



**Market Research and Evaluation Support Services**  
Request for Qualifications (RFQ) 3183

**Proposals Due: April 11, 2016 by 5:00 PM Eastern Time\***

**Information regarding upcoming Bidders' Conferences can be found here: [www.nyserda.ny.gov/rfq3183](http://www.nyserda.ny.gov/rfq3183).**

The New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) is issuing this solicitation to establish pools of qualified consultants to support the NYSERDA Performance & Market Standards (P&MS) and Market Insights teams with a variety of objective market and evaluative research in order to inform program strategies and assess the effectiveness of results. NYSERDA's evaluation and market research capabilities are transitioning to become increasingly nimble and flexible to meet short turnaround requests and provide actionable insights while supporting accountability goals. The results of this work will allow NYSERDA to improve impact and innovation in deploying clean energy projects and strategies. In order to achieve these objectives cost-effectively and efficiently, evaluation tasks will be assigned for individual, discrete activities with firm timelines and deliverables.

NYSERDA's approach to program design involves working from the market back to initiate, measure, test and evolve offerings that accelerate the cost-effective deployment of clean energy and to stimulate technology and business innovation in clean energy. Our new program approaches are intended to enable NYSERDA to achieve the high-level State policy goals identified in the 2015 State Energy Plan including greenhouse gas reduction, energy efficiency, generation through renewable sources, and expansion of the clean energy economy. Interested parties may submit a proposal to provide support in one or more of the following Market Research and Evaluation Support Areas:

- Market Research
- Impact Evaluation/Field Verification
- Survey Data Collection

NYSERDA anticipates qualifying multiple consultants within each of the areas listed above. NYSERDA will define specific tasks and projects, which will be assigned to qualified consultants through individual task work orders which will outline scope, timelines, and budgets. NYSERDA will be responsible for coordinating and guiding work among consultants. This structure is a departure from NYSERDA's previous evaluation framework where NYSERDA competitively selected one contractor team for each evaluation area with a lead contractor coordinating and leading the work. The term of retention for each qualified consultant is up to three years with the option to renew for another two years at NYSERDA's discretion. NYSERDA intends to re-evaluate its qualified consultant pool and may reissue this RFQ to expand its qualified contractor pools on an annual basis, or more frequently as needed.

**Please Note: Consultant teaming arrangements (i.e., a primary contractor teamed with subcontractors) are discouraged in proposals submitted under this RFQ since NYSERDA is interested in direct and cost-effective access to individuals or firms most qualified to perform specific work tasks in a timely manner. As this new task- and project-based approach focuses on**

specific skills versus the breadth of each evaluation support area, NYSERDA encourages firms with specific skill sets, regardless of energy-industry experience, to propose.

**NYSERDA will hold Bidders' Conferences to provide an overview of the solicitation and answer questions. Questions must be submitted in advance. Please visit [www.nyserda.ny.gov/rfq3183](http://www.nyserda.ny.gov/rfq3183) for dates, times, instructions and details.**

**Proposal Submission:** Electronic submission is preferable. NYSERDA will also accept proposals by mail or hand-delivery. If submitting electronically, proposers must submit the proposal along with Attachments A, B, C and D in either PDF or Microsoft (MS) Word format. Proposal PDFs should be searchable and should be created by direct conversion from MS Word, or other conversion utility, rather than scanning. For ease of identification, all electronic files must be named using the proposer's entity name in the title of the document. Proposals may be submitted electronically by following the link for electronic submissions found on this RFQ's webpage, which is located in the "Current Opportunities" section of NYSERDA's website (<http://www.nyserda.ny.gov/Funding-Opportunities/Current-Funding-Opportunities.aspx>). See Attachment E of this RFQ for instructions on how to submit electronically.

If mailing or hand-delivering, proposers must submit two (2) paper copies of their proposal including Attachments A, B, C, and D, along with a CD or DVD containing both a PDF and MS Word digital copy of the proposal, following the above guidelines. Mailed or hand-delivered proposals must be clearly labeled and submitted to:

**Roseanne Viscusi, RFQ 3183  
NYS Energy Research and Development Authority  
17 Columbia Circle  
Albany, NY 12203-6399**

If you have technical questions concerning this solicitation, contact the following Project Managers:

- Victoria Engel-Fowles (Market Research) at (518) 862-1090, ext. 3207, [Victoria.Engel-Fowles@nyserda.ny.gov](mailto:Victoria.Engel-Fowles@nyserda.ny.gov);
- Emily Shusas (Impact Evaluation/Field Verification) at (518) 862-1090, ext. 3465, [Emily.Shusas@nyserda.ny.gov](mailto:Emily.Shusas@nyserda.ny.gov); or
- [Patricia Gonzales \(Survey Data Collection\)](mailto:Patricia.Gonzales@nyserda.ny.gov) at (518) 862-1090, ext. 3338 or [Patricia.Gonzales@nyserda.ny.gov](mailto:Patricia.Gonzales@nyserda.ny.gov).

If you have contractual questions concerning this solicitation, contact Venice Forbes at (518) 862-1090, ext. 3507, [Venice.Forbes@nyserda.ny.gov](mailto:Venice.Forbes@nyserda.ny.gov).

No communication intended to influence this procurement is permitted except by contacting the Project Managers (Designated Contacts) listed above. Contacting anyone other than these Designated Contacts (either directly by the proposer or indirectly through a lobbyist or other person acting on the proposer's behalf) in an attempt to influence the procurement may result in: (1) a proposer being deemed a non-responsible offerer, and (2) the proposer not being awarded a contract.

\* Late proposals will be returned. Incomplete proposals may be subject to disqualification. It is the proposer's responsibility to ensure that all pages have been included in the proposal. Faxed proposals will not be accepted. Proposals will not be accepted at any other NYSERDA location other than the address above. If changes are made to this solicitation, notification will be posted on NYSERDA's web site at [www.nyserda.ny.gov](http://www.nyserda.ny.gov).

