

“Survey Data Collection Contractor”
Request for Proposal (RFP) 2324
Up to \$3.5 million Available

Proposals Due: November 29, 2011 by 5:00 PM Eastern Time*

The New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) requests proposals from organizations or individuals interested in conducting survey data collection to support NYSEDA's energy program evaluation team across the broad range of program offerings. In recent years, NYSEDA's evaluation activities have expanded to meet the distinct reporting requirements of the System Benefits Charge (SBC)/**New York Energy \$martSM** Program, Energy Efficiency Portfolio Standard (EEPS), Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), Green Jobs –Green New York (GJGNY), Statutory Research and Development and other program portfolios. To address the evaluation needs of these portfolios, this RFP requests the services of a single contractor, or a lead contractor with a qualified team of subcontractors, to assist NYSEDA program evaluation staff and evaluation contractors in the following areas: (1) design and develop surveys, questionnaires, interview guides, and other forms of data collection; (2) develop and implement strategies to select appropriate samples; (3) pilot test data collection instruments to ensure maximum effectiveness; (4) administer data collection instruments; (5) provide cleaned, coded and analysis-ready data to NYSEDA and its evaluation contractors; (6) prepare a methodology report for each project; and (7) maintain NYSEDA's survey data warehouse to provide evaluation data access to NYSEDA and evaluation contractor staffs.

Proposal Submission: Proposers must submit ten (10) copies of the proposal with a completed and signed Proposal Checklist attached to the front of each copy, one of which must contain an original signature. Please also submit an electronic version of the proposal. Proposals must be clearly labeled and submitted to:

Roseanne Viscusi, RFP 2324
NYS Energy Research and Development Authority
17 Columbia Circle
Albany, NY 12203-6399

If you have technical questions concerning this solicitation, contact Todd French at (518) 862-1090, ext. 3212 or gtf@nyserda.org. If you have contractual questions concerning this solicitation, contact Elsyda Ahmed at (518) 862-1090, ext. 3232 or ela@nyserda.org

NYSERDA expects to make available up to \$3.5 million for up to six years of activity. The total funding will support up to \$1.92 million for an initial two-year period, with two possible two-year renewals at up to \$1.58 million in total (across four years).

No communication intended to influence this procurement is permitted except by contacting Todd French (Designated Contact) at (518) 862-1090, ext. 3212 or gtf@nyserda.org. Contacting anyone other than this Designated Contact (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) may result in the proposer not being awarded a contract.

*Late proposals and proposals lacking the appropriate completed and signed Proposal Checklist may be returned. Faxed or e-mailed proposals will not be accepted. Proposals will not be accepted at any other NYSEDA location other than the address above. If changes are made to this solicitation, notification will be posted on NYSEDA's web site at www.nyserda.org.

I. Introduction

NYSERDA has been responsible for conducting evaluation of the System Benefits Charge (SBC) program since 1998 and, over the past thirteen years, has established a highly efficient and effective evaluation process to meet expanding needs. NYSERDA aims to achieve credible evaluations that conform to industry standards and best practices, meet acceptable sampling precision levels while reducing bias, and are transparent in terms of reporting program performance and identifying the methods and approaches used to conduct those analyses. NYSERDA and its evaluation contractors follow the American Evaluation Association's *Guiding Principles for Evaluators*, which calls for systematic inquiry, competence, integrity and honesty, respect for people, and responsibility for general and public welfare.¹

Since NYSERDA was first directed to evaluate the SBC programs more than a decade ago,² internal staff within its Energy Analysis unit have been assigned to conduct analyses and manage external contractor activities related to the evaluation effort. Within NYSERDA, the Energy Analysis unit is organizationally separate from other units whose staffs perform project and program management functions related to implementation and administration of the programs.

NYSERDA has a long history of working closely with expert, independent contractors to conduct evaluations of its programs. NYSERDA has relied upon its evaluation contractors to measure and verify program savings; establish attribution, including assessing free-ridership and spillover/market effects; evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of program processes; develop program theory and logic models; and conduct market characterization and assessment studies. NYSERDA's evaluation planning process has ensured that the most important and significant metrics have been closely and regularly examined by these independent consultants. Use of independent, external consultants with a reputation for credible, high-quality, and unbiased work has served decision makers and stakeholders well and is expected to continue.

Figure 1 depicts how NYSERDA's evaluation contractor responsibilities will be configured going forward to accomplish these activities for a growing slate of programs. For details on NYSERDA's program areas, please refer to the sources listed in Table 1.

As the magnitude of NYSERDA's evaluation activities continues to expand to meet the myriad, yet distinct, reporting requirements for NYSERDA's various program portfolios, the current evaluation structure used by the Energy Analysis unit is being modified and work is being divided into the following five categories as depicted in Figure 1: (1) General Evaluation Assistance, (2) Impact Evaluation, (3) Process/Market Evaluation, (4) Survey Implementation, and (5) Economic and Environmental Impacts. The topic of this RFP is Survey Data Collection. NYSERDA intends to separately procure contractor services in the areas of Impact Evaluation and Process/Market Evaluation. Contractors for the remaining areas have recently been procured through separate competitive processes.

As depicted in Figure 1, the Survey Data Collection Contractor, henceforth called the "Survey Contractor" is expected to serve survey research needs across the various evaluation categories. Thus, as deemed appropriate by NYSERDA and its other evaluation contractors, the Survey Contractor may be used to field telephone or other surveys designed to support impact, process, market or other evaluation

¹ American Evaluation Association (AEA), *Guiding Principles for Evaluators*, www.eval.org. See source for a full explanation of these guiding principles.

² State of New York Public Service Commission, Opinion No. 98-3, Case 94-E-0952, In the Matter of Competitive Opportunities Regarding Electric Service, Opinion and Order Concerning System Benefits Charge Issues, Issued and Effective January 30, 1998.

studies. The separate budget allocated to the Survey Contractor shall be used to fund any surveys this contractor conducts to support projects undertaken by NYSERDA's other evaluation contractors. It is expected that the Survey Contractor will deliver, as a result of such efforts, cleaned and coded data files for analysis by NYSERDA or its other evaluation contractors for inclusion in evaluation reports.

