

Request for Proposals ("RFP")

2017 Solarize Houston

Group Purchase and Installation of Residential Solar PV
Systems

Issue Date: July 15, 2017
Proposal Due: July 31, 2017 12:00 noon

Issued by: 2017 Solarize Houston, a grassroots volunteer group
operated by Houston Renewable Energy Group
("Solarize Houston")

Point of Contact: Dori Wolfe; solarizehouston@outlook.com

SUMMARY

2017 Solarize Houston Project Participants (the "Participants") are seeking proposals from qualified firms willing to provide for group purchase of photovoltaic ("PV") systems. The objectives of the 2017

Solarize Houston project goal are to accelerate solar energy awareness and installations in the City of Houston by: (1) enabling the Participants electing to purchase their solar PV systems to receive a discount on their systems by going solar as a group, and (2) providing the selected solar PV installation firm with a prescreened solar-savvy group of customers.

The intent of this RFP is to select one bidder (the "Selected Firm") to provide site assessment, system design, permitting and installation services for the Participants. Proposing bidders are invited to submit proposals individually, or collaborate with another firm to submit a joint proposal.

BACKGROUND

Solarize Houston seeks through this RFP process to increase awareness and the use of solar energy for electricity generation in Houston. The 2017 Solarize Houston Project (“Project”) is a community effort for solar PV bulk-purchase and individual installation project modeled after other projects in communities across the U.S. More information about the Project and the solarizing concept can be found at solarize-houston.org.

The Participants are a group of Houston residents interested in installing a solar PV system at their properties through the Project.

BASIC REQUIREMENTS FOR EACH PROPOSING FIRM

A Proposing Firm must:

- have at least two years of grid-tied residential solar PV installations experience
- have made or intend to make a major commitment to the rooftop solar business in the Houston metropolitan area
- respond to and comply with of the “Submittal Requirements” and “Proposal Requirements” sections of this RFP using the format suggested therein.

SCOPE OF WORK AND LEGALLY BINDING NATURE OF FIRM' S BIDS

Each bidder (a “Firm”) will provide a discounted pricing structure for a “typical” grid-tied rooftop solar PV installation that is lower than what is typically offered by the Firm. Non-typical installation costs for this Proposal will be accounted for through the options provided by the Firm in its response to this RFP, and if not covered by the options, individual contracts, outside of the group purchase negotiated price. The proposed pricing structure should reflect a declining tiered pricing structure based on the aggregate amount of kilowatts in systems covered by installation contracts (“Participant Contracts”) entered into by the Firm and the Participants. For example, if the Firm enters into Participant Contracts with 18 Participants, each for the installation of a 5kW system, the applicable price paid by each Participant would be the price bid by the Firm under its submission under 2017 Solarize Houston Pricing Form for Contracts calling for installations of 90kW of solar systems. The Firm would realize cost efficiencies through lowered customer acquisition costs with group purchasing and installations.

Each pricing proposal made by a Firm (other than the Selected Firm) will be binding on the Firm until the earlier of (a) August 15, 2017 and (b) the selection by the representatives of the Participants of the Selected Firm. The pricing proposal of the Selected Firm will be binding beyond such time and until the Selected Firm performs the scope of work in connection with

this RFP. Promptly after its selection, the Selected Firm will be provided with a spreadsheet containing each Participant's name, address, phone number, email address, inclination to purchase ("very inclined," "50/50" and "mildly interested"), interconnection utility, and roof condition, as each item of this information was reported to Solarize Houston by the Participant. The Selected Firm will be required to provide to each Participant on or before September 1, 2017 a firm pricing proposal for systems to be installed in 2017 (except to the extent a later installation deadline is specifically agreed between an individual Participant and the Firm.)

The Selected Firm will use its commercially reasonable efforts to conclude a Participant Contract with each Participant on or before October 1, 2017, and shall use good faith efforts to maximize the number of Participants included and aggregate kilowatts contracted as to such Participants. Each executed Participant Contract shall assure such Participant the benefit of the tiered pricing discount correlating to aggregate kilowatts under all Participant Contracts ultimately executed.

The Selected Firm will provide site assessments and system design proposals for each Participant. Individual system designs should be aesthetically pleasing, taking into consideration the preferences of the Participant while minimizing project costs and maximizing solar energy production. System proposals should also take into consideration each Participant's self-identified financial limitations.

