



NYSERDA ORECRFP23-1



Purchase of Offshore Wind Renewable Energy Credits

Submitted by Empire Offshore Wind LLC- January 25, 2024

Section 8.4 - Disadvantaged Community Impacts



Powering New York. Together



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8. RESPONSIBLE DEVELOPMENT

8.4 Disadvantaged Community Impacts

Proposers are expected to explore how they can design their Project and associated investments to provide benefits to, and reduce burdens on, Disadvantaged Communities in accordance with the 2020 Clean Energy Standard (“CES”) Modification Order and the Climate Action Council’s Scoping Plan. All Proposers are required to fully detail the benefits and burdens associated with the impacts of the Project’s development on any Disadvantaged Communities that are hosting a Project or whose local economy, infrastructure, and air, water, and other natural resources are directly impacted by a Project, as identified through engagement with Disadvantaged Communities, and in accordance with the most recent relevant guidance per the Climate Action Council and Climate Justice Working Group (“CJWG”). Proposers are further advised to review the New York State (“NYS”) Disadvantaged Communities Barriers and Opportunities Report.

Commitments to Disadvantaged Communities must align or reference those described in the Economic Benefits Plan, according to Appendix B.1 and will be incorporated in Section 6.05 of the Agreement.

Proposers must present goals and a strategy for delivering benefits to Disadvantaged Communities. Jobs and local expenditures claimed as benefits must be described in the context of the Project’s targets or other considerations respective to prioritizing frontline, low-income, environmental justice, and otherwise historically Disadvantaged Communities. Proposers should consult the following categories of benefits when designing their commitments to ensure that members of Disadvantaged Communities share in the economy and other benefits that will result from the Project (“Disadvantaged Community Benefits”). These categories may be modified or expanded based on the mutual agreement between NYS Energy Research & Development Authority (“NYSERDA”) and the Proposer.

Commitments made under Categories A and B described below are further considered in Economic Benefits, as described in Appendix B.1 and memorialized in Section 6.05 of the Agreement. Disadvantaged Community Commitments will receive weighting in evaluation as described in Section 3.3 of the Request for Proposal (RFP).

Project-Specific Expenditures (Category A)

Category A includes expenditures associated with the construction, operation, and maintenance of the Project that will accrue to Disadvantaged Communities, examples of which are described in Table B.2.1 below. Benefits in Category A will be measured based on the methodology set forth in Table B.2.1 below, it being understood that the Proposers and NYSERDA shall reasonably cooperate to revise the methodology as necessary.

Community Focused Investments (Category B)

Category B includes investments and expenditures made to support Disadvantaged Communities, including economic development activities, approaches to improve access to clean energy solutions, opportunities to address existing environmental justice issues, and the adoption of host

community benefit agreements. This is inclusive of costs associated with negotiating and implementing a host community benefit agreement and payments as part of the agreement to municipalities that host the Project and contain Disadvantaged Communities within their boundaries. Benefits in Category B should be quantified using methodology analogous to those set forth in Table B.2.1. For example, host community benefit agreement benefits should be allocated in the same manner described in the Taxes / PILOT / Capital Improvement section of Table B.2.1.

Climate, Public Health, and Other Intrinsic Benefits (Category C)

Category C includes benefits beyond those outlined in Categories A and B that accrue to Disadvantaged Communities because of the Project, including benefits to Disadvantaged Communities resulting from reduced fossil fuel generation. Intrinsic benefits unique to the Project such as emissions reductions, associated public health benefits, educational opportunities, or knock-on effects of any Proposal commitments to clean energy infrastructure should be described. The measurement of benefits in Category C will be separately agreed by the Proposer and NYSERDA.

New York's Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act ("CLCPA") was notable not only due to New York's nation-leading commitment to clean energy, but also for the priority that the CLCPA placed on ensuring that the benefits of the clean energy revolution are distributed equitably by setting a target of ensuring that at least 40% of the benefits of spending on clean energy goes to Disadvantaged Communities. Empire Wind and its affiliates' approach to informing, involving, engaging, and creating benefits for Disadvantaged Communities is consistent with the goals of the CLCPA and the final criteria adopted by the CJWG in March 2023.

Empire Wind and its affiliates have tailored the development of the first phase of the Empire Wind Project ("EW1" or "Project") to maximize investments in Disadvantaged Communities, support the growth and development of Disadvantaged Communities across NYS, and have a positive impact on the day-to-day lives of members of these communities. Empire Wind's efforts to promote the interests of Disadvantaged Communities are directed at the following interrelated goals:

- Establishing relationships and creating communication channels to acquire and maintain awareness of broader challenges within these communities.
- Creating new and sustainable economic opportunities in Disadvantaged Communities.
- Ensuring that members of Disadvantaged Communities have the capabilities and support necessary to seize these opportunities.

Empire Wind already has taken significant steps towards achieving these objectives by prioritizing investments that will have a positive impact on, and create opportunities for, members of Disadvantaged Communities, environmental justice communities, and low-income communities. Specifically, Empire Wind's decision to [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

The following sections provide an overview of the benefits that the selection of the Project through this solicitation will provide to Disadvantaged Communities.

