

SOLAR DECATHLON 2013

Request for Proposals

Amendment No. 2

RFP Issue Date: July 21, 2011

Amendment No. 2 Issue Date: October 14, 2011

This Amendment No. 2 to the Solar Decathlon 2013 Request for Proposals is issued to:

- 1) Provide responses to technical and administrative questions

Question No. 1:

To whom should the Deans write their letter of support?

Response:

Your letter should be included in your proposal (within page limit) and can be addressed to the Subcontract Administrator:

Rebecca Dohrn, Subcontract Administrator
National Renewable Energy Laboratory
M/S 1735
1617 Cole Blvd.
Golden, CO 80401-3305

Question No. 2:

I'd be grateful if you could provide clarification regarding the stipulation about submissions to SD China, on p.7 of the RFP – “Houses that are expected to appear in Solar Decathlon Europe or Solar Decathlon China competitions prior to the start of the U.S. Department of Energy Solar Decathlon 2013 are not permitted”.

If we submit to the Chinese RFP, we assume that we may not know the outcome of this submission by the US deadline of November 10th. Is it therefore permissible to submit a proposal to the US RFP which has also been submitted to the Chinese RFP, on the understanding that even if both submissions were to be successful only one could be implemented? Or would the proposal to the US RFP have to be substantially different?

Response:

The U.S. Department of Energy Solar Decathlon RFP is independent of the Solar Decathlon China RFP. A team may choose to submit proposals to each that utilize the same design or approach, however, the same house cannot appear in both competitions.

Question No. 3:

- a. Are we allowed to apply to both Solar Decathlon 2013 and Solar Decathlon China 2013 with similar proposals and if we are chosen for both, then decide one of them to continue?

Response:

See response to Question No. 2.

The U.S. Department of Energy Solar Decathlon and Solar Decathlon China competitions are separate events. If you are selected for the U.S. Department of Energy Solar Decathlon, we would require a commitment from your team to be in that competition prior to moving forward with a subcontract.

- b. Also, our University is a state university and since it is almost free for all students, it does not have any scholarship programmes. Does it cause a disadvantage for us in evaluation of proposals under curriculum and integration tab?

Response:

The proposals will be evaluated for the overall curriculum and integration based on the criteria listed with an understanding for each school's unique situation.

Question No. 4:

While preparing for our proposal, we stumbled upon some questions.

- a. Concerning the "price proposal" template (link found on page 3 of the "2013_team_rfp.pfd"). We wonder if we are required to use this form? We ask this because we don't have any subcontractors yet.

Response: Yes, this form is required. Lower-tier subcontractors should use this form when submitting a proposal to you as well.

- b. Additionally, we are unclear what should be included in the price proposal. Is it enough to list all the expected building, technical and transportation expenses of the house and all the applications? Or does the price proposal also need to contain the expected research and development cost, usage of the lab-equipment and so on (all students are allowed to use all lab-equipment for their research (thesis, projects) without any expense).

Response:

Costs that we typically expect to see and would agree to reimburse within the \$100,000.00 limitation in the resultant subcontract award will be costs associated with student labor, travel, shipping and associated indirect costs. The RFP states that construction materials and equipment costs are not allowable as part of the NREL reimbursable costs.

We require a detailed breakout of how you are planning to spend the \$100,000.00 that we award. Items/services provided to you at no expense can be mentioned but there is no requirement to schedule out the cost of such benefit in the price proposal.

We are aware that the actual cost to participate in the Solar Decathlon competition exceeds the \$100,000.00 limitation of our awards. We understand that funding sufficient for your team to participate in the Solar Decathlon will come from a variety of sources. Note that the price/cost proposal form is separate from the Fundraising and Team Support evaluation criteria for the technical proposal.

Question No. 5:

- a. For each School on the Registration form or all other forms, does each School mean one for each Department or School involved with in each University, or one for each University (even though multiple departments are involved)?

Response:

A Registration form is required from each Institution, not each department.

- b. For the Price Proposal (two copies for each phase), is the Subcontractor's Certificate of Current Cost or Pricing Data form also required? And is a summary for each phase required?

Response:

No, a Certificate of Current Cost or Pricing Data is not required.

