



Request for Proposals

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Best Practices – Public Engagement on Nova Scotia’s Energy System Transition

RFP Release Date: **October 1st, 2024**

Proposal Due Date: **October 29th, 2024**

Contact:

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1. Introduction

[Net Zero Atlantic](#) (NZA) is an independent energy research organization advancing Atlantic Canada’s transition to a low-carbon future. We are encouraging growth of a sustainable energy sector by identifying knowledge gaps, connecting experts to projects, and leading applied research. Our team is dedicated to an inclusive and successful clean energy transition in Atlantic Canada. Our focus is on credible and unbiased research that will best prepare policymakers, industry leaders and workers, and sector investors to work together on pathways to decarbonize our region’s economy, mitigate climate change impacts, and move Atlantic Canada toward net-zero emissions.

This project is supported by funding provided by the Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources and Renewables

2. Context

To protect the environment and reach legislated goals, Nova Scotia is working toward phasing out coal-based electricity by 2030 and achieving net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. Reaching Nova Scotia’s greenhouse gas emission reduction targets will require significant changes to the provincial energy system, including the necessary transition to renewable energy sources and cleaner fuels. The energy system transition is ongoing and will affect every Nova Scotian, impacting how electricity is produced, distributed, and used across the province. Given the scale and complexity of these changes, it is important to engage the public in meaningful dialogue about the energy system transition.

Nova Scotian communities seek consistent and ongoing engagement in the energy system transition and wish to share their views. This has emerged from NZA’s engagement with rural communities over the past two years. For instance, the interim report of the “Capacity Building for the Sustainable and Inclusive Development of Nova Scotia’s Offshore Wind Resource” program notes that community members highly value the opportunity to express their views for government consideration. Therefore, it is important to assess what Nova Scotians understand about the energy system transition underway in the province and provide opportunities to express their perspectives on processes and strategies related to the energy system transition.



NZA is designing an engagement program ('the program') that fosters two-way learning centered around Nova Scotia's energy system transition, particularly the Province's Offshore Wind Road Map, the Green Hydrogen Action Plan, and the 2023 Clean Power Plan. This program will be carried out by NZA staff ('project team') throughout the province. It is expected that sixteen (16) engagement sessions will take place over the course of the program, which will run until March 31st, 2026. The models of engagement may be different and specific to the communities engaged according to best practices for public engagement. An aspect of the program is to build community capacity through training and empowering identified community organizations that have an established local network, a commitment to finding common ground, and an interest in Nova Scotia's energy system transition.

3. Objective

To support this program, NZA is seeking the services of a third-party engagement consultant ('the proponent') with a track record of training leaders and staff to provide positive and effective engagement. The successful proponent will work initially with the project team overseeing the project, to ensure clarity of purpose and timing of service provision and will then continue their work in collaboration with the project team. The proponent will work closely with the project team and community organizations to design and implement engagement strategies that reflect the principles of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA).

The proponent will train the project team in current and best community engagement practices and how to collaborate with interested parties using best practices. The successful proponent will be retained as an advisor throughout the program for assistance as needed to the project team.

4. Scope of Work

For this program, seven (7) deliverables have been identified, but additional tasks may be required depending on design and implementation of the project.

Task	Task Title	Task Description
1.	Training exercises	<p>Equip the project team and identified community organizations with the necessary skills and knowledge to facilitate engagement activities on the energy system transition. To do this, the proponent is expected to design interactive training sessions focusing on engagement techniques and inclusive practices. It will be important to tailor training sessions to different interested parties/community groups and consider DEIA.</p> <p>It is anticipated that the training sessions will be designed by the end of 2024 and implemented in January 2025.</p>
2.	Measurement and monitoring tool	<p>Design and implement a system to track and measure the effectiveness of engagement efforts. The proponent will develop metrics and indicators that can be used to evaluate the success of outreach and engagement activities and share these with the project team.</p> <p>It is anticipated that the measurement and monitoring tool will be prepared by January 31st, 2025.</p>
3.	Public facing report	<p>Create a report that defines best practices for engagement methods on the energy system transition. These methods should consider how to tailor content and strategy to reach specific audiences, specifically with a DEIA lens (i.e., youth, women, people who identify as being 2SLGBTQIIA+, African and Black Nova Scotians, Mi'kmaq and other Indigenous communities and organizations, immigrants, residents of rural communities and</p>

		other visible minorities). A draft version of the report will be submitted to the project team for feedback. The final version of the report should incorporate feedback from the project team and will be made publicly available.
4.	Collaboration with project team	On an ongoing basis and throughout the project, provide advice to and work with the project team to collect and maintain an inventory of materials, resources, etc. to support engagement activities. To do this, the proponent will develop a system for collecting and organizing materials (e.g., tools, templates, case studies) to support outreach activities, direct the project team to appropriate engagement materials, and foster collaboration between the project team, community organizations, and other interested parties.
5.	Assessment reports	Provide regular evaluations of program activities to identify successes and improvement areas. To do this, the proponent will work with the project team and conduct ongoing assessments based on feedback from interested parties, data from the monitoring tool, and project milestones. It is important to highlight strengths of engagement strategies and offer actionable recommendations for addressing weaknesses.
6.	Regular update meetings	Maintain consistent communication with the project team to ensure project alignment. Schedule, organize, and lead regular project meetings to discuss program and engagement progress, challenges, and next steps.

