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**OCEAN
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OPC SB 1 Technical Assistance Program Solicitation



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I. Introduction

A. Essential Background and Information

The Senate Bill 1 Sea-Level Rise Adaptation Planning Grant Program (SB 1 Grant Program) furthers the purposes of [Senate Bill 1 \(Atkins, 2021\)](#) by serving the needs of all California coastal communities in their sea-level rise (SLR) planning efforts to ensure that the entire coast of California, including San Francisco Bay, is prepared for SLR. The SB 1 Grant Program is administered by the Ocean Protection Council (OPC), with the source of funds coming from the Budget Act of 2022, which included a \$37.5 million Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF) appropriation to OPC for implementation of Chapter 236 of the Statutes of 2021 (SB 1).

The SB 1 Grant Program is anticipated to launch in Fall 2023, and will be a rolling application, with selected projects brought to quarterly OPC Meetings. The goal of the SB 1 SLR Adaptation Planning Technical Assistance Program (TA Program) will be to provide direct application services to qualified SB 1 Grant Program applicants to ensure equitable access to SLR planning funds and coastal resilience resources.

The purpose of this Request for Proposals (RFP) is to establish a competitive process for selecting an experienced TA Provider team who can provide those direct application services for potential applicants to the SB 1 Grant Program. The TA Provider(s) selected pursuant to this solicitation shall provide services to applicants within 2 years of funding (Fall 2023 – Fall/Winter 2025), or until funds are fully expended.

For the purposes of the RFP, the following definitions shall apply. “Applicant” shall be defined as those entities that intend to submit a response to this RFP and includes the lead entity and any partners and subcontractors that may be included in the proposal. “TA Provider” shall be defined as the entity ultimately selected to perform the technical assistance work and includes the lead entity and any subcontractors that may be included in the proposal. “TA Recipient” refers to the SB 1 Grant Program applicants that will receive technical assistance. “EJ Communities” are defined as communities that are disproportionately impacted by environmental injustices and social inequities, that are environmentally and economically-stressed and experience environmental health inequities which contribute to persistent environmental health disparities, as defined by [OPC’s Equity Plan](#).

Minimum Qualifications of Applicants

Applicants should have experience developing applications for competitive grants, implementing those grants through strong project management, and coordinating with state or federal grantors. The Applicant should have expertise in California coastal climate and environmental topics, especially sea-level rise planning. Applicants should additionally demonstrate experience working in and with environmental justice (EJ) communities and California Native American tribes. Finally, Applicants should demonstrate strong facilitation skills and experience working across communities throughout California.

TA Provision: Components and Design

Applicants should provide a preliminary design of the TA Program in their proposal. This description should include a menu of the direct services that will be offered to prospective TA Recipients, how those services could be sought, and the rate for provision. All proposals shall include a budget that describes the amount of funds needed to develop the described program and identify the number of potential TA Recipients that can be assisted if a full suite of services is sought and offered to all TA applicants. It is expected that a majority of the budget will go towards direct technical assistance. While the maximum amount for this project is \$1,000,000, work performed shall be paid in arrears on a rate-based basis and therefore be directly affected by how much TA service is provided.

Not all TA Recipients will require the same level of engagement from the TA Provider and will be dependent on need and overall capacity of the TA Provider to serve applicants. The TA Provider shall develop a work plan with each applicant to guide the provision of TA support.

The potential timeline for the SB 1 Grant Program Year 1 is as follows:

Event	Date
SB 1 TA Program Grant Finalized	August 2023
SB 1 Grant Program Solicitation Released	September 2023
Q1 OPC Meeting with selected applications submitted in Q4 2023	Q1 2024 (Date TBD)
Q2 OPC Meeting with selected applications submitted in Q1 2024	Q2 2024 (Date TBD)
Q3 OPC Meeting with selected applications submitted in Q2 2024	Q3 2024 (Date TBD)

B. Solicitation Overview

Funding Information

- The maximum amount for this project must not exceed a total of \$1,000,000
- The term of this project shall begin upon execution of the grant agreement and continue through December 2025 or until funds are fully expended
- Proposal Due: July 13, 2023 at 5:00 PM PT

