



Request for Qualifications “RFQL” For Residential-Serving Solar and Battery Storage and Related Programs (RFQL 2501)

The Texas Solar for All Coalition (“Coalition”), a collaborative partnership of local government bodies and nonprofit organizations led by Harris County, was formed to bring the benefits of residential energy efficiency and clean energy to, and to increase climate resilience for, residents of disadvantaged communities across Texas. This effort is funded by a grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (“EPA”). To accomplish this, we need to engage with a broad spectrum of vendors with expertise in the residential sector, including both single-family and multifamily installations.

Houston Advanced Research Center (“HARC”) is issuing this Request for Qualifications (RFQL) to establish a pool of vendors who have expertise in single family, multi-family, community solar, home retrofits, grid improvements, and storage in one or more areas of residential energy efficiency and clean energy for its programs and coalition-level activities:

- A. Program Development, Facilitation, and Implementation
- B. Financial Assistance
- C. Technical Support, Analysis, and Tool Development
- D. Engagement and Outreach Services
- E. Workforce Development
- F. Program Administration / Grant Administration
- G. Housing and Policy Expertise
- H. Other

HARC anticipates identifying a list of potential vendors through 2029 for each of the categories listed above as appropriate for its program and coalition-level activities. Qualified companies, individuals, or organizations (including teaming arrangements) will be evaluated and scored according to a scoring rubric within each Category. Proposers may submit proposals for one or more categories and may be selected for none, one, some, or all categories they applied to. When HARC or the coalition has a need for work in one of the categories, a request for proposals (RFP) will be issued through to the firms that qualify in their respective Category, following the process described in Section II D below. Note: if proposing to more than one Category please submit to each Category separately.

All procurement related to this RFQL and subsequent RFP’s will be subject to 2 CFR 200 and applicable federal provisions, including but not limited to EPA General Terms and Conditions, Davis-Bacon requirements, and DBE (Disadvantaged Business Enterprises) Compliance.

All responses may be subject to public disclosure under applicable state and federal law. HARC will take reasonable steps to protect proprietary information where properly designated.

HARC strongly encourages submissions from DBE in accordance with the EPA DBE requirements. Please indicate if your firm qualifies under these categories.

Important Dates:

June 3, 2025 – RFQL Published

June 30, 2025 –Deadline for submitting questions to SFApurchasing@harcresearch.org

July 8, 2025 – Final Answers to questions posted as FAQ on website (FAQ will be updated weekly)

July 15, 2025, 5PM Central Time – Application deadline

Proposal Submission: If proposing to more than one Category please submit unique proposals with all supporting attachments to each Category you are applying for. Proposers may submit Word, Excel, or PDF files to SFApurchasing@harcresearch.org with the subject line “SFA RFQL Response for [category name]”. Individual files should be 30MB or less in file size. Proposal PDFs should be searchable and should not be scanned. For ease of identification, all electronic files must be named using the proposer’s entity name in the title of the document.

No communication intended to influence this procurement is permitted except by contacting SFApurchasing@harcresearch.org for technical or contractual questions. **Contacting anyone other than the 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: (1) may result in a proposer being deemed a nonresponsive offerer, and (2) may result in the proposer not being awarded a contract under future RFPs.**

All proposals must be received by 5 p.m. Central Time on the date noted above. Late proposals will not be accepted. Incomplete proposals may be subject to disqualification. It is the proposer’s responsibility to ensure that all pages have been included in the proposal. If changes are made to this solicitation, notification will be posted on the “Procurement Opportunities” section of the Solar for All project website <https://www.solarforalltx.org>.