7.	Written progress updates	Regularly provide written updates to the project team on project milestones, and engagement outcomes.
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5. Timelines

The following timeline outlines Net Zero Atlantic’s expectations:

Project Timelines	
Item	Date
RFP Release Date	October 1, 2024
RFP Close Date	October 29, 2024, at 2 pm
Project Kickoff	Week of November 11, 2024
Project End Date	March 31, 2026

6. Project Funding

Funding available for this project is capped at a maximum of \$120,000.00 CAD excluding taxes. Proposals that exceed this amount will not be considered. Note that proposals will be rated first in terms of experience/team/work plan and second in terms of value. Hourly or daily rates should be included within the submission.

7. Proponent Qualifications

The successful applicant must demonstrate knowledge of and significant experience with different models of community and public engagement, particularly in rural settings. In addition, the successful applicant must demonstrate expertise in designing and leading training sessions on engagement methods. The successful applicant must also demonstrate a thorough understanding of applying a DEIA lens to the development of engagement activities and communications. Ideally, the successful applicant will have knowledge and experience in conducting engagements on energy-related topics.

8. Proposal Requirements

- The proposal should be concisely worded with clearly described objectives, methods, budget, schedule, and deliverables. The proposal should include a workplan outlining how all the tasks will be approached. Maximum of 10 pages excluding appendices, title page, and cover letter. Please assemble all components into a single PDF document.
- The proposal should include a description of the proponent's organization and its relevant experience with similar projects. The proponent must also describe the relevant work experience of the key staff assigned to this project and their roles on the project. This material should be summarized in the body of the proposal and can be presented in more detail, if needed, as an appendix.
- The proponent should provide a detailed budget including project tasks, team member daily or hourly rates, and their intended number of days/hours to work on each project component. The detailed budget should provide a breakdown of cost by task and a separate line item for any applicable taxes.
- The proposal should be submitted as a single electronic document. Please ensure the proposal or cover letter is signed by an officer or equivalent with authority to bind the proponent to the statements made in the proposal.
- The electronic copy should be uploaded in PDF format to the Net Zero Atlantic-FTP site available [here](#).

9. Questions and Clarifications

Net Zero Atlantic will accept content-related questions from interested applicants on an ongoing basis until October 11th at 2 pm. Please email the Project Manager, Shannon Wood, at offshorewind@netzeroatlantic.ca with any questions prior to this date. Answers will be posted on a Q&A page on October 18th at 4 pm. The Q&A page will be available on the Net Zero Atlantic website at <https://netzeroatlantic.ca/opportunities/request-proposals/best-practices-public-engagement-nova-scotias-energy-system>. The names and organizations of those submitting questions will remain anonymous; only the question and Net Zero Atlantic’s response will be posted. The Q&A page will only be available if content-related questions have been received.

10. Evaluation

This project will be administered through Net Zero Atlantic. The rubric below demonstrates the weighting associated with each proposal component. Proposals will be quantitatively evaluated using the criteria below. Proponents should demonstrate good value for money but note that the lowest cost will not necessarily be selected.

Factor	Weight
<p>Experience and Knowledge: Qualifications, experience, and capabilities of the company and delivery team; demonstration of knowledge relevant to this project as outlined in S. 7: Proponent Qualifications.</p>	40%
<p>Project Plan, Approach and Methodology: Proponent demonstrates an understanding of the project service requirements and has outlined a comprehensive and effective work plan. Proposal describes the objectives, methodology, milestones, and deliverables, and a sound approach in undertaking this project. Communication format and frequency between the proponent and the project team are clearly described. Proponent describes an achievable schedule and demonstrates the ability to complete the work on or before the desired completion date.</p>	40%



Proposal Presentation and Organization: The proposal includes all RFP requirements and tasks, demonstrates attention to clarity, grammar, presentation, and comprehensibility.	10%
Value: The project offers good value for the proposed budget. The budget is clear, convincing, and well-described.	10%
Total:	100%

Please Note: NZA reserves the right to fully award, partially award or not award this project.