## I. Introduction

In 2014, Governor Andrew M. Cuomo launched the Reforming Energy Vision (REV) strategy to build a cleaner, more resilient and affordable energy system. The Clean Energy Fund (CEF)<sup>1</sup> and NYSERDA's subsequent filings<sup>2</sup> supporting the CEF are critical pillars to support the mission of REV, and are designed to complement the related initiatives championed by New York State, including the New York State Public Service Commission's REV regulatory proceeding<sup>3</sup> and its Clean Energy Standard proceeding.<sup>4</sup>

Through the CEF, NYSERDA seeks to build on the success of its programs and momentum to meet evolving market and customer needs. NYSERDA has designed the CEF to pursue three long-term outcomes: thriving and self-sustaining clean energy industries able to operate without subsidies; greater levels of private capital invested in clean energy and jobs in New York; and significant reductions in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from the state's energy sector.

As market transformation and GHG emissions reductions goals are both long-term outcomes, NYSERDA requested a 10-year program authorization of approximately \$5 billion in new strategic investment through 2025. CEF investments will be made across four program portfolios, all of which will be addressed by consultants qualified under the RFQ<sup>5</sup>:

- Market Development, which will align with the REV Regulatory Proceeding and evolving utility strategies to reduce barriers, animate consumer demand for clean energy, and enable the private markets to provide the new products and services sought by an engaged consumer market;
- Innovation and Research, which will catalyze the development of innovative clean energy solutions, while growing New York's cleantech sector and accelerating the development and introduction of the new technologies that will be needed to foster increased levels of GHG reductions;
- NY Green Bank, which seeks market transformation in the financial sector, leveraging public investments with private capital in a self-sustaining manner while reaching new markets for clean energy services; and
- NY-Sun, which seeks to create a robust and self-sustaining solar market in New York State for solar electric technologies, and to build a program approach for other clean technologies to follow.

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<sup>1</sup> Case 14-M-0094 - Proceeding on Motion of the Commission to Consider a Clean Energy Fund; Case 10-M-0457 - In the Matter of the System Benefits Charge IV; Case 07-M-0548 - Proceeding on Motion of the Commission Regarding an Energy Efficiency Portfolio Standard; Case 03-E-0188 - Proceeding on Motion of the Commission Regarding a Retail Renewable Portfolio Standard; Case 13-M-0412 - Petition of the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority to Provide Initial Capitalization for the New York Green Bank. *Order Authorizing the Clean Energy Fund Framework*, issued and effective January 21, 2016.

<sup>2</sup> As of February 22, 2016, NYSERDA had filed revised versions of its [Resource Acquisition Transition Chapter](#) and [Budget Accounting and Benefits Chapter](#) of its Clean Energy Fund Investment Plan; additional chapters describing interventions will follow during 2016.

<sup>3</sup> Case 14-M-0101 - Proceeding on Motion of the Commission in Regard to Reforming the Energy Vision. *Order Adopting Regulatory Policy Framework and Implementation Plan*, issued and effective February 25, 2015.

<sup>4</sup> Case 15-E-0302, Proceeding on Motion of the Commission to Implement a Large-Scale Renewable Program and a Clean Energy Standard.

<sup>5</sup> In addition to the four CEF program portfolios, consultants qualified under this RFQ will also assist NYSERDA in conducting ongoing evaluation work for the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative portfolio as well as post-program evaluation activities on the Energy Efficiency Portfolio Standard and System Benefits Charge portfolios.

As NYSERDA transitions to the CEF, NYSERDA's market research and evaluation strategy will be rooted in a clear understanding of the markets within which we operate and will support the following principles:

- Accountability for use of public funds to achieve credible and sizeable outcomes: Reporting metrics and supporting evaluation analysis will focus on market change and progress toward the 2015 New York State Energy Plan policy goals related to environmental, energy and economic benefits.<sup>6</sup> Key high-level metrics include, but are not limited to: energy savings, energy cost savings, GHG emission reductions, dollars invested in clean energy and market penetration of clean energy technologies.
- Market insights that support concept development and design: Actionable insight into the economics and decision-making of customers, partners, and the markets within which we operate is foundational to our work to inform and develop strategies to overcome market barriers, animate the market, encourage private capital and investment, and increase the scale and adoption of clean energy.
- Actionable insights that evolve strategy and portfolio optimization: Timely feedback cycles on the performance of our strategies and the impacts on the market will enable us to determine which programs are working and which are not. We will deploy pilots and collect data to test hypotheses about the marketplace and barriers to private investment in energy efficiency, measure impacts of these initiatives in real-time, and adjust strategies at the pace of the market to account for new understandings of market barriers and existing conditions.
- Transparency in terms of methods and results: NYSERDA will publish regular reporting on investments, outputs and outcomes. Evaluation studies and methods will be made publicly available. Data sets gathered through evaluation activities will also be shared with the market.

This RFQ will align NYSERDA's Market Research and Evaluation Support effort with the above CEF principles, in particular ensuring effective and timely feedback cycles to provide information on market conditions and needs that can enrich strategies going to market, to assess program and strategy performance and market impact, and to support active management and cost-effective, value-added strategic adjustments in the future.

Evaluation elements supported through this RFQ include Market Research, Impact Evaluation/Field Verification and Survey Data Collection. Additionally, information that can support process evaluation and statewide building stock characterizations may be embedded within these areas, as applicable. More information describing each of these areas is provided in **Section II, Services Requested and Qualifications**.

At this time, NYSERDA has allocated nearly \$43 million of existing program evaluation funds (to be later supplemented with other available CEF evaluation funds) to the Market Research and Evaluation Support Areas described in this solicitation. NYSERDA envisions that approximately 60% of its evaluation funding will support Market Research, 25% will support Impact Evaluation/Field Verification,

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<sup>6</sup> [New York State Energy Plan](#).

and 15% will support Survey Data Collection. The overall dollar value and area allocations are subject to change, but are provided here as a reference for potential workload and emphasis. Funding will only be allocated to qualified consultants as specific tasks/projects/studies are defined by NYSERDA through individual Task Work Orders (TWOs). NYSERDA cannot anticipate when, or at what frequency, funding opportunities will arise for each qualified proposer under the Market Research and Evaluation Support Areas described in this solicitation.<sup>7</sup>

Consultants qualified under this solicitation will not be NYSERDA's sole resource for conducting evaluation and market insights research. Separately, NYSERDA may issue other solicitations in the future to invite proposers to offer innovative ideas and solutions. Proposers qualified under this RFQ will not be precluded from applying.

