



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
STRATEGIC CONSULTING SERVICES
February 14, 2019

SECTION I. PROCUREMENT OBJECTIVE

1.1 Summary Statement

The purpose of this RFP is to select a consultant to provide the Maryland Clean Energy Center, an instrumentality of the State of Maryland ("MCEC") with market analysis and financial advice related to all aspects of MCEC's mission, with focus on the ability to generate revenue through implementation, development, and capitalization of current and potential new financing programs and use of its bond issuance capacity.

MCEC is also seeking to develop models for investment necessary to achieve desired outcomes, and identify methods for leveraging public sector investment to generate greater amounts of private capital into programmatic constructs.

The Maryland Clean Energy Center ("MCEC") is seeking proposals from qualified firms to provide strategic consulting services to assist MCEC to:

- Better understand the scale and scope of the market opportunities for clean energy and energy efficiency deployment with residential, commercial, institutional, and municipal consumers.
- Analyze the performance of MCEC's existing product suite, with a focus on market potential and projected uptake.
- Determine potential new financial products for deployment to address identified market opportunities.
- Identify potential sources of revenue to support MCEC operations and program offerings.
- Forecast the financial performance of MCEC under various operating scenarios to determine the timing and capital needs to achieve financial sustainability.
- Prepare and deliver an interim report to the MCEC Board of Directors; and a final report to the Governor and Maryland General Assembly.

MCEC is requesting proposals from responsible firms for work to include:

- (1) Value Proposition Assessment:** Qualify the value of and need for the MCEC in the marketplace relative to providing access to capital and facilitating investment, providing technical support and access to information, enabling commercialization of related new technology, and facilitating collaboration and access to markets for business development.
- (2) Sector Demand Analysis:** Quantify both the scale and scope of market opportunities for clean energy and energy efficiency deployment with residential, commercial, institutional, and municipal customers, and the size of investments necessary to impact those markets.
- (3) Financial Product Suite Development:** Analyze the performance of MCEC's existing product suite with regard to market potential and projected uptake, and analyze the opportunity to develop a suite of products and initiatives for future implementation, with a focus on potential for revenue generation as well as addressing market demand and gaps in financing solutions currently available in the market.
- (4) Potential Revenue Analysis:** Analyze potential sources of capital for and from financial transactions, fees, grants and partnerships to sustain MCEC operations and programs. Recommend options for MCEC to support existing program offerings and the deployment of identified new programs.
- (5) Integrated Financial Projection Model:** Develop an Excel based model that forecasts the financial performance of MCEC over 10 years, with the ability to change assumptions in projected revenue, operating and staff expenses, and program deployment in relation to requirements to achieve financial sustainability.
- (6) Report & Presentation:** Prepare and assist with the delivery of a related interim report to the MCEC Board of Directors by November 1, 2019; and a final report to the Governor and Maryland General Assembly by December 1, 2019.

1.2 Issuing Office; Procurement Officer

Maryland Clean Energy Center
1212 West Street
Suite 200
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
Procurement Officer: Pamela Powers, Administrator

Phone: (443)-949-8505

E-mail: admin@mdcleanenergy.org

The sole point of contact for purposes of this procurement is the Procurement Officer. The Procurement Officer may designate others to act on her behalf. The MCEC Executive Director may change the Procurement Officer or change the limits of her authority at her discretion.

1.3 Schedule of Events

Event	Date
RFP Release Date	February 15, 2019
Deadline for Receipt of Questions	March 1, 2019
Proposal Due Date	March 8, 2019
Tentative Date of Contract Award	March 25, 2019

1.4 Pre-proposal Conference

A pre-proposal conference will not be held.

1.5 Questions and Inquiries

All questions and inquiries should be directed to the Procurement Officer identified in Section 1.2 above. Questions must be submitted in writing by mail or email and received by the Procurement Officer before 4:00 p.m. (EST) on March 1, 2019. Oral questions will not be accepted. If a question or inquiry pertains to a specific section of the RFP, the page and section number(s) must be referenced.

