**Questions and Answers**

**GFO-23-311**

**Advancing Precipitation Enhancement in California**

**April 19, 2024**

The following answers are based on California Energy Commission (CEC) staff’s interpretation of the questions received. It is the Applicant’s responsibility to review the purpose of the solicitation and to determine whether or not their proposed project is eligible for funding by reviewing the Eligibility Requirements within the solicitation. The CEC cannot give advice as to whether or not a particular project is eligible for funding, because not all proposal details are known.

**Administrative**

**Q1:** **We are a non-profit Federally-funded Research and Development Center that is not under the Department of Energy, and we follow uniform guidance for all non-profits. The GFO states that to apply we must accept the contract terms and conditions outright, however, we wanted to know if in fact there is any opportunity for negotiation?**

A1: As indicated in the Solicitation Manual, Section II.A.2 Terms and Conditions (p.21) it is stated that applicants who, by law, cannot agree to the terms and conditions listed without negotiation can apply and request to negotiate terms. The CEC retains the sole right to refuse to agree to any changes to terms and conditions. Also note that the electronic application submission system used for this solicitation (the ECAMS system) will require the applicant to agree to certain certifications before submitting an application, including certifying the applicant will conduct the proposed project according to the terms and conditions without negotiation. Applicants who, by law, cannot agree to the terms and conditions will not be penalized for agreeing to the ECAMS system certifications.

**Q2: If awarded, are award funds distributed in lump sum or milestones/batches based on a plan?**

A2: For details on payment of funds please review the **Payments of Funds** section in the relevant EPIC Grant terms and conditions located at: <https://www.energy.ca.gov/funding-opportunities/funding-resources>. The CEC may only approve and reimburse for actual costs that are properly documented in accordance with the grant agreement terms and conditions.

**Q3: We understand that "Match funds must be spent only during the agreement term, either before or concurrently with CEC funds or in accordance with an approved Match Fund Spending Plan." Do match funds have to be held in an escrow account before they are deployed during the agreement term?**

A3: There is no requirement for match funds to be held in an escrow account, however, all applications that include match funds must submit commitment letters “that: (1) identify the source(s) of the funds; (2) justify the dollar value claimed; (3) provide an unqualified (i.e., without reservation or limitation) commitment that guarantees the availability of the funds for the project; and (4) provide a strategy for replacing the funds if they are significantly reduced or lost. Please see Commitment and Support Letters Form Attachment. Commitment and support letters must be submitted with the application to be considered.” (Solicitation Manual, Section I.K., p.17-19)

**Q4: Could you clarify whether multiple applications are allowed from one institution? Page 3 of the solicitation seems to include language that would indicate that this is a limited submission opportunity "Applicants may only submit one application under this solicitation." But page 4 seems to say multiple applications can be submitted from our institution: "If an applicant submits multiple applications, each application must be for a distinct project (i.e., no overlap with respect to the tasks described in the Scope of Work)."**

A4: An Applicant can submit multiple applications to this GFO, as long as each application is for a distinct project (i.e., no overlap with respect to the tasks described in the Scope of Work). Addendum 1 makes edits to the Solicitation Manual in Section 1.A (page 3), removing the sentence “Applicants may only submit one application under this solicitation”.

**Technical**

**Q5: It is not clear from your solicitation that there are sufficient funds to try to replicate even one season of the Sierra Cooperative Pilot Project – which ran over ten years with an annual budget of between $2 and $5 million annually in 1985 dollars, under the Bureau of Reclamations’ Project Skywater.**

A5: The solicitation does not require a duplication of a comprehensive, multi-year project such as the Sierra Cooperative Pilot Project, or even a season of such a project. Applicants for this solicitation (GFO-23-311) are urged to consider the available funding and to focus their proposals on research that is responsive to criteria articulated in the Project Focus (Section 1.C) of the solicitation manual and that will, in particular, be supported by empirical evidence. Empirical evidence could be from past or present cloud seeding campaigns (with a strong preference for orographic campaigns in California), from other sources of data, or collected as part of the proposed research. Applicants should clearly articulate how the proposed research will directly improve the efficacy of cloud seeding efforts in California.

**Q6:**  **Transferring what may be considered a working technology from Idaho or Wyoming to California could be very problematic given the significant differences in cloud structures and microphysical processes.**

A6: Staff appreciate that there are differences between California conditions and elsewhere, such as in the Intermountain West, and recognize that these conditions may necessitate different approaches and technologies. Applicants need to clearly articulate how proposed research will directly improve cloud seeding operations in California. The brief review submitted with your questions clearly highlights some of these differences and is appreciated by staff.