I. Introduction

To achieve the Texas Solar for All Coalition’s goals, more than 28,000 Texans must get access to solar through 15 local and/or statewide programs (<https://www.solarforalltexas.org/where-we-work>). To accomplish this, we need to engage with a broad spectrum of market actors with strong expertise in the residential-serving solar sectors – spanning across single-family, multifamily, commercial, and community solar. HARC seeks specifically to support efforts directed to low-income residents and disadvantaged communities to maximize the impact of the savings of the solar in reducing energy burden for Texans. Through this RFQL, HARC is seeking applicants that can help achieve these goals for its program and coalition-level activities. HARC is issuing this Request for Qualifications (RFQL) to establish a pool of vendors who have expertise in single family, multi-family, community solar, home retrofits, grid improvements, and storage in one or more areas of residential energy efficiency and clean energy:

- A. Program Development, Facilitation, and Implementation
- B. Financial Assistance
- C. Technical Support, Analysis, and Tool Development
- D. Engagement and Outreach Services
- E. Workforce Development
- F. Program Administration / Grant Administration
- G. Housing and Policy Expertise
- H. Other

As a result of RFQL, HARC expects to qualify multiple vendors to provide services in each of the specified Categories. Proposers are invited to submit a proposal, describing their qualifications, skills, expertise with documented references, and personnel rates in any or all the Categories described below. Proposers may submit a proposal to provide services in one, multiple, or all the above categories. Proposers should clearly identify which category the proposal is intended to address in both the subject line of the email submission as well as the proposal heading. Proposers are permitted, but not required, to team with partners (subcontractors or subawardees) they consider would offer complementary expertise in the identified Categories.

Upon a successful demonstration within a proposal, HARC may designate vendors that have demonstrated “specialized capabilities” in specific areas. For example, a contractor may be designated as having specialized capabilities for a particular type of service requested if it demonstrates that it possesses exceptionally scarce qualifications or experience; specialized equipment or facilities not readily available from other sources; or proprietary data or methods. Submitted proposals should clearly articulate any proposed specialized capabilities, supported by a justification as to why these attributes may be exceptionally scarce, specialized or proprietary. HARC reserves the right to make all final determinations regarding a successful demonstration of qualifications, experience, or specialized capabilities in accordance with the evaluation criteria outlined in RFQL categories. HARC reserves the right to create new Categories to address any needs that arise outside of the defined support areas included in the issuance of this RFQL. In this instance, all existing firms in the Vendor pool, along with any new proposers, will be eligible to submit a proposal for the new Categories. HARC also reserves the right to close a Category within this RFQL and stop accepting new proposals for that Category. HARC does not guarantee that all types of services will be requested or that all selected vendors will receive work. The number and type of services requested from the selected vendors will depend on the nature and complexity of the project, the vendor or project team’s expertise, the volume and frequency of the services requested by HARC, the vendor or project team’s past performance, and the absence of conflicts of interest. Qualification does not guarantee any work or funding. Future RFPs will be issued to pre-qualified vendors by service category as needed.

II. Services Requested

Proposers should clearly articulate each of the service types within the Category they are applying to.

- A. Program Development, Facilitation, and Implementation
- B. Financial Assistance
- C. Technical Support, Analysis, and Tool Development
- D. Engagement and Outreach Services
- E. Workforce Development
- F. Program Administration / Grant Administration
- G. Housing and Policy Expertise
- H. Other

The services below are representative of the types of activities HARC expects to recruit for but is not an all-inclusive list. Team arrangements are encouraged, and proposers should clearly articulate the roles of the lead contractors and subcontractors.

Category A: Program Development, Facilitation, and Implementation

This RFQL is seeking candidates who can provide expertise for solar, storage, energy efficiency, and minor grid improvement design, development, and deployment. Ideal respondents will have a proven track record of delivering successful solar, energy storage, and clean energy projects, particularly those serving low-to-moderate-income (LMI) communities. Developers should demonstrate expertise in navigating local government partnerships, managing permitting and interconnection processes, and engaging with communities to ensure project benefits align with local needs. Additionally, familiarity with innovative ownership structures and scalable deployment models will be highly valued. By participating, developers will have the opportunity to collaborate with HARC to design impactful, community-focused projects that drive equitable access to clean energy.

