



CALIFORNIA
**OCEAN
PROTECTION
COUNCIL**

OPC Offshore Wind Environmental Monitoring Guidance Solicitation



Contents

I. INTRODUCTION	3
A. Essential Background and Information	3
B. Solicitation Overview	4
Funding Information	4
Solicitation Schedule	4
II. SOLICITATION PRIORITIES	4
A. Project Goals and Objectives	4
III. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS AND INFORMATION	5
A. Grant Eligibility	5
B. Questions Regarding RFP Requirements	6
C. Solicitation Webinar and Proposal Office Hours	6
D. General Proposal Requirements	6
E. Submission of Proposals	6
IV. EVALUATION AND SELECTION	7
A. Evaluation (100 points possible)	7
B. Selection	8
V. SOLICITATION UPDATES AND CONTACTS	8
Contact Information	8

I. Introduction

A. Essential Background and Information

California is committed to carbon neutrality by 2045, which will require unprecedented changes to our energy portfolio and infrastructure. To meet these bold renewable energy targets, California's offshore waters have emerged as a prime location for floating offshore wind (OSW) projects, and OSW development in California has rapidly progressed in recent years. On August 10, 2022, the California Energy Commission adopted ambitious OSW energy goals of 2-5 GW by 2030 and 25 GW by 2045. On December 7, 2022, the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management conducted the first-ever OSW energy lease sale along the Pacific coastline for five wind energy areas, including two off the Northern California Coast near Humboldt Bay and three off the Central California Coast near Morro Bay. Provisional lease winners have been announced with lease awards anticipated later in 2023. Once leases are awarded, lessees will enter the site assessment phase. Site assessment allows lessees to collect project area specific information to inform their construction and operation plans (COP), and the entire assessment phase could take up to five years to complete. The submission of the site-specific COP will initiate most of the environmental review process by both federal and state governments. Once the COP is approved, the construction of the offshore wind farm – which generally lasts for 20-30 years – will commence. Simultaneously, California is developing a strategic plan, as required by [AB 525 \(Chui, 2021\)](#) that will identify new sea space in federal waters to accommodate additional OSW development sufficient to meet the goal of 25 GW by 2045.

Unlike most operating offshore wind projects worldwide, which have fixed-bottom turbines installed in oceans shallower than 60 meters, OSW projects off the California coast require floating turbines due to the deep water and steep slope. This technology relies on attaching a wind turbine to a floating structure that is tethered to the seabed. Currently, approximately 0.1 GW of floating wind turbines are operating worldwide, compared to over 55 GW of fixed-bottom turbines. Given the limited information available from existing projects and the unique features of the California Current System, the impacts of floating offshore wind development to wildlife and habitats in California are not well understood. Therefore, it is critical to collect long-term monitoring information, ranging from project to regional/statewide levels, and at all project phases.

Although some environmental monitoring guidelines for OSW development exist, they are designed for projects in other regions of the world with fixed-bottom structures and different marine ecosystems, for project levels that cannot adequately address cumulative impacts, or do not contain the level of detail required. Therefore, there is an urgent need to develop a comprehensive environmental monitoring guidance document that is tailored specifically to OSW development in California.

The purpose of this Request for Proposals (RFP) is to establish a competitive process for selecting an appropriate Grantee who can develop a comprehensive environmental monitoring guidance for OSW development in California. Applicants should have expertise in environmental monitoring,

experience in facilitating coordination and collaborating with subject matter experts, capacity to administer the project, and ability to effectively manage grants and provide progress reports.

B. Solicitation Overview

Funding Information

- The maximum amount for this project must not exceed a total of \$450,000
- The maximum length for this project is 2 years
- The term of this project shall begin upon execution of the grant agreement no later than Fall 2023
- Proposal due: July 31, 2023 at 5:00 PM PST

Solicitation Schedule

Key Action	Date (and Time)
RFP Available to Prospective Applicants	Wednesday, May 17, 2023
RFP Informational Webinar	Wednesday, May 24, 2023 at 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM PST
RFP Office Hours	Wednesday, May 31, 2023 at 3:00 PM – 4:00 PM PST
Deadline for Proposal Receipt by OPC	Monday, July 31, 2023 at 5:00 PM PST
Evaluation of Proposals	August - September 2023
Selection of Grantee	Mid/late September 2023
Approximate Start Date, if a Suitable Grantee is Identified	Fall 2023
Approximate Project End Date	Fall 2025

II. Solicitation Priorities

A. Project Goals and Objectives

The overall goal of this solicitation is to develop comprehensive environmental monitoring guidance for OSW development in California.

This project will accomplish the following objectives:

- Convene an advisory committee(s) consisting of subject matter experts with relevant expertise. Examples of expertise should include, but not limited to: marine mammals and sea turtles, birds and bats, oceanographic processes, marine ecology and habitat, and fisheries. The committee(s) size and role should be appropriate for the project's needs. Honoraria may be provided, as appropriate.
- Develop monitoring guidance specifically designed for OSW development in California. The guidance should include but not limited to the following:
 - Priority environmental monitoring questions and needs identified for key and/or vulnerable species and habitats, oceanographic processes, and fisheries that may be impacted by OSW development.
 - Specific monitoring design recommendations to address priority monitoring questions and needs that include technology, methodology, scale, timing, rationale, and leveraging of existing monitoring programs when feasible. Recommendations should include evaluation of project to regional scale feasibility, including beyond lease areas, to consider the full range of potential impacts from OSW infrastructure and development, as well as specific needs relative to project phases from baseline data collection through project operation and maintenance.
 - Evaluation of monitoring data necessary to comply with permitting requirements and relevant policies.
 - Recommended protocols for data sharing, data analysis and interpretation to ensure consistency, comparability, and robustness of monitoring efforts across projects.
- Facilitate a coordinated and transparent process with state, federal, tribal partners, the offshore wind industry, and environmental nonprofit organizations, as appropriate.
- Conduct broad stakeholder and/or public outreach activities.

