**Group 1 and Group 2:**

| Number | Question/Answer |
| --- | --- |
| Q.1 | Can you clarify what the expectations are for the climate projections and data platform by April 2022? Are there minimum requirements that need to be completed by that date, and then what are the expectations for the remaining years of the project? |
| A.1 | As written in the solicitation manual (see Section I.C.1, p. 7*),* Group 1 is expected to develop climate projections that will be available by April 2022. With regard to Group 2 (see Section I.C.2, “Additional considerations,” p. 11), the solicitation manual indicates that the data platform developed by this group must be ready to receive and serve the climate projections to research teams by April 2022. For both Group 1 and Group 2, the solicitation manual also describes several other minimum required project activities that are not required to be completed by April 2022. For example, Group 1 is also tasked with identifying priority projections, and Group 2 is tasked with significant stakeholder engagement, data analysis and platform development activities in making projections and derived data products thereof available for research and decision making. |
| Q.2 | Should funding for Group 1 and 2 cross-engagement come primarily from Group 2, or should both groups consider resources for cross-group engagement? |
| A.2 | As written in the solicitation manual (see Section I.C.1., p.7 and Section I.C.2., p.10) Applicants for both Groups 1 and 2 must demonstrate their capacity for coordination with the research team that is funded by the other group. |

**Group 1: Development of Climate Projections for California and Identification of Priority Projections**

| Number | Question/Answer |
| --- | --- |
| Q.3 | For the variables of relevance to the electricity sector on weather. Should we account for different levels of cloud cover, such as rolling cloud cover, overcast, fog and full cloud cover, since each type effects solar output? |
| A.3 | The solicitation manual (Section I.C.1, p. 8) states that the spatially and temporally comprehensive downscaled climate projections for California produced by Group 1 funding must “include variables of relevance to the electricity sector, such as temperature, precipitation, surface solar radiation, vector wind (speed and direction), relative humidity, and a suite of hydrologically relevant variables.” Applicants are encouraged to provide their rationale for inclusion of any additional variables that they consider relevant to the electricity sector. |
| Q.4 | For both wind and solar should the variables of relevance to the electricity sector also take into account days of overcapacity production and curtailment risk? |
| A.4 | The solicitation manual (see Section I.C.1, p. 7) states that research funded under Group 1 will “develop climate change projections that will be available for energy sector planning and as a foundation for California’s anticipated Fifth Assessment. … In addition to basic climate variables such as temperature and precipitation, the projections will also provide improved understanding of key variables of importance to California’s energy sector —such as wind speed and direction, and surface solar radiation.” There is no requirement that Group 1 develop projected days of overcapacity production or projected curtailment risk. However, Group 1 is (as noted on p.7) expected to produce projections that can support research on and planning for electricity sector resilience, and Applicants should articulate their rationale for their proposed approach. |
| Q.5 | Does the CEC expect that Group 1 efforts should be front loaded to build a foundation for downstream Group 2 efforts? Meaning, should most of the effort be early in the project in the first years 1, 2, 3? |
| A.5 | Applicants are encouraged to describe how they will allocate time and resources to achieve the goals set forth in the solicitation manual. For example, as discussed in the response to Q1, there are expectations for some project activities from both Group 1 and Group 2 to be completed by April 2022. Applicants need to describe how they will allocate funds and time to achieve the other goals set forth in the solicitation manual. The solicitation manual indicates an Anticipated Agreement End Date of March 31, 2026 (see Section I.E, p. 13); this date represents the latest possible end date based on the liquidation date of the funds (i.e. the date after which project funds will no longer be available to reimburse the Recipient). Accordingly, all work must be scheduled for completion by this date. **However, projects may be completed in advance** of this date. Applicants are encouraged to propose an end date that is appropriate to their proposed project. |

**Group 2: Analytics and Data Platform to Facilitate Electricity Sector Adaptation**

| Number | Question/Answer |
| --- | --- |
| Q.6 | Will the data platform be expected to host local and/or regional datasets requested by stakeholders in addition to hosting statewide gridded and relevant station data? |
| A.6 | Applicants are expected to describe how they anticipate gathering and hosting observed data identified through stakeholder engagement as important to support stakeholder needs (see Section I.C.1, p. 9-11), in addition to climate projections. |
| Q.7 | Would the Recipient for Group 2 be required to host data from non-energy sector products of California’s Fifth Climate Change Assessment? |
| A.7 | No. The Energy Commission (CEC) does not have authority over research that is not funded by CEC, including non-energy research associated with California’s climate change assessments. Further, CEC cannot require its Recipients to host data products whose availability is uncertain. |
| Q.8 | Can a subcontractor be part of two distinct Group 2 proposals (say, with Prime 1 and Prime 2) where the sub’s contributions to Proposal 1 consist of Tasks A, B, C, D and the sub’s contributions to Proposal 2 consist of Tasks A, B, E, F? E.g., the SOW between the two differs, but there is some overlap. |
