



March 23, 2020

BAY AREA
AIR QUALITY
MANAGEMENT
DISTRICT

Request for Proposals# 2020-006

Marketing and Product Development Support for the
Climate Tech Finance Program

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SECTION I – SUMMARY

The Bay Area Air Quality Management District (Air District) seeks proposals from qualified, experienced consultants or contractors in the field of Marketing and Product Development to assist the Air District with a marketing plan, product strategy, and outreach and communications plan for its Climate Tech Finance program.

To respond to this Request for Proposals (RFP), an interested company should submit its proposal electronically (in Adobe Acrobat PDF file format) to the Air District’s Procurement Portal (Portal):

Cynthia Zhang, Staff Specialist
Bay Area Air Quality Management District
375 Beale Street, Suite 600; San Francisco, CA 94105
Portal link: <https://baaqmd.bonfirehub.com>

**Proposals must be submitted and received by 4:00 p.m. on April 22, 2020.
Late proposals will not be considered.**

Proposals must address all information requested in this RFP. A proposal may add information not requested in this RFP, but the information should be in addition to, not instead of, the requested information and format. Minority business enterprises, women’s business enterprises, veteran’s business enterprises, and Certified Green Businesses are encouraged to submit proposals. **Any questions regarding this RFP should be submitted through the Portal.**

SECTION II – BACKGROUND

A. Air District Overview

The Air District was created by the California Legislature in 1955 as the first regional agency to address air pollution in California. The Air District jurisdiction includes Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, Santa Clara, San Francisco, San Mateo, southwestern Solano, and southern Sonoma counties.

The State Legislature originally gave the Air District the authority to regulate stationary sources of air pollution, such as factories, oil refineries, chemical plants, gasoline stations, and agricultural burning. With more recent legislation, the Air District was granted authority to enact certain measures related to transportation and mobile sources.

The Air District is governed by a twenty-four member Board of Directors, consisting of elected officials, including county supervisors, mayors, and city council members. The Executive Officer / Air Pollution Control Officer (APCO) for the Air District is Jack P. Broadbent.

B. Climate Tech Finance Program

As part of the Clean Air Plan's vision for a post-carbon Bay Area by 2050, the Air District established the Climate Tech Finance (CTF) program in 2018 to scale up technologies that reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. This program provides financial support to developers and adopters of emerging technologies that reduce GHG emissions from stationary and mobile sources. The program's overall goal is to accelerate lower-carbon technologies and practices across Bay Area industries and municipalities.

CTF's first generation of products lowers the cost of capital for development and adoption of lower-carbon technologies:

- To aid technology development, CTF helps entrepreneurs secure working capital loans from banks. The loan guarantees reduce risk to banks of lending to developers of emerging technologies. The CTF program offers a loan guarantee of up to 90% of the loan principal or \$2.5 million, whichever is less.
- To aid technology adoption, CTF loans public organizations funds to install low-carbon technology. These loans speed and ease the process of getting money and give public organizations a competitive borrowing rate. The CTF program offers loans between \$0.5 and \$30 million on terms up to 30 years.

CTF products are offered through a partnership with the California Infrastructure and Economic Development Bank (IBank). In this partnership, IBank conducts the financial evaluation of each project and manages the debt service. The Air District provides technical assistance around technology assessment and GHG engineering, and support during air quality permitting. In 2019, the Air District held networking events to support engagement between technology developers and adopters, to reduce information and search costs about low-carbon technologies, and to encourage peer-to-peer learning about low-carbon technology development and adoption.

The goals of the CTF program include the following:

- Accelerate development and adoption of technologies that reduce GHGs at industrial facilities and in the built environment;
- Reduce the perceived adoption risk of technologies that reduce GHGs;
- Support access to capital that helps developers of emerging technology get “over the hump” to product commercialization and that speeds uptake in the Bay Area;
- Promote innovation and energy resiliency in new and existing infrastructure; and
- Reduce GHGs by decarbonizing the Bay Area economy.

C. Climate Tech Finance Program Needs

After a year and a half of introducing CTF financial products to potential customers, the Air District has developed the following understanding of CTF loans and loan guarantees:

- Loan guarantees and loans are technical products. The Air District needs a marketing approach that quickly and intuitively explains how the products fit client projects and meet the needs of their organizations.
- CTF lending products help organizations spend money. They are most useful when project designers and finance managers know about them at the key points in their project development and financing decision making. The Air District needs help identifying organizations that are ready to spend money and reaching the right people at the right point in their decision cycles.
- The Air District’s mission is to regulate air quality and ensure a healthy breathing environment for all Bay Area residents. Over time, the Air District has become an administrator of grants that reduce GHGs, but is not well recognized as a financial innovator and technology accelerator. The Air District’s marketing approach may need to take into account the Air District’s existing reputation and the brand needed for newer financial products.