Solicitation Schedule

Key Action	Date (and Time)
RFP Available to Prospective Applicants	Thursday, June 1, 2023
RFP Webinar	Wed, June 7, 2023 at 11:00 AM PT
RFP Office Hours	Tues, June 20, 2023 at 1:30 PM PT
Deadline for Proposal Receipt by OPC	Thursday, July 13, 2023 at 5:00 PM PT
Evaluation of Proposals	July – August 2023
Selection of TA Provider	August/September 2023
TA Provider and OPC staff build Grant work plan	September 2023
Approximate Grant Start	September 2023
Approximate Release of SB 1 TA Grant Program RFP	September/October 2023
Approximate Project End Date	Wednesday, December 31, 2025

II. Solicitation Priorities

A. SB 1 Technical Assistance Program Goals

The overall goal of the SB 1 TA Program is to support local, regional, and tribal governments that represent EJ communities in preparing and submitting competitive applications to the SB 1 Grant Program. The SB 1 TA Program intends to establish a single team of TA providers to serve the potential applicants along the geographic coast of all of California.

As the first TA Program at OPC, the SB 1 TA Program is also intended to lay the groundwork for future OPC TA efforts. The TA Provider will work with OPC staff in developing the SB 1 TA Program Work Plan, including defining who may qualify as a TA Recipient, refining the type of technical assistance to be provided, and providing templates for TA Recipient requests and work plans. It is anticipated that these resources and materials, along with lessons learned, will be applied to future OPC TA efforts as they are developed.

The TA Provider will support TA Recipients in the development of competitive applications for the SB 1 Grant Program. The TA Provider shall support applicants that qualify for TA in submitting proposals for the SB 1 Grant Program, and support TA Recipients that receive final awards in executing their SB 1 Grant agreement. The TA Provider will also provide outreach and education to potential applicants of the SB 1 Grant Program.

The TA Provider will support the TA Recipients in:

- Understanding and meeting threshold requirements of the SB 1 Grant Program
- Identifying and designing projects that are fundable under the SB 1 Grant Program, including:
 - Aligning the project under the GGRF funding requirements
 - Aligning the project under the SB 1 Grant Program's SLR Planning Criteria
 - Feasibility in completing the project in the SB 1 grant term limit
- Developing cross-sectoral partnerships that can implement the SLR planning project
- Working closely with local stakeholders to develop transformative plans that meet community needs and SB 1 Grant Program requirements
- Reviewing application materials for cohesion, completeness, and consistency with minimum requirements
- Identifying gaps in applications and create a workplan to address this for future applications

B. SB 1 TA Program Scope of Work

The TA Provider will provide technical support to potential applicants throughout the SB 1 Grant Program's first 2 years, or until funding is fully expended, with the goal of facilitating successful applications that deliver meaningful benefits for local, regional, and tribal governments that represent EJ communities. As the first TA Program to be established at OPC, the TA Provider will first work

alongside OPC staff to build a TA Program that fits the SB 1 Grant Program's goals and funding source requirements, as well as provide a framework that can be tailored to future OPC TA efforts.

The TA Provider will then work alongside OPC staff to solicit interest in technical assistance and provide support in selecting TA Recipients throughout the state. As the SB 1 Grant Program is intended to accept applications on a rolling basis, the TA Provider will work with selected TA Recipients year-round.

As a TA program to support applicants to the SB 1 Grant Program, the TA Provider should demonstrate a well-developed understanding of sea-level rise adaptation planning. This Solicitation encourages a team-based approach to technical assistance, with potentially various entities collaborating to contribute specific subject matter expertise. If the TA Provider team includes subcontractors with experience in a specific region or with tribal communities, they shall collaborate on working with TA Recipients in the region. The TA Provider should have strong project management skills and experience pursuing and implementing State funding.

