



RFP for Evaluation of MassCEC Low Income Solar Thermal Program

RFP ID: MassCEC LI-ST-12

Posting Date: 01-19-2012

1. OPPORTUNITY SUMMARY:

A. PROPOSALS SOUGHT FOR:

The Massachusetts Clean Energy Center (“MassCEC”) is seeking a Program Evaluation Consultant to conduct a program evaluation and analysis of MassCEC’s Low Income Solar Thermal Program.

B. OVERVIEW AND GOALS:

The goal of the program evaluation and analysis is to assess the overall efficiency, success, and site-specific and industry-wide impacts of the Low Income Solar Thermal Program (the “Program”). The Consultant will be responsible for conducting a comprehensive evaluation of the types of projects that applied to and were selected through the Program, the process for installing solar thermal systems, and actual system performance data.

Through the Program, in fall 2010, MassCEC awarded the Low-Income Energy Affordability Network (“LEAN”) \$1.9 million to manage a solar thermal program with the aim of installing solar hot water (“SHW”) systems at multi-family residential and nonprofit facilities serving low income residents and participants. LEAN procured two experienced technical firms, BEAM Group and Paradigm Partners, to assist in the program implementation, including selection, assessment, and installation of projects. The LEAN management team ultimately selected 16 projects based on a range of factors, including, but not limited to: site location, storage capacity, hot water consumption, roof integrity, and client commitment. The Program began October 1, 2010 and ended December 31, 2011.

The objectives of Program and MassCEC's partnership with LEAN were to:

- Demonstrate reductions in energy operating costs for owners, managers, and occupants/users of low income residential and service facilities through the installation of solar hot water systems; and
- Facilitate the transformation of the solar thermal market in a geographically dispersed manner by:
 - Educating the installer industry and building the supply chain
 - Improving consistency and competitiveness of bids for solar thermal installations
 - Identifying solar water heating project cost reductions

C. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS:

Consulting firms that have extensive experience conducting program evaluations, preferably experience with renewable energy programs, are encouraged to submit a response. Applicants should specifically demonstrate solar thermal system expertise.

D. TIMELINE

Posted	January 19, 2012
Deadline for Written Questions	January 24, 2012
Final Questions and Answers Posted	January 25, 2012
Applications due at MassCEC	February 1, 2012
Award Announced	February 8, 2012

E. APPLICATION DEADLINE:

Responses to this solicitation must be received by MassCEC no later than **February 1, 2012 at 4:00pm**. Only complete responses will be considered.

F. FUNDING AVAILABILITY:

The total value of this contract shall not exceed \$35,000.

G. ANTICIPATED TERM OF CONTRACT

A final contract is subject to successful negotiation of a final budget and scope of services. It is anticipated that the contract will commence on or about February 15, 2012 for a period of 8 weeks. The contract will be reviewed during its course and may be extended at the sole discretion of MassCEC for one additional six month term.

H. CONTACT INFORMATION:

Christie Howe
Massachusetts Clean Energy Center
55 Summer Street, 9th floor
Boston, MA 02110
chowe@masscec.com

Please submit all questions to chowe@masscec.com by **January 24, 2012 at 4:00pm**. "RFP for Evaluation of MassCEC Low Income Solar Thermal Program" must appear in the email subject line.

2. PERFORMANCE AND CONTRACT SPECIFICATIONS

A. SCOPE OF WORK

Methodology:

- Analyze and evaluate program, project and performance data
- Conduct interviews with LEAN team members to gather detailed program, project and market information
- Conduct short interviews with approximately 10 participating building owners and installers to gather high-level feedback

Content:

1. Project Selection

- A. Characterize the types of projects that applied to the program
 - How did LEAN market the program and to whom?
 - Were there sectors/locations that did not end up applying to the program? If not, what are some reasons this may be the case?
- B. Characterize the types of projects that LEAN selected for award
 - How did LEAN select these projects?
 - Did the selection process create a representative sample of projects?
 - Summarize the key characteristics of these projects: Building Type, Fuel Offset, Location, etc.

