

MAYOR BILL DE BLASIO ANNOUNCES FINALISTS TO ANCHOR CITY'S CLIMATE SOLUTIONS CENTER ON GOVERNORS ISLAND

Four teams led by top universities move to next phase of competition dedicated to advancing New York City as a leader in the development of urban climate solutions

NEW YORK—Mayor Bill de Blasio and The Trust for Governors Island (the Trust) today announced the next steps in the City of New York's initiative to establish a global Center for Climate Solutions on Governors Island. After receiving 12 proposals as part of a competitive Request for Expressions of Interest (RFEI) process on October 13, 2021, today the Mayor and the Trust are announcing that four finalist teams will move forward in competing to build, program and operate an institution on Governors Island dedicated to researching and showcasing how cities around the world can equitably adapt to climate change.

Finalists announced today include teams led by the following institutions:

The City University of New York (CUNY) and The New School
Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)
Northeastern University
Stony Brook University

Following today's announcement, finalist teams will respond to a competitive Request for Proposals process to be launched in Spring, 2022, where they will have an opportunity to further refine their program and design.

"Governors Island is a jewel of our harbor, and today we're taking an important step toward transforming it into the nerve center for our city's fight against climate change," said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. "These finalists have submitted thoughtful, bold proposals to lead that mission. We look forward to hearing more from them as we find the perfect partner to make New York City an international leader in solving the planet's most existential challenge."

"During the last eight years we've led with transformative projects and policies that advance equitable climate action, and the Center for Climate Solutions will continue that legacy in furthering New York City's role as a global leader in education and research to tackle one of the defining challenges of our time," said **Deputy Mayor for Housing and Economic Development Vicki Been**. "The finalists announced today propose ambitious visions that will create a safer and more resilient future for cities around the world, and we are thrilled to move forward with the next phase of this critical investment in climate solutions."

"Addressing the climate crisis through inclusive and cross-sector approaches is imperative for cities, and an opportunity that New York City is poised to lead" said **Clare Newman, President and CEO of the Trust for Governors Island**. "The Center for Climate Solutions will advance New York City's leadership in generating the innovative solutions needed to create a resilient future for cities around the world, while expanding the training and education needed to provide pathways to green jobs. These four proposals showcase ambitious and innovative approaches

that underscore the urgency of addressing challenges posed by climate change. We look forward to the next phase of this competition and bringing this project to life right here on Governors Island.”

“Throughout history, New York City has always been at the center of the conversation in driving solutions to the world’s greatest challenges,” said **Alicia Glen, Chair of the Board of the Trust for Governors Island and former Deputy Mayor for Housing and Economic Development**. “The proposals announced today match our ambition for the Center for Climate Solutions, to build upon New York City’s diverse talent, world-class institutions, and resilience to be a model that cities around the world will turn to as we develop practical solutions to adapt to climate change and reduce the harm our current practices are imposing on our planet.”

The Center for Climate Solutions is a groundbreaking initiative designed to further New York City as a global leader in efforts to respond to the climate crisis. On Governors Island, the project will support the research, development, and demonstration of equitable climate solutions for New York City that can be scaled and applied globally. Through interdisciplinary education, training, and broad public engagement opportunities, the Center will support the growth of green and climate-related jobs driving New York City’s recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. At full build, the Center for Climate Solutions is estimated to create 7,000 direct jobs on Governors Island alone and nearly \$1 billion in fiscal impact for New York City.

The four finalists announced today outlined ambitious proposals to expand education and applied research in New York City. Proposals presented a range of innovative approaches to the unprecedented opportunity to showcase scalable solutions for urban environments. Applicants have focused on sustainable and resilient buildings, nature-based solutions, flood and stormwater management, energy, circular economy and waste management, climate justice and public health. In addition, proposals outline strategies to broaden the study of climate change across sectors, incorporating policy and advocacy with science and advancing urban adaptation strategies.

Proposals announced today were evaluated based on how respondents articulated a vision that addresses the City’s and the Trust’s goals as outlined in the RFEI, including advancing equitable climate solutions; making a positive contribution to Governors Island’s physical campus and existing community of partners and visitors; and creating broader opportunities for New Yorkers.