## **II. Services Requested and Qualifications**

NYSERDA expects to qualify multiple contractors to provide services in each of the specified Market Research and Evaluation Support Areas outlined in this RFQ (Areas 1-3 described below). The level and type of services requested from each qualified contractor will depend on NYSERDA's project needs, the contractor's expertise and contractor performance. Generally, research and evaluation activity will align with test-measure-adjust principles to ensure real-time feedback to NYSERDA.

NYSERDA encourages all firms that can demonstrate the qualifications and skill sets described within this solicitation to propose, regardless of whether or not they have energy industry-specific experience.

Proposers are invited to submit, in the format described in **Section IV, Proposal Requirements**, a proposal demonstrating their skills, expertise, qualifications and personnel rates in any or all of the three areas described below.

### **Overarching Minimum Contractor Qualifications**

All contractors, regardless of the area(s) being proposed, must possess the following minimum, basic qualifications:

- Ability to quickly develop tactical and cost-effective approaches to evaluation and market research
- Ability to quickly implement evaluation and market research to assist in planning future activities, as specified by NYSERDA
- Ability to work with data provided by others (e.g., survey contractor, industry data sources – open and commercially available)
- For any data collected on behalf of NYSERDA, ability to provide clean, coded data in a manner satisfactory to NYSERDA and in a manner consistent with [OpenNY guidelines](#)
- Demonstrated expertise in appropriate statistical analyses and interpretation of various statistical tests associated with survey or other data
- Statistical software expertise with SPSS, SAS, or similar packages
- Solid understanding and ability to engage in advisement or development of sampling approaches to meet NYSERDA's needs
- Computer software proficiency in MS Excel, MS Access, MS PowerPoint, MS Word, etc.

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<sup>7</sup> The framework described in this RFQ differs from NYSERDA's prior evaluation structure where one consultant team, consisting of several firms, was competitively selected for each evaluation area.

## **Area 1: Market Research**

### **Market Characterization and Market Progress/Impact Studies**

Market characterization and market progress/impact studies (herein referred to as “market studies”) will be designed to identify and assess the theory of change (i.e., how early and intermediate accomplishments lead to long-range results) and market progress associated with specific NYSERDA interventions, either individually or collectively in a given market. These studies will monitor indicators over time including those associated with awareness, knowledge, behavior, soft costs, and adoption (e.g., market penetration, market share, and private investment) of clean energy technologies and practices. While clean energy investment and market share are the paramount longer-term indicators for NYSERDA, market studies may focus on awareness, knowledge and behavior in more nascent markets, as early and intermediate indicators leading to longer-term adoption. Market studies may also, in limited cases, include developing technology commercialization projections or technology adoption curves to project and later measure the market penetration of specific clean energy technologies and practices over time. The information provided by market studies will inform program design and operation, provide credible quantification of outcomes and market impacts due to the program, and support program evolution and exit decisions.

Investment plans,<sup>8</sup> grounded through development of streamlined logic models, will be developed early in the planning phase to identify the theory of change, indicators of progress, and approaches to market tracking.<sup>9</sup> Although market change occurs over time, and longitudinal market tracking will typically have a longer time horizon, wherever possible, market tracking will be integrated into NYSERDA’s test-measure-adjust approach. For example, where appropriate, annual surveys of market actors may be conducted to assess early and intermediate indicators of clean energy technology adoption, or commercially-available data sets on market share could be assessed annually to identify the level of market share increase occurring throughout the targeted market.

When applicable, process evaluation may also be conducted as part of a market study on a given program or intervention based on the theory of change outlined in the logic model constructed by NYSERDA as part of its investment planning process. Process evaluation provides actionable recommendations to improve programs and will be designed and implemented for quick-cycle feedback and in support of continued program refinement. When appropriate, issues addressed may include program efficiency and effectiveness, participant satisfaction and barriers to participation. In comparison to prior program funding cycles and in line with test-measure-adjust principles, NYSERDA envisions conducting significantly more focused, targeted or phased process evaluations, when warranted, to provide better and timelier information to aid in program development, refinement and optimization.

### **Market Insights**

In close coordination with market characterization and market progress activities, market insights activity will leverage a wide range of traditional and new market research techniques to identify and apply actionable insights and trends to interventions so that they are most likely to be successful in the market. Research activities will largely focus on market discovery methods designed to understand customer and partner attitudes/perceptions, customer decision-making drivers/barriers affecting market growth, and techniques that will provide a clear understanding of partner/service provider and end-user economics, values, and business models to ensure the design of interventions and approaches will be compelling. Concept testing will also be a focus to confirm that strategies and approaches resonate with the market.

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<sup>8</sup> For the New York Green Bank, transaction profiles contain information similar to investment plans.

<sup>9</sup> Logic models will typically be developed by internal NYSERDA staff with Evaluation contractor support as needed.

Activities may also include continuous monitoring of social, economic, demographic and financial conditions which impact NYSERDA's efforts. This research will inform future programmatic decisions.

Another goal of the Market Research Area, generally, is assessing the future state of market activity. While market characterization and market progress/impact activity as well as market insights activity will work to describe the current state of the market, there is strong interest in identifying key indicators to track anticipatory insights within the market as well (e.g., future technology innovation, market trends). Proposals that demonstrate a capability in effectively measuring and assessing anticipatory insights are encouraged.

### Market Research Approaches/Tools

Market Research encompasses a variety of methods such as those described below. The Market Research Area may also include assistance with logic modeling and process evaluation, as needed. In all cases, deliverables shall be prepared and presented to NYSERDA in a highly useful and accessible format that aids in decision making.

