

Question and Answers  
Alternative Fuel Readiness Plans  
PON-13-603

September 3, 2013

Eligibility	
Q1	Can this solicitation be applied to electric vehicle infrastructure or is it restricted solely to readiness plans?
A1	This solicitation is limited to readiness planning only for alternative fuels.
Q2	In regards to PON-13-603 - Alternative Fuel Readiness Plans, is electricity used for transportation technology considered an alternative fuel for this program?
A2	Electric vehicle technology is an eligible alternative transportation fuel for purposes of this solicitation.
Q3	We are a public educational institution. Are we eligible to apply for this grant?
A3	“This solicitation is open to California eligible public entities that can meet the requirements of this solicitation. For purposes of this solicitation, eligible public entities include, but are not limited to, those entities that have a direct role in the development, planning, permitting, or oversight of alternative fuel infrastructure such as cities, counties, air, water, and fire districts, and regional planning entities.” To the extent the public educational institution meets the requirements of this solicitation, they are eligible to apply.
Q4	Can an applicant partner with another public agency such as higher education?
A4	Yes. However, the higher education public agency may not count match share funds from state sources.
Q5	Can a University of California or California State University that has federal funds be used as match share?
A5	Yes, provided that the federal funds are eligible to be used for this solicitation.
Q6	Are federal entities, such as the National Park Service, eligible?
A6	No, federal entities are not eligible applicants but can participate in a project with eligible applicant as a project partner or sub-contractor.
Q7	Can regional entities of the California State Department of Parks, such as Orange County, apply or does it have to be a statewide application?
A7	It is at the discretion of the eligible applicant to submit either one statewide

	application or to submit regional applications.
Q8	Do donations from in-kind services, such as volunteers or docents, count towards match share?
A8	In-kind match share from volunteers or docents may be eligible if they are directly related and support the proposed activities specified in the application. The value of all match share must be reasonable, allocable to the proposed project, and properly documented to the Energy Commission.
Q9	The “Background” for this grant is listed on Page 1 and includes ‘Establish workforce training programs, conduct public education and promotion, and create technology centers’. Page 6 lists the Eligible Projects and lists six activities that must be included. Can a proposal be submitted just for workforce training, public education and promotion, and to create technology centers? If yes, how do we include the required activities Page 6? Does a workforce training project have the same retention requirement?
A9	Page 1 describes the statutory background for the Alternative and Renewable Fuel and Vehicle Technology Program (ARFVTP). Page 6 of the solicitation, the mandatory requirements that must be addressed in the application and in the readiness plans prepared by the applicant are described. An application that describes only one of the mandatory requirements, such as training, may not pass the technical screening for other criteria listed.
Q10	I am just doing very basic research and development at this point, and the size of the grants would fit in nicely with my current needs. Is this eligible for funding?
A10	No. Basic research and development is not eligible under this funding solicitation.
Q11	Would hydrogen be considered an eligible "renewable fuel" under PON-13-603, Alternative Fuel Readiness Plans?
A11	Yes.
Q12	Is California Poly San Luis Obispo eligible to submit a proposal in response to PON-13-603?
A12	See response to Question 3.
Q13	Would a Clean Cities coalition be an eligible applicant (as a regional planning entity)?
A13	A member of a Clean Cities coalition that is a California eligible public entity may submit an application on behalf of a Clean Cities coalition.
Q14	Are tribal government’s eligible public entities? What about non-municipal owned utilities?
A14	No, tribal governments are not eligible applicants but can participate in a

