**Carbon Neutrality Strategy Q&A**

**Stakeholder Engagement**

**Q1:** Please elaborate on whether the work described under this grant will include public engagement (e.g., what form of engagement, how many meetings, etc). We ask because there are references in the RFA to public engagement (e.g., the policy roadmap will leverage feedback from stakeholder engagement, and require production of digital material and presentation for engagement activities).

**A1:** Applicants should propose an approach to engaging stakeholders in the development of the policy roadmap that is feasible given the budget and time frame. Engagement will be conducted in partnership with DOEE. Materials produced including digital materials and presentations will be used by DOEE to conduct additional engagement.

**Q2:** If public engagement is expected to be performed, please confirm if it is to be provided within the budget cap of $240,000.

**A2:** Yes. All activities proposed by the applicant must be provided within the stated budget.Q4: Does the entirety of the budgeted $240,000 need to be spent by September 2019?

**Q3:** Can additional stakeholder engagement be completed after September 2019?

**A3:** All proposed activities must be completed during the initial grant period, which ends September 30, 2019.

**Q4:** Do you have a list of potential stakeholders already in place?

**A4:** Yes, DOEE can facilitate connections with stakeholders engaged in previous planning efforts including Sustainable DC and Clean Energy DC.

**Q5:** What are the expectations specific to equity based engagement?

**A5:** We would like for applicants to consider how they will conduct equity based engagement.

**Budget**

**Q6:** Given that this RFA is framed as a grant application, please confirm if private enterprises can include profit margins in its cost estimates. We ask because profit is not explicitly stated as an allowable cost.

**A6:** The budget narrative must explain and justify every line item in the numeric budget. See Section 3.2 (c) 6. Please be reminded that this is a competitive solicitation. See Section 1.4.

**Q7:** Does the entirety of the budgeted $240,000 need to be spent by September 2019?

**A7:** See page 20, Project Period of the RFA, the project must be completed during the grant period which ends September 30, 2019. This is a competitive application and applicants may propose a project budget that is less than the $240,000 available.

**Additional Document Submission**

**Q8:** Is the work plan outside of the ten page limit?

**A8:** Yes. The work plan is outside of the proposal’s ten pages.

**Q9:** In addition to bios of key personnel, should we include resumes?

**A9:** Applicants may attach full resumes to support their application. These do not count toward the 10 page limit

**Q10:** Does an entity have to submit a tax exempt form if it is a private enterprise?

**A10:** No

**Q11:** Do sub-consultants on the project need to provide the required documentation outlined in the RFA section 3.4 Required Documentation (i.e. certificate of good standing, registered with SAM, provide fiscal year budget projection, etc.)?

**A11:** Only the applicant needs to provide the required documentation. See Appendix 1-General Terms and Conditions, Sections 14 and 15 for more information.

**Project Support and Management**

**Q12:** What kind of project management or interaction can a grantee expect of DOEE?

**A12:** This depends on the grantee’s level of performance and the project management style proposed by the grantee.

**Q13:** Will the city provide technical resources? What level of staff support does DOEE expect to provide?

**A13:** DOEE will help to facilitate connections with District agencies and stakeholders, and review everything throughout the grant period. DOEE has some in-house capacity on the existing Clean Energy DC model but we are looking for the grantee to complete the deliverables of the grant.

**Proposal Content**

**Q14:** Does climate resilience hold the same weight in the proposal as carbon neutrality?

**A14:** We are looking for proposals that discuss both a mitigation and resilience benefit.

**Q15:** Does DOEE expect original research or a consolidation of things that have already been done?

**A15:** The technical assessment will require original research/modeling.

**Q16:** Will DOEE share the Clean Energy DC model before the submission of the application?

**A16:** No. However the Clean Energy DC full plan (available at: <https://doee.dc.gov/cleanenergydc>) and the supporting website (<https://public.tableau.com/profile/dc.department.of.energy.and.environment#!/vizhome/CleanEnergyDC/DCCEP>) are quite detailed resources.