- Longitudinal market actor and customer surveys involve interviews with key market actors designed to assess changes in the market over time by tracking, on a regular basis, key indicators. Indicators that can be tracked through such surveys include changes in awareness, knowledge, market share and business practices. Longitudinal surveys may include baseline studies, market characterization activities and retrospective and prospective modeling.
- Analysis of secondary data sources involves review of existing studies and data (e.g., sales data, market share data) to identify trends in key market indicators that can support primary data collection activities (e.g., increased market share of energy-efficient products through review of national product shipment data). This activity may also include development of case studies, bibliometric analyses (to demonstrate knowledge dissemination through counts and analysis of publications and patents), and historical tracing (to show the path by which a project funded by NYSERDA led to useful downstream products and processes).
- Targeted real-time surveys include brief surveys conducted at the time of participant engagement in an intervention and are designed to collect information on participant decision making and the factors that influenced participation. This type of real-time data collection effort will also be used to collect and analyze data to support and inform NYSERDA's pilot activities as these interventions get underway.
- Other focused methods are those targeting specific research questions or knowledge gaps and may include, but are not limited to, data collection efforts such as Delphi panels, in-depth interviews, segmentation research, concept testing and voice of customer research (to glean customer wants and needs, attitudes and perceptions, drivers and barriers, familiarity and other variables related to making clean energy decisions).
- Non-traditional research methods include ethnography, social media and community platforms to offer real-time and continuous feedback on concepts and strategies.

### Market Research Contractor Qualifications

In addition to the overarching contractor qualifications listed above, the market research work will require the qualified contractors to become familiar with and fully understand the breadth and depth of the CEF



and NYSERDA's interventions including interacting with key stakeholders and ensuring methods address appropriate audiences. Specifically, one or more of the following requirements must also be fulfilled by the qualified contractors:

- Expertise or capability to evaluate theory of change and market progress for a large variety of projects and interventions
- Ability to use innovative approaches and solutions to monitor indicators over time and assess efficiency and effectiveness of interventions; methods proposed should not be limited to those used to evaluate NYSERDA's programs in the past
- Ability to leverage a wide range of traditional and new market research techniques (including ethnography, social media and community platforms and behavioral approaches) to effectively glean relevant market and customer insights particularly in the areas of customer decision making and drivers/barriers affecting market growth
- Past projects relevant to supporting knowledge and experience in market effects/transformation (including theory of change evaluation) and process evaluation experience
- Experience and training in applying guiding principles, ethics, and industry standards to market research

As the Market Research Area is tied closely with data collection, Market Research proposers with existing data collection resources **within their firms** are asked to identify and **briefly** describe the qualifications of those resources within their Market Research proposals. Refer to the qualifications listed in **Area 3: Survey Data Collection** when describing qualifications associated with these resources.

## **Area 2: Impact Evaluation/Field Verification**

Impact evaluation/field verification assesses technology performance and use in order to verify program energy impacts. This serves mainly as an accountability mechanism to ensure accurate and credible energy and GHG emission impacts, but it will be implemented in as "real-time" a manner as possible. In doing so, impact evaluation/field verification will be designed to identify ways to improve current project-level impacts, and to gain knowledge to improve future initiative impact projections. Data from impact evaluation/field verification studies will also be publicized to support market confidence in clean energy technology performance.

Historically, significant resources have been spent on impact evaluation/field verification for incentive programs. Given the nature of the CEF interventions, NYSERDA envisions impact evaluation/field verification to remain an important area of work, but to constitute less of NYSERDA's overall evaluation spending than in the past. Where targeted incentives continue (e.g., low-to-moderate income programs), and for certain pilot projects, impact evaluation/field verification will be conducted on known participant projects, usually a sample. Market-based interventions will make it more difficult to identify direct participants. In these cases, impact evaluation/field verification may still seek to identify sample projects to evaluate or may involve other types of non-project based analyses to support credible savings estimates, such as development of deemed savings values, prototypical models, etc.

### **Impact Evaluation/Field Verification Approaches and Tools**



Impact evaluation/field verification broadly encompasses methods such as utility billing analysis, engineering reviews, deemed savings analysis, and site visits for verification and monitoring, as outlined below. The results from impact evaluation/field verification analyses will provide performance data to measure program energy impacts and realization rates, inclusive of energy efficiency, renewable energy and on-site generation activities. Data collected by these approaches will also support valuation of callable load and impact on energy reliability. Analyzing and researching in-service rates (i.e., percentage of measures in service), persistence, and snap-back will also be necessary in some cases. Ancillary benefits, including non-energy impacts, may be addressed inside of certain impact evaluation/field verification analyses. As applicable, impact evaluation/field verification methods will adhere to the International Performance Measurement and Verification Protocol (IPMVP) standards.

- Utility billing analysis to provide site specific changes in energy usage over time through the use of regression models and the use of historical billing data (kWh and MMBtu)
- Engineering reviews to assess reasonableness of baselines, engineering calculations and protocols used by programs to estimate energy impacts
- Developing and maintaining data on measure-level incremental energy savings and measure life in an existing database of deemed savings values
- Measurement and verification activities to validate energy efficiency measure installation, baseline conditions, operations, and energy impacts (kW, kWh and MMBtu) through activities such as site visits, metering and monitoring, modeling or other means as appropriate
- Surveys or interviews of site personnel or other parties for purposes of understanding operational and behavioral aspects that impact energy use/savings

As appropriate, elements of process evaluation and real-time surveys on decision making considerations may be incorporated into impact evaluation/field verification activities.

#### Impact Evaluation/Field Verification Contractor Qualifications

In addition to the overarching contractor qualifications listed above, the impact evaluation/field verification work will require the qualified contractors to become familiar with and fully understand the breadth and depth of the Clean Energy Fund and NYSERDA's interventions including interacting with key stakeholders. Specifically, one or more of the following requirements must also be fulfilled by the qualified contractors:

- Demonstrated expertise or capability to evaluate impacts of various types of energy programs including electric, natural gas, fuel oil and propane energy efficiency projects, electric demand reduction projects, as well as renewable energy, demand response and other on-site generation activities
- Experience or capability to work with, and conduct analysis for, a wide-variety of energy users including, but not limited to: residential customers (homeowners, renters, low-income households, etc.), commercial buildings (building owners, property managers, occupants, etc.), decision makers for municipal buildings and facilities, industrial buildings and facilities, etc.
- Experience and training in applying International Performance Measurement and Verification Protocol (IPMVP) guidelines to project evaluations
- Ability to use innovative approaches and solutions to achieving credible energy savings and generation values

- Past projects relevant to supporting knowledge and experience in impact evaluation/field verification, which shall be included and summarized in the proposal

### **Area 3: Survey Data Collection**

NYSERDA will retain qualified survey data collection contractors to meet various discreet tasks or to work collaboratively with other qualified consultants to meet data collection needs of specific Market Research or Impact Evaluation/Field Verification projects. Survey data collection and design assistance will support NYSERDA in measuring markets addressed by its programs and interventions. For purposes of this solicitation, a survey is defined as a systematic data collection effort conducted either in person, by telephone, by mail, or using the internet, including large-scale mail surveys, panel surveys, unstructured interviews, and focus groups.