| A.8 | A subcontractor can be on two distinct Group 2 applications. The solicitation manual (Section I.A, p. 4) states: “If an applicant submits multiple applications that address the same project group, each application must be for a distinct project (i.e., no overlap with respect to the tasks described in the Scope of Work).”  As an additional point of clarification, this restriction applies to **applicants** that submit multiple applications for the same group. If an entity will be a subcontractor to two different applicants within the same group this restriction **does not apply**. It is allowable for an entity to be a subcontractor to two different applicants, and for the subcontractor’s work as described in the Scope of Work tasks to be identical in each application. |
| Q.9 | Given that the data platform under Group 2 should be developed by April 2022, and that the period of performance may extend until 2026, is it possible to include revisions to the data platform following 2022? If so, to what degree are revisions acceptable? |
| A.9 | The solicitation manual (Section I.C.1, p. 11) states that “The timeline for platform development must be such that the data platform is ready to receive and serve the climate projections to research teams contributing to the Fifth Assessment by April 2022.” This does not mean that the entire platform will be finalized by April 2022. |
| Q.10 | Given any constraints on the availability of Fifth Assessment information through the Group 1 project, should applicants to Group 2 presume the use of existing Fourth Assessment data to establish the data platform? |
| A.10 | No. Group 2 applicants should not presume the use of existing Fourth Assessment data to establish the data platform. As described in the solicitation manual (Section I.C.2, p. 9); Group 2 research will develop:   * Rigorous analytics to fulfill decision support needs identified through targeted stakeholder engagement, and * An open data platform to make climate projections and data publicly available.   Projections to be made available on the data platform will include those developed by the state (a core task of Group 1) as well as any externally developed projections identified as priorities for energy sector planning and/or Fifth Assessment research (another task of Group 1). In addition to climate projections, observed data identified through stakeholder engagement as important to support stakeholder needs should also be included in the data platform. |
| Q.11 | Was Cal-Adapt created by a contractor and will that contractor not have an advantage in bidding for this group to solicitation? |
| A.11 | Cal-Adapt was created originally through CEC funding. Its continued enhancements are being funded by the CEC and the Strategic Growth Council. As described in the solicitation manual (Section I.C.2, p. 9); “Research funded by Group 2 will provide California’s energy sector stakeholders with access to data and analytically rigorous approaches that help identify how climate data and projections can be used to foster climate adaptation and provide an interactive, publicly available, open-source data platform.” The emphasis on development and delivery of rigorous analytics to inform needs elicited through stakeholder engagement, as well as the imperative to develop data structures and a data management plan for large datasets, depart from what prior or ongoing Cal-Adapt development grants have supported.  As stated in the solicitation manual (see Section IV.A, p.33), “Applications will be evaluated and scored based on responses to the information requested in this solicitation and on any other information available, such as on past performance of CEC agreements. To evaluate applications, the CEC will organize an Evaluation Committee that consists primarily of CEC staff. The Evaluation Committee may use technical expert reviewers to provide an analysis of applications.” |
| Q.12 | Could you clarify how you would expect to leverage the current Cal-Adapt platform. Are you considering any shift on the services covered by the current version of Cal-Adapt? |
| A.12 | As stated in the solicitation manual (Section I.C.2, p. 11), “The developers of the data platform will leverage the current version of Cal-Adapt, consult with stakeholders, and coordinate with the CEC to determine the data platform architecture and design.” The solicitation manual also notes (Section I.C.2, p. 10) that “the data platform and analytics developed through this effort could become the foundation for a next-generation version of Cal-Adapt, or they could stand independently.”  The solicitation manual is not prescriptive in how an applicant proposes to leverage the current Cal-Adapt platform.  Note that the two grants currently supporting the development of Cal-Adapt are expected to end in March 2022. The Commission Agreement Managers of the prior CEC funded Cal-Adapt development agreements will assist, to the extent allowable under the terms and conditions of those agreements, to coordinate with any Group 2 grant recipient.  Regarding the part of the question asking whether CEC is “considering any shift” in the services provided by the current version of Cal-Adapt: it is unclear what the question means by “services.” The scope and goals of the CEC-funded Cal-Adapt development grants and Group 2 are—as indicated in the response to Q.11—distinct yet complementary. |
| Q.13 | Can you share any additional information about the Energy Commission's open data initiative? Are there supporting white papers or supporting documents to help applicants understand what the open data initiative is and what the requirements are for determining the ultimate location of the data platform and hosted data.” |
| A.13 | The CEC is working to contribute to the state's broader effort to provide public data in a manner that can be easily searched and downloaded and that facilitates analyses that involve data sets from different sources. This includes working with California's Natural Resources Agency to contribute to their Open Data Portal (https://data.cnra.ca.gov/) and also continuing to make public data more available on the CEC's own websites. CEC’s approach to data governance and provision of data to the public is expected to evolve early in the course of the grant, and the Recipient would be invited to provide input to the Commission Agreement Manager to support any relevant ongoing discussions. |

**Stakeholder Engagement Questions**

| Number | Question/Answer |
| --- | --- |
| Q.14 | Are there any formal aspects to the Stakeholder Engagement process that are requirements of the funding, such as a Technical Advisory Committee, Presentations to CEC Commissioners or staff working groups? |