1.6 Submission Deadline

To be considered, a signed original and 5 copies of each proposal must arrive at the Issuing Office by 3:00 p.m. (EST) on March 8, 2019, in order to be considered. Requests for an extension of this date or time will not be granted. Offerors mailing proposals should allow sufficient mail and internal delivery time to ensure timely receipt at the Issuing Office. Proposals or unsolicited amendments to proposals arriving after the closing date and time will not be considered. Proposals submitted by electronic means will not be accepted.

1.7 Duration of Offer

Proposals submitted in response to this solicitation are irrevocable for 120 days following the closing date. This period may be extended at the Procurement Officer's request only by an Offeror's written agreement.

1.8 Electronic Distribution

This RFP is available for distribution by email. Potential Offerors wishing to receive copies of the written document should contact the Procurement Officer.

SECTION II. GENERAL INFORMATION

2.1 Purpose

The overall purpose of this RFP is to provide information to Offerors interested in preparing and submitting proposals to meet MCEC's requirements for a consultant.

2.2 Revisions to the RFP

MCEC reserves the right to amend this RFP at any time prior to the proposal due date and time. If it becomes necessary to revise this RFP, amendments will be provided to all prospective Offerors that were sent this RFP or are otherwise known by the Procurement Officer to have obtained this RFP. Acknowledgment of the receipt of all amendments will be required.

2.3 Cancellation of the RFP; Rejection of All Proposals

MCEC may cancel this RFP, in whole or in part, or may reject all proposals submitted in response, whenever this action is determined to be fiscally advantageous to MCEC or otherwise in the State's best interests.

2.4 Proposal Acceptance; Discussions

MCEC reserves the right to accept or reject any proposals, in whole or in part, received in response to this RFP, to waive or permit cure of minor irregularities, and to conduct discussions with all qualified Offerors in any manner necessary to serve the best interests of MCEC. MCEC also reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to award a Contract based upon the written proposals received without prior discussions or negotiations.

2.5 Interviews/Oral Presentation

MCEC will conduct interviews with qualifying Offerors. In addition, in support of their proposals, Offerors may be required to make an oral presentation. Interviews and oral presentations must be conducted within two calendar weeks after MCEC has requested an Offeror to do so. Failure to meet with MCEC for an interview or to make an oral presentation within this time period may prevent the Offeror's proposal from receiving further consideration. The main point of contact proposed in the Offeror's proposal must be present during these interviews.

2.6 Incurred Expenses

MCEC will not be responsible for any costs incurred by an Offeror in preparing and submitting a proposal in response to this RFP.

2.7 Proposal Form

Proposals should be prepared simply and economically, providing a straightforward, concise description of the Offeror's proposal for meeting the requirements of this procurement. Oral, telegraphic, mailgram, facsimile, or electronically transmitted proposals will not be accepted.

2.8 Multiple Proposals

Multiple and Alternate proposals will not be acceptable.

2.9 Access to Public Records Act Notice

An Offeror should give specific attention to the identification of those portions of its proposal that it considers confidential, proprietary commercial information or trade secrets, and provide justification why such materials, upon request, should not be disclosed by MCEC under the Access to Public Records Act, General Provisions Article, Title 3, Annotated Code of Maryland. Careful consideration should be given before confidential information is submitted to MCEC 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.

2.10 Proposal Opening

Proposals will not be opened publicly. When the contract is awarded, those portions of the proposal available under Maryland laws regarding access to public information will be made available upon written request to the Procurement Officer.

2.11 Compliance with Law

By submitting an offer in response to this RFP, the Offeror, if selected for award, agrees that it will comply with all federal, State, and local laws, regulations, and rules applicable to its activities and obligations under the Contract.

2.12 Arrearages

By submitting an offer in response to this RFP, the Offeror shall be deemed to represent that it is not in arrears in the payment of any obligation due and owing the State of Maryland or any department or unit thereof, including the payment of taxes and employee benefits, and if selected for award, that it shall not become in arrears during the term of the Contract.

2.13 Acceptance of Terms and Conditions

By submitting an offer in response to this RFP, an Offeror shall be deemed to have accepted all the terms, conditions, and requirements set forth in this RFP unless otherwise clearly noted and explained in its proposal.

2.14 Bid/Proposal Affidavit

A completed Bid/Proposal Affidavit must accompany all proposals submitted by an Offeror. A copy of this affidavit is included as Appendix 2 attached to this RFP.

