



# **Solar Services Request for Proposals**

**Solar Workgroup of Southwest Virginia  
2019 Group Solicitation**

Issue Date: **April 1, 2019**

Response Due Date and Time: **May 21, 2019 5pm ET**

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## Introduction

The Solar Workgroup of Southwest Virginia (SWG) is a collaborative effort of nonprofit and community action agencies, colleges, state agencies, planning district commissions and other interested citizens and businesses seeking to develop a renewable energy industry cluster in the seven coalfield counties of Southwest Virginia. The effort was formed as a result of the 2016 Southwest Virginia Economic Forum hosted by UVa-Wise. In early 2017, the Appalachian Regional Commission awarded a POWER Initiative Technical Assistance federal grant to fund the development of the Solar Roadmap of Southwest Virginia (the “Solar Roadmap”). The Workgroup was also a recipient of assistance through the U.S. Department of Energy SunShot Initiative’s *Solar In Your Community* Challenge.

The mission of The Solar Workgroup is to utilize the development of solar energy as an economic catalyst in the seven-county region of far Southwest Virginia. There are four key goals:

1. Identify and develop sites that are ideal for solar development, especially solar “ambassador” projects.
2. Grow workforce development and entrepreneurship opportunities to advance solar projects and maximize local benefits.
3. Expand education and outreach in communities and with local leaders around solar benefits and opportunities.
4. Promote policy changes that will help grow the solar industry in Southwest Virginia.

The Workgroup is co-convened by the UVa-Wise Office of Economic Development & Engagement, People Incorporated and Appalachian Voices, with facilitation assistance from Dialogue + Design Associates. Additionally, several smaller committees focus on specific areas of action discussed in the Solar Roadmap including developing policy recommendations, building a solar residential program called Solarize Wise, creating innovative financing models and mechanisms to build solar, and developing priority sites to serve as “ambassador” solar projects throughout SWVA.

The strategies to achieve the goals of the Workgroup are outlined in the Solar Roadmap, which has been developed collaboratively by members of SWG, and is available on the project website with additional background information at the website [www.swvasolar.org](http://www.swvasolar.org).

**The primary goal of this Solar Services Request for Proposals is to work with building owners and developers to find solar solutions that are cost-effective. Preference will be given to developers that can: (1) provide contracts to participants that involve no upfront costs and that are revenue neutral or positive from day one; (2) begin project installations in time to ensure the systems are eligible for the 30% federal tax credit; and (3) incorporate opportunities for hiring of local Southwest Virginia workforce, or opportunities for Solar Photovoltaic (PV) interns through the Mountain Empire Community College Energy Technology pathway program.**

## Project Background

The objective of the 2019 Solar Services Request for Proposals (RFP) is to build off of the success of the initial Solar Services RFP issued in 2018, continuing to increase solar installations in the seven coalfield

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counties of Southwest Virginia through a group procurement solicitation process which will result in reduced pricing for Subject Site (sites included in this Group Solicitation) building owners through a competitive selection process. In addition, this procurement process will develop a client base with improved awareness and education on solar PV issues and expectations. Finally, the SWG hopes that the projects included in this RFP will offer lasting jobs and economic benefits to community members throughout Southwest Virginia.

The Solar Workgroup is soliciting proposals from qualified solar PV (solar service) providers to design, build, maintain, and potentially finance solar PV installations at and on behalf of the following sites:

<b>Site</b>	<b>Sector</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Estimated Array KW DC*</b>	<b>System Type</b>	<b>Utility</b>
Appalachian Community Action & Development Agency, Inc.,	Nonprofit	119 Hill St., Jonesville	14.7	Ground	PVEC
Ballad Health Plex	Nonprofit	1490 Park Ave NW, Norton	301.4	Roof	ODP
First Baptist Church Gate City	Nonprofit	307 E Jackson St, Gate City	255.8	Ground	APCO
Iron Works Fitness and Cycling	Commercial	311 River St. N and 520 Wood Ave E, Big Stone Gap	38.2	Roof	ODP
Norton Rescue Squad	Local Government	1710 Main Ave West, Norton	72	Roof	ODP
Pennington Gap Town Hall	Local Government	528 Industrial Drive, Pennington Gap	201.4	Ground	ODP
Pennington Gap Lee Theater and Community Center	Local Government	41676 W Morgan Ave., Pennington Gap	100	Roof	ODP
Pennington Gap Wastewater Treatment Facility	Local Government	391 S Fork River Rd, Pennington Gap	220.5	Ground	ODP
Pennington Gap Water Plant	Local Government	131 Water Plant Rd, Pennington Gap	1240	Ground	ODP
People Inc. Sweetbriar Apartments	Commercial	19274 Elementary Drive, Abingdon	170.5	Ground	APCO
Western Front Hotel	Commercial	3025 Fourth Ave, St. Paul	112.7	Roof and Carport	ODP
		<b>Total Preliminary Potential KW DC Installation:</b>	<b>2727.18</b>		