Qualified contractors may be tasked by NYSERDA to:

- Design and develop surveys, questionnaires, interview guides, and other forms of data collection
- Develop and implement strategies to select appropriate samples
- Pre-test data collection instruments to ensure maximum effectiveness
- Administer data collection instruments
- Provide cleaned, coded and analysis-ready data to NYSERDA and its evaluation contractors
- Prepare a methodology and survey disposition report for each project
- Perform other ad hoc survey-related work as assigned by NYSERDA

### **Survey Data Collection Approaches/Tools**

Specific survey methods to be used include, but are not limited to:

- Telephone: A method of surveying where telephone is the means used to contact potential respondents. Qualified contractors must possess centralized telephone interviewing facilities with Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) capabilities. Qualified contractors must also have cell phone calling capabilities, where applicable/permitted.
- Mail: A data collection method in which respondents complete questionnaires on paper form and return them via the mail. Qualified contractors must possess mail survey processing capabilities.
- Internet/Web: A questionnaire that the target audience can complete surveys over the Internet. Qualified contractors must be able to host in-house web surveys.

### **Survey Data Collection Contractor Qualifications**

In addition to the overarching contractor qualifications listed above, the survey data collection activity will require the qualified contractors to become familiar with and fully understand the breadth and depth

of the CEF and NYSERDA's interventions including interacting with key stakeholders. Specifically, the following requirements must also be fulfilled by the qualified contractors:

- Expertise and experience in collecting data from a wide variety of respondent audiences and populations, including multi-generational, multi-lingual, professional, etc.
- Overall technical expertise in survey and interview guide design and development
- Demonstrated ability to successfully implement a variety of survey data collection approaches (e.g., simple random-digit dialing telephone surveys of consumers, to high level interviews with decision makers)
- Demonstrated ability to serve real-time needs with quick turn-around time frames
- Past projects relevant to supporting knowledge and experience in survey design and development, which shall be included and summarized in the proposal
- Experience and training in applying guiding principles, ethics, and industry standards to survey research

### **Evaluation Topics**

NYSERDA expects to address in part, or in whole, the end-use sectors, technology areas and interventions listed below in the future. This is not an exhaustive list, nor is it a list of requirements to assess experience. As applicable, proposers should demonstrate their understanding and experience in these areas within evaluation area-specific proposals. Proposers without energy industry-specific experience who have developed skills and qualifications in other industries (e.g., health, finance) are also invited to propose given NYSERDA's strong interest in expanding the types of approaches, tools and methods that could be effectively used in the energy field to assess the impact of its new initiatives.

### **End-Use Sectors**

- New and existing structures: Commercial, Industrial (including data centers and agriculture), Multifamily (including low and moderate income) and Residential (including low and moderate income)
- Transportation

### **Technology Areas**

- Energy efficiency retrofit or replacement measures
- On-site energy management practices (e.g., real time energy management)
- Renewable energy generation and renewable thermal
- Other on-site generation (e.g., combined heat and power)
- Demand management/reduction
- Emerging technologies (e.g., LEDs and OLEDs)
- Zero Net Energy buildings
- Transportation (e.g., demand management, smart mobility, electric vehicles, transit and freight)
- Smart grid (e.g., distribution and transmission systems, microgrids and community grids)
- Energy storage (e.g., standardized products, enabling storage technologies)

### Intervention Types

1. Enabling solutions for other market actors
  - Training and education
  - Enabling adoption of tools and software
  - Identifying and connecting qualified service providers with interested customers
  - Financing (e.g., reducing risks, supporting aggregation, supporting standardization, enhancing market confidence)
  - Demonstrating and developing real-time energy management approaches
  - Enabling customer confidence
  - Working with and enabling supply chain
  - Fostering stakeholder collaboration and integration
  - Providing technical support for communities with outreach and service (e.g., modular system design, community solar)
  - Market-facing energy data analysis and deployment
2. Providing direct financial incentives
  - Motivating service providers and product suppliers to capture latent opportunities and, where needed, to develop and support emerging markets that offer high carbon reduction potential
  - Providing direct financial subsidies to fill gaps in the market (e.g., low to moderate income and renewables)
  - Providing direct financial incentives via risk sharing
3. Serving as a policy advocate to improve codes, standards, and mandates
  - Supporting credible and reliable verification protocols and services
  - Exploring best practices
  - Reducing soft costs by creating tools for simplified and standardized auditing, modeling, and training
  - Quantifying and characterizing the value proposition of zero net energy
4. Working with stakeholders in New York to advance technical innovation
  - Supporting technology development and demonstration projects
  - Validating emerging technologies
  - Promoting the transfer of technology through networks
  - Publicizing top performers (e.g., case studies)
  - Disseminating information
  - Providing direct support for cleantech business
  - Supporting technology-to-market pathways to stimulate entrepreneurial activity
  - Engaging mid-market suppliers and forming strategic industrial partnerships

### **III. Contractual Arrangement and Responsibility**

#### Umbrella Agreement

All proposers qualified through this RFQ will enter into zero-dollar value Umbrella Agreements enabling

NYSERDA to retain their services for each Market Research and Evaluation Support Area in which they have been qualified. This Umbrella Agreement will not guarantee any specific amount of work. The amount of work and funding subsequently assigned to each contractor via separate Task Work Orders will depend on expertise, the amount of work required in the Market Research and Evaluation Support Area, past performance, current workload and deadline requirements.

The term of retention for each qualified consultant is up to three years with the option to renew for another two years at NYSERDA's discretion. However, NYSERDA reserves the right to re-evaluate each qualified contractor and the qualified contractor pools, as well as add new firms to the pools at any time, as needed, due to shifts in NYSERDA emphasis, consultant performance, expertise and other similar indicators. At a minimum, NYSERDA will re-evaluate and potentially reissue this RFQ to expand its qualified contractor pools on an annual basis.