8.4.1 Delivering Contractual Commitments and Economic Benefits¹

Project-Specific Expenditures (Category A)

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

SBMT Project Office

In 2022, Empire Wind and its affiliates established an office in Brooklyn, New York in close proximity to SBMT reflecting its commitment to both New York and the Disadvantaged Communities in the vicinity of SBMT. In addition to supporting the operations of Empire Wind and its affiliates, the office will serve as a home to an Offshore Wind Learning Center that will provide New Yorkers an opportunity to learn about opportunities in the offshore wind sector as well as free public meeting space.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Transmission and Interconnection

Empire Wind's capital investments in Disadvantaged Communities will not be limited to the improvement of these ports to make them suitable to support offshore wind staging, deployment, and manufacturing facilities.

[REDACTED]

These investments will facilitate the delivery of clean, renewable energy to support the sustainability and resiliency of Brooklyn's Sunset Park neighborhood.

Lease, Rent, and Taxes

[REDACTED]

Community Focused Investments (Category B)

As described further in the economic benefit plans being submitted with Empire Wind's proposals, if selected through this solicitation, Empire Wind plans to invest millions of dollars in community and workforce development initiatives through the Regional Collaboration initiative described in its Jobs and Workforce Development Plan. These investments will provide education resources, foster innovation, and create new economic opportunities for New Yorkers, particularly members of Disadvantaged Communities.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

- **Offshore Wind Ecosystem Fund:** [REDACTED]

- **Offshore Wind Learning Center:** Empire Wind is in the process of establishing an Offshore Wind Learning Center in partnership with the New York City Economic Development Corporation (“NYCEDC”) as part of its development of SBMT. The Learning Center will conduct offshore wind educational outreach to community stakeholders, including but not limited to K-12 students from NYC public Schools, participants in OSW educational programming, and unaffiliated adults interested in entering the industry. The Learning Center will be located in Industry City in Sunset Park and will be hosted and maintained by Empire Wind and its affiliates for at least 10 years. It will directly support impacted New Yorkers from disadvantaged communities by prioritizing offshore wind education and access to workforce and business opportunities.

- **Offshore Wind Innovation Hub:** The Innovation Hub was developed in partnership with New York University’s (“NYU”) Urban Futures Lab, National Offshore Wind Research and Development Consortium, and the NYCEDC. The objective of the Hub is to accelerate start-ups and guide them into the wind industry through a curriculum managed by NYU, provide investor networking opportunities, and industry mentorship from leading industry professionals. The Hub is located in Sunset Park’s Industry City and serves as a site for offshore wind programming and a center for the industry’s innovation ecosystem.

[REDACTED]

- **Offshore Wind (OSW) NYC Waterfront Pathways Program:** Empire Wind has invested [REDACTED] in NYCEDC’s Offshore Wind NYC Waterfront Pathways Program, a capacity building program for minority-owned, women-owned, and disadvantaged business enterprises (“MWDBEs”) in the maritime and offshore wind industry. NYCEDC developed the program to counter disparities in public procurement by increasing opportunities for MWDBEs in the OSW and waterfront industries.

Climate, Public Health, and Other Intrinsic Benefits (Category C)

The selection of the Project through this solicitation will provide benefits to Disadvantaged Communities by displacing fossil fuel resources, reducing the emissions associated with serving load in New York, and reducing energy prices. While all offshore wind resources may help reduce reliance on fossil-fuel resources to some extent, the Project [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

The benefits of the Project are not limited to the emissions reduction benefits that will be achieved in the aggregate. As described further in Section 4.4.2 of this proposal, Empire Wind is pursuing a range of emissions-reduction initiatives that will reduce the carbon footprint of operations at SBMT, including:

- Use of a Hybrid Service Operation Vehicle;
- Installation of solar power at the dedicated O&M base at SBMT;
- Use of electric vehicles and shore power for operations; and
- Innovative fuel cost management strategies.

Collectively, these initiatives will help ensure that the emissions reduction benefits of the Project are not offset by increases in emissions in Sunset Park and other communities in the vicinity of SBMT.

8.4.2 Disadvantaged Community Barriers and Burdens

Proposers should present a detailed barriers assessment, including specific burdens of the Project on local communities informed by direct engagement with the impacted communities. For each barrier or burden, the proposer should address strategies to overcoming the barrier or alleviating the burden. Proposers are advised to review and encouraged to address range of barriers in the NYS Disadvantaged Community Barriers and Opportunities Report.

8.4.3 Barriers and Challenges

The *NYS Disadvantaged Community Barriers and Opportunities Report* identifies a number of challenges commonly faced by Disadvantaged Communities that should be considered both in terms of the amplified burdens that could affect area residents and impediments to these individuals enjoying access to the opportunities and benefits created by the Project. The barriers identified in the report that are most relevant to the Project include the following:

- **Inadequate Infrastructure:** Poor access to transportation systems can limit access to jobs, healthcare, and other essential services, include fresh and healthy foods.
- **Economic Challenges:** Disadvantaged Communities historically have been burdened by high unemployment rates, low household incomes, and limited access to economic opportunities and resources.
- **Educational Challenges:** Disadvantaged Communities frequently have under-resourced schools, high dropout rates, and limited access to educational and extracurricular opportunities, which can impact the long-term success of residents.
- **Health Disparities:** Disadvantaged Communities often experience higher rates of health issues due to factors like pollution, limited access to healthcare facilities, and lack of health education.

