program) (BIL Section 40103(b))”. Partners responding to this RFI may submit as a single partner entity to HSEO, or as a consortium of partners. If the Concept Paper receives a positive review from HSEO, and subsequently the USDOE, and the Partner chooses to pursue a full application, Partner will be responsible for completing the full application as detailed in the FOA. HSEO would be the prime recipient and administer the project or program, as required for eligibility of the project or program by the FOA, with the Partner as a sub-awardee acting as the project manager to execute the project or program, if selected.

The Hawai‘i State Energy Office is committed to providing equal access consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Americans with Disabilities Amendment Act of 2008 (ADAAA), and other state and federal laws. If you have a disability that may restrict your ability to meaningfully participate in this solicitation, we will provide you with a reasonable and appropriate accommodation at no cost to you. If you need an auxiliary aid/service or other reasonable accommodation, please contact Kathy Yim at 808-460-7995 or by email at kathy.yim@hawaii.gov. Requests made as early as possible will allow adequate time so that we may best serve you.

For screen reader users. The Hawai‘i State Energy Office recognizes the use of diacritical markings of the Hawai‘i‘ian language such as the ‘okina (also called a glottal stop) and the kahakō (also called a macron). Please note that screen readers may not read or pronounce the Hawai‘i‘ian words correctly.

Deadline for Submittals: Wednesday, January 4, 2023, 4:30 P.M. (HST)
SUMMARY

Pursuant to §3-122-16.31, Hawai‘i Administrative Rules, the Hawai‘i State Energy Office (HSEO), an attached agency of the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism, is seeking project or program Partners to submit a Grid Innovation Program Concept Paper and a potential subsequent Full Application in response to the United States Department of Energy (USDOE) Grid Deployment Office (GDO) and Office of Clean Energy Demonstrations (OCED) funding opportunity announcement (FOA) number: DE-FOA-0002740, Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) – Grid Resilience and Innovation Partnerships (GRIP). The intent of the GRIP program is to fund activities to increase resiliency and reliability to the grid in the face of increasing threats to the power system infrastructure caused by climate change impacts.

Although the FOA outlines three topic areas within the GRIP program, HSEO is only seeking Partners to submit concept papers to pursue funding for Topic Area 3: “Program Upgrading Our Electric Grid and Ensuring Reliability and Resiliency (Grid Innovation Program) (BIL Section 40103(b))”.

As described by the FOA, under Topic Area 3, Grid Innovation Program, “USDOE is interested in both technical and non-technical approaches that improve grid reliability and resilience on a local, regional, and interregional scale.” The USDOE is soliciting projects that contribute significantly to one or more of the following primary objectives:

- “Ensuring reliable grid operations by reducing the frequency, scale, and/or duration of disruptions, reducing capacity interconnection time, increasing regional and interregional transfer capacity, or reducing costs associated with increased reliability.”
- “Improving overall grid resilience in terms of avoiding, withstanding, responding to, and recovering from disruptions, including deliberate attacks, accidents, the growing threats of extreme weather events and climate change, and other naturally occurring threats or incidents…”
- “Enhancing collaboration between and among eligible entities and private and public sector owners and operators on grid resilience, including in alignment with regional resilience strategies and plans…”
- “Contributing to the decarbonization of the electricity and broader energy system in a way that supports system resilience, reliability, and affordability by improving access to technologically and geographically diverse energy resources, including distributed energy resources and electrification opportunities.”
- “Providing enhanced system value, improving current and future system cost effectiveness, and delivering economic benefits to community members, underrepresented regions, or other stakeholders…”

The USDOE has identified three areas of interest for Topic Area 3: transmission system applications, distribution system applications, and combination systems applications. $1.9 billion is available for Topic Area 3, Grid Innovation Program. USDOE expects to
select 4-40 applicants for funding awards, with any one individual award size awarded between $50 million to $250 million while the "Anticipated Minimum Award Size for Any One Individual Award (Fed Share)" is unknown.