Qualified contractors who, at any time, cease to provide value to NYSERDA due to poor performance and timeliness, inferior deliverable quality, lack of engagement with NYSERDA and its partners, or in any way fail to meet the objectives of NYSERDA's evaluation effort shall be issued a written warning. Should there be no improvement following this written warning, the contractor will be removed from the qualified contractor list.

### Task Work Orders

Projects will be assigned through separate written Task Work Orders (TWOs), which will become binding agreements between NYSERDA and the contractor qualified to perform the work. TWOs will either be assigned or competitively bid within the qualified pools of contractors. TWO requests issued by NYSERDA may be fully developed by NYSERDA or may require the qualified contractor(s) to develop a proposed workscope and other key components of the TWO.

Fully developed TWO requests issued by NYSERDA shall include components such as a detailed work scope, a description of the deliverables required, schedule and budget. Typically, these TWOs will be implemented according to these components as described in the TWO requests.

In other cases, TWO requests shall include a description of NYSERDA's research needs or questions, but will require a response from the qualified contractor(s) on the specific methods, deliverables, schedule and budget to implement the work. Contractor responses to these types of TWO requests may include, but not be limited to:

- Goals and objectives of the project
- Approach that will be taken outlined by tasks
- Identification of measures and ability to track project success
- Any relevant background information
- Defined deliverables
- Communication plan to facilitate information sharing with NYSERDA (e.g., weekly meetings, status reports, etc).
- Project schedule
- Names and titles of individuals to work on the project
- A detailed inventory of the measurement tools and equipment to be deployed\*
- Total not-to-exceed cost of the project, including a breakout by task and by title, hourly rate, hours, and non-labor costs

***\*Note: NYSERDA will not reimburse the purchase or rental of measurement tools and equipment.***

The details of these TWO responses will be consistent with the level of complexity of the proposed project or activity and determined in consultation with NYSERDA, but are anticipated to be 1-5 pages in

length. In limited circumstances, during the development of a work scope, NYSERDA may consider partnering and teaming arrangements between qualified consultants and other expert entities as necessary. Task Work Orders may include planning, data collection, analysis and reporting tasks but generally, NYSERDA will not reimburse consultants for the cost of preparing TWOs.

In all cases, hourly rates to implement any TWO shall be consistent with those in the general Umbrella Agreement. NYSERDA must review and approve all Task Work Orders before project implementation.

Any work that is estimated to cost \$300,000 or greater will require a mini-bid. Mini-bid requests will be issued to all qualified contractors in a specified Market Research and Evaluation Support Area. These requests will likely include a description of research questions/needs and require a detailed response on the approach by the qualified contractors. Mini-bids will be reviewed by NYSERDA and a contractor will be selected to implement the TWO. If, following proposal review, but before implementing the project, the selected contractor is unable to implement the work due to workload, expertise or other similar factor, NYSERDA will select the second-ranked consultant to implement the work.

#### Contractor Responsibility

Upon selection through this RFQ and upon agreement and approval of any Task Work Orders, qualified contractors shall be responsible for the following:

- Demonstrating value-added, timely completion of TWOs that align with the requirements and qualifications described in the **Services Requested and Qualifications** section of this RFQ
- Keeping NYSERDA informed regularly on the progress of the evaluation effort, including meeting with NYSERDA staff on a periodic basis, as needed
- Submitting deliverables to NYSERDA for review and approval in accordance with the timeline outlined in the TWO
- Providing required documentation of expenditures by task when seeking reimbursement from NYSERDA
- Ensuring the evaluation effort is based on the following principles:
  - Objectivity, fairness, and balance in terms of the types of data collected; only those data deemed necessary for evaluation purposes shall be collected and summarized in reports
  - Sound methodology, credible data and analysis, and adherence to the highest professional standards

#### NYSERDA's Responsibility

Designated NYSERDA project managers will be responsible for overseeing and managing TWOs undertaken by qualified contractors, including but not limited to reviewing, commenting and approving tasks and subsequent deliverables; coordinating with program staff and interested external stakeholders; promoting coordination among contractors qualified for each evaluation area, as appropriate; assisting in the presentation and dissemination of findings; and reviewing and approving invoices promptly.

### **IV. Proposal Requirements**

#### Proposal Format

Each proposal shall contain, at a minimum, the components listed below. **Consultant teaming arrangements are discouraged in proposals submitted under this RFQ since NYSERDA is**

**interested in direct and cost-effective access to individuals or firms most qualified to perform specific work tasks in a timely manner.**

Proposals should not be excessively long or submitted in an elaborate format that includes expensive binders or graphics. Unnecessary attachments beyond those sufficient to present a complete, comprehensive, and effective response will not influence the evaluation of the proposal. Each page of the proposal should state the name of the proposer, RFQ 3183, and the page number. Proposals may be either single- or double-sided, but a page is considered one side of an 8-1/2" x 11" piece of paper. The font size shall not be smaller than 11 point.

### **1. Cover Letter (1 page)**

Proposers shall submit a cover letter on company letterhead that:

- References RFQ 3183
- Specifies each specific Market Research and Evaluation Support Area(s) where services are being offered
- Summarizes the proposer's ability to perform such services
- Is signed by a person with authority to enter into a contract with NYSERDA

### **2. Table of Contents (1 page)**

Proposers should present a comprehensive table of contents that outlines the page number and section where each Market Research and Evaluation Support Area proposal can be found. Proposals will be evaluated independently for each Market Research and Evaluation Support Area, so proposals must be organized to provide a separate section for each Market Research and Evaluation Support Area where services are being offered.

Proposals for each Market Research and Evaluation Support Area must include the items listed below, **regardless** of whether they have been presented in another section:

- Overall experience and capabilities
- Personnel Qualifications and Qualifications Matrix<sup>10</sup>
- Cost Proposal – Project Personnel and Rates Form
- Relevant Attachments

### **3. Overall Experience and Capabilities (2-4 pages)**

For each proposed Market Research and Evaluation Support Area, proposers must describe their expertise and ability to deliver services. This should include the aggregate number of years working in this area and a summary of at least one and no more than three similar projects. Selected projects should demonstrate and describe the firm's capability to incorporate innovative methods to solve problems; identify challenges in data collection and methods used to mitigate those challenges while maintaining the integrity and credibility of the data; describe how the firm was a key contributor to the study; and describe how the firm was able to triangulate and analyze data to inform decision making.