As shown in Figure 2, all of the evaluation contractors report directly to NYSERDA evaluation project managers. The General Evaluation Assistance contractor and Survey Contractor assist NYSERDA with cross cutting work supporting all evaluation areas, whereas the other three contractors focus on their evaluation specialty area (e.g., impact evaluation) but are expected to work together to coordinate their work for the overall benefit of NYSERDA's evaluation effort.

Figure 1. NYSERDA's Evaluation Contractor Responsibilities

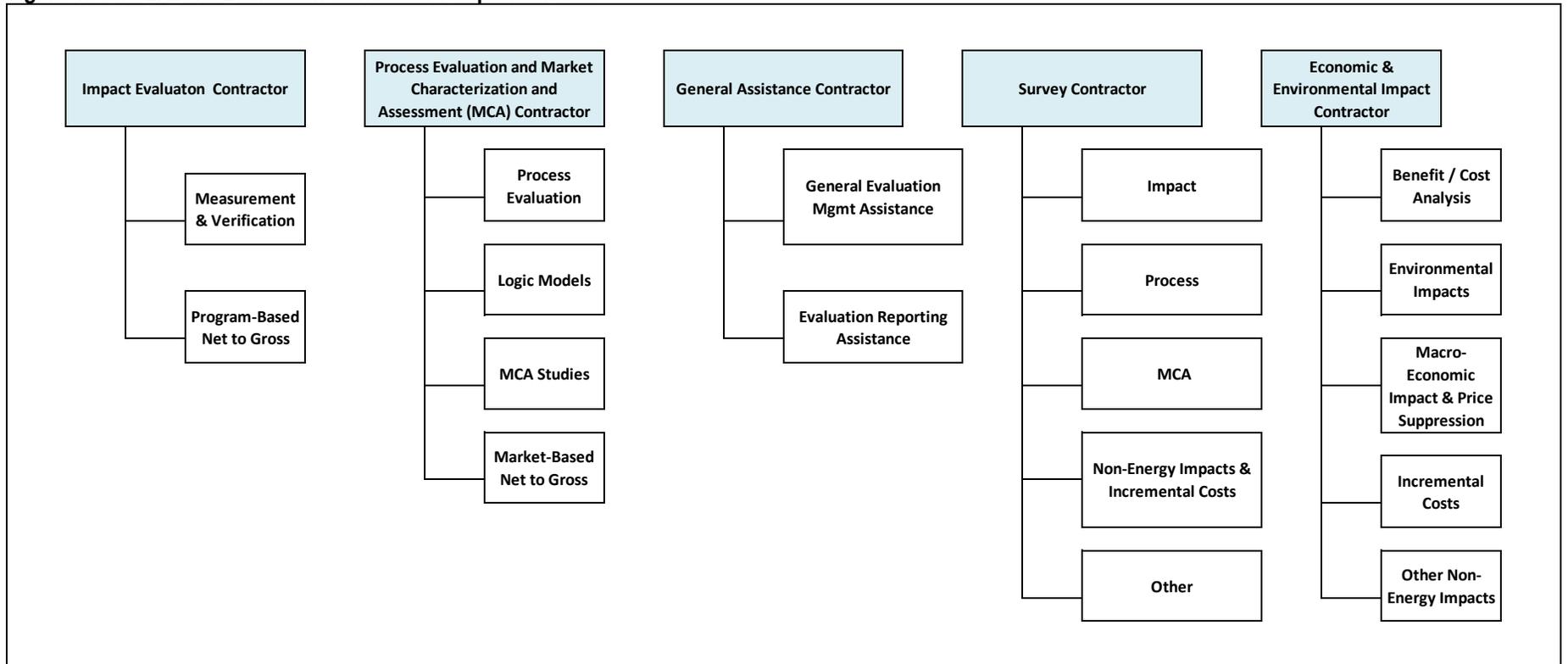
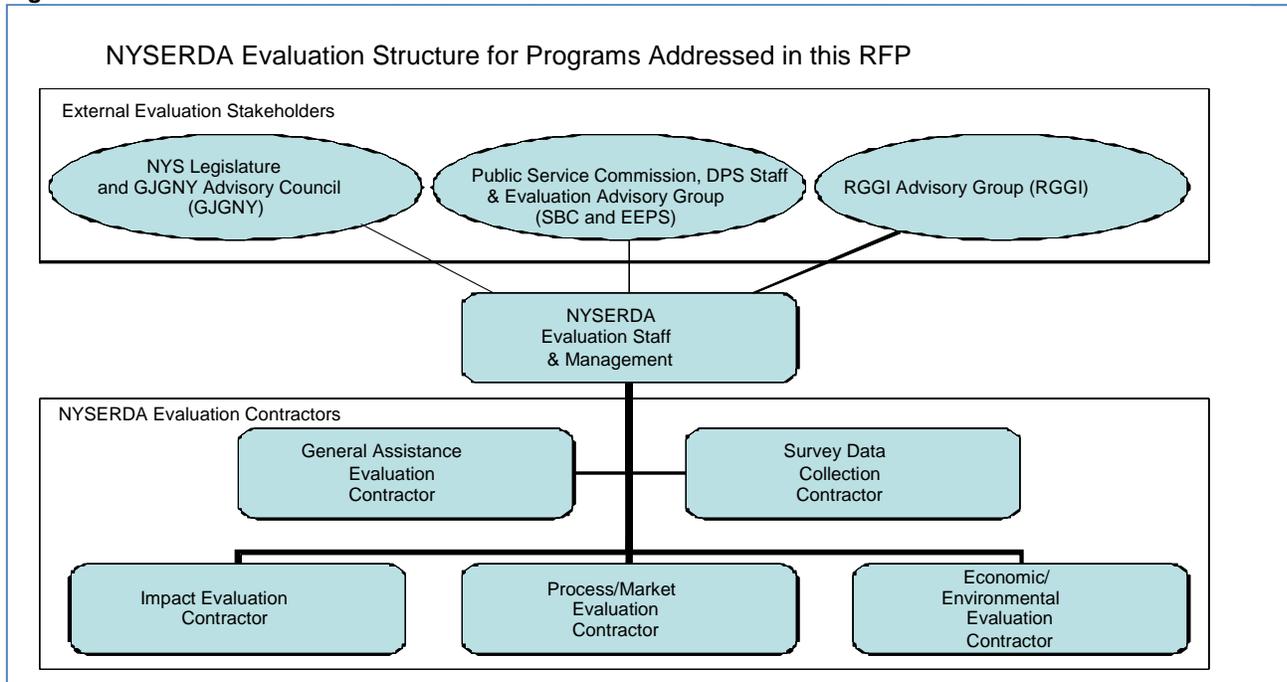