- **Environmental Justice Concerns:** Disadvantaged Communities are often disproportionately affected by environmental hazards, including pollution and lack of access to clean water and air.
- **Social and Cultural Barriers:** Issues like language barriers, discrimination, and lack of cultural sensitivity in services can lead to social exclusion and limited community engagement.
- **Governance Barriers:** Barriers in this category include real and perceived limitations in representation in local governance, lack of opportunities to inform program and policy changes that affect Disadvantaged Communities, and lack of advocacy for community needs.

8.4.4 Regional Disadvantaged Community Data

Empire Wind and its affiliates will continue to focus on the challenges and opportunities facing Disadvantaged Communities in the areas of NYS that are most affected by the development of the Project. Disadvantaged Communities, while diverse in their demographics and specific needs, share common challenges. These include higher-than-average rates of poverty and limited access to economic opportunities, which can be compounded by factors such as limited public transportation and lack of access to energy-efficient housing. Environmental concerns, such as proximity to industrial sites and resulting air and water quality issues, are also prevalent in these areas.

While the proximity of Project activities to Disadvantaged Communities in these areas creates a risk that these areas will experience a greater burden associated with the Project, the Project has been tailored to minimize the benefit imposed on the communities that it affects while maximizing the benefits to these communities through robust environmental mitigation measures, social and community investments, and the creation of new economic opportunities for Disadvantaged Community members.

New York

New York City is a study in strengths and challenges. Between 25% to 40% of New York City adults lack basic literacy skills, which has strong implications for workforce training design. The pandemic left students, families, and teachers dealing with multiple crises. More than 40% of students missed at least 18 days of school last year and city students recorded large drops in reading and math proficiency last year. After years of making progress, crime is up in all categories.

NYSERDA has identified 14 geographically linked Disadvantaged Communities in Brooklyn near SBMT, which will support significant construction, operation, and maintenance activities. Brooklyn, with its over 2.6 million residents, is a unique and densely populated area. If it were an independent city, Brooklyn would rank as the fourth largest city in the United States. Among

Brooklyn's neighborhoods, Sunset Park stands out for its cultural diversity, and is home to approximately 120,000 residents, predominantly of Asian and Latin American descent. The multiculturalism of the area is reflected in the variety of languages spoken, including Spanish, Arabic, and Mandarin Chinese. The area has a significant population of undocumented residents, adding complexity to its social fabric. Recently, Sunset Park has been experiencing early stages of gentrification, marked by an influx of young urban professionals. This demographic shift is occurring alongside persistent issues of food and economic insecurity, presenting a multifaceted challenge to the community's stability and cohesion.

Without careful and deliberate development and engagement, the redevelopment of SBMT has the potential to pose challenges to Sunset Park and the adjacent Disadvantaged Communities when considering the existing barriers and burdens faced by residents. This redevelopment, while offering economic and infrastructure benefits, could exacerbate existing challenges, especially in terms of environmental and socio-economic aspects. The industrial activities associated with construction could lead to increased air and noise pollution, adversely affecting the health and quality of life of nearby residents. Many of these residents already face health disparities, and additional environmental burdens could further compound these issues. Moreover, the redevelopment could potentially increase traffic and congestion in the area, posing logistical challenges and affecting the daily lives of the community members. In addition, while the redevelopment of SBMT promises job creation and economic growth, residents of these communities will need support to take advantage of these opportunities. All of these factors underscore the need for inclusive planning and implementation strategies that proactively address these potential impacts.

Additionally, there are more than 20 designated Disadvantaged Communities on or near the New York City coast that are adjacent to the route of the export cable for the Project. While only those communities in Long Island will be within the Project's viewshed area, the remaining Disadvantaged Communities will be able to view transmission cable installation activities.

Capital Region

In the Capital Region, the challenges surrounding the historically marginalized South End are multifaceted and impact various aspects of workforce development. Residents in the area grapple with persistent poverty, evidenced by data highlighting economic disparities and limited access to opportunities. The South End also faces low literacy rates, presenting a significant barrier to educational and employment advancement; a notably high dropout rate from union apprenticeship and college training programs further exacerbates the challenges this community faces, hindering the acquisition of crucial skills.

Moreover, the Capital District contends with a need for more skilled workers ready to capitalize on training programs that support the offshore wind industry. NYSERDA's 2022 Workforce Skills

Analysis reveals that the most severe and moderate workforce gaps are concentrated in construction and manufacturing industries, underscoring the urgency of addressing these issues.

The Capital Region Economic Development Council remains dedicated to cultivating a thriving economic ecosystem for sustainable growth in the Capital Region, fostering collaboration across all sectors to implement economic diversification for the eight-county area. With 26 colleges and universities, along with various trade schools, apprenticeship programs, and workforce education initiatives, the Capital Region's education sector serves as a significant economic and cultural catalyst, attracting a substantial global audience each year.

The Center for Economic Growth argues that manufacturing and technology have been instrumental in facilitating the Capital Region's economic growth for more than a century; however, there must be a robust plan to include emerging industries as part of the region's economic portfolio. New York's Capital Region has emerged as a center for promising commercial growth in advanced electronics research and development and manufacturing, biotechnology, offshore wind and clean energy, digital gaming, artificial intelligence, and software/information technology. However, despite the promising growth, recently reported financial difficulties faced by the State University of New York and other colleges in the region, which are essential access points for job seekers, further reveal the challenges impeding growth in the area.

