

**Americans for a Clean Energy Grid Request for Proposals:
Rural Transmission Task Force Consultant
March 17, 2023**

Overview

Americans for a Clean Energy Grid (“ACEG”) is a diverse, multi-stakeholder, public interest education and advocacy 501(c)(3) organization focused on the need to expand, modernize, and integrate the high-capacity transmission grid to achieve greater security, reliability, affordability, and sustainability of electric power service in the United States. The health, welfare, and economic stability of our nation’s rural and agricultural communities and businesses depend on electric service that is safe, affordable, and reliably available; however, America’s transmission grid is outdated and too inefficient to support a modern economy.

Investment in energy infrastructure provides significant opportunities for rural communities with smaller populations and limited tax bases. About 70 percent of rural wind farms in the U.S. are located in low-income counties, and the potential for energy expansion in those areas is significant—the 15 states between the Rockies and the Mississippi River account for 88 percent of the nation’s wind technical potential and 56 percent of solar technical potential. A sustained and strategically deployed grid modernization effort in that region of the country would allow farmer communities to reap substantial benefits, unleashing up to \$7.8 trillion in investment in rural America, create more than 6 million net new domestic jobs, and save consumers more than \$100 billion in energy costs.¹ There is urgency to collaborate amongst an array of stakeholders in rural America to maximize the use of the land and meet multiple needs from access to reliable electricity as an essential service to increased energy demand for agriculture and farming production to expanding overall rural economic development.

To further its mission, ACEG is seeking consultant(s) to assist in building out a Rural Transmission Task Force—a coalition of a diverse set of stakeholders across rural and agricultural communities—who can serve as partners in educating and promoting the benefits of a robust transmission grid, and who can help identify roadblocks and develop solutions to accelerate the modernization, expansion, and integration of the nation’s high-capacity transmission network. This contract would run approximately

¹ Americans for a Clean Energy Grid. “Consumer, Employment, and Environmental Benefits of Electricity Transmission Expansion in the Eastern U.S.” October 2020. pg. 4. <https://cleanenergygrid.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Consumer-Employment-and-Environmental-Benefits-of-Transmission-Expansion-in-the-Eastern-U.S..pdf>.

between the end of the first quarter of 2023 through December 31, 2023, with an option at ACEG's discretion to extend through December 31, 2024.

Statement of Work

ACEG seeks to retain the services of one or more qualified firm(s) or individual(s) to develop and implement, in consultation with ACEG leadership, transmission development education and advocacy targeted to rural and agricultural communities. In particular, ACEG is looking for a consultant to:

- Identify and recruit 6-10 influential representatives within the agricultural and rural economic development communities to serve on the Rural Transmission Task Force, with an emphasis on broad geographic representation.
- Manage Rural Transmission Task Force activities, including:
 - Convening the Rural Transmission Task Force on a regular basis
 - Leading the Rural Transmission Task Force discussions and activities
 - Identifying and implementing three to five (3-5) opportunities per month of the contract term for the Rural Transmission Task Force members to facilitate education and policies that will expedite needed high-capacity transmission modernization and expansion, including, for example:
 1. Identifying federal and state government opportunities where support from rural representatives could help advance transmission expansion and modernization (e.g. support for congressional bills or high-level comments to executive agencies);
 2. Identifying and building relationships with federal and/or state policymakers with a goal of making connections for educational purposes with at least three to five (3-5) contacts per month of the contract term;
 3. Identifying and building relationships with individuals, organizations, bureaus, agencies, unions, and trade associations across the agricultural and rural sectors with a goal of making connections for educational purposes with at least three to five (3-5) contacts per month of the contract term;
 4. Developing public press releases, opinion editorials, news articles, etc. on the importance to transmission expansion/modernization and the benefits to rural America that highlight statements from Task Force members;
 5. Developing and disseminating educational materials such as factsheets;

6. Identifying and coordinating representation for transmission before agricultural and rural communities at in person and virtual events on national and regional levels.
 - Provide regular updates on the Rural Transmission Task Force activities to ACEG staff and stakeholders, including through written or oral status reports that track engagement, oral updates to the ACEG Board, and participation in other ACEG committees as needed.

During the course of this contract, ACEG's consultant will not participate or intervene on behalf of ACEG, in any political campaign on behalf of, or in opposition to, any candidate for public office to an extent that would disqualify ACEG from its tax exemption status.

Eligible Offerors

Eligible offerors must demonstrate experience to perform the duties described under the scope of work, including but not limited to:

- Strong existing relationships and experience engaging with rural interests and representatives of such interests;
- Strong existing relationships and experience engaging with federal and state policy and decision-makers and skilled at building new relationships, particularly in key states where transmission expansion is planned to be sited in communities with significant rural and agricultural populations;
- Experience with building and managing programs similar in nature to the proposed Rural Transmission Task Force;
- Ability to translate complex material and explain the need for increased investments in modernizing electric transmission infrastructure in rural America, including, for example, information related to reliability, resiliency, and security benefits associated with an upgraded network, and economic benefits such as diversification of income streams, job creation, and cost savings.
- Ability to work with and manage diverse interests;
- Creativity and strong critical thinking, writing, and analytical skills.

Submission Requirements

To Apply: Please submit an electronic proposal to Will Sherman at williams@dgardiner.com by 5 pm ET on March 31, 2023 and include “Rural Transmission Task Force Consultant” in the subject line. Proposals should include:

- An executive summary consisting of a brief overview of the Consultant’s experience and the planned scope of work;
- A statement of firm qualifications that addresses the required experience listed under “Eligible Offerors”;
- A proposed work plan, including a proposed strategy to build and manage a Rural Transmission Task Force and to build a rural coalition, and a proposed timeline for the work;
- The names of the persons who will perform the tasks outlined in the scope of work, and bios or resumes of each proposed team member;
- A proposed budget, including hourly rates for team members;
- A list of two to three references who were provided with services similar to those described in the scope of work; and,
- A statement disclosing any potential conflicts for this work.

Consultant Selection

All expenses related to responding to this RFP shall be borne by the bidders. ACEG retains the right to award a portion, or all, of this contract to one or more offerors that best meets the requirements of this RFP, or to withdraw the RFP with no advance notice. Activities will commence after a contract has been executed.

Timing:

Application Deadline: March 31, 2023, by 5:00 pm ET

Planned Selection Deadline: April 14, 2023

Preferred Start Date: April 17, 2023

End Date: December 31, 2023