As a result of these observations, the Air District seeks a strategic marketing and product development plan that can help the Air District achieve the following:

- Shorten and speed up sales cycles. This could mean faster identification of potential users and their decision cycles. It could also mean improving promotional materials to speak more clearly to user needs and explain more intuitively how CTF products meet them. Regardless of print, digital, or other promotional medium, it should help identify and connect with potential product users more quickly.
- Support customer development and product iteration. This could involve methods of evaluating user experiences, needs, motivators, and accelerators. It should help the Air District evaluate the fit of its products to user needs, circumstances, and decision contexts and to engage in fast-cycle learning about Air District products.
- Improve product branding. This could mean burnishing the Air District’s reputation as an innovation leader and finance partner, rather than just a regulator or grantor.

It could mean helping to make CTF memorable so that it is considered at key planning and decision points.

Interested bidders are invited to frame their proposals based on the information provided in this Section II and include any critical feedback that the bidder would like to offer.

SECTION III – SCOPE OF WORK

The selected contractor will develop and implement a marketing and customer development plan. This plan will describe strategies for finding the right audiences for CTF products and for increasing awareness of and applicants to the CTF program. This part of the plan may contain a combination of marketing, advertising, and branding tasks. Another part of this plan will describe strategies for evaluating CTF products in light of other financial products in the marketplace and in light of customer lending needs. This part of the plan may contain an assessment of the size of the marketplace for CTF products, the needs of potential clients of CTF products, and their experience with lending products. A final and potentially optional part of the scope of work will help the Air District build a network that helps stakeholders share information, engage in peer-to-peer learning, and accelerate climate actions that include development and adoption of climate technology.

The selected contractor will propose an approach for doing this work and will consult with Air District staff to refine the methodology and plan prior to implementation. Bidders may use subcontractors to augment the prime contractor's expertise, as needed.

Interested bidders should include in their proposal their approach for the following support:

1. **Product Promotion:** Create a marketing approach that will attract interest in CTF products. This work may include developing engagement mechanisms that grow a population and, perhaps, network of interested stakeholders. This task is anticipated to include a framing of customer needs and a media-specific plan for speaking to these needs. The promotion strategy may include emails, phone calls, social media posts, and events. It may also include production of customer learning tools, such technology and customer examples. The selected consultant will work with Air District staff to develop advertising materials (flyers, photos and videos). Bidders are encouraged to describe how, in close consultation with Air District staff, they will test their marketing approach(es), develop and document insights, and use findings to revise the marketing approach.
2. **Customer Development Support.** Explain how you will provide feedback to the Air District staff about differences between CTF products and user needs and how you will work with Air District staff to close these gaps. Bidders are encouraged to elaborate on their approach here and to highlight any prior experience or expertise in marketing financial products, particularly if related to technology development and/or adoption.
3. **Market Niche and Brand Development:** Frame the strategic niche of CTF products vis-à-vis the marketplace of similar products. This task is anticipated to include identification of other financial tools or providers for industrial sectors of interest and providing summaries that help Air District staff expand its understanding the characteristics of these other financial tools. Bidders are

encouraged to describe any prior experience or expertise with financial product marketing and to explain how this approach might help the Air District position its tools and build a brand into this marketplace.

The following items are also required as part of contract fulfillment:

1. **Program Management:** The selected contractor and Air District staff will meet in-person for a kick-off meeting. Following the kick-off meeting, the contractor will prepare a final work plan, which includes project milestones, staffing resources, timelines, etc. The contractor will take part in team meetings/conference calls with Air District staff and other Air District contractors weekly or bi-weekly, as needed. The contractor will develop and disseminate call minutes and action items following each call.
2. **Deliverables:** The selected contractor will finalize the strategic outreach and marketing plan within three weeks of contract signature and begin implementation shortly thereafter. This plan will include additional deliverables as identified by the contractor and Air District staff. The contractor will provide the Air District with bi-weekly reports summarizing the percentage of work completed and percentage of the project budget expended. The contractor will prepare a final report based on review comments within one year of contract signature.

Project Timeline: Project completion one year from when the contract is signed.

The Air District anticipates a budget between \$50,000 to \$100,000 for this consultation. Interested firms should propose the most cost-effective plan based on the needs outlined in this RFP. The Air District's preliminary timeline is to select a contractor in mid-2020 and to begin work as soon as possible thereafter. (Note: The Air District reserves the right to extend or delay the timeline prior to executing the final agreement.)