While the progress made in improving economic growth in the region is generally beneficial, competition for workers among manufacturing, construction, technology, and conventional energy industries can overlap with the skill sets required for renewable energy development, creating potential challenges in recruiting and retaining a skilled workforce. Successful workforce development efforts should consider these competing industries and find ways to attract, train, and retain talent to meet the specific needs of the offshore wind sector

Long Island

Long Island's challenges include a lack of coordinated collaboration between workforce development entities. This has led to a certain amount of inter-agency competition that has stalled progress in some areas. Housing prices and the overall cost of living are high, and communities of color are not well represented throughout the island, but concentrated in several municipalities.

NYSERDA has designated several areas on Long Island directly north of the EW1 wind development lease area as Disadvantaged Communities, including parts of Long Beach, Oceanside, and surrounding Freeport, Rockville Center, and Valley Stream. Additionally, to the west of these locations north of the cable route, there are more than 15 designated Disadvantaged Communities including in, and adjacent to, Rockaway Park and the Far Rockaways in Brooklyn, bordering Nassau County.

These areas have been designated based on a variety of factors, including high levels of pollution, excessive traffic, and inadequate public transportation infrastructure. Historically, these communities have seen limited investment, and less access to green spaces. Households within these communities have above-average exposure to lead-based paint. Household incomes in these communities are at, or below, twice the federal poverty level, with housing costs consuming more than 30% of the residents' overall income. These neighborhoods grapple with issues of food and economic insecurity, limiting access to necessities and opportunities for many residents. Gentrification in many of these communities introduces additional complexities. The influx of young urban professionals into these areas drives up housing costs and living expenses. This demographic and economic shift risks displacing long-standing residents and lower-income families, thereby straining the community's socio-economic fabric and potentially leading to a loss of cultural identity and community cohesion.

The diversity of spoken languages in these communities creates a substantial barrier in communication that can hinder access to crucial information and services related to health, education, government assistance, and project-related information. This situation is further exacerbated for the undocumented residents in these communities who, due to legal fears and lack of awareness about their rights and available services, may not seek necessary assistance or participate in community programs.

8.4.5 Strategies for Overcoming Barriers

Empire Wind is mindful of the challenges facing the Disadvantaged Communities in proximity in the Project and is committed to ensuring that the development of the Project is a net positive for these communities that delivers significant economic, environmental, and health benefits for residents. Empire Wind's approach to achieving these goals is based on a strategy that combines delivering project-related economic benefits with meaningful community investments, all underpinned by extensive public engagement. The initiative focuses on creating jobs and enhancing workforce skills, thereby driving local economic growth and securing long-term employment for community members, as described in Empire Wind's Jobs and Workforce Development Plan. This approach includes local sourcing of materials and labor, which bolsters small businesses and entrepreneurs, thereby strengthening the community's economic fabric. Additionally, collaborations with community organizations that operate within Disadvantaged Communities will help ensure that residents and businesses can fully leverage the project-related benefits. Effective public engagement is key to ensuring these efforts are specifically tailored to address the unique needs and challenges of the community, fostering not just economic growth but also trust and lasting partnerships.

Recognizing the diverse needs of the community, the Empire Wind team is committed to economic development programs that support local businesses and create job opportunities accessible to all community members, including those with varying immigration statuses or

language proficiencies. This commitment extends to providing support for undocumented residents, offering them the necessary guidance and resources to navigate their unique challenges. Collaborative efforts with local organizations, government bodies, and community leaders are vital in formulating informed solutions.

Continual community engagement throughout the project development stages is crucial to ensuring that the interests and needs of Disadvantaged Community members are addressed and integrated. Job training and education programs, customized for the community's diverse population, along with initiatives to reduce environmental impacts, are critical to ensuring that the Projects, including the redevelopment of SBMT and POA, benefits the community without intensifying existing challenges.

The Empire Wind team has already shown a dedication to forging sustainable relationships with key organizations, particularly those with a proven track record in enhancing conditions within these communities through education, workforce development, and other community benefits. Through these partnerships, Empire Wind and its affiliates have successfully prioritized strategies that advance their goals and broadened their network of partners, demonstrating a commitment to community-driven development.

8.4.6 Investing in Long-Term Relationships

Proposers should further demonstrate understanding of host or proximate Disadvantaged Communities impacted by the Project through real life encounters and relationship building. Proposers should highlight any community advisory partnerships, summarize the stakeholder engagement conducted, and address how the Project will prioritize and systematically incorporate feedback from the community.

Empire Wind and its affiliates have been building relationships and partnerships in New York since they acquired their first lease area in 2017. As a result, the Empire Wind team has developed both an existing stakeholder list that can be used as a foundation for further engagement and strong, successful, and established relationships with a broad range of stakeholders. Stakeholder identification and analysis through mapping will be used to build upon this database, including to identify key stakeholders within and working with frontline, low-income, environmental justice, and otherwise historically disadvantaged communities.

As further described in the Stakeholder Engagement Plan being submitted with this proposal, stakeholder mapping is the systematic process we employ to identify, categorize, and understand the communities, businesses, and organizations that come into contact with our project. Through mapping, we can track progress and adjust strategies to achieve the goals we have set for meaningful stakeholder engagement. Stakeholders for this project are organized and considered along three axes: interest areas/risk types (why stakeholders are interested in the project), location/focus area (where they reside or conduct business or other activities), and organization

type (how individuals or groups are affiliated or organized). A full description of the stakeholder tools used for stakeholder mapping is included in the Stakeholder Engagement Plan.