	project with eligible applicant as a project partner or sub-contractor.
A14	Independently owned utilities (non-municipal) are not eligible to apply.
A14	Publicly owned utilities (municipal) are eligible to apply.
Q15	Do you consider whether the readiness of the infrastructure (commercial readiness) is ready to go into the ground or not, such as between electric vehicle supply equipment (EVSE) and hydrogen infrastructure as an example?
A15	No. The purpose of this solicitation is to prepare the state for deploying and marketing of alternative fuel infrastructure and alternative fuel vehicles.
Q16	Are you looking at funding fuel specific projects such as liquid natural gas, compressed natural gas, or hydrogen?
A16	Applicants may address a single alternative fuel or multiple fuel types in their plans.
Q17	Can you clarify Slide 23 of the workshop presentation that “All initial questions are due August 26, 2013 by 3:00 p.m.?”
A17	Table 1 of the Application Manual refers to key initial activities. “If questions or clarifications are identified subsequent to the “Deadline for Initial Written Questions” (August 26, 2013), the Energy Commission may post an addendum that responds with answers and clarifications”.
Q18	Can an applicant include a subcontract to a private sector organization?
A18	Yes.
Q19	Must the plan address stakeholders statewide or can the focus be regional? For example, can the plan focus on stakeholders in Southern California Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD)? Similarly can the plan address a single set of stakeholders (such as gas station owners, first responders)?
A19	A plan can address readiness on statewide, regional, or community wide basis. A readiness plan can also address a single set of stakeholders such as fleet owners, fuel retail outlets, or first responders.
A19	The plan must address all of the mandatory requirements of this solicitation. It is at the discretion of the applicant to engage the applicable stakeholder groups either singly or comprehensively in the development of the plan.
Q20	Does the Energy Commission intend to fund projects which are fuel specific (e.g. natural gas, hydrogen, propane, electric, biofuels, etc.)?
A20	Applicants may address a single alternative fuel or multiple fuel types in their plans.
Q21	Are there limitations on more than one application from a region? For instance could a regional entity, as well as local cities or counties in the same region, apply?

A21	Applications addressing the same fuel types or activities within regions previously funded or recommended for funding under this solicitation will be disqualified unless the previously funded or recommended project ended before being completed. The intent of this language is to prevent the Commission from paying for duplicative work. Note that an addendum will be issued.
Q22	If we are interested in applying for the grant, are we required to apply through our department (Department of State Hospitals) or may we submit the application individually as a separate entity?
A22	The application must be submitted by an eligible entity and signed by an authorized representative of the eligible entity. Please refer to Section II on Page 6 of the solicitation manual for more information.
Q23	Must any physical project that may eventually emanate from this plan be accessible to the public or can it be for restricted use by a specific public entity, such as for city vehicles only? For example, could we possibly develop a plan that would eventually place an E85 (ethanol) facility inside a city's yards such that only city vehicles can access?
A23	The purpose of this solicitation is to address issues and develop strategies for the deployment of alternative fuel infrastructure and encourage the adoption of alternative fuel vehicles. The applicant can address in their plans, infrastructure needs for both public and private fleets whether publicly accessible or not and regardless of alternative fuel type.
Q24	Does this solicitation fund the cost of installing charging stations?
A24	No. This solicitation does not fund the installation of any alternative fuel infrastructure.
Q25	Can this program run in conjunction with the installation of an actual station under PON-13-603, Alternative Fuel Readiness Plans?
A25	This solicitation is separate and distinct from any specific infrastructure installation project. Infrastructure installation is not an eligible activity under PON-13-603.
Q26	With respect to secure facilities, is there a requirement that addressed infrastructure in secure facilities? As an example, must EVSE be publicly accessible?
A26	There is no specific requirement in the solicitation that alternative fuel infrastructure be publicly accessible. Please note that this solicitation does not fund the installation of any alternative fuel infrastructure.
Q27	Is the Applicant allowed to include private subcontractors? Would a software tool for fleet managers doing economic analysis/valuation be an eligible subcontractor?

A27	Yes.
Q28	Can a metropolitan planning organization and/or a council of area governments in California qualify as the lead agency in the application?
A28	Yes.
Q29	Could an air quality management district in California qualify as the lead agency in the application?
A29	Yes.
<b>Application</b>	
Q30	I wanted to make you aware that the first page of Attachment 5, "Att B-1 Task Summary" is not entirely accurate due to the formula in cells T10, T11 and T12 which covers Match Funding Totals for each project section. Those three cells do not pull the matching funding totals from the Match Funding Tab, "Att B-6 Match Funding" like the first five cells on B-1.
A30	Addendum 1 was issued on 9/3/2013 to correct this error. Note: if you have already submitted an application, you will retain your place in line for application consideration and evaluation.
Q31	If a city has alternative fuel stations, will they be as competitive as cities that do not? In other words will a plan to expand be as competitive?
A31	All applications will be equally considered regardless of the status of alternative fuel stations within a jurisdiction.
Q32	Does a workforce training project need to complete California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) paperwork?
A32	All applicants are required to submit CEQA Compliance Information in Attachment 07.
Q33	We seek clarification on an issue in the Program Opportunity Notice Section III – Application Format, Table 2 relative to CEQA. Can you provide some examples of circumstances where inclusion of a CEQA Compliance Form would be required in the filing of an application in response to this solicitation?
A33	All applicants must complete and submit the CEQA Compliance Form contained in Attachment 7. The level of complexity of the responses on the paperwork will depend on the project proposal.
Q34	Can a public university of higher education in California qualify as an affiliate or partner in the initial filing? How should such an entity and their role best be characterized in an application?
A34	Yes. See responses to questions 3, 4, and 5.
A34	It is at the discretion of the applicant to define and characterize the role of project partners.