Figure 2. NYSERDA’s Evaluation Structure – Contractor Roles and External Stakeholders



The overarching goals of NYSERDA’s evaluation efforts are to: (1) conduct credible and transparent evaluations, and (2) provide interested stakeholders with timely and unbiased information regarding program implementation and performance. Evaluation stakeholders include NYSERDA program staff and managers, the New York State Public Service Commission (PSC), Department of Public Service (DPS)³ staff, the EEPS Evaluation Advisory Group (EAG), the RGGI Advisory Group, the GJGNY Advisory Council, the New York State Legislature and others.

The objectives of this RFP are to procure services of a firm or team of firms in the following areas of survey design, data collection, reporting, and analysis:

- (1) Design and develop surveys, questionnaires, interview guides, and possibly other forms of data collection such as expert panels, focus groups, etc;
- (2) Develop and implement strategies to define sample populations and select appropriate samples to meet expected precision targets;
- (3) Pilot test data collection instruments to ensure maximum effectiveness and modify as necessary;
- (4) Administer data collection instruments and apprise NYSERDA and its evaluation contractors of fielding status and progress toward meeting identified quotas;
- (5) Provide cleaned, coded and analysis-ready data and codebook to NYSERDA and its evaluation contractors;
- (6) Prepare a methodology report for each project including: information on the sample selection and screening process; data collection instruments; timeframe of data collection; staff training (if applicable); respondent outcomes; response and refusal rates; preliminary data analyses; sample disposition summary; and other data collection information as required; and,
- (7) Maintain NYSERDA’s evaluation survey data warehouse-the primary repository of evaluation project data to be used by NYSERDA evaluation staff and evaluation contractor staffs.

³ NYSERDA’s evaluation work for SBC and EEPS must be in compliance with the DPS/EAG Evaluation Guidelines and is subject to DPS review.

The selected Survey Contractor shall not be precluded from bidding on future NYSERDA evaluation solicitations. However, should the contractor choose to bid on a future NYSERDA evaluation solicitation, the contractor shall describe how conflicts of interest, both actual and perceived, will be resolved.

II. Project Requirements

For the purpose of this RFP, 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 surveys, panel surveys, and focus groups.

A. Services Requested

The goal of this RFP is to select a single contractor, or a lead contractor with a qualified team of subcontractors to conduct comprehensive survey data collection activities to support program and portfolio-level evaluation activities for NYSERDA's SBC3, EEPS, RGGI, GJGNY, and potentially other programs statewide. Evaluation activities supported by the selected Survey Contractor may include, but will not be limited to: impact evaluation, process evaluation, market characterization and assessment, assessment of economic and environmental impacts, and other evaluations.

Survey activities could potentially include the full range of tasks from assisting with research planning, sampling and survey design, to data collection, analysis and final report. Alternatively, the Survey Contractor may be tasked to conduct a more limited set of activities to assist NYSERDA's other evaluation contractors on projects where they are taking the lead on survey design, data analysis, and reporting. In this case the Survey Contractor's role will be limited to collecting data from survey respondents and providing cleaned, coded and analysis-ready data files and methodology reports for use by the other evaluation contractors. Considering the need to fulfill both roles, the Survey Contractor should demonstrate the flexibility to work independently as well as collaboratively with NYSERDA's evaluation contractors, to provide the type and level of data collection support needed for each evaluation project. Similarly, the selected Survey Contractor should become familiar with, and address the overall data support needs of NYSERDA's ongoing evaluation of its programs. It is also anticipated that the selected Survey Contractor will review previous evaluation survey work conducted by NYSERDA to help build upon those data collection and analysis approaches to maximize the value of NYSERDA's time-series information, while adding new and innovative approaches to address evolving programs and markets.

As a member of NYSERDA's evaluation contractor team and in order to provide full value in the survey research role, the selected Survey Contractor shall become familiar with the goals and objectives of the program portfolios supported by NYSERDA and gain an understanding of the requirements and timelines for evaluating these program portfolios. For a description of the program portfolios and individual programs supported by NYSERDA, as well as current evaluation activities, plans and protocols, please refer to the links in Table 1.

Table 1. Links to Key Program and Evaluation Documents

<p>NYSERDA Evaluation Webpage: http://www.nyserdera.org/Energy_Information/evaluation.asp</p>
<p>System Benefits Charge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2006 Operating Plan: http://www.nyserdera.org/publications/sbcOperatingPlan2006.pdf - 2011 Operating Plan: (As Amended February 28,2011) http://documents.dps.state.ny.us/public/Common/ViewDoc.aspx?DocRefId={0CA5F392-2437-4437-A7C4-2DF94D50343F}
<p>Energy Efficiency Portfolio Standard</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Background: http://www3.dps.state.ny.us/W/PSCWeb.nsf/All/06F2FEE55575BD8A852576E4006F9AF7?OpenDocument - Evaluation: http://www.dps.state.ny.us/EEPS_Evaluation.html
<p>Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Background: http://www.nyserdera.org/RGGI/default.asp - Evaluation: http://www.nyserdera.org/RGGI/evaluations.asp
<p>Green Jobs – Green New York</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Background: http://www.nyserdera.org/GreenNY/ - Evaluation Operating Plan: http://www.nyserdera.org/GreenNY/documents/GJGNY_EvalOpPlan_Final_09072010.pdf

During the planning and implementation of survey data collection activities, the selected Survey Contractor must maintain awareness of other relevant studies being conducted in New York- regionally or nationally- that could be useful to or coordinated with this work. Examples of such studies include: New York statewide baseline and potential studies, evaluations undertaken by New York utilities on their energy efficiency programs, studies undertaken by the Northeast Regional Evaluation, Measurement & Verification Forum, etc. Such studies may produce outcomes that could be used in lieu of additional NYSERDA-specific primary data collection to accomplish more cost-effective evaluation.