The types of services in this Category include:

- Program Facilitation
 - Provide industry expertise to facilitate discussions with industry experts and stakeholders
 - Strategic planning, meeting planning, agenda and material development and execution for stakeholder meetings
 - Create public facing summaries appropriate for different audiences
 - Recruit and maintain relationships with supply chain actors such as manufacturers and distributors
 - Develop standard operating procedures and associated controls for administering the Program
 - Develop an application to be submitted by prospective project developers
 - Propose and collect metrics to evaluate projects
- Program Implementation
 - Provide technical expertise specific to program management
 - Provide day-to-day management support, such as participant communication, managing project intake, technical approvals, data gathering and reporting
 - Provide in-field and/or remote training and technical assistance and quality control assistance to program participants
 - Coordinate services with other organizations that provides services to HARC and HARC's programs
- Business Development Support
 - Business development support including adopting new business models and/or service lines or expand territory
 - Sales and customer support training, assisting contractors in scaling operations
 - Support for business skill development such as business plan development, grant writing skills
 - Contractor mentorship
- Service Providers
 - Community solar developers
 - Commercial and multifamily rooftop solar installers
 - Residential Single Family solar + storage installers
 - Data and evaluation (solar performance/ bill savings) analysts

- Financial Consultants
 - Legal Advisors
 - Federal Compliance, Environmental, and Safety Consultants
 - Contractors providing home repair, energy efficiency, grid improvements, related upgrades. Provide installation services for energy efficiency and clean energy measures such as but not limited to: air sealing, insulation, window replacements, heat pumps, heat pump water heaters, electrical panel box upgrades, electrical wiring upgrades, other electrification measures, etc.
 - Retail Electric Providers
 - General contracting services, oversee installation jobs, test in/test out
 - Provide trusted third-party energy information to homeowners, such as on site or virtual energy assessments or healthy home inspections.
 - Develop project work scopes, including phased electrification scopes with multiple measures intended to be installed over a period of months or years
 - Provide installation services for environmental trigger reduction and expanded health and safety measures such as: ventilation, mold remediation, integrated pest management.
 - Energy systems modeling services
- Operations and Maintenance
 - Develop a written guide on best O&M practices and provide it to HARC in a mutually agreeable format; and
 - Deliver trainings and guidance to Customers as needed
 - Complete other deliverables necessary for the success of the task of operations and maintenance training that are agreed upon with HARC during the course of the contract.

Category B: Financial Assistance Services

HARC invites infrastructure project financiers with a strong commitment to clean energy and community development to support the Solar for All (SFA) initiative. Respondents should bring extensive experience in financing renewable energy projects, with a focus on structuring deals for long-term revenue stability and scalable impact. Preferred candidates will have a history of working with public sector counterparties, developing creative financing solutions, and enabling investments that benefit underserved or LMI communities. Financiers with the ability to assess and manage project risks, while supporting innovative deployment models, are particularly encouraged to apply. This RFQ offers an opportunity to collaborate with HARC and leading developers to create financially sustainable clean energy solutions that prioritize community impact. Priority will be given to CDFIs located in Texas, particularly those located in communities installing solar. However, all entities capable of providing services should apply. The types of services in this Category include:

- Development of low-interest loan products and programs for individuals or housing providers
- Provide short-term “bridge loans” for individuals, municipalities, nonprofit organizations, and other entities applying for tax credit or Direct Pay funding
- Additional renewable energy financing products or programs
- Work with HARC and HARC’s partners to develop a template of available financing options for different types of Customers
- In coordination with HARC, develop stacking guides, frequently asked questions, and other communications/outreach for Customers regarding other incentives and financing
- Complete other deliverables necessary for the success of the task of support in accessing incentives and financing that are agreed upon with HARC during the course of the contract.

