



Request for Proposals (RFP): RFP_SFA_006
Solar for All Online Portal Design and Development RFP

Milestone	Date
RFP launch date	June 3, 2025
<u>Q&A Webinar</u>	June 12, 2025 10:30am Register for the webinar by sending an email to RFP_SFA_006@nccleanenergyfund.org
Questions Due	June 16, 2025, by 11:59pm Eastern Time
Answers Posted	June 18, 2025
Proposals Due	July 7, 2025, by 11:59pm Eastern Time
<u>Selection Notifications</u>	July 11, 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 the NC Clean Energy Fund 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 EnergizeNC Coalition seeks proposals from qualified firms to develop and implement an online portal ("the Portal") – a dynamic and user-friendly centralized platform that will serve as a statewide comprehensive resource center for consumers seeking energy information and financial assistance as well as contractors or other relevant stakeholders interested in participating in local, state and federal programs. The Portal will serve as an educational hub that provides information about all programs that could be used to bring down energy costs for a household. The Portal will integrate with an income qualification tool (in development, separate from this RFP) to provide an accurate eligibility screen and direct users to the programs that best fit their needs.

The Coalition will host a webinar to provide an overview of goals and expectations for this RFP on June 12, 2025 at 10:30am. The webinar will be recorded and made available to prospective bidders. You must register to attend the webinar by sending an email to -

RFP_SFA_006@nccleanenergyfund.org.

To be considered, proposals must be submitted by the deadline of 11:59pm Eastern Time on July 7, 2025. This is a strict deadline. No proposals will be accepted after this deadline.

SCOPE OF WORK

Core Responsibilities & Timeline

The selected firm ("the Firm") will be responsible for the complete development, testing, deployment, and initial support of the Portal. The Firm will also be responsible for ongoing

maintenance, updates, and hosting. Pre-development and design work is already complete. The scope of work includes, but is not limited to, the following:

Core Responsibilities

We anticipate responsibilities to include:

Project Initiation and Planning:

- Conduct a project kickoff meeting with EnergizeNC staff to clarify project goals, requirements, and timelines. Build into the timeline sufficient time for iteration and feedback from EnergizeNC. The timeline should also allow sufficient time for review from DEQ's communication team prior to going live.
- Develop a detailed project plan, including milestones, deliverables, and communication protocols.
- Establish clear roles and responsibilities for both the Firm and EnergizeNC project teams.

Content Management System (CMS) Selection and Implementation:

- Recommend and implement a suitable CMS platform that meets the project requirements.
- Configure and customize the chosen CMS platform to meet the specific needs of the Portal.

Branding of Statewide Site

- Work with EnergizeNC and other SEO program teams to develop an inclusive logo and brand for the Portal that is complementary to existing branding.

Front-End Development:

- Develop a fully responsive front-end website based on approved designs.
- Optimize website performance for speed and responsiveness, particularly for mobile devices and in low-bandwidth environments.
- Develop user-friendly navigation and search functionalities to enable easy content discovery.
- Present website design to stakeholders and integrate feedback.
- Ensure content is accessible for people with disabilities, including certifying that all web content is compliant with relevant federal accessibility requirements.

Data Collection and Analytics Implementation:

- Integrate analytics tools (e.g., Google Analytics, Matomo - propose and justify recommendations) to collect user data.
- Implement mechanisms to collect user feedback (e.g., feedback forms, surveys - propose appropriate methods).

API Integration

- Implement functionality to seamlessly integrate up to three specified third-party APIs (to be detailed separately) into the website, ensuring data exchange and feature utilization as required to keep data updated and provide income qualification for each program.
- In addition, provide a plan and estimated cost for future integration of the DSIRE 3.0 API (an online tool developed by the NC Clean Energy Technology Center), outlining the approach and potential functionalities this integration would enable.

Security Implementation:

- Implement robust security measures throughout the platform development process.
- Develop and implement a data privacy policy that is clearly communicated to users and complies with relevant regulations.

Testing and Quality Assurance:

- Conduct comprehensive testing throughout the development process.
- Address and resolve all identified issues and bugs.

Deployment and Launch:

- Deploy the completed Portal to a secure and reliable hosting environment.
- Provide support for website launch, including transition from existing website, and initial stabilization.