NYSERDA’s separate General Assistance evaluation contractor shall be responsible for conducting evaluability assessments in an attempt to determine whether a given program has the necessary elements (e.g., tracking system, up-to-date data for essential fields, etc.) to support comprehensive evaluation activities. In particular, among other resources, the General Assistance contractor will use the indicators identified in the program’s logic model to support this assessment and to ascertain whether the program is adequately prepared for a robust evaluation of the efficiency and effectiveness in achieving its stated goals. The selected Survey Contractor may be required to contribute to and use these evaluability assessments in their work, including, but not limited to, the review and development of program logic models, use of program logic models in evaluation planning and research issue identification, etc.

Tasks and assistance that may be required of the selected Survey Contractor include, but are not limited to, the following:

Task 1: Project Kick Off

Within one month of contract signing, the selected Survey Contractor shall work with the NYSERDA Project Manager to plan and lead a kick off meeting to discuss overarching goals and objectives, survey data collection tasks, project management, project communication and other issues. Deliverables shall include, but not be limited to, draft and final meeting agendas and presentation materials, as well as detailed meeting notes.

Task 2: Evaluation Planning Assistance

With NYSERDA, its other evaluation contractors and a variety of stakeholders, the selected Survey Contractor will assist in designing and updating multi-year evaluation plans for the SBC3, EEPS, RGGI, GJGNY and potentially other programs. Not all of the programs administered by NYSERDA within its SBC3, EEPS, RGGI, and GJGNY portfolios will receive the same amount of attention, and some may not

be fully assessed in the initial two-year contract term. The final list of programs that will be assessed will be determined through discussions among NYSERDA staff and the selected Survey Contractor after contractor award and during the process of updating and developing the detailed multi-year evaluation plans. Current evaluation plans are provided as reference via the links in Table 1. Given the interrelated nature of NYSERDA's programs across various portfolios – e.g., GJGNY audits and loans supporting implementation of energy efficiency measures using SBC or EEPS incentive programs – the selected Survey Contractor must assist NYSERDA in developing effective evaluation plans to capture effects of multiple customer interactions or interventions. Effective and efficient evaluation and sampling designs should collect data to support evaluation of multiple program portfolios where applicable.

At NYSERDA's direction, the selected Survey Contractor shall work with evaluation contractors to update existing work plans, including incorporating any new approaches and schedules, and to help create new plans for programs that do not yet have a documented evaluation approach. NYSERDA expects that all detailed evaluation plan updates and drafting will be completed within four months of contract signing. The Survey Contractor shall work with NYSERDA and its other evaluation contractors during meetings and conference calls to discuss preliminary plans, provide written plan sections describing the data collection activities to be implemented and cost information for these activities, and to revise those write ups based on comments from NYSERDA and other stakeholders. Deliverables shall consist of draft and final program-specific evaluation survey data collection plans and budgets.

During the course of the contractual agreement, the selected Survey Contractor shall remain engaged, as required by NYSERDA in general evaluation planning activities and in further updates to already determined evaluation plans as necessary.

Task 3: Survey Data Collection Implementation

The selected Survey Contractor will perform survey data collection work in four key areas in support of ongoing evaluations of NYSERDA's current portfolio of programs: (1) planning and design, (2) implementation, (3) documentation, and (4) analysis and reporting. Other activities related to survey data collection may be requested by NYSERDA to meet the needs of program evaluation from time to time. Survey Contractor roles and deliverables are specified below according to four identified survey data collection work areas. Where applicable, estimated time frames are provided for activity completion, although specific time lines may vary depending on the size and scope of the specific project.

Task 3a – Survey Planning and Design

Activities assigned to the Survey Contractor may vary by evaluation study or survey effort, but will be defined at the outset so that all parties are clear on their roles and level of involvement. The survey planning and design tasks generally include, but may not be limited to, the following activities:

- Assist NYSERDA and its evaluation contractors in developing project-specific work plans, including clearly defining and developing research issues, target populations, sample populations, sample frames and sizes, statistical power and precision expectations, analysis plans and other relevant issues to be addressed in the work plans. Where sample populations are not readily available from NYSERDA databases- e.g., for non-participants- suggest possible frames that will best support the research objectives;
- Specify survey methods such as telephone, mail, on-line, and describe the use of quality control strategies such as Computer Assisted Telephone Interviews (CATI) systems, interviewer training, and pretesting of questionnaires;
- Develop overall data collection budgets and costs per completed survey for each major survey type;
- Take proactive steps to anticipate and mitigate potential survey fatigue issues through careful sample selection, cross referencing samples against NYSERDA's existing Evaluation Contact Database, specifying the number of adequate attempts prior to sample replacement, and describing the use of interviewer training techniques;
- Specify a timeframe for the data collection effort, including proposed survey fielding dates;

- Review and/or assist with development of data collection instruments; and,
- Contribute to or complete various deliverables identified for this activity, as noted above. Deliverables include: final data specification plans, sampling plans, and data collection instruments.

Task 3b – Survey Implementation

During this stage the contractor is responsible for all aspects of survey administration including any final revisions to survey instruments and data collection procedures, along with pretesting and administering each survey. This stage includes the following key components:

- Survey Review: conduct a final review of each survey instrument for clarity and consistency, focusing on key elements such as skip patterns. Make revisions as needed, in collaboration with the evaluation contractor and NYSERDA;
- Survey Programming: program each survey into the appropriate format to be ready for fielding. Examples would include CATI and Random Digit Dialing (RDD);
- Data Programming/Coding: Develop methods for coding and cleaning survey data for use in analysis by the evaluation contractor;
- Advance Letters: for each survey, coordinate with NYSERDA to develop and send advance letters to the survey sample to enhance the response rate;
- Administer each data collection instrument using specified format and methods. Pretest each survey instrument and provide disposition reports to NYSERDA and evaluation contractor. Following the pretest, make any revisions to each instrument or sample if necessary, and field the full survey;
- Provide the opportunity, when requested, for NYSERDA evaluation staff or contractors to listen to telephone surveys in progress.
- Provide weekly updates to NYSERDA and the evaluation contractors on survey fielding status, progress and issues; and,
- Deliverables include: Data coding, file layouts/formats, data files, survey programming, pretest and weekly fielding status updates including disposition results by strata, and survey cost tracking.