As required by Section 988 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16352), the project requires a cost share of at least 50% of the total project costs from non-federal sources unless otherwise allowed by law. Partners should indicate their cost share contribution, as well as those in their consortium if applicable, as a Cost Share Partner. HSEO will only consider projects or programs for which the responder is accountable for the entirety of the cost match either individually or through a consortium. While HSEO will be requesting funding from the legislature to support local cost match, HSEO currently does not have funds to support cost match. According to DE-FOA-0002740 for Topic Area 3, USDOE generally uses cooperative agreements to provide financial and other support to prime recipients. Additional information is available in the USDOE FOA-0002740 or see attachment “GRIP_FOA-2740.”

Please note the deadline for Concept Papers to be submitted to HSEO is January 4, 2023, as noted below under Submission Deadline. The Concept Paper deadline for the USDOE is January 13, 2023, 12:00 P.M. (HST). If the Concept Paper receives a positive review by USDOE, a Full Application must be submitted to the USDOE with a scheduled due date of May 19, 2023, 11:00 A.M. (HST).

SELECTION CRITERIA

The following are the selection criteria to be utilized by HSEO to assess the Grid Innovation Program Concept Papers consistent with the FOA. As stated in section V.A.i. of the FOA on page 80, the USDOE will evaluate Concept Papers based on consideration of the following factors. All sub-criteria are of equal weight.

1. (20%) The proposed work, if successfully accomplished, would clearly meet the objectives as stated in the FOA for the specific topic area.

2. (20%) The proposed work aligns with and supports State, local, Tribal, regional resilience, decarbonization, or other energy strategies and plans.

3. (20%) The applicant has identified risks and challenges, including possible mitigation strategies, and has shown the impact that USDOE funding and the proposed project would have on the relevant field and application.

4. (20%) The applicant has proposed strategies to ensure meaningful community and labor engagement; quality jobs and workforce development; EEJ and the Justice40 Initiative; and diversity, inclusion, accessibility—including methods to ensure accountability.

5. (20%) The applicant has the qualifications, experience, capabilities and other resources necessary to complete the proposed project.
Concept Papers which are responsive to the above five criteria, consistent with the USDOE criterion for Concept Papers, and tie directly to the criterion for Topic Area 3, will score more favorably. HSEO may select multiple Concept Papers for submission to USDOE. For additional details, see page 88 of the FOA.

SUBMISSION FORMAT

Interested Partner (s) shall submit the following documents to HSEO:

- **Company and Contact information:**
  1) legal name of business,
  2) address,
  3) contact name,
  4) telephone number,
  5) email address, and
  6) website address

- **Name(s) and resume(s) of key executive personnel(s);**

- **Cost Share plan (three page maximum) including a statement that the Partner will meet the full cost share required by the proposed project, excluding any letters of commitment or other similar supporting documents of funding commitments.**

- **Include a statement that the Partner understands that HSEO reserves the right to incorporate or not incorporate into the application for the USDOE grant any recommendations, in whole or in part, presented in response to the request.**

- **Include a statement that the Partner understands that neither HSEO nor the interested Partners has any obligation under this request.**

- **Include a statement certifying that the applicant has not submitted this concept to any other entity or organization for consideration.**

In addition, interested Partners shall submit a program or project in the Concept Paper format as detailed in the FOA.

- **Coversheet (one page maximum)**
  - Project title
  - Area of Interest to Topic Area 3
  - Technical points of contact
  - Business points of contact
  - Names of all team member organizations
  - Project location(s)
  - Any statement regarding confidentiality

- **Project and/or Technology Description (12 page maximum)**
  - How the project addresses the topic area’s eligible uses and technical approaches.
- How the project supports State, local, Tribal, community and regional resilience, in reducing the likelihood and consequences of disruptive events, decarbonization, or other energy strategies and plans.
- The grid-benefitting outcomes to be delivered by the project.
- The impact of the project to reduce innovative technology risk; achieve further deployment at-scale; and lead to additional private sector investments.
- The impact that USDOE funding would have on the proposed project.
- The readiness, viability, and expected timing of the project.
- Community Benefits Plan (five page maximum)
  - Succinctly describe the approach to be taken to address the following four core elements:
    1. Community and labor engagement leading to negotiated agreements;
    2. Investing in job quality and workforce continuity;
    3. Advancing diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility; and
    4. Contributing to the Justice40 Initiative goal that 40% of the overall benefits of certain climate and clean energy investments flow to disadvantaged communities
- Project Team - Addendum A (five page maximum)
  - Succinctly describe the qualifications, experience, and capabilities of the proposed Project Team to include the following:
    1. Whether the Project Manager and Project Team have the skill and expertise needed to successfully execute the project plan;
    2. Whether the applicant has prior experience that demonstrates an ability to perform tasks of similar risk and complexity;
    3. Whether the applicant has worked together with its teaming partners on prior projects or programs;
    4. Whether the applicant has adequate access to equipment and facilities necessary to accomplish the effort and/or clearly explain how it intends to obtain access to the necessary equipment and facilities.
    5. Applicants may provide graphs, charts, or other data to supplement their Project and/or Technology Description.

