



PROCUREMENT SERVICES

Request for Information for

Solar Photovoltaic Financing

Please mark all proposal submission envelopes with the following information:

RFI21NH-118

All questions must be received by October 21st, 2020 at 5:00pm

All responses must be received by November 4th, 2020 at 3:00pm

University of Florida
Request for Information
RFI21NH-118 Solar Panel Financing
Issued October 7th, 2020

Introduction

The University of Florida (UF), Gainesville, Florida, is soliciting INFORMATION ONLY responses to this Request for Information (RFI) from firms and other entities that may be interested in submitting a technical and cost proposal for a potential future project to provide UF options for solar panel financing.

All information submitted is subject to Chapter 119 F.S., Public Records. If any information provided is believed to be confidential and proprietary, please mark it accordingly. Such marking will not exempt the information from Chapter 119 F.S. if the information does not fall within any exemptions available under Chapter 119 F.S.

UF does not intend to award a contract as a result of this RFI. Nor does UF guarantee that a formal solicitation will be issued as a result of this RFI.

University Demographics

With the support of Florida lawmakers and the UF Trustees, UF has launched UF Rising – a five-year initiative to elevate the university among the nation’s top public universities. The state and UF will devote a combined \$150 million to hiring as many as 100 new faculty members, including both midcareer and eminent professors. The UF Foundation is supporting the plan with an \$800 million campaign to add more than 100 new endowed professorships, and upgrade and add facilities – prominently including a new chemistry building for UF’s world-class chemistry department.

The University of Florida is a major public land-grant research university. The state's oldest, largest, and most comprehensive university, the University of Florida is among the nation's most academically diverse public universities. The University has a long history of established programs in international education, research, and service. It is one of only 17 public land-grant universities nationwide and the only university in Florida belonging to the Association of American Universities. With more than 50,000 students, the University of Florida is now one of the five largest universities in the nation.

The University of Florida has a 2,000-acre campus and more than 900 buildings (including 170 with classrooms and laboratories). The northeast corner of campus is listed as a historic district on the National Register of Historic Places.

The University’s extensive capital improvement program has resulted in facilities ideal for 21st century research including the McKnight Brain Institute, the Health Professions, Nursing and Pharmacy Building, the Cancer and Genetics Research Complex, and the Proton Therapy Institute in Jacksonville. Overall, the university's current facilities have a book value of more than \$1 billion and a replacement value of \$2 billion. UF is also looking to build a new Central Energy Plant by 2025 to supply campus with electricity, steam and chilled water.

For any additional information about the University of Florida, please visit the University’s web page at: www.ufl.edu.

Summary

UF currently has 10 solar photovoltaic arrays on campus, totaling 362kW of capacity, and is interested in exploring additional solar options across the main campus. Florida is a regulated utility market, and UF is territorially obligated by the state Public Service Commission to purchase grid electricity from Duke Energy Florida. However, UF owns and maintains all electrical distribution and infrastructure on the campus. Net metering agreements at the state-level allow for up to 4MW of solar installed inside the boundaries of the core campus. Florida is one of a small number of states that do not allow third-party Power Purchase Agreements (PPA), so other financial options will need to be proposed. UF has internally performed analyses of ~25 potential photovoltaic installation sites; however, no sites have been approved or vetted for installation.

While UF could self-fund solar installation, the University is interested in exploring options that require little or no upfront capital expense by the university, but that result in benefits and savings over a 20-year period or less.

Scope of Work

The University of Florida seeks information about financing options for installation of solar infrastructure on University property.

Primary Deliverables

- Recommendations for financing options for solar, recognizing that 3rd party PPAs aren't allowed in Florida
- Comparison of financing options to self-funded, including where tax incentives not available to the University could be incorporated into the overall financial scenarios over the next 5-year period

Response Requirements

- Submit one (1) hardcopy original and two (2) copies of initial response on 8½ x11 text weight paper, double-sided, and one copy on PC compatible media (CD/DVD or USB flash drive), preferably in Word® and/or Excel®. RFI should be printed, when possible, on paper containing a high level of post-consumer recycle content. The original hardcopy response must contain the original signature of the authorized person signing the RFI.

Responses should contain the following information:

- Tab 1: General Information
 - Company legal/registered name
 - Company mailing and physical address
 - Company website URL

- Name of company representative that will be the primary point of contact for inquiries
 - Representative's contact information (phone, fax, e-mail)
 - Brief description of the company
- Tab 2: Description of general experience and qualifications to help UF achieve objective
 - Include listing of successful projects that have a similar size and scope
- Tab 3: Statement of qualifications including a brief description of past work performed.
 - Description of Florida specific work performed, if any
 - Description of work with similar types of institutions (e.g. public, tax exempt, higher education, internally owned infrastructure in regulated distribution environment)
- Tab 4: Other considerations
 - Identify considerations UF needs to address to achieve its objective of the installation of up to 4MW of new solar arrays on main campus
 - Identify any barriers or time-sensitive concerns over the next 5 years (e.g. tax credits) that UF should consider
 - Discuss benefits or considerations for UF ownership of all products that may result from the solar installations, including, but not limited to energy and renewable energy credits (RECs)
- Tab 5: Experience with a range of small, yet financially viable PV systems
 - On-campus systems would likely be limited to rooftop mounted, parking garage mounted, and small-scale (< 1 acre) ground-mount options.
- Tab 6: Financing offering(s) (please only provide options available under the Florida regulatory landscape).
 - Potential financing options that address full 4MW portfolio or allow a phased approach to installation
 - Lifecycle costs to University under proposed financing model(s) including initial costs, maintenance plans/options, warranty, third-party installation, future ownership transfer to UF etc.
 - Financial example for hypothetical photovoltaic system:
 - 200kW
 - Ground- mount
 - Grid-tied
 - System for tracking production/output
 - Savings or payback period compared to grid electricity rate of \$0.07186
 - Potential adoptable publicly solicited contract information.
- Tab 7: Value added services
 - Inclusion of small, minority-owned businesses, sustainability tie-in, student research opportunities etc.

Submission of Information

Questions to this RFI may be directed in writing to:

Nicola Heredia Director – Procurement Services
University of Florida Procurement Services
971 Elmore Drive
Gainesville, FL 32611-5250

Email: nheredia@ufl.edu
Phone: 352-294-1155

Questions must be received by Thursday October 21st, 2020 at 5:00pm, Responses to all inquiries will be posted on UF Procurement Website at <http://www.procurement.ufl.edu>.

Responses to the RFI must be addressed and delivered to:

University of Florida Procurement Services
971 Elmore Drive
PO Box 115250
Gainesville, FL 32611-5250

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Attention: Nicola Heredia

Responses to RFI are due by November 4th, 2020 at 3:00 p.m.