Task 3c – Survey Documentation

Typically within a week after completing survey administration, the Survey Contractor will prepare a disposition and methodology report on each survey, and will clean and code the data for analysis by the evaluation contractor. In addition, the contractor will upload completed reports, instruments, and data sets to the NYSERDA Data Warehouse as these documents are completed.

During this stage the Survey Contractor will:

- Provide cleaned and coded, analysis-ready data tables and a codebook to NYSERDA and the evaluation contractor(s);
- Prepare a final methodology report (one per survey effort) including information on the sample acquisition process, screening and respondent selection, data collection instruments, timeframe of data collection, staff training (if applicable), respondent outcomes, response and refusal rates, survey fatigue issues, preliminary data analyses (such as descriptive statistics and frequencies), sample disposition summary, and other data collection information;
- Maintain a record of all surveys, survey data, and related documentation from ongoing program evaluations in the NYSERDA Data Warehouse; and,
- Complete deliverables including: Cleaned and coded SPSS-compatible survey data files, codebook, data tables (frequencies, means, distribution), methodology report, files uploaded to NYSERDA Data Warehouse, updates made to Contacts Tracking Database;

Task 3d– Survey Data Analysis and Reporting (Optional/As Needed)

In most cases, the data analysis and reporting will be performed by NYSERDA’s evaluation contractor serving as lead for the specific project. In the event that the Survey Contractor is tasked with conducting the data analysis, the contractor shall:

- Implement the pre-approved data analysis plan;
- Provide descriptive statistics for all variables; and,
- Summarize and present findings in a brief report submitted to NYSERDA.

Key deliverables for Task 3 to be completed by the selected Survey Contractor include:

- Weekly and monthly status and disposition reports;
- Monthly budget spreadsheets and invoices;
- Draft and final survey instruments where applicable;
- Methodology reports summarizing analysis and disposition of survey data for each evaluation;
- Ongoing email summary data reports for each survey in progress;
- Use of tracking and reporting tools to monitor the status of ongoing survey efforts relating to all currently evaluated NYSERDA programs and program portfolios;
- Timely submission of data sets to NYSERDA and evaluation contractors to support project data analysis; and
- Ongoing maintenance of the Energy Analysis data warehouse, including uploads of data files, data summary reports, updates to the contacts database and other final survey deliverables as they are made available.

Implementation of the planned survey data collection activities shall begin as soon as final plans are approved by NYSERDA with final reports from evaluation activities conducted in the initial two-year contract completed to support delivery of study reports on these efforts no later than the end of January 2014. Implementation of evaluation studies will be staggered with some studies completed well in advance of the end of the initial two-year contract period. The selected Survey Contractor will be expected to manage and conduct multiple survey activities in support of a number of diverse evaluation projects at any given time during the implementation period. Through the evaluation plans and subsequent project tracking and communication NYSERDA will endeavor to provide advance notice and scheduling of survey efforts that will be assigned to the Survey Contractor. However, the selected contractor must provide flexibility as evaluation time lines evolve. NYSERDA’s evaluation contractors, including the selected Survey Contractor, will be expected to adhere to agreed upon evaluation project time lines and milestone deadlines since this is essential to coordination with other NYSERDA evaluation contractors and study efforts.

In addition to the activities listed above, the selected Survey Contractor shall coordinate closely and regularly with NYSERDA’s other evaluation contractors as required by NYSERDA. The selected Survey Contractor shall become fully aware of NYSERDA’s data collection efforts and other evaluation activities and assist the NYSERDA project manager in coordinating this work among the other NYSERDA evaluation contractors. Since some data is required by more than one evaluation contractor to complete analyses, the selected Survey Contractor shall keep all other evaluation contractors informed of all data that is delivered as well as the nature of the data. Coordination could include: developing surveys to serve the needs to multiple evaluations or evaluation contractors, determining samples to prevent survey fatigue, and collecting, exchanging, and analyzing data. Since a number of survey and data collection efforts will be conducted concurrently, with the possibility of occasional overlap in survey participants, the coordination efforts of the Survey Contractor will help to maximize the success of data collection by ensuring the careful use of sample design to prevent survey fatigue, and will also help the overall collection, exchange, and analysis of evaluation data.

In addition to completing the tasks noted above, the selected contractor may also be required to adjust evaluation tasks consistent with overall policy changes as set forth by the Public Service Commission. In the near future, the Commission may issue decisions related to continuation of EEPS and SBC programs. Final decisions may include modifications to policies related to evaluation. NYSERDA will adjust contractor tasks, as necessary, to bring them into alignment with new Commission policies as they affect evaluation.

B. Proposer Qualifications

Expertise and experience in collecting data from a wide variety of respondent populations must be demonstrated in the proposal. Proposals must also demonstrate overall technical expertise in survey and interview guide design and development, and show an understanding of the application of survey design principles related to the appropriate wording of survey questions, length of surveys, survey structure, etc. Past projects relevant to supporting knowledge and experience in survey design and development shall be included and summarized in the proposal. Proposals must also demonstrate ability to successfully implement a variety of survey data collection approaches (e.g., simple RDD telephone surveys of consumers, to high level interviews with decision makers).

The survey data collection work will require the selected Survey Contractor to become familiar with and fully understand the breadth and depth of the large portfolio of NYSERDA programs, including program and portfolio interactions and relationships. In addition, the Survey Contractor will be expected to be aware of any other NYSERDA ongoing evaluations, familiar with the evaluation guidelines developed by DPS staff and the EAG, and participate in program evaluation design and coordination activities.