\*Note: The array sizes and configurations noted here and in the Exhibits for each Subject Site should be considered for illustrative purposes only. Each Respondent is responsible for determining what, in the Respondent's professional experience, the most appropriate and advantageous array size, type, configuration, and location is for each Subject Site.

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Subject Site owners shall negotiate and enter into agreements with the selected Respondent individually. Respondents are invited to submit proposals individually or collaborate with another firm to submit a joint proposal. The SWG anticipates the selection of a single proposal firm/team through a facilitated process of a Selection Team comprised of Subject Site owners and representatives.

The selected Respondent will be responsible for all project permitting. If any Subject Site decides to proceed with a Third-Party Ownership Option, the selected Respondent is expected to maintain the system for the term of the agreement. All Respondents must have demonstrated experience designing, planning, scheduling, permitting and constructing complete solar electric systems, have demonstrated experience in successfully working with utilities similar to those serving the Subject Sites, provide project financial analysis and applicable incentive/rebate support, providing system monitoring and maintenance, and have established onsite safety standards.

The SWG has established an aggressive timeline for this initial 2019 RFP in order to meet the deadlines for the 30% Federal Investment Tax Credit (ITC). Respondents are asked to commit to meeting construction deadlines in order to ensure that Subject Site owners are eligible for the 30% ITC, understanding that circumstances outside of the Respondent's control may prevent the winning bidder from meeting these deadlines. Please refer to Commence Construction Guidelines provided by the Solar Energy Industry Association: <https://www.seia.org/initiatives/commence-construction-guidance> and the Internal Revenue Service: <https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-drop/n-18-59.pdf>.

### Conditions of the RFP

1. Nothing in this solicitation process, RFP, or any contemplated or final agreement relieves any qualified vendor from complying with all laws and regulations applicable to the agreement.
2. Each Respondent is responsible for reviewing and understanding all terms of this RFP. Failure to thoroughly examine or request clarification on RFP terms may result in disqualification.
3. Any bid may be withdrawn at any time prior to the due date with a written request signed by an authorized Respondent representative. Revised proposals may be submitted up to the Response Due Date.
4. Issuance of this RFP and receipt of proposals commits neither SWG nor any of the Subject Sites to move forward with an award or complete projects described herein. SWG reserves the right to postpone the RFP award process, to accept or reject any or all proposals received in response to this RFP, and to modify the scope of the project at any time. Any changes to the scope of the project or RFP will be provided to Respondents who have registered an intent to bid.
5. An award under this RFP may not be based solely on the lowest price but will be made to the Respondent with the overall best value proposal. The successful proposal will meet the project site design guidelines and provide service level acceptable to SWG.
6. Bid proposals shall remain valid for 90 days after the Notice of Intent to Award. Each Subject Site owner must, within 30 days of the Notice of Intent to Award, provide a notice to the Successful Respondent and SWG that it intends to engage in negotiations (Notice of Engagement) with the Successful Respondent. If a Subject Site does not provide Notice of Engagement before the 30<sup>th</sup> day, Respondents will be allowed to renegotiate time sensitive bid aspects.
7. Within 30 days of receipt of Notice of Engagement, the Successful Respondent must provide a viable contract to the Subject Site owner reflecting the terms set forth in the proposal and initial negotiation discussions with Subject Site owner. The Successful Respondent must then make all reasonable efforts to successfully complete final negotiations and arrive at an executed

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agreement with the Subject Site owner within 60 days of receipt of the Notice of Engagement. Failure to make appropriate and reasonable efforts at meeting these schedule expectations may result in the Subject Site award being revoked.

8. Upon award, successful Respondent shall secure all appropriate licenses to complete the scope of work included in this RFP.
9. Successful Respondent will negotiate and enter into a formal agreement with each Subject Site individually. The Exhibit B Draft General Conditions of the Contract outlines some of the general expectations of contracts with each individual Subject Site. Respondents must note any and all exceptions Respondent makes to these Draft General Conditions of the Contract. Failure to note exceptions to these General Conditions of the Contract will be understood to indicate acceptance on behalf of Respondent.

