

March 3, 2017

Dear Installer,

We're excited to issue a Request For Information (RFI) on behalf of agricultural producers seeking to go solar in West Virginia. We are working closely with WV agriculture organizations and stakeholders to recruit interested participants.

Enclosed please find an official RFI for this program. We want to be as clear as possible about the process and what to expect if your company chooses to participate.

If you have any questions about the process or installer expectations, please don't hesitate to email me at autumn@wvsun.org.

We look forward to receiving your response!

Best,

Autumn Long
Solar Co-op Coordinator
[WV SUN](#), a project of [Community Power Network](#)

Ag Producers' Solar Co-op Request For Information

Executive summary

This electronic document represents a Request For Information that WV SUN is issuing on behalf of agricultural producers seeking to go solar in West Virginia. We are issuing this RFI with the intent of identifying individual project developers (“Proposers”) who can provide solar photovoltaic (PV) energy systems for participating group members. Each participant will select one Proposer to develop his/her individual project.

The goal of this project is three-fold: (1) to enable each participant to access funding and financing opportunities available to agricultural producers; (2) to connect each participant with qualified local solar installers who can service the participant’s individual needs; and (3) to provide the project developer with an extensively pre-screened and well-educated customer.

This program is open to West Virginia agricultural producers for whom at least 50% of gross income comes from on-site agricultural operations.

Overall timeline

1. RFI Issue Date: March 3, 2017
2. Responses Due: March 17, 2017 by 4:59pm

Proposal Review Process

1. WV SUN will collect all RFI submissions and maintain a detailed list of Proposers that are willing to service agricultural producers in the state. The list will be organized based on geographic area (i.e., what area each Proposer is able to service).
2. As WV SUN identifies qualified agricultural producers (Participants), WV SUN will connect them with qualified Proposers in their areas.
3. Each Proposer will provide the Participant with a customized proposal **within one month** of being connected to the Participant. (WV SUN will send an introductory email.)
4. The Participant and WV SUN will convene to review all proposals.
5. The Participant will make a final decision on the selected Proposer.

Scope of work

Services to be provided by Community Power Network

1. Pre-screen participants by reviewing each property via publicly available satellite imagery and by extensive communication with each participant. Assessments performed by WV SUN are not intended to be overly restrictive. Our goal is to find the balance between wasting a participant's or the developer's time and unnecessarily excluding participants.
2. Recruit qualified participants throughout 2017.
3. Connect participants with qualified participating developers, per developer response to this RFI.
4. Connect participants with available funding sources such as USDA REAP grants and guaranteed loan financing for agricultural producers.
5. Support participants and selected developers throughout the process.
6. Host celebration of successful solar installations and public recognition of the work of the installer.

Services to be provided by the Developer

1. A customized proposal for each participant. The proposal should include language that explains all the services provided in the turnkey price for the system (assessment, system design, permitting, installation, interconnection paperwork, etc.). Please copy autumn@wvsun.org when sending a proposal to a participant. This helps WV SUN track our impact through metrics like system sizes, estimated production, market investment, etc.
2. Site assessment, structural assessment, design, equipment procurement, installation, monitoring setup, financing, customer training (i.e. safety rules, monitoring, maintenance, how to deal with problems, etc.), permitting, and application/management of applicable incentives.
3. \$0.05/Watt per signed contract to be paid to Community Power Network as a referral fee. This fee should be incorporated into the \$/Watt price, not listed as an adder.
4. Responsive communication with participant.
5. Responsive communication and coordination with WV SUN about participant status.
6. Participate in public education/outreach events.
7. Installations performed in conformance with all applicable laws and codes, interconnection requirements for net-metered installations and any incentive-related installation requirements, rules, and timelines. CPN defers to the [SEIA Solar Business Code](#) as a determinant of fair, transparent business practices to ensure solar customers are treated in a fair and honest manner.

Technical Requirements

Photovoltaic Modules must:

1. Be listed and reviewed on the California Energy Commission list entitled, '[Incentive Eligible Photovoltaic Modules in Compliance with SB1 Guidelines](#)' or installer must

- provide similar performance information for selection committee from an alternate source, or by referencing a CEC-listed panel from the same product family.
2. Have at least a 25-year power warranty with a specified performance degradation curve showing acceptable levels of performance or replacement and show achievement of a minimum of 80% of the nameplate rated power at STC by year 25;
 3. Have a product warranty of at least 10 years.

Inverters must:

1. Be included in the California Energy Commission list entitled '[List of Eligible Inverters per SB1 Guidelines](#)' or installer to provide similar performance information for selection committee from an alternate source or by referencing a CEC-listed inverter from the same product family.
2. Have a warranty that allows for replacement due to premature failure over the specified warranty timeframe and be a minimum of 15 years for micro inverters and 10 years for string inverters.