Category C: Technical Support, Analysis, and Tool Development

HARC is seeking qualified firms that can provide technical consulting and analysis to the Coalition's program teams. The types of services in this Category include:

- Project siting, land use, interconnection, building codes
- Provide engineering or project design support for solar installations
- Inspection and quality control
- Monitoring validation
- Technical analysis related to residential programs and technologies, including collection and analysis of technology, program, and market data
- Provide guidance on standard work practices and installation and decommissioning practices, standards development
- Review and analyze technical components of programs and provide recommendations to HARC
- Technical writing for different audiences (Texas agencies, municipalities, contractors, etc.)
- Market segmentation analysis (geographic, demographic, psychographic)
- Technical subject matter expertise for current and developing building electrification technologies and strategies
- Development of tools and resources for low-income neighborhood or affordable housing community-driven and place-based clean energy planning
- Provide expertise in the development of functional requirements to support program workflow and software needs
- Data mapping support
- Testing, analysis, design, and troubleshooting of realization rates and residential energy modeling tools
- Develop a project timeline with the facility owner and report progress to HARC and/or develop improvement plans to ensure project completion should projects face delays
- Coordinate with utilities and customers on interconnection studies, timelines and applications
- Complete other deliverables necessary for the success of the task of project development and technical assistance that are agreed upon with HARC

Category D: Engagement and Outreach Services

HARC is seeking qualified firms that can provide engagement support to the Coalition's program teams. The types of services in this Category include:

- Equitable community engagement
- Language accessibility services
- Community benefits planning and engagement
- Community based organizations (CBOs) that can support one or all of these program areas: establishing and managing a solar ambassador program, engaging community members for input and feedback on program design and development, customer acquisition
- Provide segmentation services including developing lists, messaging, conducting outreach, etc.
- Participating in contractor recruitment and management, in coordination with Clean Energy Hubs
- Aggregation of participants for the purposes of sales and installations

- Work with influencers of home purchases and upgrade decisions such as real estate market actors, community groups, financial partners, etc.
- Recruit participation in stakeholder forums and programs
- Develop educational materials
- Communicate with customers about the benefits of solar, energy storage systems, and energy efficiency
- Hold meetings with utilities/coops, municipalities, and selected or potential site owners – direct outreach to set meetings up, plus follow-up afterwards
- Develop LIDAC household outreach plan, in coordination with other programs that deliver benefits to LIDAC households
- Provide regular updates on metrics and outreach statistics to HARC
- Complete other deliverables necessary for the success of the task of education and outreach that are agreed upon with HARC

Category E: Workforce and Small Business Development and Related Services

HARC is seeking qualified firms that can provide workforce development support and advising to the Coalition's program teams. The types of advising services in this Category include:

- QA/QC for community level job training and curriculum review and recommendations
- Program workforce development strategy input
- Facilitation for strategy implementation as appropriate and directed by HARC
- Small or disadvantaged business recruiting & development for coalition programs
- Complete other deliverables necessary for the success of the task of facilitating workforce development activities that are agreed upon with HARC

Service providers may also apply for these categories:

- Wraparound services and life skills provider(s)
- Community-level pre-apprenticeship training

Category F: Program Administration / Grant Administration Support

HARC is seeking qualified firms that can provide additional grant administration support to the Coalition through software or services. The types of software or services in this Category include:

- Compliance
- Administrative services
- Reporting
- Customer satisfaction support

Category G: Housing and Policy Expertise

HARC is seeking firms that have experience with and can provide expertise, research and recommendations contributing to program design to HARC focused on working with Disadvantaged Communities. The types of expertise being sought include:

- State and federal housing policy and regulations that go beyond strictly energy-related considerations, such as: tenants' rights, utility allowances, identification of subsidized and/or regulated affordable housing issues and opportunities, regulatory mechanisms and their strengths/limitations, zoning, current debates about best approaches to preserve and increase affordable housing, etc.
- Work on local policy and innovation models such as community land trusts and sweat equity approaches