2.15 Contract Affidavit

All Offerors are advised that if a contract is awarded as a result of this solicitation, the successful Offeror will be required to complete a Contract Affidavit. A copy of this affidavit is included for informational purposes as Appendix 3 attached to this RFP. This affidavit need not be submitted with an Offeror's proposal.

2.16 Order of Precedence

The contract between the parties will be embodied in the contract documents which will consist of the following, listed in their order of precedence:

1. The contract and contract modifications executed by both parties;
2. This RFP; and
3. Contractor's proposal.

Modifications of the order of precedence provision of this solicitation will not be accepted. If any terms and conditions inconsistent with requirements of the solicitation are proposed, those terms and conditions must be stated in the proposal.

2.17 Contract Award

MCEC anticipates making one award under this solicitation, but is not precluded from selecting a second firm if it is in the best interest of MCEC to do so. It may award a contract based on initial applications without discussion, or following limited discussion, negotiations, or interviews. Each offer should be submitted using the most favorable cost and technical terms. MCEC may request additional data or

material to support applications. MCEC expects to notify proposers in approximately thirty (30) days from the proposal due date whether your proposal has been selected to receive an award.

2.18 RFP Modifications

MCEC also reserves the right to correct any arithmetic errors, to change the final due date and time for the proposals, to accept or reject any of the firm's employees assigned to provide services on this project, and to require their replacement at any time, and to reject any proposal containing false or misleading statements or that provides references that do not support an attribute or a condition claimed by the proposer.

2.19 Limitation

This solicitation does not commit MCEC to award a contract, pay any costs incurred in preparing a proposal, or to procure or contract for services or supplies. MCEC 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 MCEC's best interest.

2.20 Performance of Services

The Offeror shall perform the services within the limits prescribed by MCEC in a manner consistent with that level of care and skill ordinarily exercised by other independent public financial advisors under similar circumstances at the time the services are performed.

2.21 Term

A contract to be awarded pursuant to the RFP shall begin on the date that the contract for this RFP is signed by both parties and continue for a period of 9 (nine) months, with a month to month renewable option exercisable at the sole discretion of MCEC.

SECTION III. SCOPE OF SERVICES AND REQUIREMENTS

3.1 Background

MCEC is a public corporation and an instrumentality of the State of Maryland that has been authorized to: 1) Promote economic development and jobs in the clean energy industry sector in the State; 2) Promote the deployment of clean energy technology in the State; 3) Serve as an incubator for the development of clean energy industry in the State; 4) Collect, analyze, and disseminate industry data; and, 5) Provide outreach and technical support to further the clean energy industry in the State. MCEC's program priorities range from providing clean energy initiative funding, technology commercialization and business incubation, and workforce development and training.

MCEC is governed by a Board of Directors that consists of 9 individuals that bring a wide range of perspective and experience to MCEC’s operations. MCEC employs a small staff and the Attorney General’s Office provides legal services to the organization.

The purpose of this RFP is to select a consultant to provide MCEC with market analysis and financial advice related to all aspects of MCEC’s mission with focus on the ability to generate revenue through implementation, development, and capitalization of current and potential new financing programs and use of its bond issuance capacity. MCEC is also seeking to understand the investment needed to achieve desired outcomes, and how a public sector investment could be leveraged to generate greater amounts of private capital into programmatic constructs. MCEC is undertaking this work in response to the following statutory mandate:

“Maryland Clean Energy Center **shall establish a work plan to become self-sustaining** within 5 years after the effective date of this Act using funding provided under this Act and other funding that the Center may obtain, and projected revenues from project financing activities of the Center under Title 10, Subtitle 8 of the Economic Development Article.”

The law directs MCEC to: “**submit a report, which may be part of its annual report, on or before December 1, 2019**, to the Governor and, in accordance with § 2–1246 of the State Government Article, the General Assembly on the Center’s:

- 1) progress since enactment of this Act to become self-sustaining with its current activities and funding and revenue levels; and
- 2) recommendations for changes, including additional necessary funding, to continue on the trajectory path to reach the goal to become self-sustaining within 5 years.