III. Proposal Submission Requirements and Information

This section contains instructions for the submission of a proposal. It is the responsibility of the applicant to carefully read and follow all proposal requirements within this RFP. Compliance with the RFP instructions is mandatory for a proposal to be considered for award. Failure to comply with the RFP instructions may cause a proposal to be deemed non-compliant and non-responsive, thus ineligible for the award.

A. Grant Eligibility

Applicants that are eligible to apply for offshore wind general funding from OPC consist of:

- Local, state, and federal agencies

- Public or private universities
- Nonprofit organizations (must be a 501(c)(3) as verified by the Internal Revenue Service)
- Private entities
- California Native American tribes, including federally recognized Native American Tribes and non-federally recognized Native American tribes

Priority will be given to California applicants as the project must benefit the state of California. Out-of-state applicants may be considered. However, international applicants and partners are not allowed at this time.

B. Questions Regarding RFP Requirements

All questions and/or concerns to the RFP requirements must be directed to:
OPC-OSW@resources.ca.gov

Questions received will be added to a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) list available at the OPC website.

C. Solicitation Webinar and Proposal Office Hours

OPC will hold an informational webinar on Wednesday, May 24, 2023 from 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM. The webinar will discuss the solicitation process and receive questions from prospective applicants. Please [register to attend the webinar](#).

OPC staff will also be available for “office hours” on a webinar format to answer questions and provide technical assistance on Wednesday, May 31, 2023 from 3:00 PM – 4:00 PM. Please [register to attend the office hour](#). For further questions, please contact: OPC-OSW@resources.ca.gov

D. General Proposal Requirements

1. Applicants must use the proposal template provided on the OPC website.
2. Proposal must be complete and accurate. To be competitive, applicants demonstrate how their projects meet the evaluation criteria listed in section IV below.

E. Submission of Proposals

1. Proposals must be submitted electronically only to: OPC-OSW@resources.ca.gov Proposals must be submitted to, and received by OPC, by the deadline identified in the Solicitation Schedule. Proposals will not be considered if they are submitted after the due date and time that has been specified. Please ensure that you have received an email confirmation that your proposal has been received.

IV. Evaluation and Selection

A. Evaluation (100 points possible)

OPC will convene a panel to conduct an evaluation of the proposal, by an evaluation panel consisting of OPC staff, and staff from other state partner agencies. If deemed necessary, independent academic and subject matter experts may be called upon to be a part of the evaluation team.

The evaluation criteria provided here will be used to score applications. The total points available for any application is 100. Please note that while the use of leveraged funding is appreciated, it is not given priority in the evaluation process.

Item/Description	Points Available
<p>A. Clarity and Articulation – This criterion will assess whether the proposal includes complete, reasonable, and well thought out proposal elements, including proposed tasks (10 points), budget (10 points), and schedule and deliverables (10 points)</p>	30
<p>B. Approaches to Guidance Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This criterion provides applicants the opportunity to describe the methodologies and approaches to guidance development, including collection and organization of information that is up-to-date and appropriate. (10 points) • Applicant has shown that the methodologies and approaches contain technical/scientific merit. (10 points) 	20
<p>C. Project Management and Effectiveness – Applicant demonstrates capacity to execute project, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant demonstrates that it has expertise in environmental monitoring. (10 points) • Applicant has administrative capacity, either in-house or through partnerships, to develop, manage and implement the project successfully. (5 points) 	15
<p>D. Informing Management – Applicant identifies how the project proposed would inform or enable the state to better manage ocean and coastal ecosystems and resources in the face of potential impacts resulting from OSW development.</p>	10

<p>E. Coordination and Collaboration –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant provides a description of the advisory committee(s) of experts, including their role, size and composition. Applicant also includes a plan outlining how they intend to assemble the advisory committee. (5 points) • Applicant clearly identifies key partners in the OSW field, including government agencies, tribes, industry, environmental nonprofit organizations, as appropriate, and includes a plan outlining how they intend to facilitate coordination. (5 points) • Applicant demonstrates experiences in effectively facilitating coordination and collaboration. (5 points) 	15
<p>F. Community Support and Engagement –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has community support, as demonstrated by submittal of letters of support with the application. The following California state agencies: Coastal Commission, Department of Fish and Wildlife, State Lands Commission and Energy Commission are conflicted out of submitting letters of support due to their involvement in the solicitation. (5 points) • Applicant includes a plan outlining how they intend to engage with stakeholders, tribes, and the public. (5 points) 	10

B. Selection

If the proposal review committee determines that a suitable grantee is not identified through this competitive process, OPC will fund discretionarily.

V. Solicitation Updates and Contacts

Please check the OPC webpage regularly, join our [email list](#), and follow our social media for the most recent updates on this solicitation process.



Contact Information

If you have further questions about this solicitation and application process, please contact:
 Yi-Hui Wang, Offshore Wind Program Manager
 Email: OPC-OSW@resources.ca.gov