- Science and policy expertise related to buildings as a social determinant of health, including characterization, research and quantification of healthy homes issues (such as mold, lead, asbestos, environmental triggers, health risks from extreme heat/cold) for medical and public health sector acceptance and partnership building, approaches to resiliency of residential buildings and the ways that building condition intersects with other social determinants of health (employment stability, academic performance, etc.)
- Policy and analysis related to low- to moderate-income household energy affordability, identification and quantification of barriers to accessing programs and energy program design, including energy efficiency, electrification and solar program solutions
- Provide climate and clean energy-oriented Community Planning Services focused on low-income neighborhoods or affordable housing communities, including developing and leading community-driven planning processes, community asset mapping, community benefits agreements, place-based outreach, place-based surveying and census-taking services, and consensus-driven multi-stakeholder solution development around low-to-moderate income housing energy and electrification upgrades.

Category H: Other

Potential candidates with related expertise not listed in the above categories can submit under the “Other” category.

Proposer Qualifications

All proposers, regardless of the Category or categories being proposed, must possess (or subcontract to obtain) the following minimum basic qualifications:

- Knowledgeable staff or team with documented and relevant experience in one or more Categories
- Ability to deliver services requested in one or more of the Categories within Texas. If the proposer does not have offices within Texas, the proposal must include a description of the proposer’s ability to work within the State, as applicable and when needed
- Flexibility to respond to services requested
- Where relevant, credentialed staff with proof of industry-accepted certifications and training, such as but not limited to the Building Performance Institute; the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers; Residential Energy Services Network; manufacturer trainings, etc.

Teaming Arrangements

Proposers are permitted, but not required, to team with partners (subcontractors) they consider would offer complementary services and/or expertise in the proposing Category. Within the budget, overhead fees for subcontractors shall not exceed two percent.

During RFP contracting process, formal teaming arrangements will be permitted with other RFQL qualified awardees, as necessary and as indicated by HARC.

During the RFP process, an awardee may propose teaming with a subcontractor that was (1) not part of their initial bid and (2) not also qualified by the RFQL as long as the portion of the subcontractor’s work is less than 30% of the total RFP value.

III. Proposal Requirements

To be eligible for selections under this RFQL, proposers must submit a complete bid package and agree to the requirements of this RFQL. Proposers may submit to any or all Categories, and each

Category will be evaluated and judged independently from the others. Each Category is intended to create a separate pool of contractors that can meet the specified needs of the Category. If proposing to more than one Category please submit a complete proposal for each Category including all supporting attachments (e.g., resumes, Letters of Commitment, references, and Project Personnel and Rate Forms) and upload as ONE submission per Category.

Each proposal shall contain, at minimum, the components listed below. Each Category's proposal shall be uploaded as one complete document containing: (1) Proposal, (2) Attachment A: Project Personnel and Rates Form, (3) Attachment B: Supporting Documents, and (4) Attachment C: Sample Agreement.

Proposals should not be excessively long. Unnecessary attachments beyond those sufficient to present a complete, comprehensive, and effective response will not influence the evaluation of the proposal.

The proposal shall be in the following format:

1. Executive Summary (1 to 2 pages)

Proposers shall submit an executive summary on company letterhead that:

- Includes the firm name, address, telephone/fax, email address, contact person, year the firm was established, and the type of firm (e.g., partnership, corporation, not-for-profit)
- Specifies the proposed Category by name and identifying letter (i.e. A-H)
- Clearly articulate if the proposer's expertise is in single family, multifamily, commercial, community solar, retrofits, and/or new construction applications (if applicable)
- Exhibits a thorough understanding of this RFQL and directly addresses the Texas Solar for All Coalition's goals
- Summarizes proposer's ability to fulfill and support the services requested in the Category proposed
- Identifies all collaborating entities participating in the proposal, including a brief summary of the subcontractors and the services they provide, as well as past working relationships among team members and subcontractors if applicable
- Discusses the mechanism which will guarantee the proposer's ability to deliver services in Texas in a cost-effective manner
- Is signed by a person with authority to enter into contracts

2. Table of Contents (1 page)

Proposers should present a comprehensive table of contents that outlines the section and Page.