## Reservations

SWG and the SWG Selection Committee are not obligated as a result of the issuance of this RFP or a proposal submission by a Respondent to enter into an agreement with any Respondent, and have no financial obligation to any Respondent arising from this RFP. All contracts will be executed between each Subject Site owner and the selected Respondent. Each Subject Site owner has committed to a Good Faith Agreement to proceed to a contract with the Successful Respondent provided the offered terms are fair and appropriately beneficial to the Subject Site owner. This RFP does not obligate any Subject Site owner to award a contract or complete the proposed project. Through this Group Solicitation process, the SWG Selection Committee and the Subject Site owners anticipate that Respondent bids will reflect highly competitive rates and quantity discount considerations due to the aggregation of projects, resulting in appealing contracts for Subject Site owners.

The agreement between the Subject Site owner and the selected Respondent will state that SWG, the SWG Selection Committee, and Solar Workgroup Co-conveners are not parties to the agreement, and that the selected Respondent will be solely liable for any claims, losses or damages arising out of the agreement. The SWG is facilitating this RFP as a service to the participating Subject Site owners, free of charge. The SWG will facilitate the selection process but will not cast a vote in the selection process; Subject Site owners will determine the winning Respondent.

## Request for Proposals

### RFP Schedule

The schedule for this RFP is as indicated below. It may be modified or changed at the discretion of SWG. An addendum will be issued in the event of any scheduling changes.

<b>Project Milestone</b>	<b>Date/Time</b>
Issue Date	April 1, 2019
RSVP for Optional Site Tours Due	April 5, 2019
Optional Site Tours	April 11-12, 2019
Mandatory Pre-Proposal Conference (GoToWebinar option available)	April 12, 2019, 3-4pm ET
Notice of Intent to Submit Proposal Due	April 19, 2019, 5pm ET

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Questions from Respondents Due	April 26, 2019, 5pm ET
Answers to Respondent Questions distributed	May 3, 2019
Bid Due Date (electronic submission only)	May 21, 2019, 5pm ET
Interviews of Shortlist of Respondents (if desired by the SWG Selection Committee)	June 4, 2019
Notice of Intent to Award	June 5, 2019 (approximate)
Deadline for Subject Site Owners to provide Notice of Engagement	July 5, 2019 (approximate)
Deadline for Contracts to be Signed	September 3, 2019 (approximate)
Deadline to Commence Construction for 30% ITC	December 31, 2019
System Operation Date	Negotiated Individually per Subject Site

### Optional Site Tours

A site tour will be provided for Respondents interested in viewing the Subject Sites prior to bid. Respondents interested in viewing each subject site must do so within this organized site tour. Respondents will not be granted site access at any other time in this RFP process. Transportation will be provided for Respondents who RSVP by April 5. Space is limited and will be reserved on a first come, first serve basis. Some Respondents may be asked to provide their own transportation if space is full. Respondents who do not RSVP may still attend the Optional Site Tour, however, they may be required to provide their own transportation and must arrive at each Subject Site at the designated tour time in order to access sites along with the rest of the tour group. To reserve space on the tour transportation, please RSVP to Austin Counts, [austin@appvoices.org](mailto:austin@appvoices.org) (276) 679-1691 by April 5.

The site tour shall occur over two days; attendance at both tour dates is required in order to view all Subject Sites. No Subject Site shall be visited more than once. The Subject Site tours provided on Tour Day One, April 11th, shall depart no later than 8:00 am ET from the Ballad Health Plex, 1490 Park Avenue NW in Norton, and will end around 5:35 pm ET. Park in the lot west of the Captain D's restaurant and meet on the south side of the Health Plex. The Subject Site tours provided on Tour Day Two, April 12th, shall depart from the same location no later than 8:00 am ET, and will end around 5:00pm ET. Note, Subject Site tour time is subject to change. Any Respondent not traveling with the group is solely responsible to verify tour schedule prior to the tour date.

### Mandatory Pre-Proposal Conference

A mandatory pre-bid meeting is scheduled as noted in the RFP Schedule. Questions will be taken and answered at this meeting. Questions and answers and any questions that are not able to be answered at the meeting will be listed in the Answers to Respondent Questions document provided to Respondents on May 3. All interested Respondents must attend this required pre-bid meeting either in-person, via conference call, or via web conference. Failure to attend shall disqualify any Respondent from submitting a proposal.

