



REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

Using Private and Public Funds
to Leverage Federal Loans for
Clean Energy in Maryland

ISSUED BY: Maryland Clean Energy Center
5000 College Avenue, Suite 31010
College Park, MD 20740

RELEASE DATE: Friday, February 23, 2024

**PRE-SUBMITTAL
CONFERENCE:** Tuesday, March 5, 2024, at 9:00 AM

QUESTIONS DUE: Friday, March 29, 2024

DUE DATE: Monday, April 15, 2024

**PROCUREMENT
OFFICER:** Ben Rupert, Director of Procurement
Maryland Clean Energy Center
Email: brupert@mdcleanenergy.org
Phone: (301) 314-6061

DIRECT INQUIRIES TO: Procurement Officer

Respondents are cautioned not to make changes to any of the terms and conditions in this Request for Information (RFI). Doing so may render a Respondent's Response unacceptable and subject to rejection. Questions and inquiries may be addressed as outlined in Section 6 of this RFI. Any exceptions to MCEC's terms and conditions are not binding unless they are negotiated and affirmatively deemed mutually agreeable by the Respondent and MCEC. MCEC is not required to negotiate changes to its terms and conditions.



1. Introduction

MCEC

The Maryland Clean Energy Center (MCEC) is a green bank and corporate instrumentality of the State of Maryland that advances the adoption of clean energy and energy efficiency products, services, and technologies. MCEC leverages private capital to help homeowners, businesses, and government entities reduce energy costs.

The Maryland Department of Environment (MDE) has a mission to protect and restore the environment for the health and well-being of all Marylanders by managing air, water, and land resources. In support of this mission and as required by the Maryland Climate Solutions Now Act, MDE released Maryland's Climate Pollution Reduction Plan in December of 2023. The plan outlines key strategies and investments aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions 60% from 2006 levels by 2031 and keeping the state on track to achieve net zero emissions by 2045. The investment, incentives, and programs of additional partner agencies may also be leveraged to achieve related outcomes, including enhancing support for clean energy projects and related activities benefiting low-to-moderate income (LMI) Marylanders. Partner agencies include the Maryland Energy Administration, the Maryland Department of Housing & Community Development, the Maryland Department of Labor, and the Maryland Department of Transportation.

In addition, MCEC and the Clients we support have established policy mandates and developed aligned and, in many instances, more aggressive goals to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the near term. These goals and mandates will be challenging to achieve, and it is critical that MCEC and state agency partners add private project development resources in order to meet them. MCEC financing and funding capabilities per statute, including the availability of Climate Catalytic Capital (C3) Fund resources, may also be considered in proposed investment strategies.

Through this Request for Information (RFI), MCEC seeks to gather information regarding the potential use of State funds to implement the priorities outlined in [Maryland's Climate Solutions Now Act](#) and associated [Climate Pollution Reduction Plan](#), the [Clean Energy Jobs Act](#) and [Clean Energy Future](#) package (collectively, "Clean Energy Laws"), and leverage federal financing from the [U.S. Department of Energy's \(DOE\) Loan Programs Office \(LPO\)](#).

2. Instructions

The purpose of this Request for Information (RFI) is to solicit initial feedback on the potential use of private and public funds to implement the priorities outlined in the Clean Energy Laws and leverage federal financing from the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Loan Programs Office (LPO).

Responses to the following are requested of the vendor:



A: A Potential Maryland Financing Program for Clean Energy Deployment

1. Is there a need for Maryland to use private and public funds to leverage DOE LPO financing for projects that implement Maryland’s Climate Pollution Reduction Plan and other clean energy regulations and initiatives? Please explain why or why not.
2. What are the most important design features needed for a successful State of Maryland program to help large clean energy and/or decarbonization projects secure a loan from the federal government or provide a guarantee for a loan from a private lender?
3. What are the reasons you would choose not to apply for a federal loan or loan guarantee?
4. What are the key considerations in developing a State of Maryland program that will help meet the goals of Maryland’s Climate Pollution Reduction Plan and other clean energy regulations and initiatives?
5. What should be the primary focus of a potential Maryland program? Should State of Maryland funds be used to accelerate implementation, to address financing market gaps, or something else?
6. What types of clean energy, technologies, and projects should be the focus of Maryland investments to achieve greenhouse gas reduction?
7. What financial hurdles prevent faster clean energy deployment today? If none, would the State of Maryland financing crowd out existing private financing options?
8. What are the challenges that currently exist for investment in research and development of clean energy technologies and manufacturers seeking access to capital to fund diversification and retooling opportunities, and how could those challenges be addressed through programmatic investments? What issues or challenges would necessarily need to be addressed in using DOE LPO Program capabilities to support proposed programs and investments?
9. What form should the State’s “meaningful contribution” take (e.g., grant, loan, loan loss reserve, equity, other)? Which type of financing is needed to reach the state’s clean energy deployment goals faster and why?
10. How can private and public funds best leverage private funding for clean energy projects in Maryland?
11. What parameters should the State put around the use of proceeds generated through a potential State of Maryland program or investment?
12. How should MCEC collaborate with other entities in the state and/or the region, including but not limited to tribes, municipalities, and/or community-based organizations, to coordinate planning and action in its use of State of Maryland funds?