3. Experience performing services in the Category (3 pages maximum)

For each proposed Category, proposers shall describe the breadth and depth of their experience delivering high quality services as it relates to the needs of the Category, including:

- The proposer's experience as a team/firm in service delivery, including the aggregate number of years working in the Category
- The proposer's experience with one of more of the following: 1-4 family buildings, multifamily buildings, commercial buildings, community solar, residential retrofits, new residential construction
- The proposer's experience, if any, working with, or in, a disadvantaged community located in Texas

- A brief summary of at least one and no more than three of the proposer's projects that are relevant to the Category including the identification of efforts that made a difference and the extent of impact and influence achieved

4. Market insights in the Category (1 page maximum)

For each proposed Category, proposers shall describe key challenges and opportunities, both technical and market-based, facing the Category in the short, medium, and long term, including:

- Similarities and differences between Texas and the market at large
- Opportunities, challenges of working within Texas, and potential solutions that could be deployed by the Texas Solar for All Coalition, related to the Category
- If applicable, references to recently published abstracts from articles, white papers, or presentations from the proposer (or subcontractor) specifically addressing issues related to the Category

5. Capabilities to meet requested services in the Category

For each proposed Category, proposers shall describe the specific capabilities and resources available to their firm in addressing the needs of the Category, including:

- The proposer's or proposing teams' locations, including headquarters, location of incorporation, and identification of any Texas offices as either primary locations or satellite offices if applicable
- The proposer's geographic areas of coverage or specify that the services offered can cover Texas or are not applicable.
- The proposer's annual revenue for the past three years and total number of employees.
- The proposer's key owners, partners, or parent companies associated with the organization.
- Detailed explanation of the services and expertise offered that address one or more of the services requested through this RQFL, including a description on how services will be delivered (primary contractor, subcontractor relationships, etc.).
- The proposer's capability to incorporate innovative methods to solve problems including unique market differentiators that the proposer can provide working in this space.
- If applicable, directly address the minimum qualifications listed in Section II.
- If applicable, reference to Letters of Commitment (provide as attachment within the proposal) from subcontractors
- If applicable, submitted proposals should clearly articulate any proposed specialized capabilities, supported by a justification as to why these attributes may be exceptionally scarce, specialized or proprietary
- Whether the proposer is a disadvantaged business enterprise or other similar certification.
- Whether the proposer partners with or subcontracts to disadvantaged business enterprises or similarly certified businesses.
- For project developers responding to Category A, provide the following information:
 - Provide a summary of your experience in solar energy project development (200 kW to 5 MW), including location, capacity, initial operation date, utility partner, storage inclusion, and installation type (roof/ground).
 - Can you provide ongoing operations and maintenance (O&M) services for completed projects?
 - Please describe how you ensure the long-term performance and reliability of your solar projects, including how you track energy production over time. How do you handle scenarios in which projects you develop produce below expectations?

- Do you have experience with federal reporting and compliance requirements, including Davis-Bacon and Related Acts (DBRA) and Build America Buy America (BABA)?
- Are you North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners (NABCEP) certified?
- What is your estimated project timeline for a 5 MW, ground-mounted community solar project from start to completion? How soon could you start?
- What is your estimated project timeline for a 200 kW, roof-mounted community solar project from start to completion? How soon could you start?
- Provide an indicative project budget for a 5 MW, ground-mounted community solar project that connects to the Oncor grid.
- Provide an indicative project budget for a 200 kW, roof-mounted community solar project that connects to the Oncor grid.
- Describe your knowledge and experience with Inflation Reduction Act tax credits, including Elective Pay (Direct Pay).
- Do you have existing financing partners for potential projects to be completed in the Texas?
- Developers will be required to hire local community members, particularly graduates of Texas Solar for All Coalition training programs to fill a percentage of roles on their program. Describe your capacity to hire from the local community and HARC's partner job training programs.
- To apply for the full Investment Tax Credit, a portion of roles on the project must be filled by registered apprentices. Describe your organization or partner organizations' registered apprenticeship program offerings or capacity to begin a registered apprenticeship program.