Potential Respondents wishing to **attend via web conference** may do so on April 12th at 3pm by Registering at: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/7006809769607915021>. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.



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Potential Respondents wishing to **attend in person** will meet at 2:45 pm on April 12th at the Norton Rescue Squad building at 1710 Main Ave West, Norton VA. To help assure seating is accommodated for everyone, if you intend to attend the Pre-Proposal meeting in person, please RSVP to Austin Counts, [austin@appvoices.org](mailto:austin@appvoices.org) or (276) 679-1691 by April 10th.

### Requests for Information

Please submit any questions or requests for information via email by April 26 at 5:00pm. Responses to all submitted questions and requests will be shared with all Respondents. Questions must be emailed to Chelsea Barnes, [chelsea@appvoices.org](mailto:chelsea@appvoices.org).

### Sole Point of Contact

Chelsea Barnes, [chelsea@appvoices.org](mailto:chelsea@appvoices.org) or (276) 207-9636

Chelsea Barnes shall be the sole point of contact for all Respondents and interested parties for all questions related to this RFP except as noted above. Respondents shall not contact Subject Site owners, nor SWG selection committee members directly unless explicitly directed to do so by Ms. Barnes. Direct contact of Subject Sites without the explicit direction of Ms. Barnes may disqualify Respondent's proposal.

### Notice of Intent to Submit Proposal

Respondents must state their notice of intent to submit a proposal to Chelsea Barnes, at [chelsea@appvoices.org](mailto:chelsea@appvoices.org) by April 19th, 5pm ET to ensure receipt of all addenda and other project documents. Addenda to this RFP based on submitted technical questions, along with changes to the proposal schedule, will be issued via email only.

### RFP Submission Guidelines

Responses to this RFP will be accepted via email only. All submissions must be made by the Response Due Date and time identified in the RFP Schedule. Email size is limited to 25MB. Respondents may elect to transmit documents via compressed / cloud transfer methods such as Google Drive, Dropbox, zip files, etc. Email submissions to the contact below:

Chelsea Barnes: [chelsea@appvoices.org](mailto:chelsea@appvoices.org)

### Respondent Qualifications

Respondent teams must meet the minimum qualifications described in this section to participate. Each Respondent is responsible for determining whether that firm will be able to meet the minimum qualifications based on their completed proposal.

#### **Required:**

- Respondent team **must** have at least one employee that is a North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners (NABCEP) Certified PV Installer.

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- Respondent team must meet insurance requirements included in the General Conditions of The Contract, Exhibit B. Proof of liability insurance and worker's compensation policy, as well as any documentation for pending or active judgements or liens will be required prior to contract execution with the selected Respondent.
- Respondent team must include a licensed electrician in the Commonwealth of Virginia.
- Respondent must abide by the SEIA Solar Business Code:  
<http://www.seia.org/policy/consumer-protection/seia-solar-business-code>
- Respondents must use the Proposal Template provided as Exhibit D and Cost Proposal Form provided in Exhibit C for proposal submission.
- Respondents must be able to provide Subject Site owners with no-money-down contract options that allow any not-for-profit owners to benefit from the tax credit either through Leases, Self-Generation Agreements, Solar Services Agreements, Third-Party Power Purchase Agreements where available, or other similar contract options (collectively referred to in this RFP as "Third-Party Financing Options").
  
- Respondents shall provide a group-based pricing structure that incentivizes participation through lower prices as the number of participants or kW capacity rise. Pricing discounts for increased installed capacity/participants are to be identified in the Cost Proposal Form.

**Prioritized Consideration Awarded To:**

- Respondents with a clearly outlined plan and commitment to employ Southwest Virginia residents for the implementation of project(s).
- Respondent teams that have a Master Electrician on staff.
- Respondent teams with a clearly outlined plan and commitment to prioritize diversity and inclusiveness in their business practices. Please provide program(s) descriptions and current progress.

### Local Participation

As outlined in the Introduction section, one of the goals of SWG is to "Grow workforce development and entrepreneurship opportunities to advance solar projects and maximize local benefits." In that spirit, SWG encourages Respondents to include in their proposal consideration of:

**Local Workforce:** Opportunities for inclusion of local Southwest Virginia sub-consultants and/or sub-contractors, as well as strategies for hiring of individuals in the local workforce.