Partners may amend or clarify submittal at any time by filing a new submittal prior to the submission deadline.

**SUBMISSION DEADLINE**
To be considered for this grant opportunity, all submittals must be submitted electronically and received no later than January 4, 2023, 4:30 P.M. (HST). All submittals must be received by email only. Timely receipt of the application shall be evidenced by the date and time of email delivery. Any submissions received after this date and time will be automatically disqualified.

Send email submission to:
Hawai‘i State Energy Office
Ms. Kirsten Baumgart Turner  
Acting Chief Energy Officer  
Attn. Kathy Yim  
Email: dbedt.hseo.solicitations@hawaii.gov

In the email subject line, write “APPLICATION for Solicitation No. RFI-23-033-HSEO”.  
Facsimiles and/or hard copies of any submittal shall not be accepted.

QUESTIONS
All procedural questions regarding this RFI shall be submitted in writing via email to:  
dbedt.hseo.solicitations@hawaii.gov. Only questions received by December 28, 2022,  
12:00 P.M. (HST) will be accepted.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Costs for developing submissions or assisting the concept paper development process  
are solely the responsibility of the applicant. Whether or not any award results from this  
RFI, HSEO will not reimburse such costs.

HSEO reserves the right to cancel this RFI and to reject any and all submissions in  
whole or in part when it is determined to be in the best interest of the State.

HSEO reserves the right to incorporate or not incorporate in the Concept Paper and/or a  
Full Application any recommendations presented in response to this RFI.

HSEO reserves the right to incorporate additional components into the Concept Paper  
and/or a Full Application to any recommendations presented in response to this RFI  
with agreement of the Partners.

HSEO may select multiple Concept Papers for submission to USDOE.

Neither HSEO nor any interested Partners shall have any obligation under this request.

All submittals become the property of the State of Hawai‘i.

CONFIDENTIAL SUBMISSIONS

If a person believes that any portion of a proposal, offer, or correspondence contains  
information that should be withheld as confidential, then the head of the purchasing  
agency should be so advised in writing and provided with justification to support the  
confidentiality claim. Cost is not considered confidential and will not be withheld.

A person shall request in writing nondisclosure of designated trade secrets or other  
proprietary data considered confidential. Such data shall accompany the submittal, be  
clearly marked, and shall be readily separable from the submittal in order to facilitate  
eventual public inspection of the non-confidential portion of the submittal.
Pursuant to HAR Section 3-122-58, the head of the purchasing agency or designee shall consult with the Attorney General and make a written determination in accordance with HRS Chapter 92F. If the request with regard to requests for confidentiality is denied, such information shall be disclosed as public information, unless the person appeals the denial to the Office of Information Practices in accordance with Section 92F-15.5(a), HRS.

INCOMPLETE SUBMITTALS

Submittals received by the due date, but with missing information or minor deficiencies, will be considered “incomplete.” Partners will be notified of the deficiencies and will have the opportunity to submit the required items by the deadline imposed by HSEO.

TECHNICAL IRREGULARITIES

Technical irregularities are matters of form rather than substance evident from the submittal document, or insignificant mistakes that can be waived or corrected without prejudice to other applicants. The Procurement Officer may waive such irregularities or allow an applicant to correct them if either is in the best interest of the State.

AWARD

All respondents shall be notified in writing.

Kirsten Baumgart Turner
Acting Chief Energy Officer
Hawai'i State Energy Office
Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism

(Internet Posting: December 14, 2022)