Conflicts of Interest

The TA Provider shall be expected to act as an independent, third-party provider, and shall demonstrate established protocols and policies that will ensure fair and confidential service provision. Please note, due to the expectation that OPC shall be working closely with TA Providers to ensure effective provision of service that meets OPC's needs, and the TA Provider's direct work in assisting applicants in securing SB 1 grant funds, **the selected TA Provider and all staff and subcontractors working under its direction relative to this funding shall not be eligible to act as staff or contractor for any SB 1 grantee, nor may it receive separate SB 1 grant funds for its own projects since there are no clear rounds of issuance and projects are selected upon a rolling basis. This includes implementation of plans or projects.**

C. Tasks and Deliverables

Task 1: Administration Coordination and Reporting

The TA Provider shall be responsible for all work assignments identified in this Scope of Work (above), as well as required deliverables and reporting requirements. The TA Provider shall finalize a work plan that includes a timeline identifying milestones and a schedule of deliverables. This task includes an

initial kick-off meeting with OPC staff, regular status updates and meetings, as well as feedback and evaluation of SB 1 TA efforts.

On a quarterly basis throughout the project, the TA Provider will deliver quarterly reports to OPC outlining progress in meeting work plan deliverables, provide any immediate feedback on program design, and provide a progress report on funds spent to-date. The quarterly reports should also include a mid-term application assessment for each TA Recipient that received TA during the quarter that documents the number of hours of assistance utilized and provides an assessment on the progress of each of the SB 1 applicants to submit a competitive application and the potential challenges applicants are facing. For any TA Recipients that submit an SB 1 grant application during the quarter, the quarterly report should include a summary of the assistance provided, successes and challenges faced, and best practices and recommendations for future applications of the SB 1 TA Program, including strategies for assisting unsuccessful applicants in applying for future rounds.

Following the completion of all activities, the TA Provider shall provide a Final Report to evaluate the success of technical assistance provided. The Final Report will include summaries of applicant assistance, including documentation of hours of direct application assistance provided, type of TA provided, and the successes and challenges faced during the grant. The TA Provider should also include best practices and recommendations for future rounds of the SB 1 TA Program.

Task 1 Deliverables

- Quarterly Reports
- Final Report

Task 2: Establishing the SB 1 TA Program

The TA Provider shall refine and finalize the development of the SB 1 TA Program, in close coordination with OPC staff. The basis of the SB 1 TA Program will come from the TA Provider's proposal, and will be finalized to include:

- The determination of criteria for identifying TA Recipients, including which data tools will be used to ensure a broad number of local, regional, and tribal governments that represent EJ communities may qualify for TA
- The number of hours each TA Recipient can receive

- Timeline for providing TA, from initiating contact with applicants qualified to receive TA, to their submission of an application
- Contingency method for prioritizing TA Recipients, if interest ever exceeds TA Provider capacity
- Refining the type of technical assistance to be provided to TA Recipients (see Task 3 list below)

Task 2 Deliverables¹

- Final SB 1 TA Program Work Plan
- TA Program Framework
- TA Recipient Work Plan Template

Task 3: SB 1 TA Outreach and Education

At the beginning of the TA Program and SB 1 Grant Program's paired launch in Fall 2023, the TA Provider will provide outreach and education about the TA Program to potential applicants of the SB 1 Grant Program. The TA Provider will provide informational webinars, attend workshops and events where educating about the SB 1 TA Program is appropriate, and scope out potential applicants who may qualify for TA to provide targeted outreach. Following the initial outreach efforts in Fall 2023, the TA Provider will continue to provide outreach and education throughout the duration of the grant, but it will be adjusted to reflect where targeted outreach may be needed. The TA Provider shall develop a framework that provides flexibility in providing ongoing outreach and education that ensures direct application assistance (Task 4) is prioritized following the initial outreach in Fall 2023.

Task 3 Deliverables

- Outreach and education plan
- Materials used in any outreach events, including webinar recordings, slides, or flyers
- Summaries of outreach and education events, including number of attendees, etc.

¹ A major goal of the SB 1 TA Program is to lay the groundwork for future OPC TA efforts. As the first TA Provider selected to work with OPC, the TA Provider will play a large role in shaping the direction of future OPC TA efforts. All data, plans, frameworks, work plans, templates, and other grantee materials will be able to be used by OPC for future OPC TA efforts.