| A.14 | Applicants are expected to participate and develop materials for a Project Kick-Off Meeting, Critical Project Review Meetings, and a Final Project Meeting and to convene and facilitate a Technical Advisory Committee per the requirements listed in the Attachment 5 Scope of Work Template (p. 5-8 & p. 12-14). |
| Q.15 | Is there any additional guidance that can be provided on the structure of the stakeholder process beyond what is in the solicitation manual? For example, technical advisory groups, sector based working groups, focus groups. |
| A.15 | Applicants are expected to convene and facilitate a Technical Advisory Committee per the requirements listed in the Attachment 5 Scope of Work Template (p. 12-14).  For stakeholder engagement beyond the Technical Advisory Committee, the solicitation is written deliberately to not be prescriptive in the approach taken for stakeholder engagement. Applicants are expected to provide their rationale and approach to stakeholder engagement for achieving the goals articulated in the solicitation manual. |
| Q.16 | Can any guidance be provided on the breadth of the stakeholder process—should it focus on electricity industry stakeholders, or should it include environmental and safety advocates, renewable energy companies, micro-grid or other distributed systems representatives, local government representatives, ecosystem scientists, etc.? |
| A.16 | With regard to Group 1, the solicitation manual (Section I.C.1, p. 7) states that “Development of the methodology for selecting priority projections must be informed by the climate research community and energy sector stakeholders through targeted and deliberate stakeholder engagement and, as noted above, may involve collaboration with efforts funded external to this work.” Applicants are encouraged to identify applicable stakeholder groups and provide their rationale for selecting the identified groups.  With regard to Group 2, the solicitation manual (Section I.C.1, p. 9) states that: “For example, this research will provide analytics for use by IOU’s, researchers, agencies, and others to support climate resilient planning and infrastructure investment. For example, the analytics will support IOUs’ adaptation planning processes and is expected to support implementation of CPUC’s ongoing adaptation rulemaking R. 18-04-019.” Applicants are encouraged to identify applicable stakeholder groups and provide their rationale for selecting the identified groups. |
| Q.17 | Is there a preferred structure for the stakeholder process such as topic-specific working groups, focus groups, larger workshops to present the results of Project 1 to participants in Project 2? |
| A.17 | The solicitation is written deliberately to not prescribe the approach taken for stakeholder engagement. Applicants are expected to provide their rationale and approach to stakeholder engagement for achieving the goals articulated in the solicitation manual. Coordination between funded projects in Groups 1 and 2 is expected and applicants are encouraged to provide their rationale and proposed approach for coordination. |
| Q.18 | Should we assume that much of the stakeholder process will be conducted virtually, or should we assume some face-to-face meetings or other convenings can take place in the latter years of the grant effort? |
| A.18 | Current recommendations from state and local officials encourage physical distancing to slow the spread of COVID-19. State and local recommendations over the course of the anticipated agreement terms cannot be predicted. Applicants are encouraged to plan for and address the challenges associated with virtual stakeholder engagement and allow for flexibility to respond to evolving circumstances. |
| Q.19 | Can any guidance be provided on the budget for the stakeholder process? The narrative and statements made at the pre-application workshop demonstrated that the stakeholder process is seen as equally critical and valuable as the research, analytics, and data representation. Does this mean that the stakeholder process over the 5-year grant period should have a budget of $500,000 - $1,500,000? |
| A.19 | Applicants are encouraged to provide a clearly articulated and detailed approach to stakeholder engagement, including dedicated funding and expertise. It is the responsibility of the applicant to determine costs associated with stakeholder engagement, which will depend on a number of factors, such as the proposed approach to engagement and the level of expertise brought by key members of the project team. |

**General Questions**

| Number | Question/Answer |
| --- | --- |
| Q.20 | Seeing that these projects will involve state agencies from a wide spectrum; Will the submitted applications be reviewed and will your evaluation be coordinated with other state agencies? |
| A.20 | CEC frequently reaches out to other state agencies with relevant expertise for technical review of applications. It is the intent of the evaluation committee for this Grant Funding Opportunity to reach out to relevant state agencies for technical review. |
| Q.21 | The governor had proposed a rather robust allocation for California’s Fifth Climate Change Assessment, but it's possible that that allocation will be changed in that the structure and capacity of the Fifth Assessment may be reduced. Is that something that applicants should take into consideration when crafting their responses? |
| A.21 | Although the timing and funding associated with many aspects of an anticipated Fifth Assessment remain unclear, this should not significantly change how applicants craft their responses, because (1) the overarching goal of this Grant Funding Opportunity remains to support research and planning for electricity sector resilience; and (2) CEC’s funding for electricity and natural gas resilience research—which comprises the energy-related contribution to California’s climate change assessments—is already approved through EPIC and Public Interest Energy Research (PIER) Natural Gas funding plans. With regard to the solicitation manual’s indication that Groups 1 and 2 will support and coordinate with an anticipated Fifth Assessment, applicants should continue to anticipate a CEC-funded suite of energy sector resilience research that would contribute to an anticipated Fifth Assessment. |
| Q.22 | Since you appear to expect to fund multiple projects within each group. How are you expecting the project within each group to relate to the requirements that successful applicants must demonstrate? i.e. Can a project address a portion of the requirements and be successful or must all projects address all requirements |