Yes, a summary for each phase is required.

- c. We cannot find information about the Certificate of Insurance listed on the Price Proposal Checklist except what must be completed after a proposal is accepted. Can you please provide guidance?

Response:

Refer to the requirements of Attachment D entitled "School Participation and Release Agreement".

- d. What is the Budget form listed on the Price Proposal Checklist (different from the Price Proposal form)? Is that the Budget included in the proposal for the total construction cost of the house, the Estimated Budget Form for the whole project including the separate form for the labor rate proposal, or some other form or budget table?

Response: The Price/Cost Proposal form referred to in Attachment H to the RFP is accessible at: http://www.nrel.gov/business_opportunities/related_docs.html under the heading Standard Forms.

A Budget Justification is not a specific form, rather, it is a document that you generate to explain, itemize and detail your proposed costs. The budget justification communicates to us how you plan to spend the \$100,000.00 that we award. It should show itemized travel cost, labor cost calculations and application of fringe benefits and F&A (or indirect) rates. In short, the budget justification should explain how costs on the price/cost proposal form are derived so that NREL can fully evaluate your price proposal.

- e. We think that the Certificate of Insurance and the Budget form are not due with the proposal, but wanted to clarify.

Response:

Refer to Attachment D. Our preference is that your Certificate of Insurance accompanies the proposal. If, for some reason, that is not possible, then you may provide it to us prior to signing the subcontract. The "budget justification" and the price/cost proposal form are due with the proposal.

Question No. 6:

On the first PDF "2013_team_rfp.pdf" - Request for Proposal, we have a problem with Point 4 and are not able to download the **Representation and Certification form**.

Response:

There was, indeed, a technical difficulty with the link to the Representations and Certifications but it has been corrected. Please try again at:

http://www.nrel.gov/business_opportunities/related_docs.html

Scroll down to Standard Forms and select the first option.

Question No. 7:

I have a few questions about SD 2013.

Is any limitation on the number of PI and co-PIs?

Is having one faculty advisor on communication and one faculty in business a must in addition to Engineer and Architecture faculties?

Do the students writing the proposal also have to be in the four different departments, e.g. Engineering, Architecture, Business and Communication?

Response:

You are free to structure your team in a way that makes sense to you and promotes and supports the goals in your proposal. Generally speaking, unless the RFP specifically restricts something, then there is no restriction. The RFP does not limit the number of PIs, require that faculty advisors be stated for specific topics, or require that students represent specific departments.

Question No. 8:

I have a question regarding the school participation and release agreement and who exactly "School Officer" is referring to. Does it need to be the Dean of each college within our university, or could it just be our lead faculty adviser? Also, is there any other document that needs to be signed by a "school official" that we may have missed?

Response:

That is a decision internal to your University and must be an individual who is authorized to sign commitments/documents of this nature on behalf of your University. There are other forms that are to be signed by "School Officials" (individuals authorized to commit your University); for

example the Representations and Certifications and the Price/Cost Proposal are two. We encourage you to thoroughly read through the RFP and identify areas for official signature.

Question No. 9:

I noticed a change in the language of the RFP relative to curriculum integration, which seems to bias against engineering schools proposals. I would appreciate a clarification or explanation of this change.

In the past, the language for the “curriculum integration” portion of the proposal evaluation has been (for example, from 2011):

20% Curriculum Integration-The proposal demonstrates that the Solar Decathlon project is well integrated into the students’ course work.

The institution(s) incentivizes top students to make long-term commitments to the project by offering scholarships, independent study credit, paid research assistantships, or other paid or academic compensation.

In the 2013 RFP it states:

15% Curriculum and Integration -The proposal demonstrates that the institution has an architecture and/or building science curriculum and that Solar Decathlon project is well integrated into the students’ course work. The institution(s) incentivizes top students to make long-term commitments to the project by offering scholarships, independent study credit, paid research assistantships, or other paid or academic compensation.

Response:

The RFP added language to increase focus on integration and education across multiple disciplines, but does not limit projects with any particular studies. Proposals should demonstrate how the various aspects of the project will be supported by the institution and existing curriculum.