**Community College Interns:** Inclusion of Solar PV interns through the Mountain Empire Community College (MECC) Energy Technology pathway program.

### Disposition of Environmental Attributes

For all "Cash Purchase Options," all Environmental Attributes shall be conveyed to the Subject Site owner upon and following the System Operation Date. For all "Third Party Owner Options," disposition of the Environmental Attributes for each Subject Site shall be as described in Exhibit A.

"Environmental Attributes" means any and all claims, renewable energy credits, benefits, emissions reductions, offsets, and allowances, howsoever entitled, resulting from the generation and/or consumption

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of renewable energy (other than the energy itself) or the avoidance of the emission of any gas, chemical, or other substance to the air, soil or water, which are deemed of value. Environmental Attributes include but are not limited to: (1) any avoided emissions of pollutants to the air, soil, or water such as (subject to the foregoing) sulfur oxides (SO<sub>x</sub>), nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>), carbon monoxide (CO), and other pollutants; and (2) any avoided emissions of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), methane (CH<sub>4</sub>), and other greenhouse gases (GHGs) that have been determined by the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change to contribute to the actual or potential threat of altering the Earth's climate by trapping heat in the atmosphere. Environmental Attributes do not include (i) PTCs or certain other tax incentives existing now or in the future associated with the construction, ownership or operation of the system, (ii) adverse wildlife or environmental impacts.

### Disposition of Rebates, Incentives, and Tax Benefits

For all "Cash Purchase Options," the right to all Rebates, Incentives, and Tax Benefits resulting from the ownership of the system shall be conveyed to the Subject Site owner. For all "Third Party Owner Options", the right to all such Rebates, Incentives, and Tax Benefits shall be retained by the selected Respondent, unless specified otherwise in Exhibit A.

### Selection Process

The SWG Selection Committee shall evaluate each proposal based on the Proposal and Evaluation Criteria section of this RFP. Proposals will be ranked based on the evaluation criteria, which will determine the final award recipient. Respondents who do not meet the Requirements listed in the Respondent Qualifications section above are not eligible for the final award. All Respondents will be notified of the outcome of the selection.

Depending on the number and quality of the proposals received, the SWG Selection Committee plans to interview a shortlist of select Respondent teams. Shortlisted Respondents will be asked to present their proposal to the SWG Selection Committee in person on June 4 and answer any outstanding questions.

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## Proposal Requirements

Please create project proposals in 8½" x 11" document size using a minimum 10-point font size. Proposals should be submitted as one PDF file, or, if multiple files are required, one ZIP file containing the proposal folder and files. Proposals should use the template provided in Exhibit D, and should not exceed 25 pages, excluding cover page, cover letter, Cost Proposal exhibits, and any appendices and/or attachments.

### Proposal Checklist:

- 1. Cover Letter
- 2. Completed Proposal Template (Exhibit D)
- 3. Cost Proposal (use RFP Exhibit C, one copy for each Subject Site)
- 4. Required Appendices
- 5. Optional Appendices

#### 1: Cover Letter

The cover letter shall discuss the highlights, key features and distinguishing points of the proposal. As part of this discussion, please describe specifically why Respondent wants to work with SWG and the Subject Sites and why Respondent's proposal should be considered superior. The cover letter must be prepared and signed by a manager having the authority to make offers and enter into financial agreements on behalf of the Respondent or Respondent team, as the case may be.

#### 2. Completed Proposal Template (Exhibit D)

#### 3. Cost Proposal

- A. Using **Exhibit C**, Respondents should present pricing for each Subject Site and include pricing options to match the desired ownership options and line-item pricing identified in the Exhibit A project descriptions. The price is to apply to all work described in the Scope of Work and as required to achieve an interconnected and operational solar system.
- B. **Production Guarantee:** Provide at least a 90% kWh guarantee for year 1, degrading by a maximum of 0.5% per year for 20 years. Performance guarantee should be measured and damages should be paid on an annual basis.
- C. **Cost Proposal:** Provide for each system (1) a price for a cash purchase ("Cash Purchase Option"), and (2) a price for a Third-Party Financing Option(s) (the Contract Options). Include a version of Exhibit C for each Subject Site as a part of your electronic proposal submission.