| A.22 | It is ***not* expected** that multiple projects will be funded within each group. Please see the solicitation manual (Section I.D.1, p. 12), for an indication of available funding, minimum award amount, and maximum award amount for each Group. It ***is* expected** that applicants address all items listed under “**Successful applicants must demonstrate:**…” as well as those listed under “**Projects in this group must, at a minimum**:…", as described on pages 7-11 of the solicitation manual. |
| Q.23 | Will the PowerPoint presentation and the recording from the pre-application workshop be posted for all to view? |
| A.23 | The presentation slides and recording are available at: <https://www.energy.ca.gov/solicitations/2020-06/gfo-19-311-climate-scenarios-and-analytics-support-electricity-sector> |
| Q.24 | Recent CEC communications have conveyed that signed and scanned copies of Attachments are considered acceptable. However, the pre-application webinar indicated a need for a “wet signature.” Can you please confirm what type of signature will be deemed acceptable? |
| A.24 | The CEC may have waived the requirement for a signature on application materials for this solicitation. If a notice regarding CEC’s waiver of the signature requirement appears here: [https://www.energy.ca.gov/funding-opportunities/solicitations](https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.energy.ca.gov%2Ffunding-opportunities%2Fsolicitations&data=01%7C01%7C%7C81a14cec29dd45e6fefb08d823620374%7Cac3a124413f44ef68d1bbaa27148194e%7C0&sdata=YUp5KNuFbf9uJpDJ5upzQFOG6jJIcvGvcluvMflLHOI%3D&reserved=0) then signatures are not required on any application documents: |
| Q.25 | The solicitation manual (Section I.E., p. 13) lists the anticipated agreement end date as March 31, 2026. Can you confirm this is a typo and should instead read March 31, 2022? |
| A.25 | The Anticipated Agreement End Date is March 31, 2026, this is not a typo. This date is associated with the funding liquidation date (i.e. the project funding will no longer be available). All project work must be scheduled for completion by this date. **However, projects may be completed in advance** of this date and the applicant is encouraged to provide a project specific appropriate end-date. Please also see the answer to Q.5. |
| Q.26 | Per the pre-application workshop where you indicated the potential outcome of more than one award per group, should that occur, are there funds above the maximum amount to distribute or does the maximum amount get distributed among those awardees? |
| A.26 | The solicitation manual (Section I.D.3, p. 12) states that: “Along with any other rights and remedies available to it, the CEC reserves the right to:   * Increase or decrease the available funding and the minimum/maximum award amounts described in this section. * Allocate any additional or unawarded funds to passing applications, in rank order. * Reallocate funding between any of the groups*.* * Reduce funding to an amount deemed appropriate if the budgeted funds do not provide full funding for agreements. In this event, the Recipient and Commission Agreement Manager will reach agreement on a reduced Scope of Work commensurate with available funding.” |
| Q.27 | Per the pre-application workshop, if you see there are deficiencies in some aspect of a bid, then are you able to include elements of competing bids together on award into a consortium? |
| A.27 | The CEC considers each submitted application individually according to the application evaluation process described in Section IV of the solicitation manual. The CEC will not combine elements/parts/aspects of competing applications together to form a different application than what was submitted.  Applicants are encouraged to seek partnering opportunities on the Empower Innovation web platform at: <https://www.empowerinnovation.net/en/custom/funding/view/9794>. Partnering opportunities may allow an entity to be a part of a stronger application. |
| Q.28 | If two project applications are complementary and both are funded (either in different groups or in the same group), might applicants adjust Scopes of Work for improved coordination prior to the development of legally binding agreements? |
| A.28 | As described in Section I.C, the awardees from each group will be expected to coordinate with each other. After a NOPA has been posted and awardees are proposed for both groups, CEC staff will work with the proposed awardees to finalize their Scopes of Work, which may be modified for improved project and team coordination, as needed. |
| Q.29 | There are a limited number of groups in California with the niche expertise to be able to provide the research services required in the GFO to the quality expected by CEC. As a result, is CEC able to waive the requirement for non-overlapping bid teams to provide CEC with a broad range of options for successful project delivery that include overlapping project teams? Additionally, how does the CEC define overlap on tasks? Does that mean that task approaches should differ if submitting on two separate teams for the same task? Or is it forbidden to participate in the same task whether or not your approach differs?   * + GFO page 4 (Section I.A.): “Applicants may submit multiple applications, though each application must address only one of the project groups identified above. If an applicant submits multiple applications that address the same project group, each application must be for a distinct project (i.e., no overlap with respect to the tasks described in the Scope of Work).” |
| A.29 | There is no restriction in this GFO on overlapping bid teams. Therefore, if an entity chooses to be an applicant or applicant team member on both a Group 1 and Group 2 application, and both applications are awarded, the CEC will expect the applicant or applicant team member to fulfill all of its commitments under each project as specifically described in both applications.  If an applicant submits multiple applications for the same group, each application cannot overlap with respect to the tasks described in the Scope of Work. As an example, if an applicant submits two applications- Application A and Application B- to Group 1, the tasks described in each application’s Scope of Work must be distinct.  As an additional point of clarification, this restriction applies to **applicants** that submit multiple applications for the same group. If an entity will be a subcontractor to two different applicants within the same group this restriction **does not apply**. It is allowable for an entity to be a subcontractor to two different applicants, and for the subcontractor’s work as described in the Scope of Work tasks to be identical in each application. |