**Q17:** Would DOEE say that the Clean Energy DC plan is a good model for the level of detail expected for this carbon neutrality plan?

**A17:** Given the uncertainty in looking out to 2050, we are looking for a strategy, not necessarily a plan, so that it can be more flexible.

**Additional Questions**

**Q18:** Does the ten double-spaced page limit mean ten pieces of paper or five?

**A18:** Five double-sided pieces of paper.

**Q19**: Do you need a DC based partner?

**A19:** No. See Section 7 for scoring criteria.

**Q20:** Do all of the deliverables need to be met by the end of the grant period?

**A20:** Yes. All of the deliverables need to be met by the end of the grant period.

**Q21:** We were told that this grant isn’t federally funded, but we were also advised to register in the System for Award Management (SAM) if needed. Can you please clarify if SAM registration is needed?

**A21:** Yes. Sam registration is required for all applicants.

**Q22:** Section 6 in Appendix 2 of the Carbon Neutrality RFA implies that any organization subject to legal proceedings related to provision of services cannot sign the certification statement in Appendix 2 and should not apply for the grant.  Is that true, or can a list of the current and past legal proceedings in the past 3 years be provided as part of the certification?  Or is it sufficient to provide disclosure of the legal proceedings as a supplement to Appendix 2 per [https://opgs.dc.gov/book/citywide-grants-manual-and-sourcebook/70-nofa-and-application-process](https://emea01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fopgs.dc.gov%2Fbook%2Fcitywide-grants-manual-and-sourcebook%2F70-nofa-and-application-process&data=02%7C01%7Ccng%40ramboll.com%7C14b370175f6a4dd696da08d676697996%7Cc8823c91be814f89b0246c3dd789c106%7C1%7C0%7C636826592717931492&sdata=Sfr2zdkV6bZ2n0Cln96zuYo3Vskvv%2FSqsdFlcago05o%3D&reserved=0)?

**A22:** The terms of the RFA, Section 3.4.(b), says that  an applicant’s certifying Appendix 2, “Promises, Certifications, Assertions, and Assurances” (PCA), including, is a condition of eligibility for this grant.  That includes Part II.F (p 4 of 9).  It means that an organization itself, or an organization cannot sign the PCA if the organization or one of the following identified persons is subject to the identified criminal legal proceedings or event.  The persons are officers, partners, principals, members who are decision-makers, associates who would directly supply a business service pursuant to the grant, or key employees.

The cited part II.F says:

**F. Criminal charges or investigations, or other legal proceedings**

Within the three (3) years immediately preceding the date of the application, neither the Applicant nor any of its officers, partners, principals, members, associates, or key employees, has:

a. With respect to criminal matters:

(1) Been indicted or had charges brought against them (if still pending); and/or

(2) Been convicted of:

(a) A crime or offense arising directly or indirectly from the conduct of the applicant's organization; or

(b) A crime or offense involving financial misconduct or fraud; or

b. With respect to services by the organization, been subject to legal proceedings.

(Note: For the purpose of this section, “member” means a decision-maker of an organization, not a natural person or entity who just pays dues, and “associate” means a direct supplier of a business service pursuant to the grant.)

**Q23:** Are there restrictions on the billing rates that are utilized in the budget forms for the project?  Are Audited FAR overhead rates allowed to be applied to base rates?  Are there specific line items that are allowed or not allowed within overhead?

**A23:** Budgeted costs should be reasonable and related to the proposed project. Please remember, this is a competition and each application will be scored competitively against each other.

**Q24:** The budget template (appendix 4) isn’t clear. How much detail are you looking for here, versus what we will include in the narrative? We propose including total labor costs by task, by firm.

**A24:** Appendix 4 is a sample budget template. Feel free to submit a budget that best describes your plans.

**Q25:** For required document (e) – what level of detail are you looking for here? This RFA refers to [at least the level of detail in Appendix 4], which is the project budget template, so this doesn’t make sense.