2. Process

- A. Describe in detail each step of the process that LEAN followed from project application to project completion (1.Qualification; 2.Design and Specification; 3.Bid Solicitation & Contractor Selection; 4.Preconstruction & Construction)
- B. Evaluate each step of the process
 - Timing/Efficiency:
 - On average, how much time was spent on each step? Did this change over the course of the program?
 - What affected timing? (e.g. Weather? Certain characteristics of projects? Etc.)
 - What were the total project timelines?
 - Documentation/Tracking
 - Were the steps for each project well documented?
 - What kinds of project tracking mechanisms/methods were in place?
 - What documentation did the customers receive during the process?
 - How did the steps in the process positively or negatively affect the design and construction of the systems? For example, how did measuring the hot water load improve system design?
- C. Evaluate the process as a whole
 - Was the process that the LEAN team set up an appropriate one for the current market in Massachusetts?
 - Does the process represent an efficient and cost effective way of installing solar hot water systems in the low income sector?

- How did the overall timeframe for project completion compare to other projects that installers have done of the same size and complexity?
- What lessons did the LEAN team learn during the process?
- D. Share stakeholder feedback on the process (e.g. was the process clearly articulated before the project began? During the project?)

Measurement and Verification

3. System Performance

- A. Analyze individual performance of all installed projects
 - Were the systems appropriately designed and sized?
 - What factors may be affecting system performance (e.g. actual usage, design considerations (angle of collector), installation quality, etc.)?
 - How are the systems performing?
 - Compare modeled savings to actual savings based on metered output
 - Compare actual savings to similar projects outside of the LEAN program
 - Based on actual savings, identify the cost effectiveness of each system?
- B. Compare system performance
 - For which applications (residential, service, etc.) are systems performing best?
 - Are there trends in specific system parameters (type of collector; type of systems; storage capacity; customer type; location; etc) for well-performing systems or poor performing systems?
 - Share stakeholder feedback (e.g. building owner satisfaction with performance of their system)

4. Program Performance

- A. Summarize program results
 - Annual and lifecycle fuel savings/reductions
 - Annual and lifecycle GHG emissions reductions
 - Annual and lifecycle cost savings for end users
 - What standard processes and documents were developed that will be helpful to future years of the program and other programs and projects?
 - Share stakeholder feedback
- B. Evaluate the program's cost effectiveness
 - Administrative Costs
 - Project Costs
 - Leveraged Funding
- C. Evaluate the program's impact on the Massachusetts solar thermal market
 - Did the LEAN team receive competitive bids? Did the consistency and competitiveness of bids improve over time?
 - Were change orders reduced (compared to the industry standard)?
 - Were project cost reductions achieved (compared to similar size and complexity projects)?
 - Did the program serve to educate and clarify the supply chain?

- What key entities (manufacturers, supply houses, structural engineers, installers etc.) were engaged?
 - Were project risks transparent and well quantified? What steps were taken to reduce project risk?
 - Were installers educated on proper system design and installation throughout the bid and construction process? How many?
 - Did the program help to expedite and streamline the project completion process?
 - How many building owners and building occupants were educated during the program?
 - Identify critical issues that the LEAN team has identified with the MA Solar Thermal Industry (business operations, compliance, design/construction, etc.)
- D. Evaluate the potential replicability of the program
- Are there any unique challenges that the low income sector faces?

5. Conclusion/Recommendations

- A. Summarize key program achievements (in relation to program goals)
- B. Summarize the overall performance of the systems
- C. Highlight impacts of the program on the MA solar thermal industry
- D. Recommend how this program model can be improved
 - How can MassCEC or LEAN more effectively communicate about the program?
 - Should MassCEC or LEAN alter the future project selection process? How can MassCEC or LEAN ensure that the best projects are selected?
 - How can MassCEC or LEAN become more efficient in each step of the process?
- E. Recommend how this program model can be scaled up and applied to other sectors

B. DELIVERABLE REQUIREMENTS

- Draft Evaluation Report
- Final Evaluation Report (incorporating MassCEC comments and feedback)

C. ANTICIPATED TIMELINE OF CONTRACT:

Approximately 8 weeks: February 2012 to April 2012.

D. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Applications are due at the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center no later than February 1, 2012 at 4:00pm. The submission must be in electronic form, including a scanned signature page, submitted via email to chowe@masscec.com and received by the MassCEC not later than **February 1, 2012 at 4:00pm**. “RFP for Evaluation of MassCEC Low Income Solar Thermal Program” must appear in the email subject line.

1. Information Required:

- 1.1 Executive Summary: Applicants should provide a summary of their organization, their qualifications and their proposed approach for evaluating the program.

- 1.2 **Statement of Qualifications:** All responses must include a statement of qualifications, experience and description of the Applicant firm or individual and its/their history. The response should specifically indicate the firm's current and historical expertise in providing the Evaluation Consulting Services identified in this RFP.
- 1.3 **Staff Qualifications:** All responses must include resumes of each individual who will be providing Consulting Services, as well as written descriptions of the individuals' experience. MassCEC reserves the right to investigate and review the background of any or all personnel assigned to work under agreement for services and, based on such investigations, to reject the use of any persons within MassCEC's discretion. Any changes to personnel require formal written approval by MassCEC and MassCEC reserves the right to terminate agreement for services if changes are not approved.
- 1.4 **References:** All responses must include references from at least 3 clients of the firm, and preferably clients who have utilized the firm on matters related to the Consulting Services. The references must include a contact person, a full address, and a phone number. In addition to the foregoing, all responses must include a listing of public and private clients for whom the firm has provided services similar to those set forth in this RFP, with a description of the services provided.
- 1.5 **Total Proposed Cost and Hourly Rates:** Please include the proposed total cost to complete the scope of work outlined, as well as rates of all team members working on this project.
- 1.6 **Attachment A:** Please sign and submit Attachment A to this Solicitation.

E. EVALUATION CRITERIA

1. Experience and Qualifications:

- 1.1 Does the Applicant have knowledge of solar thermal system design, installation and performance?
- 1.2 Does the Applicant have documented experience in analyzing incentive programs, market impacts, cost effectiveness and renewable thermal performance data?
- 1.3 What is the quality of the Applicant's performance on similar past consulting assignments or their achievements related to proposed work?

2. Overall Quality of Proposal

- 2.1 Does the Applicant understand the scope and requirements of the project?
- 2.2 Has the Applicant proposed a cost competitive budget?

3. GENERAL REQUEST FOR RESPONSE CONDITIONS

A. NOTICE OF PUBLIC DISCLOSURE

1. General Statement

As a public entity, MassCEC is subject to Massachusetts' Public Records Law, codified at Chapter 66 of the Massachusetts General Laws. Thus, except for those documents exempted from disclosure, any documentary material, data, or other information received by MassCEC from an Applicant is a public record subject to disclosure. Applicants are advised to review Chapter 66 prior to submitting any information to MassCEC.

Notwithstanding the above, certain kinds of information may be statutorily exempt from public disclosure under the limited exemption at Chapter 23J, Section 2(k) of the Massachusetts General Laws. Specifically, materials that fall under one of the following categories may be determined to be not public records and thus not subject to disclosure:

1. Information, documents, or data that consist of trade secrets;
2. Information, documents, or data that consist of commercial or financial information regarding the operation of any business conducted by the Applicant; and
3. Information, documents, or data regarding the Applicant's competitive position in a particular field of endeavor.

2. Procedures for Handling Documents Identified as "Sensitive Information."

An Applicant may assert a claim of confidentiality for part or all of the information submitted to MassCEC. To make a claim of confidentiality, an Applicant must:

1. Clearly identify the documents, reports, or other information you wish to receive confidential treatment and mark such materials "CONFIDENTIAL." Where a portion of an otherwise nonconfidential document is alleged to be confidential, the confidential portions should be clearly identified and marked.
2. State the basis for your claim of confidentiality (whether trade secret, commercial or financial information, or competitive position information) and whether disclosure of the information would likely result in substantial harm to your business. If substantial harm would result from disclosure, state what those harmful effects would be and their causal connection to disclosure of the information;
3. State the period of time for which confidential treatment is desired (e.g., until a certain date, until the occurrence of a specific event, or permanently);
4. Submit nonconfidential information (including any redacted versions of partially confidential documents) separate from all materials for which you request confidential treatment.