None of Solarize Houston, Houston Renewable Energy Group ("HREG") or any of their volunteers has received any information or made any investigation about any Participant's creditworthiness, property ownership or any other personal information or circumstances. The Selected Firm will be responsible for evaluating each Participant's ability to perform its contract.

The installations will be carried out by the Selected Firm in conformity with all applicable laws, codes, and utility interconnection, good solar installation and operation practice and other requirements.

For each Participant, the Selected Firm will be responsible for securing all required permits, completing and submitting all incentive applications, and scheduling and passing all required inspections. The Selected Firm will provide each Participant with the information, documentation, and certified signatures required to complete the appropriate incentive/rebate program applications and pertinent warranties. The Selected Firm will also provide each Participant appropriate documentation and guidance to enable such Participant's application for the federal residential solar energy investment tax credit. If requested by a Participant, the Selected Firm will provide to such Participant introductions and support materials to banks, credit unions, and other interested financing entities as needed. The Selected Firm will provide to each Participant requesting a site assessment an individual site assessment. Using this site assessment and one year of historical energy usage for each Participant supplied by

the Participant, the Firm will provide a system cost/benefit analysis including total estimated cost, tax incentives, net cost, payback period, return on investment, annual cash flow and total cash gained over the life of the system, which will describe assumptions made by the Firm. For each Participant requesting assistance, the Selected Firm will provide appropriate documentation justifying the solar installation for purposes of the Participant's application to its Home Owner's Association or similar organization ("HOA").

Each Firm shall be responsible for its costs incurred in connection with this RFP and the transactions contemplated thereby.

NO OBLIGATION ON SOLARIZE HOUSTON AND NONCONTRACTING PARTICIPANTS

The Participants will not be obligated to enter into a Participant Contract with any Firm, including the Selected Firm. The Participants Solarize Houston, HREG and their volunteers, respectively, shall have no obligation, financial or otherwise, to any Firm arising from this RFP or its conduct. The non-contracting Participants, Solarize Houston and its volunteers, respectively, shall have no obligation, financial or otherwise, under the transactions contemplated in connection with this RFP. Each Participant will have only those rights and responsibilities stated in the executed Participant Contract to which it becomes a party, if any.

Solarize Houston will not be a party to any Participant Contract nor be responsible for any financial or other obligations related to Participant Contracts between Participants and the Firm or the transactions contemplated by this RFP. As a condition to its participation in the 2017 Solarize Houston Project, each Firm and each Participant waives any recourse to, and agrees to hold harmless, Solarize Houston, HREG and each of its respective volunteers from any and all financial or other obligations associated with this RFP and the related contracting. Once a Participant has committed to installing a solar PV system, he or she will be solely responsible for signing and performing a Participant Contract with the Selected Firm.

NO REPRESENTATION OR WARRANTY, RELEASE OF SOLARIZE HOUSTON

The Firms acknowledge and agree that Solarize Houston is an unincorporated, volunteer group operating under HREG. None of Solarize Houston nor HREG or their volunteers and members derives no revenue from the Project and operates on a non-profit basis. None of Solarize Houston or any of its volunteers makes any representation or warranty or has made any investigation or other inquiry about the accuracy or completeness of any information supplied to Solarize Houston by or on behalf of any Participant or any other person.

AS A CONDITION TO RECEIVING THIS RFP, EACH FIRM RELEASES AND DISCHARGES SOLARIZE HOUSTON, HOUSTON RENEWABLE ENERGY GROUP AND THEIR VOLUNTEERS FROM ALL LIABILITY IN CONNECTION WITH THE RFP, THE PROCUREMENT OF EQUIPEMENT OR SERVICES IN CONNECTION HEREWITH OR THE TRANSACTIONS CONTEMPLATED HEREBY.

Note: Proposing Firms shall use the Scope of Work above as a guide for organizing their proposal, but are encouraged to expand upon, refine or suggest alternative approaches based on previous experiences with similar projects.

TIMELINE

Participant Registration Opened	04/08/2017
RFP Issued	07/15/2017
Proposals Due by noon on	07/31/2017
Participant Registration Closed midnight on	07/31/2017
Shortlisted Installation Firms Selected	08/01/2017
Shortlisted Installation Firms Interview by	08/03/2017
Firm Selected	08/04/2017
Participant List Available to the selected Firm	08/04/2017
Design Quotes Completed on or before	09/01/2017
Contracts signed on or before	10/15/2017
Installations Complete as soon as possible, no later than	12/31/2017

Note: Dates are subject to change and should be used for planning purposes only.