SECTION IV – INSTRUCTIONS TO BIDDERS

A. General

1. Interested firms must create an account through the Portal described on p. 1 of this RFP to view RFP documents and addenda, and to submit questions and bid documents.
2. All proposals must be made in accordance with the conditions of this RFP. Failure to address any of the requirements is grounds for rejection of this proposal.
3. All information should be complete, specific, and as concise as possible.
4. Proposals should include any additional information that the respondent deems pertinent to the understanding and evaluation of the bid.
5. The Air District may modify the RFP or issue supplementary information or guidelines during the proposal preparation period prior to the due date. Please check our [Portal](#) for updates prior to the due date.

6. Proposals shall constitute firm offers. Once submitted, proposals may be withdrawn, modified and resubmitted through the Portal up until the April 22, 2020 due date.
7. The Air District reserves the right to reject any and all proposals.
8. All questions must be in written form and submitted through the Portal no later than **4:00 p.m. on Thursday, April 2, 2020**. Firms will not be able to submit questions after this time. All questions will be answered in writing and posted on the [Portal](#) by **6:00 p.m. on Thursday, April 9, 2020**.
9. The cost for developing the proposal is the responsibility of the bidder, and shall not be chargeable to the Air District.

B. Submittal of Proposals

All proposals must be submitted according to the specifications set forth in Section V (A) – Contents of Proposal, and this section. Failure to adhere to these specifications may be cause for the rejection of the proposal.

1. Due Date – All proposals are due no later than 4:00 p.m., **April 22, 2020**, and should be submitted via the Portal to:

Cynthia Zhang, Staff Specialist
Bay Area Air Quality Management District
375 Beale Street, Suite 600; San Francisco, CA 94105
Portal link: <https://baaqmd.bonfirehub.com>

2. Uploading large documents may take significant time, depending on the size of the file(s) and Internet connection speed. Bidders should plan sufficient time before the due date to finalize their submission and to complete the uploading process. Bidders will not be able to submit documents after the due date. Proposals received after the date and time previously specified will not be considered.
3. Signature – All proposals should be signed by an authorized representative of the bidder.
4. Submittal – Submit one (1) electronic copy (in Adobe Acrobat PDF file format). Electronic submissions submitted via the Portal will be acknowledged with a confirmation email receipt. Late proposals will not be accepted. Any correction or re-submission of proposals will not extend the submittal due date.
5. Grounds for Rejection – A proposal may be rejected at any time if it arrives after the deadline, is not in the prescribed format, or is not signed by an individual authorized to represent the firm.
6. Disposition of the Proposals – All responses to this RFP become property of the Air District and will be kept confidential until a recommendation for award of a contract has been announced. Thereafter, submittals are subject to public

inspection and disclosure under the California Public Records Act. If a respondent believes that any portion of its submittal is exempt from public disclosure, it may mark that portion “confidential.” The Air District will use reasonable means to ensure that such confidential information is safeguarded, but will not be held liable for inadvertent disclosure of the information. Proposals marked “confidential” in their entirety will not be honored, and the Air District will not deny public disclosure of any portion of submittals so marked.

By submitting a proposal with portions marked “confidential,” a respondent represents it has a good faith belief that such portions are exempt from disclosure under the California Public Records Act and agrees to reimburse the Air District for, and to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the Air District, its officers, employees, and agents, from and against any and all claims, damages, losses, liabilities, suits, judgments, fines, penalties, costs, and expenses, including without limitation, attorneys’ fees, expenses, and court costs of any nature whatsoever, arising from or relating to the Air District’s non-disclosure of any such designated portions of a proposal.

7. Modification – Once submitted, proposals, including the composition of the contracting team, may be altered up until the due date. Proposals may not be modified after the due date. All proposals shall constitute firm offers valid for ninety (90) days from the April 22, 2020 due date.

C. Interviews

1. The Air District, at its option, may interview bidders. The interviews will be for the purpose of clarifying the proposals.
2. Submittal of new proposal material at an interview will not be permitted.
3. Interviews may involve a presentation and/or a question-and-answer session.

SECTION V – PROPOSAL FORMAT, CONTENT, AND SUBMITTAL

A. Contents of Proposal

Submitted proposals must follow the format outlined below and include all requested information. Failure to submit proposals in the required format can result in the proposal being eliminated from evaluation and consideration.