3.2 Required Services

MCEC is requesting proposals from responsible firms to act as a Strategic Consultant to provide the following:

- A. Value Proposition Assessment:** Determine the value of and need for the MCEC in the marketplace relative to providing access to capital and facilitating investment, providing technical support and access to information, enabling commercialization of related new technology, and facilitating collaboration and access to markets for business development.
- B. Sector Demand Analysis:** Quantify the scale and scope of market opportunities for clean energy and energy efficiency deployment with residential, commercial, institutional and municipal customers, and what investment might be necessary to impact those markets.
- C. Financial Product Suite Development:** Analyze the performance of MCEC’s existing product suite with regard to market potential and projected uptake, and analyze the opportunity to develop a suite of products and initiatives for future implementation, with a focus on potential for revenue generation as well as addressing market demand and gaps in financing solutions currently available in the market.
- D. Potential Revenue Analysis:** Analyze potential sources of capital for and from financial transactions, fees, grants and partnerships to sustain MCEC operations and programs. Recommend

options for MCEC to pursue to support existing program offerings and the deployment of new program offerings identified.

E. Integrated Financial Projection Model: Develop an Excel based model that forecasts the financial performance of MCEC over 10 years, with the ability to change assumptions in projected revenue, operating and staff expenses, and program deployment in relation to requirements to achieve financial sustainability.

F. Report & Presentation: Prepare and assist with the delivery of a related interim report to the MCEC Board of Directors by November 1, 2019; and a final report to the Maryland General Assembly due by December 1, 2019.

IV. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Proposals must be submitted in two parts as set forth in Sections 5.3 and 5.4 below. Each part must be complete, so that it can be evaluated independently.

A proposal should not be excessively long or submitted in an elaborate format that includes expensive binders or graphics. The Technical Proposal (See Section 5.3 below) should be limited to not more than fifteen (15) pages, plus attachments. 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 and the page number.

4.1 Management and Qualifications

A. Describe your organizational structure.

B. Briefly discuss your firm's overall experience, including experience with public and private financial markets. In addition, please provide information on the types of businesses (i.e., investment banking, investment services) your firm is involved in, indicate the number of clients your firm serves, the dollar amounts associated with these services, and the percentage of staff dedicated to the various types of businesses.

C. Describe any technical knowledge or related expertise which may be of benefit to MCEC. Provide a project organization and management description that describes the unique capabilities of your firm and the individuals assigned as consultants related to the proposed Scope of Work.

D. Provide the names of personnel in the firm who will be assigned to MCEC's account and their experience in performing services similar to those requested in this RFP. Include resumes for all employees proposed to be involved on MCEC's account. Include a description of each employee's function in the company, title, office address, and number of years of service with the firm and other relevant past experience. Describe the availability of the lead person(s) for consultation with MCEC, including his or her ability to meet with MCEC staff in College Park Maryland. (Resumes may be included as an appendix.)

E. Describe your firm's experience and expertise working with public entities and local municipalities, particularly agencies, authorities, and instrumentalities of the State of Maryland.

- F. Briefly describe the services you expect to provide to MCEC. Indicate whether your firm is prepared to render the services enumerated in this RFP using its own resources. Discuss the approach your firm would take to meet the requirements of this RFP, including: a specific time line of milestones for measurable outcomes; expectations for MCEC staff, stakeholder engagement, and plans for graphic presentation in delivery of reports.
- G. Describe any experience in advising on legislation at the State or local level relating to the energy efficiency and renewable energy sectors.
- H. Discuss fully any conflicts of interest, actual or perceived, which might arise in connection with your firm's involvement with MCEC. If conflicts do or might exist, describe how your firm would resolve them.
- I. Identify any litigation or administrative proceedings to which you are a party and which would either materially impair your ability to perform the services enumerated herein and for which this RFP was issued or, if decided in an adverse manner, materially adversely affect the financial condition of your firm.
- J. Identify the employees discussed in Section 4.1.D that have been the subject of any investigation or disciplinary action by any Maryland ethical or regulatory authority. Describe briefly how any matter was resolved or whether it remains unresolved.
- K. Identify if your firm or any employee has ever been disbarred or suspended by any agency of the U.S. Government or the State of Maryland.
- L. Indicate if your firm is a minority business enterprise and provide the appropriate certification. If your firm is not a minority business enterprise, please furnish information on the number and percentages of minorities and women among the employees of the firm; a copy of the firm's affirmative action or equal opportunity plan or other commitment to affirmative action and equal employment opportunity; and an explanation of how your firm, if selected, would help MCEC further its policy of promoting participation of minorities and women in the provision of services to it, including services in support of its financing program.
- M. Indicate the address of the office through which MCEC's account will be primarily serviced, and any anticipated travel or other such costs.
- N. Provide three client references. The list must include references related to projects: (i) On which the proposed principal consultant played a lead role; and (ii) For which the services provided were similar to the services expected to be provided under this RFP. MCEC reserves the right to contact any previous client whether or not provided as a reference.
- O. Provide any other information that you believe would make your firm's representation of MCEC superior to other firms' representation, including descriptions of your firm's role in recommending innovative or unique ideas or concepts.