Empire Wind's team of government relations, communications, and community outreach professionals lead on-the-ground stakeholder engagement, including for the Project. As detailed in the Stakeholder Engagement Plan, Empire Wind and its affiliates have engaged in hundreds of meetings and public information sessions with a spectrum of stakeholder groups, including individuals and organizations representing and present in Disadvantaged Communities. In each of these engagements, the Empire Wind team initiated conversations, presented the project, and collected stakeholder and community input. Empire Wind has consulted with community-based organizations and leaders, elected officials, business owners, and other citizens (including local residents and property owners). Empire Wind has considered environmental justice areas in its stakeholder engagement program and continues to address concerns as they arise to ensure that the Project does not have an adverse impact on the communities that it affects.

8.4.7 Regional Collaboration Model

Empire Wind and its affiliates believe that the best approach to engage with Disadvantaged Communities, understand their challenges, and to identify and implement solutions is through a stakeholder-driven, partnership-based approach involving Empire Wind, community leaders, local organizations, and special interest groups. For that reason, Empire Wind and its affiliates have adopted a regional, multi-tier collaborative strategy that is premised on proactive engagement and partnership with key community organizations, prioritizing efforts in those areas of the state that will be most affected by the development of offshore wind resources.

The Regional Collaboration strategy is centered on partnership with community foundations, community organizations and existing non-governmental organizations with deep knowledge of the communities in their region. The purpose of this strategy is to leverage the expertise, resources, and experience of well-established organizations that have deep ties with the communities in which they work and a concrete understanding of the steps that are necessary to ensure that New York workers have the support and skills necessary to take advantage of the opportunities that will flow from the significant investments that New York State and NYSERDA are making in the offshore wind industry, with a particular emphasis on providing opportunities for members of Disadvantaged Communities, MWBEs, and SDVOBs. Based on the discussions that Empire Wind has had to date with potential partners, Empire Wind anticipates that the partnerships created if selected through this solicitation process will support an array of job training and vocational programs, including apprenticeships, talent pipeline programs, technical training and support, workforce retention programs, mentoring programs, and support for MBWEs, SDVOBs, and businesses in Disadvantaged Communities.

Empire Wind anticipates working with these organizations to identify the programs and initiatives that are likely to have the greatest impact given the specific needs of the communities that they

serve. Given this alignment with stakeholder-driven workforce development programs, fully developed partnerships and investments will be finalized once Empire Wind has been selected through this solicitation process.

The purpose of the regional collaboration model is to:

- Create an organized approach to engagement and investment that enables and ignites local and statewide action.
- Establish a replicable approach to workforce and supply chain development predicated on consistency, coordination, and equity in three market areas.
- Tap the leadership of respected community foundations and NGOs to build a structure that connects stakeholders, pools expertise, and deepens Empire Wind's relationship and collaboration with these organizations.

Through this Regional Collaboration framework Empire Wind and its affiliates anticipate utilizing partnerships with key community foundations and NGOs to ensure optimal coordination to achieve jobs and workforce development goals in each of the regions, which will also yield benefits across the state. The purpose of this three-tier approach is threefold. First, it engages respected, deeply knowledgeable New York organizations specializing in fostering development within their regions. Second, it utilizes the local knowledge and expertise in program administration and grant making to ensure a professional, equitable, and measurable approach to expanding partnerships networks and grant allocation. Third, the structure provides support to NGOs from NGOs, so they can succeed in engaging with stakeholders within, and knowledgeable of, Disadvantaged Communities to achieve Empire Wind's workforce development goals.

The Regional Collaboration strategy is pivotal in ensuring that community feedback is not only heard but systematically incorporated into every aspect of the project. This inclusive approach prioritizes active engagement with the community through various channels. Funding programs, for instance, are designed with community input at their core, ensuring that the financial resources are allocated to areas most needed and valued by the residents. Educational resources, another critical component, are established in direct response to the community's expressed needs, facilitating access to knowledge and skills that resonate with the local population. Moreover, support for vital community resources is tailored based on feedback to enhance existing community assets and services. Community events serve as a platform for continued dialogue and interaction, providing opportunities for residents to share their perspectives, concerns, and aspirations. This holistic strategy ensures that the community is not just a beneficiary but an active participant in shaping the outcomes, fostering a sense of ownership and partnership in the project's success.

Examples of certain of these long-term relationship-building activities are described below.

Ecosystem Fund Program

Empire Wind also has established an Offshore Wind Ecosystem Fund as a vehicle for providing support for local New York City organizations to develop career pathways in the offshore wind ecosystem through job education and training, support New Yorkers from historically marginalized communities by prioritizing environmental justice and access to workforce and business opportunities, and grow the green energy ecosystem in New York City by supporting and fostering innovation by local small, MWBEs, SDVOBs, and Disadvantaged Community businesses. Recipients of the fund were announced in October 2023. Awards range from \$125,000 to \$900,000 over a three-year period that commenced in December 2023. Details on the organizations and programs awarded through the Ecosystem Fund, including training and education goals, are provided below.

