



Request for Applications (RFA)

Community Wind Energy Project Technical Assistance

Date of Issue: 11/5/2014

Application Due Date: 5:00 PM Pacific Time, Monday December 22, 2014

Issued by: Northwest Sustainable Energy for Economic Development (Northwest SEED) on behalf of the Northwest Regional Wind Resource and Action Center

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REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

FOR COMMUNITY WIND ENERGY PROJECT TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

BACKGROUND

The Northwest Regional Wind Resource and Action Center (NW Wind Center) is one of six teams working under the US Department of Energy's WindEXCHANGE program, a nationwide effort to provide fact-based information regarding wind energy technologies. Northwest Sustainable Energy for Economic Development (Northwest SEED) is a lead partner in the NW Wind Center and is managing the Distributed and Community Wind Advisory Committee.

Founded in 2001, Northwest SEED (www.nwseed.org) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization with a mission to establish a clean, diverse, and affordable Northwest energy system based on the efficient use of renewable resources with maximum local control and community ownership of energy assets. Northwest SEED staff have over 10 years of experience offering technical knowledge and analysis paired with educational workshops, outreach, and support to ensure that any community that wants to harness the wind can make that a reality. Through the NW Wind Center, Northwest SEED is offering a limited amount of technical project development assistance at no cost to entities interested in developing a community-based wind energy project.

OPPORTUNITY/AWARD

Through this RFA process, Northwest SEED will select one Applicant to receive free technical assistance in the form of staff time and expertise. This is not a financial award. Applicants will work with Northwest SEED's staff to develop the most effective scope of work based on the specific needs of the Applicant and their proposed community wind project. Northwest SEED anticipates providing up to 80 hours of staff time between January and May 2015 through this award. Northwest SEED's technical assistance may include, but is not limited to:

- Researching project financing options or assisting with business planning
- Analysis of economic impact of proposed project on the local community
- Completing a preliminary wind resource assessment and energy production estimate
- Completing an initial project feasibility study or fatal flaw analysis
- Providing grant writing support to secure project funding
- Attending community meetings to provide unbiased technical information about the proposed project
- Assisting with procurement process and project management

While there is no match commitment (in terms of time or money) required by the Applicant, the level of commitment to participate will be considered in the selection process.

SUCCESSFUL APPLICANT COMMITMENT

Expectations of selected Applicants include:

- Appoint a primary point of contact to coordinate work with Northwest SEED
- Provide staff time to assist in the development of the scope of work and actively participate in the technical assistance delivery
- Schedule, organize, and lead community meetings or conference calls with local stakeholders, if appropriate

- Upon conclusion of the technical assistance, provide Northwest SEED with updates on the project development process, including sharing lessons learned, as needed.

ELIGIBILITY

Applicants serving communities in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming are encouraged to apply. Northwest SEED prefers that applicants represent established community groups, but will consider working with newly formed groups as well. Eligible projects are wind electric systems that are connected to the electric grid and that are majority-owned by local community members and/or provide direct and significant local economic benefit.

Eligible groups may include, but are not limited to:

- Grassroots community groups
- Landowner and property associations
- Local governments/agencies
- Non-profit organizations
- Native American Tribes
- Schools, school districts, and student-led or other groups from within these institutions
- Developers of community wind projects

Excluded from eligibility are:

- Individuals representing only themselves and/or family members

APPLICATION FORMAT AND EVALUATION CRITERIA

Please create applications in 8½" x 11" document size using a minimum 12 point font size. Applications shall not exceed 10 pages, including cover letter and any appendices and/or attachments.

I. Cover Letter (1 page maximum)

The cover letter shall include the following information:

- Project title
- Applicant organization
- Primary contact person
- Email and phone number

The cover letter must be signed by a representative having the authority to make decisions on behalf of the community group.

II. Application Narrative (3 pages maximum)

- A. Project Description.** Description of the proposed community wind project including the project scope, size, and location; current development status; budget and funding sources, if known; initial studies completed; and identification of the community to be served.
- B. Project Objectives.** Provide a concise description of primary project objectives and the project's estimated impact on the community.
- C. Project Partners.** List key team members and discuss their roles, responsibilities, and contributions to the project. Describe their relationship with the community, their time availability, and commitment level. Describe the local community's knowledge of and support for the proposed project, if applicable.

- D. Project Needs.** What are the key barriers to the project that you would like assistance addressing? What type of assistance are you expecting? Please be as specific as possible in describing your needs (e.g., PowerPoint presentations to stakeholders, research and analysis on certain barriers, expert testimony). How will the technical assistance you are requesting help you to overcome the key project barriers?
- E. Project Timeline.** Include an anticipated timeline for completion of project activities. Describe deadlines for any deliverables produced through our technical assistance.

III. Appendix

The Appendix may include any supporting information, such as resumes, studies completed to date, maps of the project area, or other information that will support the Applicant. If present, the Appendix is included in the maximum allowed length of 10 pages for the entire application.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Applications will be evaluated using the following criteria as a guide:

- Applicant's ability and readiness to accept and act on the provided technical assistance
- Level of community, local jurisdiction, and local utility support for the project
- Project feasibility, project visibility and potential for replication in other communities
- Potential project impact (number of people served and/or amount of electricity generated)
- Needs of the project relative to Northwest SEED expertise
- Applicant's ability to leverage other funds to support the project

APPLICATION SUBMITTAL PROCESS

Questions regarding this RFA should be submitted in writing to the RFA Point of Contact by December 1, 2014. Questions and answers will be posted on www.nwwindcenter.org. Applications must be delivered via email or mail to the RFA Point of Contact by 5:00pm Pacific Time on Monday December 22, 2014. Applicants will be notified of the award decision by January 31, 2015.

CONDITIONS AND RESERVATIONS

Northwest SEED is not obligated as a result of the submission of an Application to enter into a Contract with any Applicant, and have no financial obligation to any Applicant arising from this RFA. If selected, the Applicant will be expected to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Northwest SEED to confirm each organization's roles and responsibilities prior to work starting.

Northwest SEED reserves all rights regarding this RFA, including, without limitation, the right to:

- Amend, delay, suspend, or cancel the RFA without liability.
- Reject any or all Applications, in whole or in part;
- Waive any minor informality or non-conformance with the provisions or procedures of the RFA, and seek clarification of any Application, if required;
- Reject any Application that fails substantially to comply with all prescribed RFA requirements.