| Q.30 | Does the prime have to be a California entity? |
| A.30 | There is no requirement that the Prime Recipient has to be a California-based entity. Applicants should consider Scoring Criteria 6: CEC Funds Spent in California in the solicitation manual (Section IV.F, p. 41) for details regarding the impact of Funds Spent in California on application evaluations.  Additionally, as stated in the solicitation manual (Section II.A.3, p. 24) all corporations, limited liability companies (LLCs), limited partnerships (LPs) and limited liability partnerships (LLPs) that conduct intrastate business in California are required to be registered and in good standing with the California Secretary of State prior to the grant project being recommended for approval at an CEC Business Meeting. |
| Q.31 | Our understanding is that a publicly owned utility (POU) cannot be the recipient of EPIC funding. However, we wonder if (1): the project can leverage their collaboration system and data for their project; (2), recipients can pay the publicly owned utilities’ engagement, such as labor cost; and (3) if POU’s contribution[s] can be considered as cost share for this grant? |
| A.31 | This solicitation is open to all public and private entities with the exception of publicly owned electric utilities (POUs). In accordance with CPUC Decision 12-05-037, funds administered by the CEC may not be used for any purposes associated with POU activities (see p. 24, Section II.A.1). For the purposes of this solicitation, POUs cannot receive any EPIC funds, POUs can contribute match as long as it meets the match funding requirements of the solicitation, and a recipient can pay a POU match funds for its labor as long as it meets the match funding requirements of the solicitation. |
| Q.32 | Are the national laboratories and individuals eligible? |
| A.32 | This solicitation is open to all public and private entities with the exception of publicly owned electric utilities. This includes national Laboratories and individuals. For the purposes of this solicitation, all public and private entities that apply are required to be registered and in good standing with the California Secretary of State and Sole proprietors must be registered with the appropriate county prior to their project being recommended for approval at an CEC Business Meeting. |
| Q.33 | At the pre application workshop it was noted that all private entities must register with the California Secretary of State. Sole proprietors may not be registered with the Secretary of State. The manual notes that registering with county entities, as appropriate, is sufficient for sole proprietors. Which is correct—the pre-application workshop or solicitation? |
| A.33 | The language in the solicitation manual is correct. The solicitation manual (Section II.A.3, p. 24) states that: “All corporations, limited liability companies (LLCs), limited partnerships (LPs) and limited liability partnerships (LLPs) that conduct intrastate business in California are required to be registered and in good standing with the California Secretary of State prior to its project being recommended for approval at an CEC Business Meeting. If not currently registered with the California Secretary of State, applicants are encouraged to contact the Secretary of State’s Office as soon as possible to avoid potential delays in beginning the proposed project(s) (should the application be successful). For more information, contact the Secretary of State’s Office via its website at www.sos.ca.gov. Sole proprietors using a fictitious business name must be registered with the appropriate county and provide evidence of registration to the CEC prior to their project being recommended for approval at an CEC Business Meeting.” |
| Q.34 | Are Subcontractors to the Prime required to submit Letters of Support or Letters of Commitment? |
| A.34 | Subcontractors are only required to submit a Letter of Commitment if they are providing match funding to the project. Subcontractors are not required to, but may submit a Letter of Support. For more details regarding Letters of Commitment and Support please see Section II.D.10, p. 31 of the solicitation manual. |
| Q.35 | How can an independent consultant providing weather data to the Energy Commission and others get involved in these projects? |
| A.35 | There are a number of options available depending on the type of involvement one is seeking. Eligible applicants, which includes all public and private entities with the exception of publicly owned utilities, are welcome to submit an application to the Grant Funding Opportunity. It is also possible to find project partners through the Empower Innovation web platform – which can be accessed at: <https://www.empowerinnovation.net/en/custom/funding/view/9794> |
| Q.36 | Re: Match Funding. Say an applicant requests $3.5 million in funding. Minimum match funding would be $175,000. Is it correct that an application with $315,001 in cash match funding would earn 10 preference points, but a proposal with $10,000,000 in kind match funding would only earn 5 preference points? |
| A.36 | The example posed in the question is correct. Cash match will be considered more favorably than in-kind contributions during the scoring phase.  Please see p. 21, Section I.K for definitions of match funding categories and p.43, Section IV.F for match funding scoring criteria. |
| Q.37 | If we claim the maximum amount of funding for a specific group, do the match funds supplement this amount to increase the amount of funding for that group beyond the maximum amount? |
| A.37 | The maximum award amounts listed in the table on pg. 12, Section I.D, refers to the maximum **CEC funds** that may be awarded to a grant recipient. Match funds are in addition to CEC funds requested.  Example: Applicant requests maximum CEC funding amount for Group 2 ($3,500,000) and pledges $500,000 in match funding. The total project amount is $4,000,000. |