1. Technical Proposal
 - a. Cover Letter (Section I) – Must include the name, address, and telephone number of the company, and must be signed by the person(s) authorized to represent the firm.
 - b. Firm Contact Information – Provide the following information about the firm:
 - Address and telephone number of office nearest to San Francisco,

- California and the address and phone number of the office that each of the proposed staff members are based out of if different.
- Name of firm's representative designated as the contact and email address
 - Name of project manager, if different from the individual designated as the contact
- c. Table of Contents – Clearly identify material contained in the proposal by section
- d. Summary (Section II) – State overall approach to the CTF Marketing and Product Development Support, including the objectives and scope of work.
- e. Program Schedule (Section III) – Provide projected milestones or benchmarks for completing the project within the total time allowed.
- f. Firm Organization (Section IV) – Provide a statement of your firm's background and related experience in providing similar services to governmental organizations, if any. Describe the technical capabilities of the firm and, in particular, the firm's experience with working with environmental regulations, if any. Provide references of other, similar projects including contact name, title, and telephone number for all references listed.
- g. Project Organization (Section V) – Describe the proposed management structure, program monitoring procedures, and organization of the engagement team. Provide a statement detailing your approach to the project, specifically addressing the firm's ability and willingness to commit and maintain staffing to successfully conclude the project on the proposed schedule.
- h. Assigned Personnel (Section VI) – Provide the following information about the staff to be assigned to the project:
- List all key personnel assigned to the project by level and name. Provide a description of their background, along with a summary of their experience in providing similar services for governmental agencies, and any specialized expertise they may have. Background descriptions can be a resume, CV, or summary sheet. Substitution of project manager or staff will not be permitted without prior written approval of the Air District's assigned program manager.
 - Provide a statement of the availability of staff in any local office with requisite qualifications and experience to conduct the requested project.
 - Provide a statement of education and training programs provided to, or required of, the staff identified for participation in the project. Make particular mention of with reference to experience dealing with governmental agencies, procedures, and environmental regulations.

- i. Retention of Working Papers (Section VII) – All working papers are the property of the Air District. Include a statement acknowledging that if your firm is awarded the contract, you will retain project related papers and related reports for a minimum of five (5) years.
 - j. Subcontractors (Section VIII) – List any subcontractors that will be used, the work to be performed by them, and the total number of hours or percentage of time they will spend on the contract.
 - k. Conflict of Interest (Section IX) – Address possible conflicts of interest with other clients affected by contractors' actions performed by the firm on behalf of the Air District. The Air District recognizes that prospective bidders may have contracts to perform similar services for other clients. Include a complete list of such clients for the past three (3) years with the type of work performed and the total number of years performing such tasks for each client. The Air District reserves the right to consider the nature and extent of such work in evaluating the proposal.
 - l. Additional Data (Section X) – Provide other essential data that may assist in the evaluation of the proposal (e.g. green business certification, etc).
2. Cost Proposal
- a. Name and Address – The Cost Proposal must have the name and complete address of the bidder in the upper, left-hand corner.
 - b. Cost Proposal – The Cost Proposal must list the fully-burdened hourly rates and the total number of hours estimated for each level of professional and administrative staff to be used to perform the tasks required by this RFP. In addition, Cost Proposals should include the cost of professional printing and distribution of the final publication.
 - c. The Cost Proposal does not need to be a separate, sealed document.

SECTION VI – PROPOSAL EVALUATION

A panel of Air District staff will evaluate all proposals. The panel will recommend the selection of the contractor to the APCO, who will, in turn, make a recommendation to the Air District Board of Directors. The Air District Board of Directors may be required to approve the contract to carry out the work described in this RFP. A link to a typical contract for professional services used by the Air District is included in Section VII.

Proposals will be evaluated on the following criteria:

Criteria	Description	Weight
Approach	Responsiveness of the proposal, based upon a clear understanding of the work to be performed.	40%
Expertise	Technical expertise, size and structure of the firm and personnel assigned to RFP tasks; firm's ability to perform and complete the work in a professional and timely manner.*	20%
Experience	Past experience of the firm and, in particular, experience of the team working on projects with similar scope and product markets.	20%
Cost	Cost or cost effectiveness and resource allocation strategy.	10%
References	References of the firm.	5%
Firm's Specialty Focus Area	Local business/Green Business**	5%
Total		100%

* "Size and structure of firm" refers to the ability of a firm's size to meet the needs of the Air District. It does not give absolute preference to larger or smaller firms.

** The Air District gives preferences to local business and those that are certified as green businesses by a government agency or independent private rating organization. "Local business" means that a firm's headquarters is located within the nine counties of the Air District's jurisdiction.

If two or more proposals receive the same number of points, the Air District will accept the lower cost offer.

SECTION VII – SAMPLE CONTRACT

A sample contract to carry out the work described in this RFP is available on the Air District's website at <http://www.baaqmd.gov/about-the-air-district/request-for-proposals-rfp-rfq/samples-previous>. (Click the + to the left of Sample Contracts, and then click on the Professional Services Contract link)