Question No. 10:

Is more than one team per university allowed to participate/submit a proposal in the competition?

Response:

Yes, there is not a limitation on the number of teams per institution.

Question No. 11:

- a. The proposal checklist (Attachment H) includes that statements of acceptance of Appendix A, B, C and sample subcontract are to be included. Can this be lumped into one statement along the lines of: “....we hereby accept the stipulations of appendix A, B, C and sample subcontract.... or should it be separate statements?

Response:

Either way is acceptable.

- b. Is such statement to be provided by each school of a multi-school team, the lead school, or one statement signed by every school. Who can sign the statement(s)?

Response:

The lead Institution should provide the requested acceptance in your proposal as instructed in the RFP. The lead school is that Institution to which NREL will award the subcontract and also responsible for any lower-tier subcontracts with participating teams.

- c. The certificate of insurance, I assume that this entails separate statements issued by each of the universities, signed by an authorized official at each participating school.

Response:

Yes.

- d. Budget justification:

Response: See Question 5.d above.

- e. What is an F&A rate agreement?

Response:

An "F&A" is an indirect cost agreement that many USA Universities have. It stands for "Facilities and Administrative". The F&A Rate Agreement typically documents a pre-negotiated indirect rate for use in developing cost proposals. Universities that are not a USA institution may not necessarily have such an agreement. For budget justification questions, see Question Nos. 4 and 5.

- f. Are there special rules for labor rate calculation that we should be aware of?

Response:

Labor rate calculation methodologies are internal to and may vary by Institution depending on its' normal estimating methodology. The example given – hourly rate multiplied by estimated hours - is a typical method. There are no special rules in the RFP. We do ask that you show labor calculations in your proposal and budget justification, though, so that we can understand your proposed costs.

Question No. 12:

In the previous RFP it was stipulated that no DOE funds could be used for material purchases. This stipulation now seems omitted. Can funds be used for materials as well?

Response:

The RFP states: "The maximum funded amount for each subcontract is \$100,000, split equally in two Phases. The funding may be spent on labor and other direct costs. Note: **Equipment or personal property purchases (including construction materials) are not to be included, and will not be accepted as part of the price submitted under this request for proposals.**"

The reason for this is because this would raise title issues and the items would be owned by NREL. NREL does not choose to own property items.

Question No. 13:

- a. With regard to Attachment E, Appendix A, Statement of Work: 1.0 Background: This section indicates “The energy source of the houses is limited to the global solar radiation incident on each house's site.” Other sections of the RFP indicate village grid energy is available for use during the competition. Also, the 2011 Decathlon website indicates the houses used more energy than was produced by the houses. Could you please clarify this matter as to whether the participants are limited solely to solar energy or whether village source energy will be available?

Response:

The organizers will provide a micro-grid to allow for the bi-directional flow of electricity to and from each house. The net energy balance will be monitored and any consumption in excess of energy generated may result in a reduced score in the Energy Balance contest. The line quoted relates to the fact that alternate sources of energy, such as on-site wind, cannot be used during the competition period.

- b. Attachment E, Appendix A, Statement of Work: The statement indicates you may elect to include a transportation element in the competition after your review of the 2011 competition. Since providing solar energy for a vehicle likely is a substantial increase in energy requirements it critical to know if this will be required so that conceptual planning can include this element. Also, the details of what is meant by a vehicle are needed to understand what is expected for the competition. Will vehicle specifications be provided or are participants allowed to select the vehicle to be a car or a moped, etc?

Response:

The details of a transportation contest activity are still to-be-published. As details are developed, they will be released to teams after team selection. We recognize that this may necessitate updates and changes to design and conceptual planning.

- c. The 2011 Rules, Section 6 –1 indicate the structural drawings and calculations need to be stamped by a qualified licensed engineer. Is this only for the structural drawings or for all drawings, and does this have to stamped by an engineer licensed at the location of the competition?

Response:

In Solar Decathlon 2011, we required that the structural drawings be stamped by a qualified licensed engineer in the local jurisdiction of the team’s house. The drawings did not need to be stamped by an engineer licensed at the location of the competition. We expect the same requirements to be in effect for Solar Decathlon 2013, however, additional requirements may arise as a result of the competition site selection.