| Q.38 | Can a project funded by companies outside of California count as part of the cost share? |
| A.38 | Companies outside of California can contribute match to the project.  Note that **CEC funds** budgeted to companies outside of California are not likely to count towards the Funds Spent in California criterion. The Funds Spent in California criterion only applies to CEC funds, not match. See p. 22, Section I.L for a detailed explanation of Funds Spent in California and Scoring Criterion 6, p. 41, Section IV.F, for a description of how Funds Spent in California is scored. |
| Q.39 | Would the salary earned by an employee of a California Based Entity, paying California income tax, but working remotely out of state be considered funds spent in California? |
| A.39 | If the employee pays California state income taxes on wages received for work performed under a grant agreement resulting from this GFO, then the employee’s compensation is considered to be funds spent in California. |
| Q.40 | What is the cap on the indirect cost rate, overhead rate for UC’s or university of California applicants? |
| A.40 | As written in the current University of California EPIC Grant Terms and Conditions (Section 15.E, p. 12): “For any of the 10 University of California (UC) campuses and the UC Office of the President, whether funds are received through a prime award or through a subaward from another UC location, the maximum indirect cost rate allowable under this Agreement is 25% of Modified Total Direct Cost (MDTC).”  EPIC Terms and Conditions can be accessed through the CEC website at: https://www.energy.ca.gov/funding-opportunities/funding-resources |
| Q.41 | It is anticipated that the Recipient must host 140 TB of data over the period of 2021-2026. However, computer expenses seem to be discouraged: "Using match funds for purchasing items such as laptops, notebooks and/or personal tablets is encouraged, as CEC funds for these purchases is not allowed." Are cloud computing and other computing expenses encountered in the production of the data platform allowable? |
| A.41 | Purchasing “equipment” or “materials” with match funding is encouraged. For definitions of equipment and materials please see Section I.K (p. 22) of the solicitation manual. The language in the solicitation manual is correct. The solicitation manual states that: “Using match funds for purchasing items such as laptops, notebooks and/or personal tablets is encouraged, as CEC funds for these purchases is not allowed” (Section I.K, p. 22). Cloud computing and other computing expenses related to hosting data and the development and delivery of analytics and a data platform are expected costs associated with this GFO and are allowable expenses. |
| Q.42 | For non-key staff, may we use labor categories instead of naming specific people? |
| A.42 | The instructions for the Direct Labor tab on the Attachment 7 Budget state that a job classification/title is required, and employees’ names are optional, but recommended. Note that all key staff must be identified in Attachment 4 Project Team Form. In addition, the credentials of key staff will influence scoring criterion 4, Team Qualifications, Capabilities, and Resources (see Section IV.F, p. 40). |
| Q.43 | What are the small/disadvantaged business goals for this project? |
| A.43 | It is unclear what is precisely meant by this question. However, in scoring the applications no preference points are given for small businesses. |
| Q.44 | Is a commitment to diversity in terms of project participants, along with training, mentoring and providing networking to underrepresented communities considered a ratepayer benefit? |
| A.44 | Applicants are referred to the Solicitation Manual (Section II.B.2, p. 25) to review the CPUC’s definition of “ratepayer benefits”. |
| Q.45 | Can we assume that Project Partners are NOT considered subcontractors and do NOT need to provide the same detailed information as required for subcontractors (e.g., resumes, two references, Attachment 7 Budget Forms, etc.)? |
| A.45 | Project partners that are making contributions other than match funding and are not receiving CEC funds, are only required to submit a commitment letter signed by an authorized representative that: (1) identifies how the partner will contribute to the project; and (2) commits to making the contribution (see Section III.D.10, p. 31). |
| Q.46 | On page 15 (Section I.H), the Solicitation manual states, “All submitted documents will become publicly available records upon the posting of the Notice of Proposed Award." Given that the cost detailed contains proprietary information, will the State of California accept fully loaded rates which would be included of all indirect information? |
| A.46 | No. The CEC will not accept fully loaded rates under this Grant Funding Opportunity. |
| Q.47 | Re: Attachment 1, Past Agreements, Page 4 of 5: Does the CEC desire ten applicants per subcontractor/team member, or an aggregate of ten most recent agreements across team members? |
| A.47 | An aggregate of the ten most recent agreements, (active or past with the Energy Commission, any other California state agency, California utilities, and/or the U.S. Department of Energy) across the Applicants team members (i.e. prime and subcontractor combined) is acceptable. If the number of agreements for the applicant or subcontractor combined exceeds ten, list at least ten of the applicant or subcontractor’s most recent agreements, in order of date and relevance to the proposed project. |
| Q.48 | Can you clarify that Section I.D. below is a typo and should instead refer to Section I.E.? The below requirement is taken verbatim from page 28 of the Solicitation manual (Section III.D.3.). This clarification would then be consistent with Attachment 3 where Technical Approach Question E refers to Section I.E.   * **“Project Readiness:** Include information about the permitting required for the project and whether or not the permitting has been completed. If complete, provide appropriate documentation. If local jurisdiction CEQA review and project approval is not complete, applications must include information documenting progress towards and a schedule for achieving compliance under CEQA within the timeframes specified in this solicitation (see Section I.D). All supporting documentation must be included in Attachment 8.” |