These summaries must also include the cost of the study and description of the deliverables, along with access to the final study (through a link or hard copy). These summaries should be no more than one

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<sup>10</sup> A qualifications matrix is not required of Survey Data Collection proposers.



page in length for each selected project. Proposers must include references for each of the projects. Firms with NYSERDA experience must identify a NYSERDA staff reference for those projects.

Energy industry experience is not a requirement of this solicitation, and methodologies developed in other industries (e.g., health, finance) may be included within proposals.

Proposers should ensure the summaries prepared in this section represent the widest range of services the firm is offering within each Evaluation Services and Support Area.

#### **4. Personnel Qualifications and Qualifications Matrix (1-3 pages; résumés may be placed in an appendix and are not included in this page limit)**

For each proposed Market Research and Evaluation Support Area, proposers must identify key project personnel and relevant qualifications. Proposers must describe the accomplishments, experiences, and expertise of the individuals comprising the proposal. Proposers must identify the project manager within their firm who will serve as the single point of contact as well as all personnel that may be involved with providing services under this RFQ and their roles.

Proposers must include one-page résumés that highlight recent experiences of all individuals who will be directly involved in providing services. These may be compiled in an appendix to the proposal.

Proposers to the Market Research and Impact Evaluation/Field Verification Areas must complete a **Qualifications Matrix** for each area in which they are offering services to NYSERDA.<sup>11</sup> Proposers should indicate expertise with a checkmark. See Attachment C of this RFQ for the Market Research and Impact Evaluation/Field Verification matrices.

Each matrix is intended to provide NYSERDA with an understanding of proposer skills across approaches, technologies and sectors, as applicable. As discussed above, energy industry experience is not a requirement of this solicitation, and methodologies developed in other industries (e.g., health, finance) may be included within proposals and identified in each matrix. Information described within proposals should align and support the skills indicated in the matrix.

#### **5. Cost Proposal – Project Personnel and Rate Form (1 page)**

For each proposed Market Research and Evaluation Support Area, proposers must provide a Project Personnel and Rates form (Attachment D) and submit the name, title, and fully-burdened hourly salary range for each individual in the proposal who will perform the work in the **Services Requested and Qualifications** section under an agreement with NYSERDA. **Note: Any escalation rates must be identified for the full five-year contract term.**

NYSERDA is not requiring proposers to estimate travel or other direct costs as part of proposals, but reasonable costs for these may be part of TWOs on an as needed basis. NYSERDA will not reimburse the purchase or rental of measurement tools and equipment.

#### **6. Required Attachments**

Proposals must include the following as listed in **Section VII Attachments**:

- Attachment A - Proposal Checklist
- Attachment B - Disclosure of Prior Findings of Non- Responsibility

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<sup>11</sup> A qualifications matrix is not required of Survey Data Collection proposers.

- Attachment C – Qualifications Matrices (for the Market Research and Impact Evaluation/Field Verification Areas only)
- Attachment D – Project Personnel and Rates Form

## 7. Submittal

To be eligible for selection under this RFQ, proposers must submit a complete bid package and agree to the terms and requirements of this RFQ. Proposers may submit electronically per the requirements outlined on page 1 of this RFQ and described in Attachment E, Instructions for Electronic Proposal Submission, or must submit two paper copies of their proposal with a completed and signed Proposal Checklist (Attachment A), along with a CD or DVD containing both a PDF or MS Word digital copy of the proposal to the attention of Roseanne Viscusi at the address on the front of this RFQ. A completed and signed Proposal Checklist must be attached as the front cover of your proposal, one of which must contain an original signature.

All responses submitted as part of this solicitation process become the property of NYSERDA. Proposers will not be reimbursed by NYSERDA for any costs associated with the preparation of their proposals.

In compliance with §139-j and §139-k of the State Finance Law (see Section V, General Conditions below for additional information), the following forms must be completed and filed with proposals: (1) a signed copy of the Proposal Checklist (Attachment A) including required certifications under the State Finance Law and (2) a completed Disclosure of Prior Findings of Non-Responsibility form (Attachment B). Failure to include a signed copy of the Proposal Checklist referenced in this solicitation may disqualify your proposal.

## V. Proposal Evaluation

Proposals that meet the proposal requirements described in the **Services Requested and Qualifications** and **Proposal Requirements** sections of this RFQ will be reviewed by a Technical Evaluation Panel (TEP) consisting of NYSERDA staff and selected outside reviewers. A separate TEP will be held for each Market Research and Evaluation Support Area. Responses to this RFQ will be reviewed and assigned scores based on the criteria highlighted below:

### 1. Responsiveness to the RFQ

- Overall responsiveness to NYSERDA's request as specified in this RFQ
- Ability to satisfactorily accommodate quick cycle assignments to advance NYSERDA's test-measure-adjust approach

### 2. Relevant Experience and Qualifications

- a. Qualifications, experience and expertise of key personnel in relevant Market Research and Evaluation Support Area
- b. Clear description of selected project summaries
- c. Clear indication of key proposer qualifications per the Qualifications Matrix for the Market Research and Impact Evaluation/Field Verification Areas

### 3. Cost

- a. Reasonableness and relative competitiveness of fully-burdened labor rates and escalation rates

### 4. References and Other Items

- a. Information provided by references
- b. Other personnel, programmatic and management factors deemed appropriate by NYSERDA
- c. Is the proposal well-organized, well-written, and complete?

NYSERDA anticipates qualifying multiple proposers for each Market Research and Evaluation Support Area. The number of qualified contractors cannot be determined until all proposals are received and reviewed.

**Conflicts:** The firm and any personnel of the firm must be free from any financial or similar interest in any product or service which may conflict with or appear to conflict with the objectivity of the services provided to NYSERDA. Please describe all of your product, manufacturer or service-related affiliations. If any affiliations exist, you must provide a statement verifying that these affiliations do not conflict with or appear to conflict with the objectivity of providing services to NYSERDA and its customers. Non-disclosure of any affiliation can result in the termination of a contract, if awarded.

