Ava Community Energy Request for Proposals - Request for Proposal Q&A

Software Solution and Technical Assistance to Support Permit Streamlining for Heat Pump Equipment

Category	Question	Answer
Proposal requirements	1. Which time zone controls the question and proposal deadlines, and when is the proposal due?	All dates and times are in Pacific Prevailing Time (PPT). The RFP proposal is due on November 23, 2026 at 11:59 p.m. PPT.
Proposal requirements	2. Is there a page limit or file-size limit? Should the cost proposal and other proposal documents be submitted in the same PDF, or may they be separate attachments?	The attachment size limit to email the proposal is 50 MB. Zipped folders are admissible. It is preferred that the Cost Proposal and all proposal documents be included in the same PDF as a proposal package. Separate attachments are permissible, with each attachment clearly marked.
Proposal requirements	3. May proposals include optional appendices, such as letters of support, beyond the sections listed in RFP §10?	Yes, please ensure they are clearly labeled and provided in the table of contents.
Proposal requirements	4. May finalist interviews be held virtually, and will they occur on December 7 or later that week?	Finalist interviews will be held virtually on December 7 or the week of December 7, depending on panelist availability.
Team and qualifications	5. May a Shenzhen company deliver remotely from China? What California registration or licensing requirements apply to non-US software firms, and is Secretary of State registration before award sufficient? What offshore data-access restrictions apply?	Proposers are required to comply with all applicable law, including but not limited to state and federal requirements governing the processing of personal data. Proposers are responsible for engaging legal counsel to identify and ensure compliance with obligations arising out of their particular circumstances. Ava cannot provide legal advice of any kind. Please provide suggested redlines to the CSA in Attachment A in your proposal for review and consideration.
Team and qualifications	6. May qualified partners supply the government-system and integration experience and references required for Scope A? How does the 20% subcontracting cap apply to such a team?	The combined value of all subcontracts, including nested subcontracts, shall not exceed 20% of the total value of the contract. I.e. subcontracting the majority of the work is not allowable.

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Team and qualifications	7. Minimum qualifications (Section 4.1): May the 500-record threshold be met by the same product deployed across more than one government agency, in aggregate?	Yes, 500 records produced by the same product across multiple government entities, in aggregate, does meet minimum qualifications.
Team and qualifications	8. Does the 20% subcontracting cap apply separately when Scope A and Scope B have separate contracts, or to the combined value when both scopes share one contract? Under a combined contract, may subcontracting exceed 20% within one scope if the overall contract remains within the cap?	Yes, the 20% lower-tier consultant cap applies to the full value of a single awarded contract. If both scopes are awarded under a single contract, the 20% cap applies to the full value of both scopes (i.e., the full contract value).
Team and qualifications	9. For a delivery team consisting of a firm's principal and individual 1099 independent contractors under its direct management, are those individuals Consultant personnel or subcontractors counted toward the 20% cap?	For the purposes of this proposal, delivery teams that include independent contractors may apply as a single entity.
Team and qualifications	10. Does the no-employee workers' compensation declaration apply to a firm using individual 1099 contractors, and does Ava have a required declaration form?	Ava does not have a declaration form or template. Proposers are responsible for engaging legal counsel to identify and ensure compliance with obligations arising out of their particular circumstances.
Pricing and support	11. Is there an anticipated budget range or not-to-exceed amount for the initial two-year agreement, including Scope B?	No anticipated award ceiling is disclosed. Proposers should provide their best estimate of the costs of services to fulfill one or both scopes.
Pricing and support	12. Is there a budget or prescribed funding model for the minimum five years of post-expiration maintenance and support? Will Ava compensate that period, or may AHJs, CCAs, user agreements, or permit/user fees fund it? Must annual post-contract pricing be included in the cost proposal or contract total?	Ava does not intend to fund or support the program after the agreement expires and has not established a budget or prescribed a funding model for post-contract services. Scope A proposals should generally outline how the proposer intends to sustain ongoing services for participating AHJs, such as through user fees, user agreements, permit fees, or other methods of maintaining operations. Detailed post-contract pricing is not required in the proposal.

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Pricing and support	13. May proposers offer alternative funding or pricing models, including per-permit applicant fees, AHJ subscriptions, or a percentage of application fees instead of a flat fee? May multiple options appear in a single response?	Yes, alternative funding models are acceptable. Ava is open to different cost model options presented in the proposal. Please ensure options are clearly delineated. While Ava are open to other funding structures, Ava can only agree to cost structures within the awarded Agreemen. Ava does not have control or influence over AHJ decision-making, and cannot control pricing negotiations beyond the awarded agreement and contract term.
Pricing and support	14. Does the five-year post-expiration support period run after the original two-year agreement or after any extension? Could the total commitment therefore be seven or ten years?	The RFP requires that the selected Consultant provide for its ability to maintain services after the expiration date of the contract. If the contract is extended, the five-year commitment to maintain services is extended accordingly.
AHJ participation	15. Which 18 AHJs, permit platforms, and versions should proposers assume, including AHJs with no platform? Can Ava supply the mapping, and how many provider integrations must be included in total-cost and unit-cost estimates?	There is no identified AHJ participation at this time, therefore product mapping cannot be provided. The number of integrations will vary based on AHJ participation and flexibility will be a key consideration in rating the proposal's ability to conform to Scope A requirements. For the proposal's total cost estimate, provide a scenario for 18 AHJs using the list of providers in Attachment B for guidance and assuming some AHJs will choose a standalone software portal. Per-integration cost estimates should be technology agnostic regarding permit management providers. Final not to exceed amounts for the awarded agreement will be negotiated during the contracting process.
AHJ participation	16. Could actual AHJ participation be above or below 18 for Scope A and Scope B, and should proposals allow other CCAs to use Ava's contract?	For Scope A: Yes, participation could be above or below 18 AHJs, depending on CCA and AHJ participation. For Scope B: Because Ava does not anticipate cost sharing with other CCAs on Scope B, there can only be a maximum of 18 AHJ engagements. Ava intends to include "piggybacking" provisions in the contract with the selected Scope B Consultant.