#### 4. Required Appendices

- 1. Sample Contract
- 2. Description of any exceptions the Respondent makes to the Draft General Conditions to the Contract (Exhibit B).
- 3. Respondent's Health and Safety policies and/or plan, and Respondent firm's Experience Modification Rate as calculated by Respondent's worker's compensation insurance

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carrier for the last three years (also known as EMR, E-Mod, MOD Rate, and Experience Rating).

**5. Optional Appendices**

1. Proof of liability insurance (Not required at this time, but will be required prior to final award)
2. Proof of worker's compensation policy (Not required at this time, but will be required prior to final award)
3. Documentation for pending or active judgements or liens (Not required at this time, but will be required prior to final award)
4. Plan and description of Respondent's commitment to employ Southwest Virginia residents for project installations.
5. Plan and description of Respondent's commitment to employ solar PV interns through the Mountain Empire Community College internship program for project installations.
6. Plan and description of commitment to prioritize diversity and inclusiveness in Respondent's business practices.
7. Documentation related to change orders.
8. Equipment warranty documentation
9. Documentation of Better Business Bureau complaints

**Note:** SWG prefers proposals to be as succinct as possible – please do not include unnecessary documentation.

**Proposal Evaluation Criteria**

Final selection shall be based upon Proposal evaluation, References, and Respondent Interview. For the shortlisting of Respondents for interview, the SWG Selection Committee will evaluate all proposals based on the SWG Selection Committee's perception of each Proposal's technical merit. In the event that two or more proposals are considered to be basically equal in merit, cost or price may ultimately be the deciding factor. The SWG Selection Committee will evaluate all Respondent proposals received based on the following criteria:

Responsive and Complete Proposal Submission:	Required
Qualifications of Team:	Up to 25 points
Local Workforce Plan:	Up to 10 points
Local Internship Plan:	Up to 10 points
Business Practices:	Up to 10 points
Work Quality	Up to 10 points
Customer Service	Up to 10 points
Cost Proposal	Up to 25 points

**Proposal Evaluation Criteria - Cost Proposal**

As cost proposals are only one of the criteria upon which proposals will be reviewed, the evaluation of all costs will be translated into a point value for each respondent. As identified in the Proposal Evaluation

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Criteria section of this RFP, there is a defined total number of points available to be awarded for the cost portion of the proposals. The intent of the point assignment is to provide equal value to each site owner, and to enable sites and the selection committee to evaluate proposals based on each proposed Contract Option (Cash Purchase or Third-Party Financing Options) or on a blend of all cost/financing options.

The following outlines how each cost proposal will be assigned points for this RFP:

1. For each site, each respondent will be given a point award for each Contract Option (Cash Purchase and Third-Party Financing Option) as well as a blended average for that site.
2. The maximum number of possible points as outlined in the Proposal Evaluation Criteria section of this RFP will be given to the Respondent with the lowest proposed cost, while the Respondent with the highest proposed cost will receive 40% of the total possible points for that option/site.
3. The Respondents which are neither the highest nor the lowest proposal for a given option/site then receive a pro-rated number of points based on where their cost lands on the scale between highest proposed and lowest proposed cost.
4. If a Respondent has not provided a proposal for a given Contract Option/ Subject Site, they will receive "0" points for that Contract Option/ Subject Site.
5. Each Respondent will then receive an average of all of their points received across all sites. As with the individual sites, these averages are provided for the Cash Purchase Option, Third-Party Financing Option, and the average of both Contract Options.

## Scope of Work

SWG is soliciting proposals from qualified solar providers on behalf of the Subject Sites to design, build finance, and maintain installations, with one or more ownership options as described in the Exhibit A series of project descriptions. The goal of this RFP is to identify a solar partner with the necessary experience to ensure a fully managed and well-executed process. The successful Respondent will have demonstrated experience financing, designing, planning, scheduling, permitting and constructing, interconnection and owning a solar PV system. Selected Respondent will be responsible for all permitting. Respondents must provide project financial analysis and have established onsite safety standards.

## Project Description

Please see Exhibit A for project supporting information for each of the Subject Sites to be included in this RFP.