- **City University of New York (“CUNY”)**: The CUNY’s Offshore Wind Advisory Network, comprised of Kingsbridge Community College, Laguardia Community College, New York City College of Technology, and the College of Staten Island, was awarded [REDACTED] to implement the “Bridges to Offshore Wind Program.” This program is structured to provide New York City’s workforce with the information, knowledge, and skills necessary to begin careers in the offshore wind industry. An interactive seminar will be used to educate participants about the regional offshore wind industry, emphasizing maritime, electrical, construction, and supply chain sectors. Participants will explore various career pathways in offshore wind, understand educational requirements, and assess how their skills align with industry careers and needs. Participants also will learn about available training and degree programs at CUNY. The colleges will prioritize recruitment in environmental justice communities, collaborating with local community board organizations to reach underserved residents. Recruitment for the program will focus on engaging underrepresented, traditionally marginalized (e.g., black, indigenous, and other people of color), and disadvantaged and environmental justice communities. The Bridges to Offshore Wind program aims to enroll 560 students over the course of three years, with the goal of referring at least 280 of these students to offshore wind training programs.
- **UPROSE**: UPROSE was awarded [REDACTED] to support the establishment of the Just Transition Worker Resource Initiative, an initiative to connect the historically marginalized and low-income residents of Sunset Park to offshore wind and clean energy training and jobs by offering resources, education, training, and support through a network of partners. UPROSE will focus on engaging residents of marginalized neighborhoods, environmental justice areas, and people with other barriers to access training and employment opportunities in the offshore wind industry and will provide residents with personalized outreach opportunities, mentorship, and guidance on career pathways. The initiative aims to provide job readiness services for a minimum of 50 participants.
- **Jewish Community Center of Staten Island (“JCCSI”)**: Through a [REDACTED] award, JCCSI is establishing the “Creating Career Pathways in Offshore Wind” program targeting K–12

students and families, adults in the offshore wind workforce, and workers with transferrable skills to educate, train, raise career awareness, and develop career pathways in the offshore wind industry. The program aims to fill gaps in the offshore wind workforce, including providing new opportunities to workers that may be displaced by the clean energy transition. The program will also focus on serving those who have been historically marginalized or reside in environmental justice areas. The program will educate over 3,500 residents, including 2,500 young people, about wind energy careers over two years. The JCCSI also will collaborate with TMI Waterfront Services, a MWBE, SDVOB, and Disadvantaged Community Business, and New York's first and only Global Wind Organization ("GWO") accredited facility, which brings world-class training to New Yorkers, to provide foundational GWO training for 22 adults.

- **New York City District Council of Carpenters ("CTC"):** The CTC was awarded [REDACTED] to train skilled workers, especially from environmental justice communities, for union carpenter careers. The CTC will focus recruitment efforts on environmental justice communities, including low-income and underserved areas, by working with community-based social service organizations that have expertise working with these groups. The three-year initiative aims to produce 240 carpenter apprentices equipped for the emerging offshore wind industry jobs. Apprentices will receive 144 hours of training at the CTC and 1,400 hours of on-the-job training on worksites throughout the city. Training will include health and safety instruction, blueprint reading, drywall installation, concrete forms, house framing, welding, steam turbine generator installation, general carpentry, and specialty trades related to offshore wind that include millwrights, dock builders, and divers.
- **New York Academy of Sciences ("NYAS"):** The NYAS was awarded [REDACTED] to operate a clean energy city-wide challenge that will bring real-world, experiential learning directly to thousands of public-school students in grades 3–12 across environmental justice areas and communities in need of science, technology, engineering, and math ("STEM") learning support. The program will focus on engaging underserved children, environmental justice communities, New York City Department of Education and Department of Youth and Community Development schools, and afterschool sites. The challenge-based learning experience includes: mentor-led team building, problem solving, research, and applications of design thinking as well as final team presentations. The New York Academy of Sciences aims to have 50 teams with 4–6 students per team, engaging 200–300 students across the boroughs.
- **IBEW Local #3 Educational and Cultural Trust Fund:** The Ecosystem Fund awarded [REDACTED] to launch a program to prepare a diverse workforce for New York's Offshore Wind Industry using virtual reality. The Joint Industry Board of the Electrical Industry ("JIBEI"), a joint-management cooperative organization among IBEW, Local Union No. 3, and the National Electrical Contractors Association ("NECA") will launch a program in collaboration with Vinci VR, a leading provider of virtual reality ("VR") training and

industry education technology for offshore wind, to recruit, educate, and train a skilled and diverse workforce for New York's Offshore Wind Industry. The program will utilize Vinci VR's existing offshore wind training modules and simulations and create new customized training modules to align with the IBEW curriculum specific to electrical duties during the installation and maintenance of offshore wind turbines, which include cable splicing, component and system testing, and inspection. JIBEI aims to engage and provide training and job opportunities to K–12 students and adult career transitioners with a focus on New York City high school seniors, underserved communities, and women through its relationships with non-profits and New York City Career and Technical Education programs. JIBEI aims to train at least 225 workers and apprentices from historically marginalized communities in the three years of the program as well as help at least 10 MWBEs and/or SVDDBs receive work contracts related to offshore wind. IBEW will also provide VR training to at least 20 members from MWBE and SVDDB contractors each year.