6. Personnel qualifications

For each proposed Category, proposers shall identify and describe the qualifications of key staff members, teams, and subcontractors that are to be involved in providing services in the Category, including:

- Key personnel's education, experience, and certification(s) relevant to the Category as evidenced by resumes (provide as **Attachment B**. If applicable, resumes from subcontractors should be provided)
- Potential roles (e.g., technical, operations, outreach, administrative) and responsibilities of key individuals comprising the proposing team relevant to the Category, including the identification of the project manager who will serve as the single point of contact under this RFQL
- Organization chart demonstrating the relationship among key personnel and, if applicable, subcontractors.

7. Conflicts (1 page)

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 the Texas Solar for All Coalition or HARC. Please describe all your product, manufacturer, or service-related affiliations. If any affiliations exist, you must provide a statement verifying that these affiliations do not conflict. Failure to disclose any affiliation can result in the termination of a contract, if awarded.

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

8. Cost Proposal (1 page)

For each proposed Category, proposers must complete and provide a **Project Personnel and Rate Form (Attachment A)** and submit the name (if known), job title, and fully burdened hourly salary range for each individual in the proposal and all subcontractors who will perform the work under an Agreement with HARC. Proposers shall identify annual escalation rates through 2026, not to exceed three percent annually. Proposers shall also include any multipliers or other fees applied to work. HARC is not requiring proposers to estimate travel or other direct costs as part of the proposals, but reasonable costs for these may be part of future RFPs on an as needed basis.

Proposal Materials & Effort

All material submitted as part of this RFQL process becomes the property of HARC. Proposers will not be reimbursed by HARC for any costs associated with the preparation of their proposals.

IV. Qualification Evaluation

For each Category for which applicants submit a proposal, proposals that meet solicitation requirements will be reviewed by a Scoring Committee and scored using the evaluation criteria below. The minimum threshold is 65 points out of 100 possible points per proposed Category. No proposed Category with an average score of less than 65 will be considered for future RFPs. At HARC's discretion, proposers may be requested to interview with all or part of the Scoring Committee to address any potential questions or clarifications outlined in the proposals. Proposers will be notified if they are requested to attend an interview. Applications should be clear and complete and not rely on a possible interview to demonstrate the merits of the application.

Responses to the RFQL will be reviewed and assigned scores based on the criteria highlighted below:

Overall relevant experience and impact – 25 Points maximum

- Previous experience in the conduct and delivery of similar or related services.
- Demonstrated ability to complete projects on schedule.
- Quality and relevance of previous work
- References substantiating with evidence the contractor's abilities and past performance.
- Responsiveness to HARC's request as specified in this RFQL, including overall clarity and organization of the proposal.
- Ability to serve all or part of Texas clearly articulated and, if applicable, specific geographic areas of coverage are defined.

