



Request for Proposals (RFP): RFP_SFA_002
Solar for All Legal Services RFP

Milestone	Date
RFP launch date	March 26, 2025
Questions Due	April 2, 2025, by 11:59pm Eastern Time
Answers Posted	April 7, 2025
Proposals Due	April 25, 2025, by 11:59pm Eastern Time
<u>Selection Notifications</u>	April 30, 2025
Memorandum of Understanding Execution	May 2, 2025

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BACKGROUND

On April 22, 2024, *EnergizeNC*, North Carolina's Solar for All (SFA) coalition, was selected by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for \$156 million in funding through the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF). The coalition is led by the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality's State Energy Office, in collaboration with the North Carolina Clean Energy Technology Center, North Carolina Clean Energy Fund, and Advanced Energy. After a planning and design period, the *EnergizeNC* coalition anticipates launching a program in late 2025 to transform solar energy growth statewide, enabling the rapid deployment of distributed solar and associated storage with meaningful benefits to low-income and rural communities across the state.

Our mission at NCCEF is to accelerate investment in clean and efficient energy solutions and increase climate resilience in North Carolina, particularly to the benefit of underserved populations. We partner with public and private investors, foundations and other non-profit organizations to deploy sustainable financing solutions that will create long-lasting environmental, economic and social benefits.

RFP PURPOSE

The North Carolina Clean Energy Fund (NCCEF), a nonprofit organization, seeks legal counsel to support NCCEF's work under *EnergizeNC*. The selected legal counsel will develop standardized templates for NCCEF to use in engaging vendors and consultants, ensuring compliance with federal Solar for All requirements, terms and conditions that must flow down through subawards and subcontracts. The selected legal counsel will also provide negotiation support for each agreement that NCCEF enters to implement work under *EnergizeNC*. Selected legal counsel will also offer ad-hoc legal advice throughout the program.

To be considered, proposals must be submitted by the deadline of 11:59pm Eastern Time on April 25, 2025. This is a strict deadline. No proposals will be accepted after this deadline.

SCOPE OF WORK

Timeline

NCCEF will establish a timeline for the project upon selection of legal counsel.

Services

Objectives

- Develop a robust and compliant template contractor agreement.
- Ensure the template agreement incorporates all necessary "flow down" language from U.S. EPA, including all relevant compliance mechanisms such as the Solar for All Terms and Conditions and any state-specific requirements.
- Provide expert legal advice during contractor negotiations.

- Offer timely and accurate ad-hoc legal advice on other Solar for All issues that may arise from time to time.

Scope of Services

Template Agreement Development

- **Drafting:**
 - Develop a comprehensive template agreement for use with contractors selected through the Solar for All RFP process.
 - Incorporate all necessary "flow down" language from U.S. EPA, including all relevant compliance mechanisms, such as the Solar for All Terms and Conditions and any state-specific requirements.
 - Include best practices for contracting agreements of this nature.
- **Review and Refinement:**
 - Provide NCCEF with a draft template for review and feedback.
 - Incorporate NCCEF's feedback and revise the template accordingly.
 - Deliver a final, approved template agreement.

Contractor Negotiation Support

- **Negotiation Advice:**
 - Provide legal counsel to NCCEF during negotiations with contractors who propose changes to the template agreement.
 - Advise NCCEF on the legal implications of proposed changes and recommend appropriate responses.
 - Assist NCCEF in reaching mutually acceptable agreements with contractors while maintaining compliance with Solar for All requirements.
- **Documentation:**
 - Review and assist in the documentation of all agreed upon modifications to the template agreement.

Ad-Hoc Legal Advice

- **General Legal Counsel:**
 - Provide timely and accurate ad-hoc legal advice on any Solar for All-related issues that arise over the course of the program.
 - Respond to inquiries from NCCEF regarding compliance, contractual obligations, and other legal matters.
 - Keep NCCEF informed of any changes to relevant laws, regulations, or guidance.