QUESTIONS

Firms interested in bidding are invited to a conference call to be held on July 24, 2017 at 4:00. Each bidder will be informed of the call-in number. Questions, including explanations of the meaning or interpretations of the provisions of the RFP, shall be submitted via email to the RFP Point of Contact listed on the cover page by July 26, 2017, 5:00 pm CDT. Responses to email questions and clarifications of the Program will be posted to all bidders simultaneously by email. In the interest of fairness, no other questions will be accepted or considered.

DUE DATE, SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS AND AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE

Proposals must be received no later than July 31, 2017, 12:00 noon CDT, by Dori Wolfe at solarizehouston@outlook.com. An email response will be returned within one

business day confirming receipt of the Proposal. If you do not receive a confirmation email, please email Dori Wolfe at solarizehouston@outlook.com.

Each Firm is required to designate a representative of such Firm to receive notices in connection with this RFP and the transactions contemplated thereby, providing such representative's email address, physical address and phone number to solarizehouston@outlook.com. Solarize Houston shall be entitled to rely on communications from such representative and such communications shall be binding upon such representative's Firm.

Please submit the following PDF documents in 8 ½" x 11" format:

- A. Your responses to the proposal information requested as stated in the following section, "PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS", Sections 1 through 4. Responses should use a minimum 12 point font size and not exceed 8 pages (excluding cover letter). (single PDF document)
- B. Completed pricing using the 2016 RFP Pricing Form. Submissions should be proposing Firm's best and final pricing, which if accepted, will be binding on the Firm. (single PDF document) Multiple RFP rounds will not be conducted.
- C. Copies of sample contract, insurance certificates demonstrating required coverage, system specifications, warranties, and any appendices or attachments. (multiple PDF documents are acceptable)

Faxed proposals and late proposals will not be accepted. Proposals may be withdrawn at any time before the due date via an emailed request.

All communications shall be through the RFP Point of Contact listed on the Cover Sheet. Firms that contact members of Solarize Houston or Participants for the purpose of unfairly influencing the outcome of this RFP may be disqualified from further consideration.

Solarize Houston may amend the RFP at any time prior to the proposal due date by issuance of a written amendment to all Firms who are participating in the process. The Participants and Solarize Houston may also cancel, delay, or suspend this solicitation for any reason. The Participants and Solarize Houston may reject any or all proposals, in whole or in part. It is intended that each Participant be a third-party beneficiary of this RFP and the terms accepted by Solarize Houston be enforceable by each Participant, subject to the terms of this RFP.

SELECTION PROCESS

The Participants, with Solarize Houston's assistance, shall evaluate each Firm's proposal. Each Firm's submitted proposal will be reviewed by the Participants solely for the purposes of

completing the evaluation process of the RFP, and will not be shared or disclosed with other participating Firms during or after the RFP process.

The top ranked proposing Firms will be invited for interviews. Proposal ranking and interviews will be the principal means of evaluation in determining a final selection. The Participants, with Solarize Houston's assistance, will select one Firm to be the "Selected Firm" to design, procure, and install PV systems for the Participants' properties. All proposing Firms will be promptly notified of the outcome of the selection.

PROMOTIONAL RIGHTS

The Solarize Houston name and logo are owned by Solarize Houston, and may not be copied, imitated or used, in whole or in part, without the prior written permission of Solarize Houston, *provided however* that after the Selected Firm successfully completes substantially all the installations contracted with Participants arising out of the Project, the Selected Firm shall be licensed to represent in its advertising and promotional activities that it was the winning bidder chosen in the 2017 Solarize Houston RFP process, subject to the conditions that (i) other competing Firms participating in the RFP shall not be identified by name, and (ii) individual Participants in the RFP process shall not be named, featured or utilized in any such advertising and promotional activities without their prior written consent. The license referenced above is limited to the 2017 Solarize Houston name and logo inasmuch as the Solarize Houston name and logo may be utilized in subsequent RFPs occurring in subsequent years.

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

1. Cover Letter

- A. Discuss the highlights, key features and distinguishing elements of your Proposal, along with why you want to work with the Solarize Houston project. The cover letter must be prepared and signed by an officer of the Firm, having the authority to make offers and enter into contracts on behalf of the Firm.

