

**Center for Climate Solutions**  
**Request for Expressions of Interest: Anchor Educational & Research Institution**  
**Questions & Answers**  
**Updated as Of: July 13, 2021**

Eligibility Questions

1. *Is an international organization such as the United Nations eligible to submit a proposal as a consortium lead?*

Yes, governmental and intergovernmental research organizations are considered Eligible Respondents as defined in Section IV of the RFEI document.

2. *Are the in-person site visit opportunities restricted to only Eligible Respondents, or may architects or other potential team members attend on their own?*

Potential team members who are not Eligible Respondents are welcome to attend the group site visit scheduled for July 22. Any additional site visits that are available upon request, per RFEI Section VII: Process, will only be scheduled for Eligible Respondents. Note that Governors Island is open to the public every day through October 31 and interested parties are always welcome to explore the Island independently.

3. *This is a global competition -- is an interested international party expected to partner with a locally based institution?*

Interested international parties that are themselves Eligible Respondents, as defined in Section IV of the RFEI document, are eligible to respond independently, or as the lead or participating member of a consortium. International Eligible Respondents are welcome, but are not required, to partner with a locally based institution.

Partnership Questions

1. *As an architectural partner, would we need to find a university or research institution to join ahead of the submission?*

All Responses must include an Eligible Respondent as the team lead. An architectural firm would not be eligible to submit a response to this RFEI if not as a member of a team led by an Eligible Respondent. However, Eligible Respondents that are the lead entity on a response are not precluded from adding additional partners to their team at any stage in the process (e.g. between RFEI and RFP should the process proceed to RFP, after RFEI award, etc.)

2. *How do I share my contact information? How do we identify partners?*

Entities interested in joining a team to respond to the RFEI may indicate their interest in sharing their contact information and the desired role they would play on such a team via [this form](#) or when signing up for an information session, also included in the RFEI in Section VII: Process, Partnership Opportunities. Interested parties must submit such information prior to July 22. Thereafter, the Trust will distribute this information only to other potential respondents that have similarly opted in to sharing their information.

- 3. As architectural partners, is it expected that we are to reach out to individual institutions ourselves? Or would they be part of the shared pool of interested applicants?*

The list of entities interested in sharing their contact information that will be distributed by the Trust will be inclusive of both Eligible Respondents and other entities that have elected to share their contact information and receive the information of other entities interested in partnership.

- 4. As part of the submission for the RFEI from an anchor institution, would you expect inclusion of letters of collaborations from partners at this stage?*

Letters of collaboration and/or support are not required. However, if a Respondent has proposed partnerships with specific entities, letters of support would speak to the feasibility of Respondent's proposal, which is one of the selection criteria described in Section VII: Process of the RFEI.

- 5. If an architectural firm is not a member of a team at this RFEI stage, would the firm be eligible to join a team later, should the process move into an RFP stage?*

Yes. The RFEI states in Section I: Executive Summary and Section VII: Process, that "in the event an RFP is issued, it is anticipated that only entities included on a team that responded to the RFEI will be eligible to respond." This is anticipated only to be applicable to team leads, e.g. only entities included on a team that responded to the RFEI will be eligible to respond **as a team lead**. In the event an RFP is issued, it is anticipated that Eligible Respondents that were the team lead on an RFEI response may add additional members to their team between the RFEI and RFP stages (e.g. form a partnership with another research institution whether that institution did or did not respond to the RFEI, add an architectural partner, etc.).

- 6. Do you have a range in mind for the number of partners in a partnership?*

No. The Trust is open to any number of partners that supports a Respondent's proposal and addresses the Trust's and the City's goals for the RFEI, inclusive of the goal to Create Partnership Opportunities for the Island Community and balanced by the selection criteria around project feasibility.

- 7. In order to learn which anchor institutions are interested, will you be issuing an addenda or else posting the list to the website, or else sending out emails for those anchor institutions that chose to include that information when prompted for it, during the pre-bid sign ups?*

All potential respondents interested in sharing their contact information, including Eligible Respondents, have the opportunity to opt-in to sharing their contact information either when signing up for information sessions or via the standalone Partnership Opportunities form found in the RFEI. This information will be circulated only to other potential respondents that have similarly opted in to sharing their information. Any other addenda to the RFEI will be available online.

- 8. Will the list of potential respondents interested in partnership opportunities include contact information for those entities?*

Yes.

- 9. Will the Trust be sharing a list of all parties that attended the information sessions?*

No. The Trust will only be sharing information for entities who have opted in to sharing such information.

*10. For potential respondents attending the July 22 site visit, will you circulate a list of confirmed attendees to all attendees in advance to facilitate introductions and team formation?*

Yes, the Trust will circulate this information amongst confirmed attendees to facilitate partnership opportunities.