Where questions are not specific to a program or opportunity, respondents may broadly comment on the State of Maryland's potential use of funds to leverage DOE LPO financing for projects that implement Maryland's Climate Pollution Reduction Plan and other clean energy regulations and initiatives, and on considerations for program design.

B: Projects a Potential State of Maryland Program Could Support

1. What potential projects are being or could be planned in Maryland that would benefit from State and DOE LPO financing and why?
2. What size are projects that are planned (or already underway) in Maryland that might be suitable for State and DOE LPO financing?
3. How could projects receiving State and DOE LPO resources help support workers in the pursuit of the deployment of goals specified in Maryland's Climate Pollution Reduction Plan and other clean energy regulations and initiatives?
4. How could projects receiving State and DOE LPO resources help support the White House Environmental Justice Interagency Council's Justice40 (J40) goal to deliver 40% of the overall benefits from certain federally supported climate and clean energy programs to disadvantaged communities?
5. How could projects receiving State and DOE LPO resources help support economic development across the state?
6. Do you have a specific project in the State of Maryland that you would like considered for support, and/or DOE LPO investment? * If yes, please describe below and indicate your willingness to connect with a State of Maryland team member to discuss further. You may also upload supporting information via the RFI response form.

***NOTE:** Potential projects must be evaluated by the U.S. Department of Energy Loan Programs Office in order to determine whether or not they meet the criteria for LPO financing. All interested parties are encouraged to review the LPO's [Program Guidance for Title 17 Clean Energy Financing Program](#), included as Appendix 1.

Where questions are not specific to a program or opportunity, respondents may broadly comment on the types of projects a Maryland [State Energy Financing Institution \(SEFI\)](#) could support in order to leverage DOE LPO financing for implementation.

Additional Feedback: In addition to sections A and B above, we invite Respondents to raise and suggest solutions/priorities to any other potential limitations/barriers that the State of Maryland should assess in its consideration of the creation of a State program to leverage DOE LPO financing.



3. Response Instructions

Responses must be received by no later than **5:00 PM EST Monday, April 15, 2024**. Respondents must enter responses using the online form located here: [MCEC RFI: Response Form](#). If you have difficulty with the form and/or would like to submit responses in an alternate format, please email Imingo@mdcleanenergy.org. Any response received after the submission deadline, no matter what the reason, will be deemed unacceptable. Responses or unsolicited amendments to responses arriving after the closing date and time will not be considered.

4. Statement of Confidentiality

It is understood and agreed that all information pertinent to this solicitation may contain trade secrets, which are confidential and proprietary. The selected vendor agrees not to disclose or knowingly use any confidential or proprietary information of MCEC and/or third-party participants.

Responses are subject to the Maryland Public Information Act (General Provisions Article, Maryland Annotated Code, § 4-101, et seq.). In accordance with the Act, certain information is subject to public disclosure. Please be advised that should you deem any portion of your response as confidential or proprietary, it must be conspicuously indicated on those portions so deemed. However, and in accordance with the Act, you are hereby notified that every portion may still be subject to disclosure under the Act.

5. Pre-submittal Conference

An information meeting will be held via Zoom on **Tuesday, March 5, 2024, at 9:00 AM**. To register, click here: [Pre-Submittal Conference Registration](#)

6. Questions and Inquiries

All questions and inquiries should be directed to the Procurement Officer identified in Section 7 below. Questions must be submitted in writing by mail or email and received by the Procurement Officer before **5:00 PM EST Friday, March 29, 2024**. Oral questions will not be accepted. If a question or inquiry pertains to a specific section of the RFI, the page and section(s) must be referenced.

7. Issuing Office; Procurement Officer

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

8. Appendices

Appendix 1: [US DOE LPO: Program Guidance for Title 17 Clean Energy Financing Program](#)