## Design Guidelines

Respondents should consider the following guidelines when designing the solar system. **Note: Detailed design of solar array is not required as of the Response Due Date.** Respondents are encouraged to provide any preliminary design information or illustrations they believe best represents their proposal for each Subject Site. Respondent is responsible to assure proposals meet all Utility interconnection requirements and validate that the proposed project and Solar Services structure (where offered) meet the Utility and Commonwealth of Virginia requirements. Respondents may propose arrays similar to those indicated in Exhibit A for each Subject Site, or may propose alternative approaches the Respondent believes to be in the best interest of the Subject Site using one or more of the array types outlined below:

Rooftop Solar (where applicable)

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Respondent shall develop a design for a new PV system. Not all roof space identified needs to be utilized. It is the responsibility of Respondent to assess the building's structural integrity, roof condition and shading limitations.

- Respondent is responsible for securing all permits and approvals required of the project prior to the Construction Start Date as defined in each Subject Site's final agreement terms.
- Mounting system shall be fully ballasted or, when existing structure is incapable of supporting a ballasted or hybrid racking system, anchored racking solar PV system based on Exhibit A project descriptions per Subject Site. For Subject sites requiring anchored mounting, Respondent shall endeavor to limit roof penetrations. Mounting system design needs to meet applicable local building code requirements with respect to snow, wind, earthquake and other factors as defined in the building code.
- Solar system installation should not void the roof warranty. Prior to installation, Respondent will be responsible to coordinate with the property owner's roof warranty holder and obtain a letter indicating warranty shall not be voided based on proposed installation. See General Conditions of The Contract, Exhibit B for additional information on this requirement.
- Conduit penetrations shall be minimized and coordinated with the property owner prior to design finalization.
- System shall be fixed tilt with an orientation that maximizes annual savings to the Subject Site owner.
- System layout shall meet local fire department, code and ordinance requirements.
- Solar PV arrays on flat roofs shall be the self-ballasted style designed to minimize penetrations through the roofing system if roof framing is found by the structural engineer to be structurally capable of carrying loads.
- If the building structure cannot support the full amount of an array ballast, the Respondent shall propose a partially ballasted system that uses minimum roof penetrations. If the building structure cannot support any array ballast, and where high wind speeds warrant, fully anchored systems will be allowed as a last choice. For roofs where hybrid solutions can be accommodated (partially ballasted/anchored), array systems may in these cases incorporate a tie-down system that penetrates roofing in order to attach to underlying roof frame members. One such example is comprised of cabling strung through arrays with perimeter tie-downs to the building, but Respondents are to recommend what they judge to be effective. Extra system tie-down will be allowed only where ballast weight needs to be reduced and/or wind speeds are high. A tie-down system that incorporates a minimum number of roof penetrations is preferred.

Ground-Mounted Solar (where applicable)

Respondent shall develop a design for a new PV system. Not all ground space identified needs to be utilized. It is the responsibility of Respondent to assess site topography and geotechnical attributes to estimate costs related to project installation. The successful Respondent shall be responsible for securing the environmental permits necessary, if any, to install a ground-mounted system.

- Respondent responsible for securing all permits and approvals required of project prior to commencing construction.
- Mounting system shall be either directly anchored into the ground (driven piers, concrete footers, ground screws, etc.) or ballasted on the surface without ground penetration. Mounting system

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design needs to meet applicable local building code requirements with respect to snow, wind, and earthquake factors.

- Mounting system can either be fixed tilt, single axis tracker, or dual axis tracker.
- Panels' orientation, tilt, and azimuth shall provide an orientation that maximizes annual savings to the Subject Site owner.
- Pollinator friendly ground cover and vegetation and their management shall be included in the proposal.
- Storm water management and erosion control management plan, as required, shall be included in the proposal.
- All lines interconnecting solar arrays to point of interconnection shall be underground.

Carport Solar (where applicable)

Respondent shall develop a design for a new PV system. Not all land or parking space needs to be utilized. It is the responsibility of the Respondent to assess site topography and geotechnical attributes to estimate costs related to Project installation.

- It is recommended that carport solar shall be tilted at a minimum of 5 degrees to allow for drainage and reduce soil build-up.
- The carport solar shall be at least 9 feet clear in all locations.
- Lighting shall be provided under each carport as required to maintain existing grade level night illumination levels at Subject Site locations. This lighting shall be energy efficient (e.g., LED) and allow for adjustable times for illumination with photocell controls to turn the lights on at dusk and off in the morning prior to daylight.
- All lines interconnecting solar arrays to point of interconnection shall be underground.
- Trees can be removed from parking lots to accommodate solar installation. Removal of trees shall be kept to a minimum. Parking lot can be restriped to better orient the parking spaces for PV installation. Reorientation of the parking spaces cannot reduce the number of spaces in the parking lot.

