



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Project Technical Assistance to Community Based Organizations participating in Community Investment Recovery Center

Introduction and Background

Deep South Center for Environmental Justice is seeking proposals from firms or teams of firms experienced in providing project-related technical assistance to Community-Based Organizations (CBOs).

The Deep South Center for Environmental Justice (DSCEJ) is dedicated to improving the lives of children and families harmed by pollution and vulnerable to climate change through research, education, community, student engagement for equitable systems, and health and safety workforce training for environmental careers. Founded in 1992, the DSCEJ is the longest-serving environmental justice resource center that provides opportunities for communities, scientific researchers, and decision-makers to collaborate on projects that promote the rights of all people to be free from environmental harm as it impacts health, jobs, housing, education, and quality of life. The DSCEJ used three operational components to execute its mission: (1) Research and Policy Studies, (2) Community and Student Education, Training, and Engagement, and (3) Environmental, Health and Safety Worker Training. The DSCEJ employs a full-time staff of 30.

CIRC serves as a resource for program participants interested in participating in environmental and energy justice programs and policy development, as well as understanding and utilizing environmental and energy grant programs to advance environmental and energy justice. CIRC's goal is to build the capacity of community-based organizations so that they can apply for grants for projects that will create thriving communities. The focus of the CIRC is underserved urban and rural communities within EPA Regions 4 and 6.

Scope of Work

Technical assistance supports communities in successfully advancing projects identified through meaningful public involvement that delivers a broad set of transportation, climate, equity, housing, economic, and other community benefits. Project Technical Assistance is intended to support the CBOs in the following areas:

Phase I Define Problems and Issues

Work with CBOs to summarize and categorize their issues based on technical areas such as drainage, roadway, health, mobility, etc.

Phase II Training in DSCEJ Environmental Justice Data Action Portal (EJDAP)
Introduce the CBOs to the DSCEJ Environmental Justice Data Action Portal (EJDAP) and work with the CBOs on how to use EJDAP to tell their story. Develop community profiles.

Phase III Scope the Data Gaps and Assist to Fill the Gaps
Define the problem scope, data gap analysis, and an approach to fill the data gaps. Work with the CBOs to develop actionable project definitions based on concerns and issues. Help them identify data gaps and develop an approach to filling them.

Phase IV Develop Needs Statement and Develop Concept
Project scoping and alternative analysis and concept development.

Phase V Technical support through project design, funding application, and implementation.

DSCEJ intends to award a five-year contract to one consultant firm or a team of consultant firms that will provide project-related technical assistance to all of its CIRC CBOs. The contract will start on July 1, 2024. Interested organizations should submit a proposal that addresses the areas listed under the scope of work.

DEADLINE: Application packages must be submitted on or before **June 10, 2024, at 4:59 PM (Central Time)** by email to fuziehj@dscej.org. Applications received after the closing date and time will not be considered.

Proposal Requirements

The successful firm or team of firms should be prepared to begin work on July 1, 2024. Proposals must include the following information:

- 1) Name of the lead firm and any sub-consultants.
- 2) The point of contact (name, title, phone number, mailing address, and email address) at the lead firm.
- 3) Describe your experience working with underrepresented communities providing technical assistance.
 - a. Experience executing projects that address local community mobility, access, climate, and community development goals in accordance with regional or statewide plans
 - b. Experience supporting disadvantaged, rural, and tribal communities on equity-related issues such as equitable development and inclusive community engagement
- 4) Qualifications and technical competence of consultant/or sub-consultants in the type of work required.

- 5) Provide a description of your experience on similar projects, including a list of at least three references within the past five years, with current contact information.
- 6) Listing of key project personnel and their qualifications and roles related to the project. This should include a short summary of the individual's relative areas of expertise, years of experience, employment, and education history, and a brief snapshot of related project history noting work with disadvantaged communities, comprehensive economic or community development, and/or capacity building. Replacement of key staff is subject to DSCEJ approval.
- 7) The proposed firm's Project Manager must be an engineer in any engineering field, preferably with a graduate degree. Most importantly, the Project Manager must demonstrate at least 20 years of working with disadvantaged communities.
- 8) The address of the consultant's office performing the work.
- 9) A detailed description of the technical approach proposed for completing the work described in the scope of work.
- 10) A proposed labor rates

Evaluation Criteria

The review of written proposals and interviews will be based on the following evaluation criteria, with the relative weights in parentheses:

1. Related experience, qualifications of the firm or project team working with disadvantaged communities (50%)
2. Experience of the Project Manager (25%)
3. Technical approach (25%)

Additional Provisions

According to the contract with EPA for the conduct of this project, the following must be observed in relation to the work to be conducted under this RFP:

Competency of Organizations Generating Environmental Measurement Data

In accordance with Agency Policy Directive Number FEM-2012-02, Policy to Assure the Competency of Organizations Generating Environmental Measurement Data under Agency-Funded Assistance Agreements, the successful bidder agrees, by entering into an agreement, if awarded, that it has demonstrated competency prior to award involving the generation or use of environmental data. Recipient shall maintain competency for the duration of the project period of this agreement and this will be documented during the annual reporting process. A copy of the Policy is available online at

<https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-03/documents/competency-policy-aaia-new.pdf>

Quality Assurance

The successful entity shall adhere to applicable quality requirements for the work implemented according to the DSCEJ Quality Assurance (QA) planning document approved by the EPA under C.F.R. § 1500.12 Quality Assurance.

Use of Logos

As the funds for this contract have been provided by the EPA, if the EPA logo is appearing along with logos from other participating entities on websites, outreach materials, or reports, it must **not** be prominently displayed to imply that any of the recipient or subrecipient's activities are being conducted by the EPA. Instead, the EPA logo should be accompanied with a statement indicating that the [Insert Recipient or subrecipient NAME] received financial support from the EPA under an Assistance Agreement.

National Terms and Condition for Light Refreshments and Meals

The successful bidder agrees to obtain prior approval from DSCEJ for the use of contracted funds for light refreshments and meals served at meetings, conferences, training workshops, and outreach. The recipient must send requests for approval to the DSCEJ Project Officer and include:

- 1) An estimated budget and description for the light refreshments, meals, and/or beverages to be served at the event(s);
- 2) A description of the purpose, agenda, location, length and timing for the event.
- 3) An estimated number of participants in the event and a description of their roles activities (events). The recipient must send requests for approval to the EPA Project Officer and include:

Note: U.S. General Services Administration regulations define light refreshments for morning, afternoon or evening breaks to include, but not be limited to, coffee, tea, milk, juice, soft drinks, donuts, bagels, fruit, pretzels, cookies, chips, or muffins. (41 CFR 301-74.11)