Deliverables

- A final, approved template contractor agreement.
- Written summaries of negotiation advice provided to NCCEF.
- Prompt responses to ad-hoc legal inquiries.

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Respondents to this RFP are required to provide the following information:

- Detailed description of the firm's experience in developing and negotiating contracts for federally funded programs, particularly those related to renewable energy and federal/state compliance.
- Resumes of the attorneys who will be assigned to this project, including their relevant experience and qualifications.
- Resumes of the attorneys who will replace the assigned attorneys, in the event the assigned attorneys are unable to provide services.
- A project-based resume providing information on at least one (1) and up to five (5) similar projects, with references from previous clients.
- Proposal submissions should not exceed 10 pages, 1" margins, 12-point font, single-spaced (excluding attachments).
- **Fee Structure:**
 - Hourly rates for all attorneys and paralegals who may be assigned to the project.
 - An estimated number of hours required to complete each task outlined in the scope of services (template agreement development, negotiation support, and hourly rates for ad-hoc advice).
 - A total estimated cost for the services.

COMPENSATION

Compensation will be determined through a competitive bidding process. Payments will be made upon an agreed upon schedule and will be aligned with the federal grant drawdown schedule. Vendors must submit invoices detailing completed work, which will be reviewed and approved prior to disbursement. Payment will be contingent upon compliance with federal grant requirements and availability of funds within the grant disbursement cycle. Bidders should clearly present their pricing (e.g., line-item pricing, hourly rates, and total project cost) to ensure transparency and facilitate the appropriate allocation of funds. Pricing for nonprofit rates is welcomed.

ATTACHMENTS

- Professional Resumes and Specific Project References for at least one (1) and up to five (5) key personnel. Please detail the depth of the firm's history or experience supporting federal programs, as this expertise is essential for ensuring adherence to funding requirements and successful program execution. Please use your own professional resume and specific project reference templates.
- Additional attachments may be included but are discouraged and should be kept to a minimum.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Proposal Evaluation Process: All submitted proposals will be reviewed and evaluated by a

selection committee comprised of subject matter experts, procurement professionals, and key stakeholders involved in the *EnergizeNC* Coalition. The evaluation will be based on a set of predefined criteria included in an earlier section of this RFP under “Scope of Work” and located within the bid matrix below. The committee reserves the right to request additional information, conduct interviews, or seek clarifications as needed. Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria and will be consistently evaluated and scored based on the following factors and relative weights:

Factor	Points Available	Vendor 1	Vendor 2	Vendor 3	Vendor 4
Experience & Qualifications of the firm and assigned attorneys	20				
Experience with Solar for All	20				
Proposed approach & methodology	15				
Cost	35				
References feedback	10				
Total	100				

SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Submit your proposal electronically to RFP_SFA_002@EnergizeNC.org with the subject line “Solar for All Legal Services RFP_SFA_002” no later than 11:59pm Eastern Time on April 25, 2025. Responses must be provided as attachments to an email. It is recommended that attachments with file sizes exceeding 25MB be compressed (i.e., zipped) to ensure message delivery. Late submissions will not be considered. Only electronic responses will be accepted.

NCCEF will not respond to individual submissions or publish publicly a compendium of responses. A response to this RFP will not be viewed as a binding commitment to develop or pursue the project or ideas discussed.

QUESTIONS

All questions regarding this solicitation shall be submitted to RFP_SFA_002@EnergizeNC.org with the subject line “Solar for All Legal Services RFP_SFA_002 Questions” by April 2, 2025, at 11:59pm Eastern Time. NCCEF targets posting answers on its website <https://energizenc.com/> on April 7, 2025.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

NCCEF reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals, and to negotiate with any respondent. All materials submitted as part of the proposal become the property of NCCEF and may be used as deemed necessary. The selected vendor(s) will enter into a formal contract with NCCEF before commencement of any Solar for All activities.

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