4.2 Cost

A. Offeror shall provide the hourly rates for no more than four classes of personnel: principal, professional, para-professional, and staff. The rates will include all expenses except for out-of-pocket travel expenses and express mail or other delivery charges incurred at the direction of the Procurement Officer. Fees will be applicable for the term of the contract between MCEC and the winning Offeror, and all extensions of the contract.

B. State any special considerations with respect to billing or payment of fees and expenses that your firm offers and that you believe would differentiate you from other proposers and make your firm's services as financial advisor more cost effective for MCEC.

SECTION V. PROPOSAL FORMAT

5.1 Transmittal Letter

A brief transmittal letter prepared on the Offeror's business stationery should accompany the original and required copies of the two-part proposal. The letter must be signed by an individual authorized to bind the Offeror to all statements, including services and prices, contained in the proposal. The transmittal letter should also indicate that, if selected, the Offeror will execute a contract with MCEC.

5.2 Two -Part Submission

The selection procedure for this procurement requires that the initial technical evaluation(s) of each portion of the proposal be completed before consideration of an Offeror's pricing proposal. Consequently, each proposal must be submitted in two parts as indicated below.

5.3 Part I - Technical Proposal

This part shall be labeled "Financial Advisor for MCEC - Technical." This part shall contain a completed proposal affidavit (Appendix 2). It should be prepared in a clear and concise manner, be no more than 15 pages in length (excluding appendices), and should address all of the subsections of Section 4.1 above. In addition, this part should contain:

- (a) Name of firm.
- (b) Mailing address of the office from which the proposal is being submitted.
- (c) Name of individual who will represent firm as primary contact person on matters relating to the proposal.
- (d) Telephone number, fax number, and E-mail address, if applicable.

5.4 Part II - Pricing Proposal

This part shall be labeled "Strategic Consultant for MCEC - Price." Offeror shall provide the hourly rates for no more than four classes of personnel: principal, professional, para-professional, and staff. The rates will include all expenses, except for out-of-pocket travel expenses and express mail or other delivery charges incurred at the direction of the Procurement Officer.

As part of a pricing proposal, Offeror shall define a timeline for deliverables and a schedule of payments associated with the completion of deliverables described in the timeline.

VI. PROPOSAL EVALUATION

Proposals meeting the RFP requirements will be evaluated as follows:

A selection committee consisting of internal MCEC staff, Counsel and select Board Members will review the Technical Proposals to determine if they each meet the requirements of this RFP.

Following this initial review, the selection committee will review all Price Proposals.

Following this review, MCEC may develop a short list of Offerors who will be eligible for further consideration and will be asked to interview with and/or make oral presentations to the selection committee as set forth in Section 2.5 above.

Following any presentations or, if the selection committee believes that it has sufficient information based upon its review of the Proposals without presentations, the selection committee will recommend an Offeror to the MCEC Board of Directors for approval.

The selection committee's recommendation, and any final Board approval, will be based upon the determination of the selection committee and the Board, in their sole judgment, as to which Proposal would provide MCEC with the most advantageous and comprehensive combination of technical expertise, reputation, and price, while also assessing the minority business enterprise goals of MCEC.

Appendices

Appendix 1	Form of Contract
Appendix 2	Bid/Proposal Affidavit
Appendix 3	Contract Affidavit