- d. The 2011 Rules, Section 6 – 2 provides ANSI guidance on livable floor space calculations. It is not clear how this impacts the use of deck or non – house space. Are there any specific limits on the use of deck space or landscaping within the specified lot size?

Response:

The Solar Decathlon 2011 Rules do not limit the amount of additional site structures on the site beyond the limits for finished square footage as calculated by ANSI Z765-2003 except that all site components must remain within the defined Solar Envelope. Review Solar Decathlon 2011 Rules, Rule 5: "The Solar Envelope" for additional details. The same approach is expected for Solar Decathlon 2013.

- e. Do all solar components have to be attached to the home?

Response:

The Solar Decathlon 2011 Rules do not require solar components be attached to the home. All structures must remain within the Solar Envelope, however. Review Solar Decathlon 2011 Rules, Rule 5: "The Solar Envelope" for additional details. The same approach is expected for Solar Decathlon 2013.

Question No. 14:

- a. Please confirm if we need to be present at the competition on June 27, 2013 for "public exhibit material", and if the answer is yes, how many people must travel to the presentation?

Response:

The "Public Exhibit Material" deliverable listed in Appendix E, Statement of Work, Paragraph 6.0 Deliverables of the RFP is a PDF and are to be submitted digitally. Please review "Appendix G" of the Solar Decathlon 2011 Rules for deliverable submission instructions. A similar approach is expected for Solar Decathlon 2013.

- b. In our team, we are several schools (Architecture School, Engineering School, etc) We want to be sure if the "Attachment B" has to be signed by the University, or by the different schools. Besides, instructions say that there have to be seven copies of Registration Form for Entry, but at the end of the "Attachment B" say: "one for each school on each team", so we really don't know if it has to be one signed by each school, or seven signed by each school.

Response

The Agreement must be signed by the Institution (not individual departments within the Institution) and also by each and every participating institution. Seven copies are required for our purposes.

- c. We read the rules several times, and we are not sure if a porch which has only one side with wall and is covered, applied as finished square footage. We have been looking other projects and sometimes they consider this area as finished square footage, and sometimes not.

Response:

For Solar Decathlon 2011, finished square footage was calculated according to the ANSI Z765-2003 standard and typically only includes finished, conditioned space. A non-conditioned porch would likely not be included. The same approach is expected for Solar Decathlon 2013.

- d. Such as rules explain, will limitation energetic exist to produce energy? What will it be? And will we have limitation area to put solar cell - photovoltaic panels?

Response:

Rule 8-2: "Energy Sources" of the Solar Decathlon 2011 Rules states that global solar radiation incident upon the lot and the energy in small primary batteries are the only sources of energy that may be consumed in the operation of the house. The rules do not limit the production capacity of solar arrays. All site components must remain within the Solar Envelope as defined by the Rules.

- e. To calculate the travel's costs of the team, we need to know how many decathletes must go to Las Vegas, for Design Development Review Workshop. And how many must go to the competition place, for the contest in October.

Response:

Please recognize participation in the workshops is for your team's benefit. The Solar Decathlon does not require a specific number of participants at the workshops or at the competition site. Participation is determined by each team in accordance with their needs and expectations.

- f. And finally, when will we know the competition place?

Response: See Amendment 1 dated October 10, 2011 located on the Solar Decathlon website at: <http://www.solardecathlon.gov/apply.html>

Question No. 15

Do you know if there are any rules that prohibit companies from sponsoring or working with collegiate teams in any way?

Response

Each collegiate team is tasked with securing its own sponsorship and fund-raising. Once the teams are selected, contact information for each team is posted on the Solar Decathlon website.

Sponsorship recognition opportunities on the competition site are limited by the published Rules for each Solar Decathlon. Review Rule 10: "The Event" of the Solar Decathlon 2011 Rules for sponsorship guidelines used for Solar Decathlon 2011. A similar approach is expected for Solar Decathlon 2013.

Question No. 16:

- a. When will we know the location of Solar Decathlon 2013?