2. Proposing Firm Profile

- A. Describe Proposer's experiences in designing and installing solar PV systems in the Houston metropolitan or surrounding areas. Describe your plans for participating in the solar installation market in the Houston metropolitan and surrounding areas for the next two years.
- B. Describe Proposer's experiences in obtaining permits, interconnection agreements, utility incentives and any other PV installation related activities in Houston (including its

incorporated towns and cities) or surrounding areas. We have very limited interested enrollees in outlying areas, including Bellaire, Cypress, Tomball, Galveston, Friendswood, Katy, and Waller and Montgomery Counties.

- C. Describe Proposer's capability to complete the Project per timeline specified above. Include a discussion of the Firm's size, financial condition*, stability, number of employees, length of time in business, capacity, and resources.
- D. Identify key personnel for this project such as Owners/Principals; Project Managers; Designers; Installers. Describe their roles, experiences, licenses and certificates (e.g., NABCEP), if applicable.
- E. Identify subcontractors you plan to use, along with their value/contribution to the Project and your experience with them. (Provide substantially the same information required of the Firm as to any subcontractor which will perform the predominant portion of the work awarded to the Firm.)
- F. Identify insurance coverages, insurers and current insurance limits.
- G. Address the firm's safety record and practices. Identify citations and communications, if any, with government or industry agencies regarding workplace issues in the last 3 years.

3. Work Quality - Describe:

- A. Clearly state the warranty provided for labor and workmanship (including durations).
- B. Installation process; including how to minimize disruption to roof, structures, and landscaping during preparation, installation, and cleanup.
- C. Final testing and sign off procedures, including punch lists and inspections. D. Training and materials you provide the Participant to reduce later questions.
- E. Plans for handling incidents after installation, such as technical/technological troubles, service calls, or inquiries.
- F. The most common problems that the Firm has experienced and how they have been resolved. G. Any complaints against the Firm received by the Better Business Bureau or the Texas Attorney General's office over the last 3 years or any pending litigation or judgments over the last 3 years.

Provide references from at least 3 recent residential installation customers, including size, date of installation, and location, with a contact name and telephone number.

4. System Quality

- A. Explain why proposed modules are appropriate for this project. Provide descriptions of warranties (including durations) that ensure long term durability, operation, and minimum maintenance. Provide module's performance, efficiency, and reliability figures, place of manufacture and any other relevant details. Attach copy of specifications and warranty as appropriate.
- B. Provide proposed inverter details as requested above.
- C. Provide proposed racking system details as requested above.
- D. Provide details of any other proposed components as requested above.

5. Pricing • All responses to items A through E shall be stated in 2017 RFP Pricing Form.

- A. Provide per watt pricing, exclusive of any eligible incentives or tax credits, for the entire group as a tiered structure by anticipated group total capacity. If single flat rate is proposed regardless to the group total capacity, input that rate in all tiers. Proposing multiple module/inverter combinations or upgrade options is desirable but not required. Due to Houston's residential makeup, at least one system configuration option with microinverters is strongly suggested.
- B. Proposed pricing assumes a typical grid tied system installed on a typical dwelling in our area. Pricing must include all materials, equipment (including system monitoring equipment), permitting fees, labor, applicable taxes, transportation, warranties and services required to assess the proposed homes and to design and install the systems in accordance with: a) all applicable laws and codes, b) interconnection requirements, c) applicable tax credit rules, d) and applicable utility incentive installation requirements.
- C. Identify any factors or conditions which would result in additional costs (such as roof materials, roof slope, improvements to existing wiring, roof access, or ground-mount option, minimum system installation size, if any) and provide estimates of additional charges for each.
- D. If offered, list additional services and features (such as extended warrantees, maintenance contracts, or ancillary monitoring equipment) and price separately.
- E. It is assumed that the site assessments, system design and cost estimates are to be provided free of charge to the Participants even if they decide not to execute a Participant Contract. Specify otherwise if this is not the case.
- F. Provide Payment terms including any deposits required.

6. Insurance and Sample Contract

- A. Provide copies of Certificates of Insurance, including General Liability, Workman's Compensation, and Automobile coverage for PV installation projects.
- B. Provide a sample copy of the customer contract you plan to use in the 2017 Solarize Houston Project. Some items expected to be covered: Scope of Work, equipment to be installed, terms of payment, construction timeline, change order process, final system commissioning, and labor/workmanship warranty.