- **City Growers:** The Ecosystem Fund award of [REDACTED] will allow City Growers and the Brooklyn Grange to create opportunities for youth, families, and members of Sunset Park to develop environmental literacy and discover the potential of the green and offshore wind workforces. The funding from the grant will support Family Farm Days and Sunday Open Houses that welcome the public to the Brooklyn Grange rooftop farm for free, expand outreach, provide free farm tours, youth and family activities, performances and artists, food, to host vendors, and offer translation support for American sign language, mandarin, and Spanish. Past open houses have engaged 800–1,350 community members, and this number is expected to grow with support from this grant. The funding will also expand the Green Ambassadors program, an after-school apprenticeship for Sunset Park High School students, into a full-year program that will engage students in peer-to-peer learning, training, and networking that builds paths to green job employment. The program will include wind power education along with training in green careers.
- **Southwest Brooklyn Industrial Development Corporation ("SBIDC"):** A [REDACTED] Ecosystem Fund grant will support Wind Connections, SBIDC, and the Business Outreach Center Network's program to build capacity for local MWDBE firms to understand the offshore wind industry in New York and get involved in business opportunities. The program will prioritize education, outreach, and technical assistance to help small businesses understand and participate in the offshore wind industry's supply chain. The program will deliver unique educational programming including workshops, creative networking opportunities, and new digital communication channels accessible to small businesses. Over the three years, the program anticipates engaging 360 small businesses through workshops and 250 individuals through networking events.

Offshore Wind Learning Center

Empire Wind also is in the process of establishing an Offshore Wind Learning Center in partnership with NYCEDC as part of its development of SBMT. The Learning Center will conduct

offshore wind educational outreach to community stakeholders, including, but not limited to, K-12 students from New York City public Schools, participants in OSW educational programming, and unaffiliated adults interested in entering the industry. It will serve as a central hub for educational outreach in New York City, as well as informational videos and interactive exhibits about port activities at SBMT and offshore wind operations.

The Learning Center will be located in Industry City in Sunset Park and will be hosted and maintained by Empire Wind and its affiliates for at least 10 years. It will make information about the offshore wind industry and the SBMT wind port easily accessible and will provide free access to community meeting spaces. It will directly support impacted New Yorkers from Disadvantaged Communities by prioritizing offshore wind education and access to workforce and business opportunities. The Learning Center Design Committee is led by the Empire Wind team and comprised of community stakeholders, including the Central Brooklyn EDC, New York City Public Schools, and NYCEDC. The Design Committee collaborates on design elements and educational aspects of the OSW Learning Center, focusing on community engagement, innovation, and environmental impact.

SBMT Community Engagement

In February and June 2023, Empire Wind and its affiliates hosted SBMT community engagement meetings in Sunset Park to present the design phases of the proposed O&M base at SBMT and gather community input. The February meeting at Industry City showcased the 60% design phase, emphasizing the project's alignment with the community's vision for climate resilience, renewable energy, environmental justice, and preserving the waterfront's industrial character. UPROSE, Equinor's Environmental Justice partner, highlighted the project as a triumph for the local Environmental Justice Movement, reflecting years of advocacy for renewable energy in the area. The June meeting at Community Board 7 ("CB7") focused on the 90% design phase, addressing community feedback and introducing Skanska, the general contractor, as part of networking and supply chain opportunities for local businesses. Future meetings will address construction-related concerns such as traffic, noise, and environmental remediation, showcasing Equinor's commitment to listening, learning from, and responding to the community's expertise and needs.

BOEM New York & New Jersey Environmental Justice Forum with Tour of SBMT

Empire Wind and UPROSE hosted an event organized in partnership with the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management ("BOEM") New York and other local stakeholders to grow relationships and improve coordination across agencies, governments, and community-based organizations. The event served as an opportunity to develop a shared understanding of challenges affecting everyone in the greater New York City area and to coordinate efforts to engage environmental justice populations, underserved communities, and members of Tribal Communities on offshore

wind issues. The event included presentations from BOEM, UPROSE, and Empire Wind, and featured a tour of Sunset Park, SBMT, and Industry City.

UPROSE Environmental Justice Workshop

This workshop was an opportunity for developers to discuss how they can integrate environmental justice into their operations, including in the supply chain, management, and other aspects of the industry. Participants talked about some of the challenges facing developers and community-based organizations, and how we can use this opportunity to develop best management practices for meaningful environmental justice in decision-making, planning, hiring, and solutions. This discussion was useful for developers to work with communities to establish equitable plans for supply chain investment, stakeholder engagement, and workforce development.

Long Beach Martin Luther King Center (MLK)

The Long Beach Martin Luther King Center is a nonprofit community-based organization with a mission to enhance the well-being, education, and health of Long Beach residents, particularly the underserved Black and Latino families that make up the North Park community. Their range of support services encompasses counseling, mentorship, early childhood growth, cultural enrichment, youth empowerment, career advancement prospects, exploration of entrepreneurship, and practical training in STEM, tailored for young people and adolescents. In a demonstration of their authentic and genuine investment in the lives and futures of the community, representatives from the Empire Wind team visited MLK weekly to engage with and answer questions from staff and community members throughout the day, incorporated community feedback into informational materials to make them more accessible, holding targeted information sessions for MLK seniors and volunteering with, and ultimately funding, the MLK's STEM-focused Afterschool Enrichment Program.

Sports Power Clean Energy Events

In July of 2023, Empire Wind hosted four Sports Power Clean Energy events supporting Disadvantaged Community members in Brentwood, Wyandanch, Long Beach, and Oceanside. The national Sports Power Clean Energy Program combines clean energy education with sports to encourage teamwork, critical thinking, and problem-solving abilities to prepare young people to become effective leaders in the field of sustainability. 35 Sports Power volunteers, including the Empire Wind team, residents, elected officials, manufacturers, business owners, and stakeholders across the local clean energy supply chain took part in the program. Volunteers served as sports coaches, clean energy career coaches, and mentors to guide more than 200 student-athletes, ages 7-13, through a day of drills, teamwork, and hands-on learning to encourage children in Disadvantaged Communities on Long Island to see themselves in the emerging offshore wind economy.