Response: See Amendment 1 dated October 10, 2011 located on the Solar Decathlon website at: <http://www.solardecathlon.gov/apply.html>

- b. The rules say that it's forbidden to use hard-wired batteries for storage. Does this also count for electric cars, or car batteries?

Response:

The Solar Decathlon 2011 Rules did not include a transportation element. The Rules will be updated as necessary to reflect changes for Solar Decathlon 2013. The details of a transportation contest activity are still to-be-published. As details are developed, they will be released to teams after team selection.

Question No. 17:

- a. In the appendices section of the technical proposal, we would like to include a chart that for readability sake is larger than 8 ½" x 11", namely our curriculum integration over the 2-3 year timeline. We have been told by other teams that have competed that that is okay. Please advise.

Response:

All documents should be easily condensed to an 8 ½ x 11" size, such as an 11" x 17" sheet with a fold. An alternate size for limited appendices is acceptable, but should meet the above guideline.

- b. Is the Price Proposal tied to the breakdown of tasks in the RFP or to the deliverables listed in the statement of work? So for instance, are we providing a price proposal for the whole projects (with associated tasks), so total cost of project? Or is the price proposal tied to the deliverables for the proposal or \$100,000 for each deliverable listed? Please advise.

Response:

The deliverables listed in the Statement of Work will be contractually required to be submitted to NREL in performance of the subcontract. The Pro Forma Subcontract specifies the amount payable for each deliverable. Per the Subcontract, upon submittal of each deliverable, your accounting office can submit an invoice. For further information regarding what types of costs are typically included in the price/cost proposal, refer to Questions 4 and 5 above.

Question No. 18:

I have some questions regarding the Request for Proposal document (www.solardecathlon.gov/pdfs/2013_team_rfp.pdf)

- a. On page 3, point 4, the link to the "Representations and Certifications form" doesn't work. Where do we find this "Representations and Certifications form"?

Response:

The link provided in the RFP should work since we have recently corrected it. This link can be accessed at:

http://www.nrel.gov/business_opportunities/related_docs.html. Scroll down to Standard Forms and select the first selection.

- b. On page 3, point 7, on Insurance. What kind of insurance is required? Is it about financing, injuries, accidents, liability insurance etc.? Is there any recommendation on this point? Do we need an intention to contract insurance or a signed certificate by an Insurance company?

Response: Refer to Attachment D entitled School Participation and Release Agreement.

- c. In the SD2013 context, what is the definition of a subcontractor? To what extent is a team is allowed to partner with a company?

Response: Generally speaking, the term “Subcontractor” refers to the Institution that is awarded a subcontract from NREL as a result of this RFP. Successful awardees will each enter into a contractual agreement with NREL to participate in the SD 2013 competition and to perform the Statement of Work. Teams may choose to partner with companies independent of the subcontract between NREL and the Institution.

- d. What is the limit of a capacitor? What is the clear definition of a capacitor?

Response:

A capacitor, as referenced by Rule 8-3, “Batteries” is considered a battery as it stores energy on-site. The storage limit will fall within the limits of all batteries on-site as detailed in “Rule 8-3” of the Solar Decathlon 2011 Rules. A similar approach is expected for Solar Decathlon 2013.

- e. In the Registration form (Attachment B), it asks that the team should indicate the lead school and lead faculty in case of multiple schools being involved, as in our case. However, both schools are equally involved and mutually agreed that there is no lead school. What do we do in this case?

Response: We will award a single contract to the lead organization only, so a lead organization must be designated.

- f. For the Price Proposal Form, do you prefer forms for the tasks of Appendix A (4.0 Tasks), the deliverables on Attachment F (Article 3) or a mix of these two?

Response: The amounts shown for the deliverables identified in Attachment F (Article 3) add up to a total of \$100,000.00. Each Occurrence represents the amount that will actually be paid upon submittal of that particular deliverable to NREL. Paragraph B of Article 3 says “Payments will be made by NREL upon receipt and acceptance of the deliverables, for which funds have been allotted and are available for payment, in the following specified amounts...”.

- g. For the Price Proposal Form, do you need estimates from companies or can we just provide our sources for the prices of each item?