Task 4: SB 1 Grant Program Direct Application Assistance

Following the launch of the SB 1 Grant Program in Fall 2023, the TA Provider will provide direct application support to applicants of the SB 1 Grant Program that qualify for TA support. The TA Provider will initiate contact with each identified TA Recipient within the specified timeline established during Task 2. During this introductory meeting, the TA Provider will provide an assessment to applicants on meeting threshold requirements and submitting a competitive application. Based on each applicant's needs, the TA Provider will draft a work approach for the proposed application that identifies specific TA needs for the application and a proposed schedule of delivery of assistance.

Direct application TA services will be defined in the final TA Program Work Plan. These services could include, but is not limited to:

- Answer technical questions related to the SB 1 Grant Program Guidelines and Solicitation
- Guidance on project scoping, such as:
 - Identify major challenges that would prevent submission; provide support to resolve issues
 - Provide information and guidance on SB 1 Grant Program threshold requirements
 - Guide applicants in integrating their projects in order to maximize benefits
 - Provide technical expertise in project eligibility and meeting readiness thresholds
 - Assessment of project readiness
- Facilitation between public and private partners to establish robust partnerships and meaningful community engagement
- Developing data collection and evaluation methodologies
- Gathering data and other relevant information
- Review of application responses
- Timeline for application completion
- Budget review and feedback
- Tracking documentation
- Assisting in executing the grant agreement (if awarded) between OPC and TA Recipient

The TA Provider will conduct regular in-person or conference call meetings with each TA Recipient to ensure benchmarks in the work plan are met and will develop a system to collect applicant questions and provide timely responses (e.g., within one week).

This task also includes ongoing communication with OPC staff regarding TA questions specific to the SB 1 Grant Program and application.

Task 4 Deliverables

- Workplans for each TA Recipient
- Minutes and summaries of meetings with TA Recipients
- Templates and materials utilized in application coordination activities
- Documentation of Application Submittals
- Check-ins with OPC to provide updates on applicants' major milestones and challenges

III. Proposal Submission Requirements (General) and Information

This section contains instructions for the submission of your 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 your proposal to be considered for award. Failure to comply with the RFP instructions may cause your proposal to be deemed non-compliant and non-responsive, thus ineligible for the award.

A. Grant Eligibility

Applicants that are eligible to apply for this SB 1 TA Program opportunity 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)
- California Native American tribes, including federally recognized Native American tribes and non-federally recognized Native American tribes

Please be aware that OPC cannot enter into a grant agreement without governing board approval or other verification that the applicant can accept funding from the state. Applicants will be expected to submit this verification before grant execution.

B. Questions Regarding RFP Requirements

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

Questions received will be added to a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) list available on the [SB 1 Funding webpage](#).

C. Solicitation Webinar and Proposal Office Hours

OPC will hold an informational webinar on Wednesday, June 7, 2023 from 11:00 am – 12:00 pm. The webinar will discuss the solicitation process and receive questions from prospective applicants. If you want to attend the webinar, please register using [this Zoom link](#).

OPC staff will also be available for “office hours” on a webinar format to answer questions and provide technical assistance on Tuesday, June 20, 2023 from 1:30 – 2:30 pm. If you want to attend the office hours, please register using [this Zoom link](#).

For further questions, please contact: OPC-TA@resources.ca.gov.

D. General Proposal Requirements

1. Proposals must provide straightforward and concise descriptions of the Applicant’s and any subcontractors’ ability to satisfy the requirements of this RFP. The proposal must be complete and accurate. Omissions, inaccuracies, or misstatements will be sufficient cause for rejection of a proposal.
2. Proposals must be submitted for the performance of all services described herein. Any deviation from the work specifications contained in this RFP, *Section III, Proposal Submission Requirements (General) and Information*, may cause a proposal to be rejected.