Operation SPLASH

Operation SPLASH is a volunteer-driven organization committed to enhancing the conditions of Long Island's southern shore bays, waterways, and beaches. The dedicated members of Operation SPLASH lead clean-up initiatives targeting marine debris, advocate for environmental causes, and deliver STEM-focused educational programs to schools and universities. Based in the Disadvantaged Community of Freeport, NY, Operation SPLASH's educational program teaches the importance of clean air and water and encourages a sense of pride, stewardship and responsibility for local marshlands for children grades 2-12 in the surrounding area. In addition to participating in multiple volunteer cleanups, Empire Wind staff have presented to the full organization membership and maintained a regular presence at monthly meetings to make announcements and answer questions from members.

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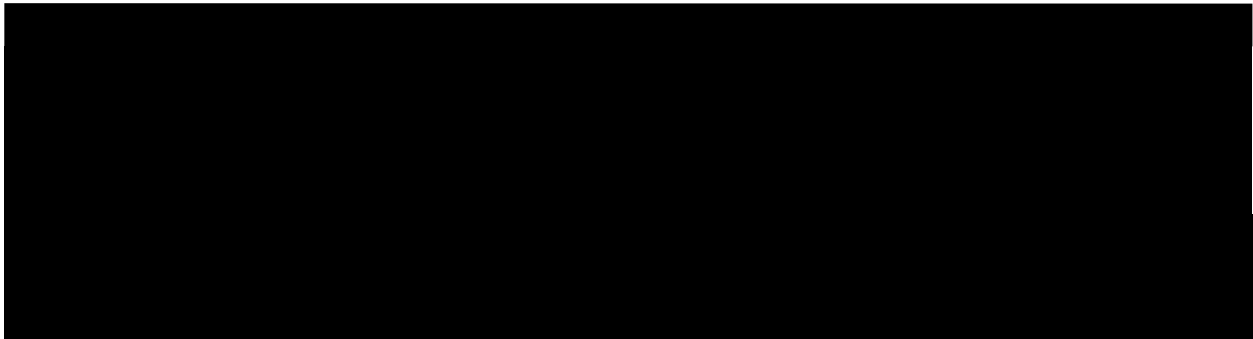
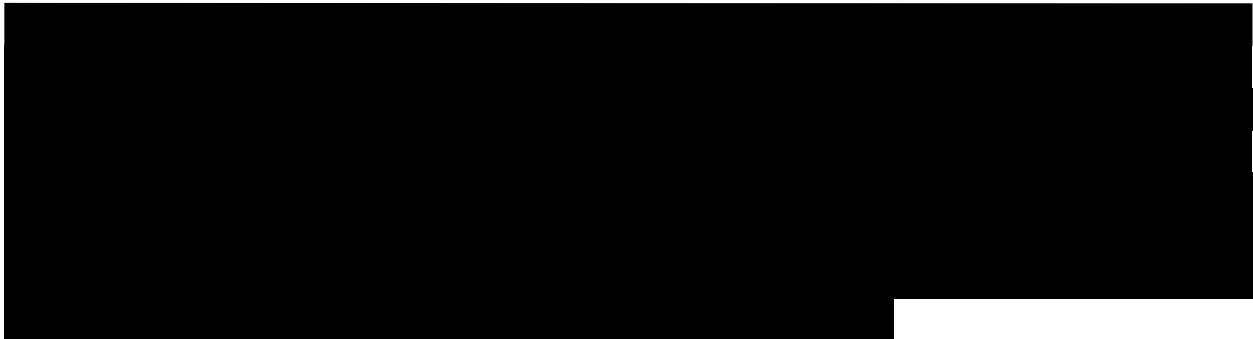
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8.4.8 Partnerships

Proposers should describe any partnerships entered with host or proximate Disadvantaged Communities impacted by the Project in the capacity of a community advisory group or board that guides feedback and input to the project on a regular basis, ensures community input is being received, and collaborates on any community benefit plan or dissemination of benefits.

Proposers may wish to further provide testimonials from their community partnerships to provide insights into the Proposer's activities in the impacted communities and serve to verify the data and perspectives identified in the barriers assessment.

Empire Wind and its affiliates have established partnerships with a number of key organizations working within, and supporting, Disadvantaged Communities. The preceding sections already have provided a description of numerous partnership and advisory boards that have been formed by Empire Wind. In addition to the initiatives that already have been described above, Empire Wind regularly works with, and consults with, the following organizations in order to facilitate stakeholder input and feedback, ensure consideration of community input, and to promote jobs and workforce development. The partnerships that have been forged with these organizations are instrumental in informing Empire Wind's efforts to deliver economic benefits, education, training, and workforce development strategies. Representatives from these organizations have participated in forming community advisory groups, which play a crucial role in guiding and channeling feedback and input into the project on a regular basis. The emphasis of this collaborative effort is to ensure that community input is not only received but is actively integrated into the project's planning and execution. These partnerships also extend to collaborating on any community benefit plans, ensuring that the dissemination of benefits is aligned with the needs and aspirations of the community.



[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]