Response:

See Question/Response Nos. 4 and 5 above. Applicants are encouraged to provide cost detail to support your proposed costs for the \$100,000.00 that NREL will

reimburse. The RFP states that construction materials and equipment costs are not allowable as part of the NREL reimbursable costs. We are aware that the actual cost to be in the Solar Decathlon competition exceeds the \$100,000.00 award. Note that the price/cost proposal form is separate from the Fundraising and Team Support technical proposal evaluation criteria.

- h. About the affordability contest, what is included and what is not (ex: decks, outdoor plants, furniture, garage, etc.)? Is it based on one prototype unit or multiple units (mass production)?

Response:

The Solar Decathlon 2011 Rules utilized an Affordability Contest Guidelines document to clearly define what is included in the estimate. In general, costs were determined with the intent that if a contractor is responsible for an item in typical U.S. residential construction or the item is integral to the operation of the house, it will be included in the cost estimate. Assumptions were not made for mass production. A similar approach is expected for Solar Decathlon 2013.

- i. When will we know where the Solar Decathlon 2013 will take place?

Response:

See Amendment 1 dated October 10, 2011 located on the Solar Decathlon website at: <http://www.solardecathlon.gov/apply.html>

- j. When the 2013 Rules will be released?

Response:

A draft version of the Rules that incorporates all major elements is expected to be released in early 2012, after team selection.

- k. Is the Notification Date the date when you start to negotiate with the teams to choose the 20 teams?

Response: This is the target date that we plan to notify the 20 schools (or teams) that have been selected to participate in the competition and award of a subcontract.

Question No. 19:

- a. Is the height of the deck encountered in the 18 foot height restriction of the building?

Response:

Review Rule 5-2 of the Solar Decathlon 2011 Rules. The house and all site components, including the deck, must stay within the 18-foot-high solar envelope. A similar approach is expected for Solar Decathlon 2013.

- b. What is the maximum deck area allowed?

Response:

No maximum deck size is stated. Review Rule 5-2 of the Solar Decathlon 2011 Rules for solar envelope restrictions. A similar approach is expected for Solar Decathlon 2013.

- c. According to the competition rules, what is the overall operation time of the PVs through the competition week?

Response:

Review Appendix A-3 of the Solar Decathlon 2011 Rules for the overall operation time of the energy balance contest for Solar Decathlon 2011. The schedule will be updated for Solar Decathlon 2013, however, a similar approach is expected.

- d. Is there any anticipation about the probable location of the 2013 Solar Decathlon and also the transportation contest rules?

Response:

The RFP for the Solar Decathlon 2013 location is pending. Selection decisions have not yet been made. See Amendment 1 dated October 10, 2011 located on the Solar Decathlon website at: <http://www.solardecathlon.gov/apply.html>.

The details of a transportation contest activity are still to-be-published. As details are developed, they will be released to teams after team selection. We recognize that this may necessitate updates and changes to design and conceptual planning.

- e. Is there any possibility of extension of the technical questions submission deadline; 11th Oct. 2011?

Response: The deadline for technical questions is not extended.

Question No. 20:

I would like to pose the following questions concerning the RFP process for Solar Decathlon 2013:

- a. Is it anticipated that teams will procure their own sponsorship for an electric car, or will the DOE provide one?

Response:

The details of a transportation contest activity are still to-be-published. As details are developed, they will be released to teams after team selection.

- b. Can additional institutions be brought into a partnership after the proposal is submitted?

Response:

The question is unclear; however, NREL will award the subcontract to one lead organization and it is up to that organization to define and structure the participating team. If you were to omit a participant at the beginning then your technical proposal would not be evaluated on the merits thereof.

- c. Is the price/cost proposal for the entire budget, or just for the \$100k provided by the DOE?

Response:

Review the response to Question No. 4. Costs associated with student labor, travel, shipping and indirect costs are expected. Items/services provided to you at no expense can be mentioned but there is no requirement to schedule out the cost of such benefit in the price proposal. Additionally, we are aware that the actual cost to be in the Solar Decathlon competition exceeds the \$100,000.00 award. We understand that funding sufficient for your team to participate in the Solar Decathlon will come from a variety of sources. Note that the price/cost proposal form is separate from the Fundraising and Team Support evaluation criteria for the technical proposal.