E. Submission of Proposals

1. Proposals must be submitted electronically only to: OPC-TA@resources.ca.gov using the subject: [Main Applicant Name]-SB1 TA Program-Proposal
2. 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.
3. Each proposal will be reviewed to determine if it meets the administrative requirements. Failure to meet the administrative requirements for the RFP may be cause for rejection of the proposal for lack of responsibility on behalf of the Applicant and/or lack of responsiveness on behalf of the proposal.
4. OPC reserves the right to reject all proposals. OPC is not required to award an agreement.

F. Proposal Requirements

Applicants should completely fill out the [Proposal Template and Instructions \(MS Word .docx\)](#). Final proposal applications should be attached to the email as **one PDF**, entitled “[Main Applicant Name]-SB 1 TA Program-Proposal” that includes the following:

- Proposal Cover Page (using the Template)
- Proposal Application (using the Template)
- Budget (using the Template)
- Project Team Resumes/CVs
- Project Letters
- Nonprofit Organization Pre-Award Questionnaire (required for nonprofits only)

IV. Evaluation, Selection, and Award

A. Administrative Evaluation (Pass/Fail)

During the Administrative Evaluation, OPC staff will review each proposal to check for completeness of all required information and to ensure that the Applicant meets the Grant Eligibility requirements. Only proposals that meet all Eligibility requirements will move forward to subsequent evaluation.

During this Administrative Evaluation, if an item is unclear or needs further clarification, Applicants may be requested to provide additional clarification and/or documentation.

B. Technical Evaluation (100 points possible)

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

Evaluation Criteria
<p>A. Clarity and Organization of Proposal – This criterion will assess whether the proposal is presented in a clear, organized manner that facilitates the technical assistance proposed.</p>
<p>B. Approach to Scope of Work – This criterion provides applicants the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge in the subject of the RFP and to lay the groundwork for the actual work to be performed for this project.</p>
<p>1. Applicant has outlined a detailed project management plan consistent with the goals and objective of this project, and project organization that names a qualified Project Manager whose experience and skillset aligns with program objectives.</p>
<p>2. Applicant has described the methodology and approach to Task 2 (Establishing the SB 1 TA Program), including the scope of work and proposed approach to: the determination of criteria for identifying TA Recipients, the number of hours each TA Recipient can receive, outreach and education plans for potential applicants of the SB 1 Grant Program, refining the type of technical assistance to be provided to TA Recipients, etc. For complete list, refer to Task 2 above.</p>
<p>3. Applicant has described the methodology and approach to Task 3 (Outreach and Education), including scope of work and proposed approach to: providing targeted outreach and education to potential SB 1 Grant Program applicants, webinar and in-person materials, and other activities, as appropriate.</p>
<p>4. Applicant has described the methodology and approach to Task 4 (Direct Application Assistance), including the scope of work and proposed approach to: developing and implementing a direct application assistance plan for each TA Recipient, providing</p>

<p>technical expertise on the SB 1 Grant Program Guidelines, project scoping, application materials assistance, and other activities, as appropriate.</p>
<p>C. Work Plan, Schedule, and Budget Justification – For this criterion, reviewers will consider the schedule of activities and evaluate its effectiveness in reaching outlined goals and objectives. Project schedule, estimated dates of completion, and proposed methods for measuring project progress are feasible when measured against the work plan.</p>
<p>D. Applicant & Team Experience –</p>
<p>1. Applicant has proven track record of successfully providing TA and developing proposals and grants, has written and managed successful grant applications, and can provide substantive technical evaluations.</p>
<p>2. Technical Assistance team has demonstrated experience working in and with communities across the geographic coast of California.</p>
<p>3. Applicant team has specific expertise with sea-level rise planning</p>
<p>4. Applicant has experience coordinating local, regional, and tribal governments or serving as a project manager with such entities.</p>
<p>5. Applicant has experience working with Environmental Justice communities and Technical Assistance Team has experience working with tribal communities.</p>

V. Solicitation Updates and Contacts

Please check the SB 1 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:

Megan Williams, Coastal Adaptation Program Manager

Ella McDougall, Climate Change Program Manager

Email: OPC-TA@resources.ca.gov