All confidentiality claims are subject to verification by MassCEC. If no confidentiality claim is made when information is received by MassCEC, then it may be made publicly available without further notice to you.

B. CONTRACTUAL REQUIREMENTS

Upon MassCEC authorization to proceed with the proposal, MassCEC and the selected applicant will execute a Contract which will set forth the respective roles and responsibilities of parties.

C. WAIVER AUTHORITY

MassCEC reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to waive minor irregularities in submittal requirements, to request modifications of the application, to accept or reject any or all applications received, and/or to cancel all or part of this Solicitation at any time prior to awards.

D. DISCLAIMER

This Solicitation does not commit MassCEC to award any funds, pay any costs incurred in preparing an application, or procure or contract for services or supplies. MassCEC reserves the right to accept or reject any or all applications received, negotiate with all qualified applicants, cancel or modify the Solicitation in part or in its entirety, or change the application guidelines, when it is in its best interests.

ATTACHMENT A

Authorized Applicant's Signature and Acceptance Form

The undersigned is a duly authorized representative of the applicant listed below. The applicant has read and understands the Solicitation requirements. The undersigned acknowledges that all of the terms and conditions of the Solicitation are mandatory.

The applicant understands that all materials submitted as part of the application are subject to disclosure under the Massachusetts Public Records Law, as explained in Section 3.A of the Solicitation, and acknowledges and agrees that MassCEC has no obligation, and retains the sole discretion to fund or choose not to fund the application set forth herein, and that MassCEC's receipt of the application does not imply any promise of funding at any time.

The applicant understands that, if selected by MassCEC, the applicant and MassCEC will detail and execute a contract that outlines the respective roles and responsibilities of the parties.

I certify that the statements made in this application, including all attachments and exhibits, are true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Applicant: (Printed Name of Applicant)

By: (Signature of Authorized Representative)

Name:

Title:

Date:

Notice of Confidential Information Cover Letter

This cover letter notifies MassCEC as to the confidentiality of information submitted by the applicant for support indicated below. If this cover letter is not included with information submitted to MassCEC when the information is received by MassCEC, then such information may be made publicly available without further notice to you. All confidentiality claims are subject to verification by MassCEC.

POLICY: As a public entity, MassCEC is subject to Massachusetts’ Public Records Law, Codified at Chapter 66 of the Massachusetts General Laws. Thus, any documentary material, data, or other information received by MassCEC, or created by MassCEC, is a public record subject to disclosure. Materials that fall under certain categories, however, may be exempt from public disclosure under a statutory or common law exemption, including the limited exemption at Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 23J, Section 2(k) regarding confidential information submitted to MassCEC by an applicant for any form of assistance.

PROCEDURE: In order to make a claim of confidentiality for these categories of materials that may be exempt from disclosure, you must:

- (1) Complete **all** fields below;
- (2) Submit this cover letter with any information for which you are requesting confidential treatment. Please submit a separate cover letter with each separate submission;
- (3) Prominently mark each page containing confidential information “CONFIDENTIAL”; and
- (4) Submit a copy of all non-confidential information (including any redacted versions of partially confidential documents) separate from all materials for which you request confidential treatment.

Name:	Address:
Category (check all that apply): <input type="checkbox"/> Information, documents, or data that consist of trade secrets <input type="checkbox"/> Information, documents, or data that consist of commercial or financial information regarding the operation of the business conducted <input type="checkbox"/> Information, documents, or data regarding the applicant’s competitive position in a particular field or endeavor	
If substantial harm would result from disclosure, state what those harmful effects would be and their causal connection to disclosure of the information: 	
Period of time for which confidential treatment is desired (e.g., until a certain date, until the occurrence of a specific event, or permanently): 	
Date:	Signature:
Application Number (if applicable):	Printed Name (and title, if applicable):