Qualified contractors shall not be precluded from bidding on the other evaluation areas described within this RFQ or on future evaluation solicitations. However, qualified contractors should describe within their proposals how conflicts of interest, both actual and perceived, will be resolved should qualified contractors choose to bid on other evaluation areas or on future evaluation solicitations.

## **VI. GENERAL CONDITIONS**

**Proprietary Information** - Careful consideration should be given before confidential information is submitted to NYSERDA as part of your proposal. Review should include whether it is critical for evaluating a proposal, and whether general, non-confidential information, may be adequate for review purposes. The NYS Freedom of Information Law, Public Officers law, Article 6, provides for public access to information NYSERDA possesses. Public Officers Law, Section 87(2)(d) provides for exceptions to disclosure for records or portions thereof that "are trade secrets or are submitted to an agency by a commercial enterprise or derived from information obtained from a commercial enterprise and which if disclosed would cause substantial injury to the competitive position of the subject enterprise." Information submitted to NYSERDA that the proposer wishes to have treated as proprietary, and confidential trade secret information, should be identified and labeled "Confidential" or "Proprietary" on each page at the time of disclosure. This information should include a written request to except it from disclosure, including a written statement of the reasons why the information should be excepted. See Public Officers Law, Section 89(5) and the procedures set forth in 21 NYCRR Part 501 <http://www.nyserda.ny.gov/About/-/media/Files/About/Contact/NYSERDA-Regulations.ashx>. However, NYSERDA cannot guarantee the confidentiality of any information submitted.

**Omnibus Procurement Act of 1992** - It is the policy of New York State to maximize opportunities for the participation of New York State business enterprises, including minority- and women-owned business enterprises, as bidders, subcontractors, and suppliers on its procurement Agreements.

Information on the availability of New York subcontractors and suppliers is available from:

Empire State Development  
Division For Small Business  
625 Broadway  
Albany, NY 12207

A directory of certified minority- and women-owned business enterprises is available from:

Empire State Development  
Minority and Women's Business Development Division  
625 Broadway  
Albany, NY 12207

**State Finance Law sections 139-j and 139-k** - NYSERDA is required to comply with State Finance Law sections 139-j and 139-k. These provisions contain procurement lobbying requirements which can be found at <http://www.ogs.ny.gov/aboutogs/regulations/advisoryCouncil/StatutoryReferences.html>. The attached Proposal Checklist calls for a signature certifying that the proposer will comply with State Finance Law sections 139-j and 139-k and the Disclosure of Prior Findings of Non-responsibility form includes a disclosure statement regarding whether the proposer has been found non-responsible under section 139-j of the State Finance Law within the previous four years.

**Tax Law Section 5-a** - NYSERDA is required to comply with the provisions of Tax Law Section 5-a, which requires a prospective contractor, prior to entering an agreement with NYSERDA having a value in excess of \$100,000, to certify to the Department of Taxation and Finance (the "Department") whether the contractor, its affiliates, its subcontractors and the affiliates of its subcontractors have registered with the Department to collect New York State and local sales and compensating use taxes. The Department has created a form to allow a prospective contractor to readily make such certification. *See*, ST-220-TD (available at [http://www.tax.ny.gov/pdf/current\\_forms/st/st220td\\_fill\\_in.pdf](http://www.tax.ny.gov/pdf/current_forms/st/st220td_fill_in.pdf)).

Prior to contracting with NYSERDA, the prospective contractor must also certify to NYSERDA whether it has filed such certification with the Department. The Department has created a second form that must be completed by a prospective contractor prior to contacting and filed with NYSERDA. *See*, ST-220-CA (available at [http://www.tax.ny.gov/pdf/current\\_forms/st/st220ca\\_fill\\_in.pdf](http://www.tax.ny.gov/pdf/current_forms/st/st220ca_fill_in.pdf)). The Department has developed guidance for contractors which is available at <http://www.tax.ny.gov/pdf/publications/sales/pub223.pdf>.

**Contract Award** - NYSERDA anticipates qualifying multiple consultants within each Market Research and Evaluation Support Area. It may award a contract based on initial applications without discussion, or following limited discussion or negotiations pertaining to the Statement of Work. Each offer should be submitted using the most favorable cost and technical terms. NYSERDA may request additional data or material to support applications during the proposal review process. NYSERDA will use the Sample Agreement (Attachment F) to contract successful proposals. NYSERDA reserves the right to limit any negotiations to exceptions to standard terms and conditions in the Sample Agreement to those specifically identified in the submitted proposal (see Proposal Checklist). Proposers should keep in mind that acceptance of all standard terms and conditions will generally result in a more expedited contracting process. NYSERDA expects to notify proposers in approximately ten weeks from the proposal due date whether your proposal has been qualified. NYSERDA may decline to contract with awardees that are delinquent with respect to any obligation under any previous or active NYSERDA agreement.

**Limitation** - This solicitation does not commit NYSERDA to award a contract, pay any costs incurred in preparing a proposal, or to procure or contract for services or supplies. NYSERDA reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals received, to negotiate with all qualified sources, or to cancel in part or in its entirety the solicitation when it is in NYSERDA's best interest. NYSERDA reserves the right to reject proposals based on the nature and number of any exceptions taken to the standard terms and conditions of the Sample Agreement.

**Disclosure Requirement** - The proposer shall disclose any indictment for any alleged felony, or any conviction for a felony within the past five years, under the laws of the United States or any state or territory of the United States, and shall describe circumstances for each. When a proposer is an association, partnership, corporation, or other organization, this disclosure requirement includes the organization and its officers, partners, and directors or members of any similarly governing body. If an indictment or conviction should come to the attention of NYSERDA after the award of a contract, NYSERDA may exercise its stop-work right pending further investigation, or terminate the agreement; the contractor may be subject to penalties for violation of any law which may apply in the particular circumstances. Proposers must also disclose if they have ever been debarred or suspended by any agency of the U.S. Government or the New York State Department of Labor.

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## **VII. Attachments**

- Attachment A - Proposal Checklist
- Attachment B - Disclosure of Prior Findings of Non- Responsibility
- Attachment C – Qualifications Matrices for Market Research and Impact Evaluation/Field Verification
- Attachment D – Project Personnel and Rates Form
- Attachment E – Instructions for Electronic Proposal Submission
- Attachment F - Sample Agreement