| A.48 | There is a typo in the above referenced passage regarding project readiness (see Section III.D.3, p. 28).  The above-referenced passage should read as:  **Project Readiness:** Include information about the permitting required for the project and whether or not the permitting has been completed. If complete, provide appropriate documentation. If local jurisdiction CEQA review and project approval is not complete, applications must include information documenting progress towards and a schedule for achieving compliance under CEQA within the timeframes specified in this solicitation (see Section I.**E)**. All supporting documentation must be included in Attachment 8. |
| Q.49 | Attachment 4, Project Team Members: Please confirm that CEC desires all employees of major subcontractors to complete Attachment 4, even if they are not necessarily “key personnel.” |
| A.49 | Project Team Forms (Attachment 4) are only required for key personnel. Key personnel are defined as “individuals that are critical to the project due to their experience, knowledge, and/or capabilities.” Key Personnel are often employees of subcontractors and thus would need to be identified. Team member forms for non-key personnel do not need to be completed. |
| Q.50 | It's unclear on both page 28 of the Solicitation manual (Section III.D.4) and Attachment 4 if two-page resumes are requested for ALL individuals proposed for the project or if two-page resumes are required just for those who we consider key personnel. |
| A.50 | Project Team Forms (Attachment 4) are only required for key personnel. Key personnel are defined as “individuals that are critical to the project due to their experience, knowledge, and/or capabilities.” |
| Q.51 | Is the intent in the following passage on page 28 of the Solicitation manual (Section III.D.4) and Attachment 4 that ALL proposed individuals from a major subconsultant are by default considered key personnel requiring both a table response (using the table in Attachment 4) and a two-page resume?   * “Identify by name all key personnel assigned to the project, including the project manager and principal investigator (if applicable), and individuals employed by any major subcontractor (a major subcontractor is a subcontractor receiving at least 25% of CEC funds or $100,000, whichever is less).” |
| A.51 | Project Team Forms (Attachment 4) are only required for key personnel. Key personnel are defined as “individuals that are critical to the project due to their experience, knowledge, and/or capabilities.” Key Personnel often include employees of subcontractors and thus would need to be identified. Project Team forms do not need to be completed for non-key personnel. |
| Q.52 | Per the pre-application workshop, it was noted that applicants should identify one product deliverable per task in Attachment 5. Can you clarify if that is a requirement as we don’t see it listed in the written materials (Solicitation Manual, Attachment 5, or Attachment 6) as a requirement. |
| A.52 | Please see p. 16 of the Scope of Work (Attachment 5): “The Recipient shall: Capitalize and *italicize* the name of each product. **All technical tasks should include product(s)**. A “product” is an item the Recipient submits to the CEC such as a report, summary, plan, or presentation materials, and not an activity. |
| Q.53 | Task 1 in Attachment 5 - Scope of Work takes up 12 pages. TBD-1 and TBD-2 take up about 3 additional pages. We are instructed to not change/revise Task 1, TBD-1, or TBD-2. Do these 15 pages count toward the 30 pages allotted for Attachment 5, providing us 15 pages (not a full 30 pages) for our customized response? |
| A.53 | The 15 pages do count toward the 30 pages, however, as stated in the solicitation manual (Section III.A, p.26): the maximum page limits are recommendations, not strict requirements. |
| Q.54 | In Attachment 5, Section I.A, there’s a column for CPR with the following footnote. We have read subtask 1.3 in Part III of the Scope of Work within Attachment 5 and are still unclear how to fill in data requested for this column. Can you please clarify how you’d like us to respond to this column for CPR in this referenced table? Is it simply one CPR meeting per Task number, so we should input “CPR 1” for Task 1, “CPR 2” for Task 2, and so on?   * “[1] Please see subtask 1.3 in Part III of the Scope of Work (General Project Tasks) for a description of Critical Project Review (CPR) Meetings.” |
| A.54 | Critical Project Review meetings generally take place at key, predetermined points in the Agreement, as determined by the CAM and as shown in the Task List on page 1 of the Scope of Work (Attachment 5). Applicants are encouraged to indicate through the Task List in the Scope of Work where a CPR is most logical. At least one CPR meeting should be identified in the Task List in the Scope of Work. The timing and number of CPRs throughout a project will be negotiated and discussed with grant recipients during Agreement Development.  For example, holding a CPR for Group 1 projects during the task that includes identifying a subset of priority downscaled climate projections would be appropriate. |
| Q.55 | If acronyms we use in our response in Attachment 5 are already defined in your main GFO document acronym list, can we not list them in our response to Attachment 5’s acronym list (Attachment 5, Section I.B) to save space as this response counts toward the 30 allotted pages? |
| A.55 | Acronyms that meet the criteria for being listed in the Acronym/Term List in the Scope of Work (Section I.B, p. 1) need to be included regardless of whether they are listed in the Grant Funding Opportunity. The Scope of Work will become a legal document between funded applicants and the CEC.  Additionally, as stated in the solicitation manual (Section III.A, p.26): the maximum page limits are recommendations, not strict requirements. |
| Q.56 | Can we save space by duplicating the columns for acronyms and their meanings having two per row or must we follow the format provided of only one acronym per row (Attachment 5, Section I.B)? |
| A.56 | Please do not alter the format of the Solicitation Attachments. |
| Q.57 | In an Attachment 5, the Scope of Work template on p. 5 under the software application development, a very specific technology stack application architecture here is prescribed, with the caveat: Unless the CAM approves other software applications such as open source programs. Is this really the preferred technology stack and how our proposals meant to interpret this information? |