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AHJ participation	17. Is the goal to standardize permitting beyond Ava's jurisdictions? Should proposers assume cost sharing for Scope A only or both scopes, and must unit prices transfer to AHJs in other CCA service areas?	While cost sharing was left open for either or both scopes, at this time Ava is only considering cost sharing with other CCAs for Scope A. Ava intends to include "piggybacking" provisions in the contract with the selected Scope B Consultant. All unitary costs provided in the Scope A proposal must be transferable to other AHJs across participating CCA service areas.
Software requirements	18. Must HPWH and HP-HVAC launch together? Does required coverage include single-family homes and multifamily units? Should automated issuance follow SB 222 eligibility, with other projects routed to staff review?	It is preferable to have a single launch date for all product offerings, but it is not required. Product launch schedules should provide ample time for AHJs to adopt software to comply with SB 222 deadlines. Use SB 222 bill text for clarification and guidance on qualifying criteria in the proposal, including single-family and multi-family eligibility criteria. All permitting process oriented questions should be addressed in discovery.
Software requirements	19. May proposers license existing software customized for participating jurisdictions rather than build new software? How should the baseline software-development cost be presented?	Yes. Instead of the baseline cost to develop the software solution, provide the cost to enhance, modify, or otherwise prepare the software to provide the services required to fulfill Scope A.
Software requirements	20. Should the standalone pathway collect and remit AHJ permit fees online, or hand payment off to the AHJ's existing system? How should an optional standalone payment service be priced?	For the purposes of this proposal, assume fees are paid through a documented handoff to the AHJ's existing payment system. If your proposed software approach can provide a payment option for a standalone permit portal, please note that in your response with any estimated additional pricing for that service.
Software requirements	21. Are there mandatory hosting, cloud-provider, data-residency, security-environment, SOC 2, or AHJ single-sign-on requirements?	Security and technology requirements involve discovery and the proposer is expected to know and understand any laws and/or best practices that apply to California local government data protection.

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Software requirements	22. Will specifications, lessons learned, or other deliverables from Ava's prior SolarAPP+ heat pump water heater effort be made available to the selected Scope A Consultant?	Yes.
Software requirements	23. Must virtual inspections use a human inspector in real time over a video call? Will jurisdictions, rather than Ava, conduct the inspections?	Ava does not have any involvement in the AHJ permitting or inspection process. Use SB 222 and AB 1738 bill text and/or other state guidelines for clarification on virtual inspection.
Software requirements	24. Are any jurisdictions currently conducting virtual inspections?	Ava cannot respond to this; this should be part of discovery.
Intellectual property	25. For Scope A, should proposers price vendor ownership or Ava ownership of software and intellectual property? Will Ava accept vendor ownership with a perpetual, royalty-free license for Ava and participating AHJs and agency ownership of their data? Which CSA provisions may be disregarded? If the selected Consultant owns the software, what rights must Ava and its funding partners retain? Would a perpetual, non-exclusive license meet Ava's needs? How does CSA §11's restriction on sharing Work Product apply if the software launches outside Ava's service area before or alongside Ava's AHJs?	For clarity, Ava does not intend to retain ownership of Scope A intellectual property as defined in Attachment A, Section 7.2. Changes to Section 7.2 will be negotiated in the contract negotiation process. All additional sharing of Work Product, licensing, or sublicensing of the Scope A software for Ava and its funding partners will be negotiated in the contract negotiation process. Proposers are encouraged to provide suggested redlines to the CSA, Attachment A, for review and consideration.
Intellectual property	26. Does the Scope A ownership exception also waive CSA §§8.3 and 8.5 concerning Work Product on termination, or §12.1 concerning infringement indemnity?	No.

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Insurance	27. For remote services without vehicle use, may hired/non-owned automobile coverage satisfy the requirement? Are certificates and endorsements due with the proposal, at execution, or before work? For a non-US firm, will Ava accept A:VII-or-better insurers licensed in Canada and Ontario WSIB instead of California workers' compensation when staff do not work in California?	Automobile insurance evidence is required before work, not at the time of the proposal. Ava will not assess whether or not a proposer meets the necessary insurance coverage until contract negotiations. Provide any objections to the requirements of Attachment A in redlines attached to your proposal for review and consideration.
Labor compliance	28. Does any work under Scope A or Scope B constitute a public work under CSA §3.3 and Labor Code §1720, triggering prevailing-wage requirements?	The work outlined in Scope A or Scope B is not anticipated to constitute a "public work" as defined in California Labor Code Section 1720. However, Ava will begin investigation on this question and provide further clarity, as necessary. In general, proposers are responsible for engaging legal counsel to identify and ensure compliance with California labor laws.