The use of sub-contractors and or teaming arrangements as needed to fulfill the requirements of this RFP is appropriate. If a team is proposed, respondents to this RFP must be able to demonstrate that they have or can create a teaming arrangement that is directly applicable and consistent with the evaluation needs of NYSERDA's programs and this RFP. The primary Survey Contractor of the team shall be responsible for maintaining continuous correspondence with NYSERDA and ensuring all deliverables applicable to the contract are provided to NYSERDA according to an approved time-line meeting quality standards.

In addition to the services and expectations described above, the following requirements must also be fulfilled by the selected Survey Contractor:

Audience Coverage

- Must be well versed in the design of various types of primary and secondary data collection approaches for a wide array of audiences. This shall include the experience and capability to collect data from a range of respondents potentially including: residential customers (homeowners, renters, lower-income households, etc.), commercial building owners and managers, engineers and architects, "C-Suite" executives, etc.

Energy Program/Fuel Type Coverage

- Must demonstrate the expertise or capability to conduct survey research related to various types of energy programs including electric, natural gas, fuel oil and propane energy efficiency projects, electric demand reduction projects, on-site generation, as well as programs focused on emission reduction and economic development.

Technical Support Requirements

- Expertise in MS Office including MS Access, PowerPoint, Word, and Excel;
- Statistical software expertise with SPSS or SAS. Must be able to demonstrate expertise in appropriate statistical analyses and interpretation of various statistical tests associated with survey data;
- Capability to design data collection plans and carry out all associated work;
- Expertise in conducting large-scale data collection using mail, telephone, and the internet;
- Expertise in small-scale data collection efforts such as focus groups, panels, and in person interviews;
- Expertise in quantitative data collection methods to support conjoint analysis, regression analysis, quasi experimental research, and time series analysis;
- Expertise in qualitative data collection analyses such as observation studies and interviews;
- Expertise in conducting, presenting, and interpreting descriptive and inferential statistical analyses and significance testing; and,
- Demonstrated organizational expertise and the capability to coordinate multiple, yet distinct, evaluation activities to prevent burdening program staff and survey respondents, while also identifying areas of potentially duplicative activities;

Reporting Requirements:

- Provide weekly and monthly reporting of all activities pertaining to the contract, including participation in a weekly status call with NYSERDA. These reports shall indicate progress on survey/data collection efforts underway as well as any issues or problems and the Survey Contractor's proposed solution.
- Provide detailed and comprehensive reports on each major data collection activity as it is completed. At minimum, for each survey effort the contractor will provide a cleaned, coded and analysis-ready data file and codebook to NYSERDA and its evaluation contractors; In addition the contractor will provide a methodology report including: information on the sample selection and screening process; data collection instruments; timeframe of data collection; staff training (if applicable); respondent outcomes; response and refusal rates; sample disposition summary; and other data collection information as required.
- Provide other reports or summaries, as needed, on survey activities, results, and analyses of NYSERDA programs. Together these reports shall provide supporting information that NYSERDA and its evaluation contractors will need to conduct a detailed review of the data, perform subsequent analyses, and use as time-series measurements in the future.

C. Contractor's Responsibility

The selected Survey Contractor shall be responsible for timely completion of the requirements and deliverables described in the Services Requested section of this RFP.

Any computer software developed or used in conjunction with work conducted for NYSERDA, that is owned by the survey Contractor, shall be provided to NYSERDA for its use in testing the software and oversight of the Survey Contractor's work. Training for NYSERDA staff on the use of such software shall also be provided by the selected contractor, if necessary. The terms of this provision will be specified in the contract.

The Survey Contractor shall be responsible for coordinating with NYSERDA's evaluation contractors during all phases of survey and data collection efforts. The Survey Contractor shall also provide services for ad-hoc data collection activities that are unrelated to the work conducted by the specialty-area evaluation contractors. For these projects, the Survey Contractor will be solely responsible for all phases of the survey, including survey design, implementation, data analysis, and reporting.

The selected Survey Contractor must assume the overall responsibility for coordinating and developing field work and surveys required from this RFP (whether or not done by the contractor or one or more subcontractors).

The selected Survey Contractor shall keep NYSERDA informed weekly either by telephone, in-person meetings or e-mail on the progress of ongoing data collection efforts. Meetings with NYSERDA staff will be required, as needed.

In any and all circumstances, evaluation data collection activities shall be based on the following principles:

- The evaluation process shall ensure objectivity, fairness, and balance in terms of the types of data collected. Only those data deemed necessary for evaluation purposes shall be collected.
- The program evaluation shall be based on sound methodology, credible data and analysis, and adhere to the highest professional standards.

The selected Survey Contractor's contribution will allow NYSERDA to assess the overarching status of its programs and note successes and areas for improvement as well as help determine the extent to which NYSERDA's programs have achieved their desired objectives, particularly through the comprehensive integration of findings generated from NYSERDA's evaluation contractors.

D. NYSERDA's Responsibility

The NYSERDA Project Manager will be responsible for overseeing and managing all tasks undertaken by the selected Survey Contractor, including but not limited to reviewing, commenting and approving tasks and subsequent deliverables; coordinating with program staff and interested external stakeholders (e.g., when necessary, obtaining approval for deliverables from DPS staff); promoting coordination between the selected Survey Contractor and NYSERDA's other evaluation contractors; approving invoices promptly; and reviewing and preparing work products for inclusion in NYSERDA's program evaluation and status reports.

E. Available Funds

In total, up to \$3.5 million will be made available for up to six years of activity. The total funding will support up to \$1.92 million for an initial two-year period, with two possible two-year renewals at up to \$1.58 million in total (across four years).

The total funding available to support the services requested under this RFP and the program portfolios identified for study, at this time, are subject to change based on NYSERDA's evolving needs, programmatic responsibilities, and regulatory and legislative requirements.