| A.57 | The language referred to on p. 5 of the Scope of Work template is boiler-plate language that may not be appropriate in all circumstances. The Applicant is encouraged to describe the approach that they would propose in the Scope of Work (Attachment 5) for subsequent CAM approval, if awarded. |
| Q.58 | Attachment 9 limits past projects to the past projects. However, the Solicitation manual (Section II.D.9, p. 31) doesn’t specify a limit for past projects. Can you clarify? |
| A.58 | Please follow the guidance specified in Attachment 9, which limits past project descriptions to three projects or less. |
| Q.59 | Can Attachment 9 be submitted in PDF format? Attachment 9 requires copies of our scientific publications, which are in PDF format. Per the Solicitation manual (Section III.A Format and Number of Copies of the Application, p. 26) only documents with signatures or commitment and support letters are acceptable in PDF format. |
| A.59 | The formatting guidelines set forth in the Solicitation Manual (Section III.A, p. 26) are recommendations—they are not requirements. It is therefore acceptable to submit Attachment 9 with publications in PDF format. |
| Q.60 | Are subconsultants/primes required to submit Commitment Letters even if they, themselves are not putting up matching funds? If so, how should subconsultants/primes fill out the “Commitment Letter Subject Matter” row in Attachment 10 for their Commitment Letter? The options are to check one or more of the following: Match Funding, Project Partner, and/or Pilot Test/Demonstration/Deployment Site. Is not checking any box in this row for subconsultants/primes satisfactory? |
| A.60 | Commitment letters are **only** required from entities committing match funding to a project or Project partners that are making contributions other than match funding and are **not** receiving CEC funds. If a prime and/or subcontractors are committing match funding they need to provide a commitment letter to the specifications laid out in the GFO. |
| Q.61 | If subconsultants/primes aren’t providing match funding, can the below be disregarded as N/A for the subconsultant/prime Commitment Letters if they, themselves, are not directly providing match funding?   * From GFO page 21 (Section I.K): “(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.” |
| A.61 | Commitment letters are **only** required from entities committing match funding to a project or Project partners that are making contributions other than match funding and are **not** receiving CEC funds. If a prime and/or subcontractors are committing match funding they need to provide a commitment letter to the specifications laid out in the GFO. |
| Q.62 | GFO page 21 (Section I.K) states, “Proof that the funds exist as cash is required.” However, Attachment 10, Commitment and Support Letter Form, doesn’t state this and neither states what qualifies as proof that funds exist as cash. Can you further clarify if this is necessary and what constitutes as proof that cash exists? |
| A.62 | A commitment letter that meets the criteria identified on p. 21, Section I.K constitutes “proof that the funds exist as cash.” |
| Q.63 | Does the Energy Commission have any successful examples of Attachment 11: Performance Metrics that they can share? The document appears to be designed for industrial and/or applied research. It’s not immediately clear how it is applicable to Environmental research topics. |
| A.63 | The applicant is asked to propose relevant performance metrics in Attachment 11 to the best of their ability. These can be revised, in coordination with the CAM and others within CEC, over the course of the grant agreement. |
| Q.64 | Regarding GFO page 39 (Section IV.F “Applicant Past Performance with Energy Commission”), where can we look up our firm’s past performance evaluation of CEC agreements? |
| A.64 | In order to conduct its evaluation of the “Applicant Past Performance with Energy Commission” screening criteria, the Evaluation Committee will use all information available regarding an applicant’s past performance on CEC contracts, grants and loans. This includes, but is not limited to, any audit reports and resolution of audit issues, lawsuits, level of match funds actually provided, timely submittal of products, quality of submitted products, timely completion of the project, communication about issues, timely resolution of issues, completion of the project at or below budget, and an applicant’s CEC-created, metric-based performance evaluation of past CEC grants and certain types of contracts.  CEC staff has been completing CEC-created performance evaluations for roughly three and a half years for projects under its EPIC and Natural Gas programs, so projects under these programs that concluded before that time are unlikely to have performance evaluations on file at the CEC. CEC staff has only just started completing CEC-created performance evaluations on projects under its Clean Transportation Program (formally the Alternative and Renewable Fuel and Vehicle Technology Program), so projects under it are unlikely to have any performance evaluations on file at the CEC.  Applicants may request copies of performance evaluations from the Commission Agreement Manager associated with the project.  Requests can also be directed to ERDD@energy.ca.gov. Please include the agreement number when making requests (i.e. EPC-XX-XXX). Note that, pursuant to Public Contract Code sections 10369 and 10370, certain contract evaluations are not public records and are therefore unavailable to requestors. |
| Q.65 | Is it best for these applications to come from a university, research entity (DRI or Scripps), or a private entity. |
| A.65 | Applications are welcome from all entities eligible to apply. For more information on eligibility requirements please see Section II.A. Applicants should consider Scoring Criteria 6: CEC Funds Spent in California in the Solicitation Manual (Section IV.F, p. 41) for details regarding the impact of Funds Spent in California on application evaluations. |
| Q.66 | When will funding be available if awarded? |
| A.66 | The anticipated agreement start date is January 16, 2021 (see Section I.E, p. 12-13). As indicated, this is an **anticipated** start date, and is subject to potential revisions. Please see Section IV.B for more information regarding the award process. |