### Code Specifications

As required by the Commonwealth of Virginia's Net Metering legislation, all customer-generator electrical generating systems are to meet all applicable safety and performance standards established by the National Electrical Code, the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers and accredited testing laboratories such as Underwriters Laboratories. All power generation and transmission equipment must be UL listed for its designed use. Construction must comply with current adopted Commonwealth of Virginia and Local Building Codes.

- **Modules:** System modules shall be UL1703 listed, and CEC-listed.
- **Inverters:** Shall be UL1741 listed and must be CEC-listed with an efficiency of 95% or higher.



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## Selected Respondent Responsibilities

### Project Management and Site Owner Communications

The Successful Respondent shall be responsible for managing all aspects of the project after accepting the bid award, including the negotiation process, pre-construction, construction, and project close-out phases. The successful Respondent shall be responsible for maintaining appropriate, professional, timely, and regular project management communications with each Subject Site owner to assure quality project communications, decision procedures, and safe, coordinated on-site workflow. Such project management communications shall occur bi-weekly unless otherwise agreed to by the Subject Site owner and the Successful Respondent.

### Final Design Package and Documents

The final design package and documents are to be completed within the time frame appropriate to the final agreement terms for each Subject Site and are not all required in this proposal stage. Please reference the proposal requirement section for detailed bid submission requirements. The final design package and documents shall, at a minimum, include:

- Description of the solar system
- Construction documents and engineering calculations that are signed and sealed by a licensed architect or engineer as required.
- Layout drawing of installation site providing location of all equipment
- Equipment details and specifications
- Schedule for equipment procurement and installation
- Description of how local utility grid interconnection requirements will be met
- Description of controls, monitors, and instrumentation to be used for the solar system
- Equipment and installation manuals
- Safety plan
- Quality control plan
- Operations and Maintenance manuals for system operations and performance monitoring over the life of the contract
- Web-based monitoring for term of service.
- Close out report including the following information: system nameplate size, the overall installed cost of the system and estimated and guaranteed annual kilowatt hour (kWh) production, System Commissioning report, and System Decommissioning/Removal Plan.
- Verification of structural capacity: Note: Respondent is responsible for verification that all structures which are to receive arrays are capable of withstanding the required structural loading.

### Warranties

The solar provider's standard system warranty coverage for Cash Purchase and Third-Party Ownership Options should cover modules, inverter, racking and workmanship.

- **Modules:** 20-Year Power Output & 10-Year Workmanship Limited Warranty
- **Inverter:** 10-Year Limited Warranty
- **Racking:** 10-Year Limited Warranty priority
- **Workmanship:** 1 Year Limited Warranty

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### Operation and Maintenance of System

The successful Respondent will be required to provide Operation and Maintenance (O&M) of the entire solar electric system based on the Project Description set forth in Exhibit A for each Subject Site. O&M services will be understood to include:

- Online monitoring
- Performance monitoring, notification, and troubleshooting – must have personnel available to notify the property owner of an outage or decrease in system production
- Corrective maintenance to mitigate any risk to the system or minimize downtime
- System Performance Reports that compares actual production to predicted production
- Preventative maintenance and inspections to identify and fix problems before they occur, including infrared photography for hot spots, manufacturer recommended maintenance, hardware torque checks, and array cleanings
- Array inspection and cleaning at a minimum of once annually, with additional cleaning as required by array performance and Respondent's operational standards.
- Weed abatement as needed for ground mount

O&M Manual and Data: If the Subject Site owner selects a Cash Purchase or Third-Party Ownership Option, prior to initial System Operation Date, the successful Respondent shall supply two copies of all Component Product Data and Component O&M manuals. The information shall be sufficient for the Subject Site owner to evaluate and ensure appropriate O&M is being completed over the life of the system. Examples of components include solar panels, conduit, inverter, net metering equipment, etc. Project as-builts that detail the locations of all above and underground utilities and components shall be submitted to the Subject Site owner within 30 days of the initial System Operation Date.

### RFP Exhibits

All exhibits can be found online at:

<http://palebluedot.llc/solar-workgroup-of-southwest-virginia-group-solar-solicitation-2019>

Exhibit A: Supporting Information for Subject Sites

Exhibit B: Draft General Conditions of the Contract

Exhibit C: Cost Proposal Form

Exhibit D: Proposal Template

Please submit a completed Cost Proposal Form electronically for each Subject Site with RFP response.