III. Proposal Requirements

Proposers must submit ten (10) copies of the completed proposal to the attention of Roseanne Viscusi at the address on the front of this Request for Proposal. A completed and signed Proposal Checklist must be attached as the front cover of your proposal, one of which must contain an original signature. Also please submit an electronic version of the proposal. **Late proposals and proposals lacking the appropriate completed and signed Proposal Checklist may be returned.** Be sure that the individual signing the checklist is authorized to commit the proposer's organization to the proposal as submitted. Proposals that include teaming arrangements must designate one party as the lead contractor. Faxed or e-mailed copies will not be accepted.

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. The proposals should not exceed 20 pages, excluding the conflict of interest, cost proposal and appendices. Each page of the proposal should state the name of the proposer, the RFP number, and the page number. The proposal must be in the following format:

Proposal Format

RFP 2324	Proposal Checklist (Attachment A)
Section 1:	Introduction
Section 2:	Statement of Work/Approach
Section 3:	Management Structure
Section 4:	Qualifications, Experience, and References to Similar Projects
Section 5:	Potential Conflict of Interest
Section 6:	Cost Proposal
Appendices:	Resumes of Key Personnel Summaries of Relevant Work Products Letters of Commitment

RFP 2324 Proposal Checklist

The checklist is attached to this RFP. It must be attached to all 10 copies of the proposal. At least one copy must contain an original signature.

Section 1: Introduction and General Information (2 pages)

Proposers shall summarize their understanding of the objectives and requirements of this RFP. Proposers shall briefly identify key information about their organization and any other organizations that are part of the proposer's team. Proposers shall describe how the organization or team is qualified to perform and complete the services requested under this RFP.

Section 2: Statement of Work/Approach (8 pages)

The Statement of Work must be consistent with the deliverables and schedule outlined in this RFP. Provide a plan of how you will assist NYSERDA in designing and implementing data collection plans for NYSERDA's programs and a time-line for completing these activities. Identify how coordination of data collection and other evaluation efforts with the other evaluation contractors will be achieved. Describe your approach and methodology, and define your rationale for both. Describe techniques you will employ to garner high quality survey responses and good response rates. Describe how you will deal with the challenges of survey administration for such a large and diverse portfolio of programs, and a wide range of evaluation activities, as well as other challenges related to survey respondent fatigue and participation. The Statement of Work must be prepared as an ordered set of tasks corresponding to the tasks listed under Section II, Project Requirements, of this RFP. Describe the actions you will take to complete each task.

Section 3: Management Structure (5 pages)

Proposers shall identify all team members, including the Principal or Lead contact, who will be responsible for ensuring that the all deliverables and ultimate projects are timely and of good quality, as well as a backup lead person should this need arise. Provide a clear description of the roles and responsibilities of each key person in completing the work plan. Provide the names and addresses of subcontractors. Provide an organization chart. Describe how you plan to coordinate the design and implementation of the survey data collection activities among all subcontractors and with NYSERDA. Discuss how you would manage and maintain flexibility to accommodate potentially short notification times and tight deadlines.

Section 4: Qualifications, Experience, and References to Similar Projects (5 pages)

Describe specific experience pertaining to survey data collection for energy related programs. Include specific examples of expert survey design as well as interpretations and recommendations related to the findings of this work. Discuss proposed teaming arrangements, if applicable. State the team's individual and combined expertise that would enable successful completion of the project. List and briefly describe relevant projects that have been completed by the proposer/proposing team. Indicate which team members were responsible for each project described. Resumes of all team members shall be provided in an appendix. Indicate the name and telephone number of at least three references for whom your organization, or proposed teaming arrangement if appropriate, has recently completed similar relevant projects. Summaries of related work products and other supporting materials that demonstrate your ability to complete the work requested in this RFP may be submitted as attachments to your proposal.

Section 5: Potential Conflict of Interest

Identify the nature of any potential conflicts of interest among team members in providing services to NYSERDA under this RFP. Fully discuss possible conflicts of interest, actual and perceived, which could arise in connection with performance by team members of the proposed contract. Describe how your firm would resolve conflicts of interest.

In the event that NYSERDA determines that a team member may have a conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest, NYSERDA may: (1) take this into consideration in evaluating the proposal; (2) exclude the proposer from consideration for an award; (3) adjust the scope of work to avoid the conflict or appearance of conflict; or (4) negotiate other appropriate actions with the team member to avoid the conflict or appearance of conflict.

Section 6: Cost Proposal

Using the Attachment D Contract Pricing Proposal Form (CPPF) as a template, submit the name, title, and hourly rate or salary range for the initial two-year agreement for each individual proposed to perform the work outlined in Section II Project Requirements, Subsection A-Services Requested (including all subcontractor personnel). Use the CPPF to provide overhead multipliers for the duration of the initial two

year agreement. In addition to providing the CPPF for the initial two-year agreement, indicate whether any rate increases would apply to subsequent years after the initial two-year contract period, should NYSERDA elect to renew the contract, and identify the amount of any such increases.

Attach documentation to support indirect cost (overhead) rate(s) included in your proposal as follows:

1. Describe the basis for the rates proposed (*i.e.*, based on prior period actual results; based on projections; based on federal government or other independently approved rates);
2. If rate(s) is approved by an independent organization, such as the federal government, provide a copy of such approval; and,
3. If rate(s) is based on estimated costs or prior period actual results, include calculations to support proposed rate(s). Calculation should provide enough information for NYSERDA to evaluate and confirm that the rate(s) are consistent with generally accepted accounting principles for indirect costs.

NYSERDA reserves the right to audit any indirect rate presented in the proposal and to make adjustment for such difference. Requests for financial statements or other needed financial information may be made if deemed necessary.

Cost Proposal – Survey Scenario

In order to help NYSERDA gauge the cost effectiveness of your proposal in terms of direct survey costs, please specify an estimated cost per completed survey for preparing and administering the hypothetical survey below. Provide any specific details on methods, rationale and assumptions that might be needed to judge the cost you provide. Assume that the cost per completed survey includes: survey programming; pretesting and minimal modifications; all attempts and call backs needed to attain the specified response rate and number of completes; and data entry, cleaning, and coding to create an analysis-ready data file. The survey instrument/questions will be developed in advance by one of NYSERDA’s evaluation contractors. Analysis will also be performed by one of NYSERDA’s evaluation contractors.