Mounting equipment must:

1. Be used in accordance with its manufacturer's listed purpose.
2. Be grounded in accordance with manufacturer's specifications.

Proposal Requirements

Although participants will look for competitive pricing in proposals, price is **not** the only factor that the participant will consider. Participants also value experience in the marketplace, quality system components, and strong warranties, among other factors. We do not want the solar co-ops to be a "race to the bottom" in terms of system price and quality, nor do we want proposers to feel they must sacrifice quality in order to be selected.

Proposer will provide an individualized proposal for each participant. If selected to submit a proposal to a program participant, the Proposer will provide an individual proposal that lists at a minimum (1) the proposed system size for the project, (2) the total price of the proposed system, and (3) the estimated annual production of the system and the resulting percentage of annual electricity consumption the system is expected to produce. Please copy autumn@wvsun.org when sending a proposal to a participant. The selected Proposer will then sign a separate bilateral contract with the participant.

When developing your proposals, please adhere to the following formatting requirements:

1. Include spec sheets for each module and inverter type specified.
2. Include any additional business promotional information, warranties, performance information, etc.
3. Provide a single PDF document that contains your entire proposal. Your submission should be a single PDF with no additional attachments.

Additional charges not included in the \$/watt price must be explicitly explained in the proposal (e.g., charges for electrical upgrades, steep roofs, specific roofing types/materials, roof attachment methods/components, multiple array locations, small system size, customized racking, tree trimming, etc.) Furthermore, WV SUN will hold the chosen installer to the proposal base price and additional charge prices (or lack thereof).

Proposal Tips

Keep in mind that proposals will be reviewed by participants. While WV SUN will provide technical assistance and support as they review proposals and make their selection, participants do not have a formal background in solar energy topics. We've found the following tips will help participants review your proposal more easily.

1. Keep the pricing as simple as possible.
2. Proposers are strongly encouraged to provide information about solar financing opportunities for participants in this solar co-op, including but not limited to USDA REAP grant and loan programs.
3. Reach out to the WV SUN Solar Co-op Coordinator if you are not clear about any step of the proposal process. They will provide information to facilitate the proposal process and help proposers understand the needs and priorities of the specific project with the understanding that any information shared is available to all proposers.

Respondent Questions

1. Are you interested in pursuing referrals from WV SUN for individual solar installations on WV farms and agricultural operations?
2. Are you fully licensed and insured to install solar PV systems in the state of West Virginia? Provide all of the following:
 - a. General Building Contractor license number
 - b. Master Electrician license number
 - c. Certificate of general liability insurance
 - d. Any additional business promotional information, certifications, etc.
3. Which of the following **solar PV system sizes** are you able and willing to install for participants in this program? (*Select all that apply*)
 - a. Small/residential-scale installations (<15kW)
 - b. Mid-sized installations (15kW-30kW)
 - c. Commercial-scale installations (>30kW)
4. What is the **estimated price per Watt** you would offer participants based on the system sizes listed above?
5. What is the **maximum geographic range** you are able and willing to travel to pursue individual site visits, proposals, and installation projects for participants in this program? (*Specify the West Virginia counties to which you are willing to travel.*)
6. Do you have experience assisting customers with applications for USDA REAP grant and/or loan programs? Conservation Fund Energy Initiative loan financing? Other agriculture-based funding programs? Provide details of your experience working with these funders and specific examples (*with contact references*) of completed installations utilizing these funding resources.
7. Do you agree to pay a **\$0.05/Watt referral fee** to Community Power Network for each contract signed by a co-op participant?
8. Provide additional comments or information you deem relevant to your response.

Submission Requirements

We request that respondents answer all questions in their response to this RFI. Responses must be sent to autumn@wvsun.org and be received by 4:59pm on Friday, March 17th.

Please note that Proposers must be current and in good standing with both (a) past payments to WV SUN; and (b) updated customer tracking data from previous or active co-op groups (including metrics like kW installed and interconnections completed) before new Proposals will be accepted.

Q&A Process

WV SUN will act as the point of contact for all solar co-op and proposal-related questions on behalf of the participants in this co-op group. Autumn Long will manage all communications. Please submit any questions and/or comments via email to autumn@wvsun.org.

About CPN and WV SUN

Community Power Network (CPN) is a network of grass roots, local, state, and national organizations working to build and to promote locally based renewable energy projects & policies.

WV SUN is a project of CPN and supports the growth of solar in West Virginia through innovative community projects, neighborhood solar co-ops, and strong solar policies. Our belief is that all West Virginians should have the right to produce their own homegrown energy.