**A25:** For required document, please submit your existing organizational documents. There is no need to create anything new for this RFA, unless it is project specific.

**Q26:** If there are no criminal indictments or charges but there are legal proceedings related to professional services (e.g., contract disputes), can the organization sign the PCA and provide disclosure of the proceedings per the DC Grants Manual (highlighted in yellow below)?

The RFA shall require the applicant to disclose in a written statement, the truth of which is sworn or attested to by the applicant, whether the applicant, or where applicable, any of its officers, partners, principals, members, associates or key employees, within the last three (3) years prior to the date of the application, has:

* been indicted or had charges brought against them (if still pending) and/or been convicted of (a) any crime or offense arising directly or indirectly from the conduct of the applicant’s organization or (b) any crime or offense involving financial misconduct or fraud, or
* been the subject of legal proceedings arising directly from the provision of services by the organization  If the response is in the affirmative, the applicant shall fully describe any such indictments, charges, convictions, or legal proceedings (and the status and disposition thereof) and surrounding circumstances in writing and provide documentation of the circumstances.

**A26:** Our legal team will provide a comprehensive answer as soon as possible. Because we may be unable to provide an answer by the grant deadline, we are asking you to submit your application by 4:30 on January 14, 2019 without the PCA signed. We do not want a qualified applicant to not apply due to our delayed response. Please note if you are not able to comply with the answer and any required steps once provided, your application will not be considered.

**A26 (2):** Our legal team has provided the following response.

In reference to the RFA, Section 3.4.(b), incorporating PCA Part II.F (p 4 of 9).  If there are within the past 3 years civil, not criminal, legal proceedings related to past professional services:

1. You are still eligible to apply under the RFA/PCA Part F requirements regarding criminal and civil legal proceedings. You can sign the PCA certification and explain in writing that you do have the identified legal proceedings under way. We have reviewed the cited provisions. They fail to communicate clearly DOEE’s intended policy and we will revise them.

As for civil legal proceedings, DOEE does not mean to exclude from RFA competition an applicant, or the identified persons, merely because the applicant or identified persons are involved in a legal proceeding that may or may not be relevant to the advertised grant. If the matter is irrelevant to implementation of the advertised grant, by definition it should not affect eligibility to apply. But even if the matter is relevant, DOEE intends to allow the application. For example, a billing dispute or the interpretation of a contract term will not affect eligibility; it may affect the evaluation. The DOEE review team or DOEE’s Director will determine its impact.

DOEE will be clarifying the parallel provision on criminal proceedings.

With this Answer DOEE is interpreting the cited provisions. Their existence should not render someone ineligible to apply for the grant. See the answer to part “2”, just below, for what to do next.

2. Since you are still eligible to apply, you can sign the PCA, with an explanation and relevant materials attached. Indicate on the signature page “The certification is to everything with the following exception: The response to Part F is certified as in the explanation, below.” Then, on the same document and/or e-communication, explain fully the legal proceedings, your position in them, the status of the proceedings, and attach the documents that best present the controversy and/or the decision rendered on that controversy. In order to present our review team with the most complete explanation, please err on the side of overinclusion.

3. Is there anything else you must do to comply with the terms of the *DC Grants Manual* Part 7.2 (p 15)?

…. been the subject of legal proceedings arising directly from the provision of services by the organization   If the response is in the affirmative, the applicant shall fully describe any such indictments, charges, convictions, or legal proceedings (and the status and disposition thereof) and surrounding circumstances in writing and provide documentation of the circumstances.

No. There is nothing further to do to “comply” with the *Grants Manual*. The *Grants Manual* is a guidance document written for District agencies and employees. It is “precatory”, guiding and suggesting, not ordering. Further, it is directed to District agencies and employees only. It is not directed to applicants to the District agencies. So, for this matter, the *Grants Manual* provides no guidance or direction to you, as an applicant. There is nothing further for you to do.