At your discretion, provide estimates for more than one approach if necessary to demonstrate alternative methods to achieve survey goals.

Survey Scenario - Specifications	
Telephone survey audience	NYSERDA Home Performance with Energy Star (HPwES) Program, Partial Participation Homeowners. These are homeowners who had a home energy audit conducted by HPwES contractors and for whom energy efficiency measures were recommended, but who did not go on to participate in NYSERDA incentives through the program.
Research issues	Whether respondents purchased and installed any of the recommended energy efficiency measures within the last 12 months, what measures were installed, the efficiency level of the installed measures, influencing factors that played a role in the decision on measure installation.
Required Number of Completes	100
Survey Length and Question Structure	25 minutes, mostly close-ended questions, plan for 5 open-ended questions requiring coding
Response Rate	Minimum requirement of 30%
Sample Frame	Provided by NYSERDA with all necessary partial participating homeowner contact information. Supporting data also including recommended measures from the audit, available in electronic format for each contact in the program database.

Appendices

Materials to be submitted include:

- Resumes of key personnel that will complete the tasks described in “Section II Project Requirements – Services Requested;”
- Summaries of related work products that demonstrate your ability to conduct process evaluations and characterize and assess markets for NYSERDA, and that demonstrate your capability to perform the tasks that would be identified in such a strategy; and,
- Letters of Commitment from any subcontractors.

IV. Proposal Evaluation

All proposals received by the due date and meeting the requirements established in this RFP will be reviewed and ranked by a Technical Evaluation Panel (TEP) consisting of NYSERDA staff and selected outside reviewers. Final rankings and the contract award will be based on the following Evaluation Criteria:

Responsiveness to the Work Scope of the RFP. Does the proposer present a sound approach for accomplishing the objectives of this proposal? Is there a sound rationale or justification for the proposed approach(es)? Has the proposer demonstrated a clear understanding of the project goals and objectives? Does the proposer’s team have sufficient resources to comply with data collection requests? Does the proposer demonstrate ability to produce high quality, timely data collection? Does the proposer appear to have the flexibility to accommodate potentially short notification times, tight deadlines or changes to evaluation time frames? Has the proposer demonstrated a thorough understanding of NYSERDA’s programs? Is there clear evidence that the proposer possesses the capability to evaluate NYSERDA’s programs? Is the Statement of Work thorough, specific, and consistent with the stated objectives?

Relevant Experience and Qualifications. Are key personnel’s education and experience relevant to project needs? Is the project staff’s overall capability appropriate? Does the proposing team have experience in conducting similar survey data collection work? Does the proposing team have the technical expertise in survey and interview guide design as well as statistical software applications? What is the quality of the project staff’s performance on past projects or their achievements related to the proposed work?

Comprehensiveness of Approach and Management Plan. Does the proposer demonstrate the ability to complete all aspects of the project? Has the proposer demonstrated the ability to institute appropriate data collection and analysis procedures (including staff training, survey programming and administration, statistical analysis software programs)? Are appropriate management and coordination strategies articulated? Are sufficient resources being devoted to the project? Does the proposer demonstrate dedication to this project by key personnel? Is the project organization, including the staffing plan, clear and well-defined? Does the proposer describe a data collection quality control strategy? Is the staffing plan sufficient to provide timely deliverables? Is there one team member designated as the day-to-day NYSERDA contact? Is there a backup lead person designated should the need for this arise?

Cost. How cost-effective is the proposal? Are hourly rates, overhead rates, indirect cost, other cost multipliers, and total hours reasonable and appropriate for the proposer's and subcontractor's personnel completing the tasks? Are the proposer's and subcontractor's rates cost effective when compared to the cost allocation of comparable proposals? Are the example costs per completed survey competitive relative to comparable proposals and industry standards?

Other. Is the proposal well-organized, well-written, and complete? Does the proposal offer economic benefits in New York State? (A local office, while not required, would be considered favorably.) Do appendices include resumes of key personnel and letters of commitment from subcontractors?

V. Procurement Lobbying Requirements

Procurement Lobbying Requirements - State Finance Law sections 139-j and 139-k

Procurement lobbying requirements contained in State Finance Law sections 139-j and 139-k became effective on January 1, 2006. (The text of the laws is available at: <http://www.ogs.state.ny.us/aboutogs/regulations/advisoryCouncil/StatutoryReferences.html>). In compliance with §139-j and §139-k of the State Finance Law, for proposals submitted in response to this solicitation that could result in agreements with an annual estimated value in excess of \$15,000, additional forms must be completed and filed with proposals: (1) a signed copy of the Proposal Checklist including required certifications under the State Finance Law and (2) a completed Disclosure of Prior Findings of Non-Responsibility form. Failure to include a signed copy of the Proposal Checklist referenced in this solicitation will disqualify your proposal.

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 exempt it from disclosure, including a written statement of the reasons why the information should be exempted. See Public Officers Law, Section 89(5) and the procedures set forth in 21 NYCRR Part 501 www.nyserda.org/about/nyserda.regulations.pdf. 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
30 South Pearl Street
Albany, NY 12245

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

Empire State Development
Minority and Women's Business Development Division
30 South Pearl Street

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.state.ny.us/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.state.ny.us/pdf/2007/fillin/st/st220td_507_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.state.ny.us/pdf/2006/fillin/st/st220ca_606_fill_in.pdf). The Department has developed guidance for contractors which is available at <http://www.tax.state.ny.us/pdf/publications/sales/pub223.pdf>.

Contract Award - NYSERDA anticipates making one award under this solicitation. 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. NYSERDA will use the Sample Agreement 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. NYSERDA expects to notify proposers in approximately ten (10) weeks from the proposal due date whether your proposal has been selected to receive an award.

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.

VII. Attachments

Attachment A - Proposal Checklist

Attachment B - Disclosure of Prior Findings of Non-responsibility

Attachment C - Intent to Propose

Attachment D - Contract Proposal Pricing Form and Instructions

Attachment E - Sample Agreement