#### Design Questions

*1. Given that you are asking for renderings, is the expectation that the education institution will bring an architect and/or developer as part of the team?*

Eligible Respondents are welcome to, but not required to, include an architect as a member of their team.

*2. Are there CAD files for existing buildings or site conditions that are available?*

Select existing building and site condition information is included in PDF format in Appendix A of the RFEI, the Site File. Potential Respondents interested in further information may submit such request to [climatecenter@govisland.org](mailto:climatecenter@govisland.org) and the Trust will provide such information to the extent available.

*3. Will the Trust consider sustainable certification – SITES – for outside the buildings' skin?*

The Trust's design guidelines, attached to the RFEI as Appendix D, encompass guidelines for both buildings and open space. Per the guidelines, Respondents are encouraged to identify clear benchmarks for measuring their sustainability and resiliency performance, including potential use of third-party rating and certification programs such as SITES.

*4. Can you explain why the Trust is requiring a physical plan submission at this RFEI stage?*

In addition to the programmatic and research elements, the physical form of the proposed Institution will be an integral component of the Trust's evaluation, as described in Section VII: Process, Criteria & Review and the Trust's goal for Inspired and Innovative Design. The Island is a public place and a unique resource for the City of New York. To clarify the Submission Requirements outlined in Section VI, item 3, the illustrative site plan and conceptual rendering requirements are not intended to be fully realized graphic materials but rather to convey the concept and key design principles embedded in the proposed Institution. Responses are welcome to think through creative ways to convey conceptual design intent.

#### Financial Questions

*1. In what format is the available City funding available? Is it low-interest bonds?*

The \$150M in available City capital funding identified in RFEI Section IV: Partnership Structure and Details will be available in the form of direct support for eligible capital improvements or via Landlord Work, not in the form of a loan. In addition to the \$150M of direct support available, the Trust has identified numerous incentive programs that may be available to the successful Respondent in Appendix B of the RFEI, including low-interest bond financing via Build NYC or the Dormitory Authority of the State of New York.

2. *Do you have an estimate or range of the annual lease and common charge payments you are looking for? Should we be thinking about a certain ROI based on the \$150M capital investment?*

The Respondent ultimately selected will be expected to meaningfully support the Island's goal of financial self-sufficiency and expanded public access through common area maintenance charges and/or rent payments. The Trust has not identified a specific dollar value or range for such contribution. The Trust anticipates evaluating the fairness of such contribution in the context of the overall scale and nature of the Respondent's proposal. The exact amount of financial contribution will be determined at a future stage of the process. There is no expectation of an exact offer in the response to the RFEI.

3. *Is the lease payment based solely on the educational anchor or can we include projections from dormitory, hospitality or office space subleases?*

The Trust will evaluate Respondent's total proposed contribution to the Trust, inclusive of all uses included in Respondent's proposal. Should Respondent elect to include ancillary uses that will be managed by Respondent in their proposal, any financial contribution to the Trust generated by such uses would count toward Respondent's overall contribution to the Trust.

4. *Does the amount of financial contribution to the Trust need to be determined now?*

The exact amount of financial contribution will be determined at a future stage of the process. There is no expectation of an exact offer in the response to the RFEI.

#### Structure Questions

1. *Is it expected that all partners in a consortium will be creating satellites to their home campus?*

Respondents are welcome to propose any model for the Institution consistent with the goals of the RFEI. Such models may include, for example only, a satellite degree-granting program, research center with a visiting scholars program, or an innovation studio with fellowships, among others. Respondents, whether part of a consortia or an independent Respondent, are not required to propose a satellite campus in their Response.

2. *Do you require that researchers and/or students live on the Island?*

No. Per RFEI Section IV: Partnership Structure and Details, Allowable Uses, Respondents to this RFEI are only required to include an Institution featuring an academic and/or research program that addresses the City and Trust's goals in their response. Respondents may also, at their discretion, propose any additional uses allowed on Governors Island to the extent that these uses are integral to, enhance, or support the core academic and/or research program at the Institution and the mission of the Center. These additional uses include dormitories and/or faculty housing, amongst other uses listed in the RFEI.

#### Process Questions

1. *Will slides and/or recordings from the information sessions be made available?*

Yes, please refer to the RFP page of the Trust's website [here](#) for a copy of the slides.

2. *Is there an anticipated construction timeline?*

Per RFEI Section VI: Submission Requirements, item 5(d), Respondents should describe the proposed construction timeline associated with their proposed project in their response to the Trust.

*3. Will RFEI responses be made public? Will the public have a chance to weigh in?*

The Trust has committed to presenting the proposals of the finalists of the RFEI, absent identifying information about the Respondents, at public hearings with Manhattan Community Board 1 as well as the City Planning Commission. The Trust and/or the City may also choose to make additional public announcements about RFEI responses received, such as the number of responses received and/or responding entity names.