Training and Documentation:

- Provide comprehensive training to EnergizeNC Coalition members on using the CMS platform for website administration, content management, user data analysis, and platform maintenance.
- Develop user manuals and technical documentation for the Portal, including CMS administration guides and security protocols.

Ongoing Maintenance and Updates:

- Provide maintenance and execute portal updates for the length of the contract. At the end of the contract, transfer these responsibilities to NC Clean Energy Fund.
- Develop a comprehensive plan for the perpetuity of the Portal, ensuring long-term accessibility and preservation of the URL.

Timeline:

- Development, testing, deployment, and initial support: July – October 2025.
- Ongoing maintenance, updates, and hosting: November 2025 – April 2029, with potential to extend.

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

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

- Cover Page
- Experience & Qualifications
- Overview of Detailed Scope of Work & Deliverables
- Estimated Timeline for Delivery of Detailed Scope of Work & Deliverables
- Key Staff Resumes
- Cost Proposal

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.

- Please provide a detailed cost breakdown by task rather than a flat rate.
- NC Clean Energy Fund reserves the right to negotiate pricing with any proposer as part of this procurement. We also reserve the right to award all, part, or none of the requested work described in this RFP and may issue multiple awards if it is determined to be in the best interest of the program. NC Clean Energy Fund may modify the scope of work or add related tasks, provided such changes are appropriately documented and priced, without reissuing a new RFP. The selected vendor(s) must allow for federal audits, maintain all records for a minimum of three (3) years, and participate in EPA-required reporting as applicable.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Proposal Evaluation Process: All submitted proposals will be reviewed and evaluated by a selection committee comprised of subject matter experts and/or, procurement professionals and/or, and key stakeholders involved in the *EnergizeNC* Coalition. The evaluation will be based on a set of predefined criteria located within the bid matrix below. The committee reserves the right to request additional information, conduct interviews, or seek clarification 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	15				
Demonstrated Experience Developing a Statewide or Regional Public-Facing Website or Portal	30				
Proposal is Responsive to Needs Expressed in RFP	20				
Can Meet Proposed Timeline for Delivery	15				
Cost	20				
Total	100				

QUESTIONS

All questions must be submitted in writing to RFP_SFA_006@nccleanenergyfund.org with the subject line “Solar for All Online Portal Design & Development RFP_SFA_006 Questions” by June 16, 2025, at 11:59 PM ET. Questions arising from the webinar must also be submitted via email by June 16, 2025 at 11:59 PM ET. NC Clean Energy Fund aims to post how to get access to all

questions and answers on its website (<https://energizenc.com/>) by June 18, 2025.

SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Submit your proposal electronically to RFP_SFA_006@nccleanenergyfund.org with the subject line “Solar for All Online Portal Design & Development RFP_SFA_006” no later than 11:59pm Eastern Time on July 7, 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. NC Clean Energy Fund 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.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- NC Clean Energy Fund 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 NC Clean Energy Fund and may be used as deemed necessary. The selected vendor(s) will enter into a formal contract with NC Clean Energy Fund before commencement of any Solar for All activities.
- Compliance with Federal and EPA Requirements: All work performed under this RFP shall comply with applicable federal regulations, including the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) General Terms and Conditions for Assistance Agreements and the requirements of the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF) Solar for All program. Contractors must adhere to the provisions of 2 CFR Part 200 (Uniform Guidance), including procurement standards, conflict of interest policies, records retention, and allowable costs.
- NC Clean Energy Fund reserves the right to negotiate pricing with any proposer as part of this procurement. We also reserve the right to award all, part, or none of the requested work described in this RFP and may issue multiple awards if it is determined to be in the best interest of the program. NC Clean Energy Fund may modify the scope of work or add related tasks, provided such changes are appropriately documented and priced, without reissuing a new RFP. The selected vendor(s) must allow for federal audits, maintain all records for a minimum of three (3) years, and participate in EPA-required reporting as applicable.
- All deliverables, including any associated URLs, shall become the exclusive property of the NC Clean Energy Fund, with a comprehensive plan for perpetuity ensuring long-term accessibility and preservation. Upon termination of the agreement, all project files and data will be securely transferred to NC Clean Energy Fund, archived, or permanently deleted. The Contractor shall provide reporting and access to website analytics (e.g., page views) for a period of at least four years post-launch.

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