Details announced today regarding the finalist proposals are outlined as follows:

CUNY and The New School (C3: Climate Center Consortium)

Additional Partners: Columbia University, Barnard College, The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art, New York University, Cary Institute of Ecosystem Studies, Northeastern University, University at Albany, Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution

C3 is a new consortium of academic, research, and community organizations, focused on merging the work of climate adaptation, mitigation, and environmental justice. Programming will include formal and informal K-16 learning opportunities, degree-granting courses, career and workforce development, and continuing education credentials for educators and

practitioners. C3 proposes to utilize Governors Island as a living laboratory for just climate solutions through transdisciplinary research, prototyping, and commercialization, focused on building design, technology, and nature-based solutions. Disciplines proposed include natural and social sciences, engineering, design, the arts, and humanities. Adaptive reuse of many of the Island's historic buildings will create classrooms, research space, and dormitories. New spaces include areas for conferences and gatherings, field and forest research, and public participatory and demonstration sites. C3 proposes to facilitate collaboration across disciplines and sectors to develop climate solutions with community members, environmental justice organizations, and stakeholder groups on Governors Island, throughout New York City, and the world.

Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)

Additional Partners: Columbia University and Barnard College

MIT proposes to create a dedicated climate change solutions and innovation center on Governors Island to support the research, development, prototyping, and deployment of urban-based solutions focused on New York City communities, in partnership with industry and government. Managed by MIT's Environmental Solutions Initiative, which is dedicated to mobilizing the Institute's scientific, engineering, policy, and design capacity to contribute to addressing climate change, the Governors Island center would host researchers and faculty from MIT and other partner institutions who would focus on the testing, rapid commercialization, and deployment of climate solutions. Solutions-development would focus on the areas of transportation, energy, buildings, the circular economy, equity and citizen science, and biodiversity. MIT's center on Governors Island is proposed to include research space with a shared public conference hall, prototyping facilities, and overnight accommodations.

Northeastern University (Coastal Cities Impact Team)

Additional Partners: Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, The University of Tokyo, University of Puerto Rico at Mayagüez

Northeastern University is proposing to build a climate solutions research and innovation center on Governors Island that engages the citizens of New York with researchers from around the world. The proposed center will be dedicated to driving ideas and discoveries that make coastal cities and communities sustainable, resilient, equitable, and vibrant for all. The Coastal Cities Impact team, with external partners, is proposing to drive climate science, climate justice, and climate adaptation from the deep ocean to coastal environments to city neighborhoods. Northeastern would expand its internationally renowned Cooperative Education program to accelerate and expand educational and career pipelines to climate-related jobs for New Yorkers. Proposed facilities include research and laboratory space, space for start-up companies and entrepreneurs to collaborate on research projects, overnight accommodations, and a public exhibition hall with interactive learning displays.

Stony Brook University (New York Climate Exchange)

Founding Partners: Stony Brook University, Brookhaven National Laboratory, University of Oxford, University of Washington

Additional Academic Partners: Columbia University, Stanford University, Yale University, SUNY Maritime, Rochester Institute of Technology, University of Tokyo

The New York Climate Exchange, led by Stony Brook University, proposes to create an innovation campus dedicated to urban coastal sustainability, water, food and energy, and climate justice. The program would include continuing education opportunities, a solutions-focused semester abroad on Governors Island, a K-12 summer intensive program providing students the opportunity to work on hands-on projects alongside researchers and educators, competitively awarded research, testing, and demonstration space, and a fellowship and internship program. Continuing education opportunities are proposed to offer credentials and micro-credentials for accessing green jobs, focused on frontline communities and in collaboration with labor, workforce development, and community-based organizations. Proposed facilities include classroom and laboratory space, overnight accommodations and dormitories, and a conference center.

In June 2021, the City and the Trust released an RFEI seeking an educational and research institution to anchor the Center for Climate Solutions. Respondents were offered the option to lease land within 33 acres of development sites, and/or up to one million square feet of adaptive reuse opportunity within historic buildings on Governors Island. The Trust and the City of New York have partnered to make available up to \$150 million of capital funding that may be allocated to support this project.

“Today’s announcement of the four finalist teams brings us into the exciting next phase of establishing an institution right here on Governors Island which seeks to take an innovative, multidisciplinary approach to meet the existential threat of climate change”, said **Congressman Jerry Nadler**. “The Center for Climate Solutions will allow New York to be a leader in education, research and collaboration around climate change and help bring green jobs and infrastructure to our city.”

“I am thrilled to see the Center for Climate Solutions one step closer to being realized,” said **Council Member Margaret Chin**. “The proposals from these four finalists all bring so much potential to cementing Governors Island’s identity as a world-class research hub for climate resiliency and sustainability.”