Qualifications and expertise of the personnel/team – 25 Points maximum

- Adequacy/depth of corporate resources to provide requested services.
- Qualifications and expertise of the personnel/team in relevant Categories
- Certifications, certificates, and relevant professional trainings completed by key personnel, if applicable

- Clear identification of staff that will be assigned to various project types.
- If applicable, clear explanation of subcontractors with letters of commitment included

Cost – 20 Points maximum

- Reasonableness and relative competitiveness of labor rates associated fees, escalation rates and overhead.
- Pricing and hourly rates are in line with the rest of the market and consistent when compared to expertise and qualifications.
- Escalation rates through 2026 shown
- Clear budget proposal, free of errors

Responsiveness to the RFQL and ability to deliver services – 15 Points maximum

- Proposals follows the required format specified in the RFQL
- Proposal is well written, complete, and addresses all requested information
- The proposal demonstrates a clear understanding of the goals and objectives of this RFQL and directly addresses the Texas Solar for All Coalition's strategic goals
- A complete, comprehensive, and effective response to the Category needs is provided
- Demonstrated ability to complete projects on schedule by securing the appropriate level of resources needed to conduct the requested services
- If applicable, identify collaborating entities and demonstrate their ability to work together effectively

Market awareness/insights – 10 Points maximum

The degree in which the proposer identifies:

- Challenges and/or barriers in the Category supported by research (e.g., white papers, articles, presentations)
- Similarities and differences between Texas and the market at large
- Opportunities or value propositions that can help the Texas Solar for All Coalition or HARC achieve success in the Category and advance its goals

Other considerations – 5 Points maximum

- Past experiences with contractor, notable position within the firm's industry, accomplishments on similar projects.
- Experience in or demonstrated ability to serve disadvantaged communities within Texas through their proposal, location, or commitment to hiring staff located in a disadvantaged community(s).
- Proposer is a Texas-certified Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) or a certified service-disabled veteran-owned business enterprise (SDVOB).
- Demonstrated specialized unique capability that is considered a priority to a specific application which cannot be predetermined. Therefore, contractors must articulate specialized capabilities (e.g., unique or exceptionally scarce qualifications or experience, specialized equipment, or facilities).

HARC may consider the following program policy factors in making selection decisions:

- Variety of selections, including multiple locations, and benefits to a variety of communities, including low-income and rural communities.
- The degree to which there is variety of technologies, approaches, methods and institutions

- The degree to which there are technical, market, organizational and/or environmental risks associated with the projects.
- The degree to which the applicant has the resources (human and financial) to be able to complete the project

V. General Conditions Proprietary Information

Careful consideration should be given before confidential information is submitted to HARC 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 Texas Freedom of Information Act provides for public access to information HARC possesses in certain circumstances. The law 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 HARC 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 exempt it from disclosure, including a written statement of the reasons why the information should be exempted. However, HARC cannot guarantee the confidentiality of any information submitted.

Disadvantaged Business Enterprises

It is the explicit intent of EPA to maximize opportunities for the participation of disadvantaged business enterprises as bidders, subcontractors, and suppliers.

Limitation

This solicitation does not commit HARC to award a contract, pay any costs incurred in preparing a proposal, or to procure or contract for services or supplies. HARC 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 HARC's best interest. HARC 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 (Attachment C). HARC reserves the right to disqualify proposers based upon the results of a background check into publicly available information and the presence of a material possibility of any reputational or legal risk in making selections.

Disclosure Requirement

Proposers must disclose if they are or have in the past five years been debarred or suspended by any agency of the U.S. Government. 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.

Vendor Assurance of No Conflict of Interest or Detrimental Effect

The proposer shall disclose any existing or contemplated relationship with any other person or entity, including any known relationships with any member, shareholders of 5% or more, parent, subsidiary, or affiliated firm, which would constitute an actual or potential conflict of interest or appearance of impropriety, relating to other clients/customers of the proposer or former officers and employees of member organizations participating in the Texas Solar for All Coalition, in connection with proposer's rendering services as proposed. If a conflict does or might exist, please describe how your company

would eliminate or prevent it. Indicate what procedures will be followed to detect, notify HARC of, and resolve any such conflicts.

VI. Attachments:

- Attachment A – Project Personnel and Rate Form
- Attachment B – Supporting Attachments (resumes, Letters of Commitment, references)
- Attachment C – Sample Agreement (includes Standard Terms)