Q35	Does preparedness and readiness planning for alternative fuel infrastructure include planning and training provisions outside of infrastructure and more focused on alternative fuel vehicle support? Specifically, could training and planning focus on best safety practices at entities such as vehicle maintenance and repair facilities?
A35	The plans may address, in addition to the mandatory requirements identified in this solicitation, training needs of alternative fuel vehicle maintenance and repair facilities.
Q36	In the Scope of Work (SOW) – Attachment 2, Task 1.7 discusses the need for permits to be completed and provided as part of an Award Agreement. Can you provide examples of what permits might be required in the development of an Alternative Fuel Readiness Plan? Please explain how this permitting description is relevant to the scope of developing a plan and the subject of this Notice PON-13-603.
A36	The applicant is responsible for determining whether or not permits are required for their proposed projects. If no permits are required, Task 1.7 allows for Recipients to document in a letter that no permits are required.
Q37	With respect to the scope of the application and the Technical Screening Criteria, must plans address <u>all</u> of the criteria listed?
A37	Yes.
Q38	How do you define the cost to prepare the application?
A38	Costs to prepare an application are ineligible for reimbursement. An ineligible cost may include, as an example, a consultant paid to prepare the application.
Q39	What is the agreement period of performance? (e.g. two years, one year.)
A39	The maximum term for an agreement with the Energy Commission under this solicitation is two years.
Q40	On page 11 of the Application Workshop presentation, it states “Applicants may apply for only one grant agreement at a time under this solicitation”. Does this mean that non-prime grant applicants are not eligible to apply for more than one grant agreement? (i.e., partner on grant agreements in different regions).
A40	An applicant may only submit one application at a time. Project partners that are not the applicant may be eligible as project partners for more than one application.
Q41	Could match share be a part of an implementation project?
A41	This solicitation is for the readiness planning of alternative fuels. The implementation of alternative fuel station are considered separate and distinct from activities funded under this solicitation and therefore are not be

	eligible as match share.
Q42	Can you submit an application for multiple alternative fuels or for just one alternative fuel?
A42	Both types of applications are acceptable.
<b>Award Process</b>	
Q43	Do requesting and/or having a debriefing preclude resubmitting that same application or another application?
A43	An applicant may resubmit an application if they do not pass the administrative or technical screening on the original application regardless of the debriefing process.
Q44	The solicitation was released on August 12, 2013 and it is first-come, first-served. Is the program oversubscribed at this time?
A44	No. Since applications are funded on a first-come, first-served basis, potential applicants are encouraged to submit applications as quickly as possible. Once the solicitation has been fully subscribed, the Energy Commission will notify stakeholders that the solicitation is closed.
Q45	It states that there is a deadline for application on September 3, 2013 at 3:00 p.m., yet it states "Continuous until funds are exhausted or April 30, 2014, whichever occurs first." Is the deadline only for the review of the first batch of applications and future applications will be taken as time goes?
A45	The deadline to submit applications is "continuous until funds are exhausted or April 30, 2014 at 3:00 p.m., whichever occurs first." The Application Manual identifies September 13, 2013 as the date the "Initial Notice of Proposed Award" would be published. If there any applications received subsequent to this initial date, a revised NOPA will be issued. Once funds are fully subscribed, the solicitation will be closed.
Q46	How many applications have been received to date?
A46	As of August 30, 2013, 1 application has been received. However, the application has not been evaluated for compliance with the minimum administrative and technical requirements.
Q47	How many days after an application is submitted can I expect the NOPA?
A47	The date for the initial NOPA is expected to be September 13, 2013.
<b>Miscellaneous</b>	
Q48	How important is it to attend the Pre-Application Workshop on August 23, 2013? Is it required for the grant application?
A48	Attendance at the workshop is not required to submit an application.