

**Buildings of Excellence
Early Design Support
Request for Proposal (RFP) 3928- D
Up to \$2,000,000**

*NYSERDA reserves the right to extend or
add funding at its sole discretion.*

Applications accepted continuously through June 28, 2024, by 3:00 p.m. Eastern Time (ET)* or until funds are fully committed, whichever occurs first*.

The Buildings of Excellence Early Design Support Request for Proposal (the “Early Design Support RFP”) seeks Proposals for qualified design firms that will provide early-stage design support for new construction, adaptive reuse, and gut rehabilitation multifamily projects that will be clean and resilient and achieve carbon neutral-ready performance while being beautiful and functional, and will provide healthy, safe, comfortable, and resilient living spaces for their occupants. Projects that will be profitable for their developers and owners and demonstrate realistic cost reductions in the design and construction of clean and resilient buildings, may also be eligible for early design support funding. The Early Design Support RFP is part of and in support of the larger Buildings of Excellence Competition (the “Competition”). Successful design firm Partner Proposers to the Early Design Support RFP must demonstrate how their design firm has engaged with prior projects and will engage with projects in the future to substantially reduce energy use, while increasing building resiliency, successfully integrating architectural design attributes, and improving health, comfort, safety, and productivity for occupants, in a manner that can be replicated at scale.

Design firm Partner Proposers must demonstrate (1) competence in clean, resilient, and carbon neutral-ready design that is coupled with architectural design quality and innovation, (2) ability to deliver high quality and functional, clean, resilient, and carbon neutral-ready multifamily projects at competitive costs, with superior performance, (3) how their projects generate interest in and demand for the design, construction, and occupation of clean, resilient, and carbon neutral-ready buildings, and (4) their commitment to share information related to the project’s design, costs, and performance to support the decision-making processes employed to achieve the desired outcomes.

This Early Design Support RFP will consider funding the early-stage design of projects that intend to serve all portions of the multifamily market sector, while focusing on mid- to high-rise (8 stories or greater in height) multifamily buildings and for projects that involve the adaptive re-use of commercial office or retail space to provide multifamily housing. Through this Early Design Support RFP, selected design Partners are eligible to receive up to \$1.50/square foot in direct funding, up to a per project-cap of \$100,000, for early-stage clean, resilient, and carbon neutral-ready design support, as well as support for initiatives focused on broad marketing and public awareness.

Design firm Partner and Project Proposal Submissions: Electronic submission via the NYSERDA portal is preferable. Design firm Partner Proposers may submit Word, Excel, or pdf files (file formats include the following: csv, doc, docx, gif, jpeg, jpg, pdf, png, ppt, pptx, pps, ppsx, tif, txt, xls, xlsx, and zip). Individual files should be 100 MB or less in file size. Proposal pdfs should be searchable and should be created by direct conversion from MS Word, or other conversion utility. Files should not be scanned. For ease of identification, all electronic files must be named using the design firm Partner Proposer’s entity name in the title of the document. NYSERDA also accepts Proposals by mail or hand delivery if electronic submission is not possible. For detailed instructions on how to submit a Proposal (electronic or paper submission), go to NYSERDA’s [Funding and Opportunities](#) web page and follow the [NYSERDA Solicitations User Guide](#) [PDF] located on [that website](#).

Information: The program team may periodically provide updates on this opportunity. [Fill out this form](#) to be notified of updates or informational webinars that may be scheduled. Submitting your contact information will ensure you will also be notified of when funding has been depleted or when additional funds are made available.

Contact Information: For technical questions, contact Kristin Graham (designated contact) at or (518) 862-1090 ext. 3069 For contractual questions concerning this solicitation, contact Venice Forbes (designated contact) at VeniceSolicitations@nyserdera.ny.gov or (518) 862-1090 ext. 3507.

No communication with NYSERDA staff intended to influence this procurement is permitted. Contacting anyone other than the designated personnel (either directly by the design firm Partner Proposer or indirectly through a lobbyist or other

person acting on the design firm Partner Proposer's behalf) in an attempt to influence the procurement may disqualify the proposer from consideration.

*** All design firm Partner and Project Proposals must be received by 3 p.m. (ET) on the date noted above. Late, faxed, or emailed Proposals will not be accepted.** Incomplete Proposals may be subject to disqualification. It is the design firm Partner Proposer's responsibility to ensure that all submission requirements have been met. Please note the following: for electronic submissions via the portal, there are required questions that need to be answered in addition to uploading attachments. Be sure to allot at least 60 minutes to enter and submit Proposals. The electronic Proposal system closes promptly, and files in process or attempted edits or submission after 3 p.m. (ET) on the date above will not be accepted.

If changes are made to this solicitation before the due date, notification specific to this solicitation will be posted on NYSERDA's [Current Funding Opportunities](#) website.

I. Introduction

The use of fossil fuels, such as natural gas, propane, oil, and coal, releases carbon dioxide and other emissions into the atmosphere that contribute to climate change and other environmental impacts. Climate change will put buildings, and their systems and occupants, at greater risk in the future of hazards such as flooding, sea level rise, increased temperatures, and more frequent and more extreme storm events. Eliminating the use of fossil fuels to support building operations will decrease carbon dioxide and other emissions.

NYSERDA seeks to increase the number of design firms participating in the development of aesthetically pleasing, cost-effective, clean, resilient, and carbon neutral-ready buildings as well as increased proficiency among these firms in delivering clean and resilient design. By funding design firms instead of individual projects through this RFP, NYSERDA aims to drive market development by:

1. Increasing the design firm's capacity and expertise to complete the analyses, design, engineering, and research needed to produce cost effective, clean, resilient, and carbon neutral-ready buildings,
2. Supporting the design community with resources and tools that will help design firms comply with upcoming policy requirements, local laws, and advancing code cycles,
3. Funding additional research, design detailing, modeling, and cost analyses on individual projects that the design firm can then apply to other projects within the firm's portfolio in a quest to make carbon neutral attributes part of the firm's general design practice. The project knowledge acquired will ideally result in a scaling up of the number of clean, resilient, and carbon neutral-ready buildings the design firm can implement,
4. Reducing market barriers and soft costs associated with the design of new and existing clean, resilient, and carbon neutral-ready buildings. This RFP provides funding at early design phases, when energy efficient design decisions are being made, to help buy down and reduce upfront risks associated with clean, resilient, and carbon neutral-ready design exploration,
5. Assisting design Partners in convincing more developers to successfully build clean, resilient, and carbon neutral-ready projects. Additional design work, research, modeling, and economic analysis can produce quality, objective data, and pertinent information that, if acted on and included in the building design, could mitigate carbon impacts, provide better living conditions for occupants, and financial benefits to building owners. This information can be used to build developer confidence in clean, resilient, and carbon neutral-ready buildings and create a lower risk for the developer to proceed with the project design, innovation, and nascent and novelty systems.

Design Firm Partner Opportunity

NYSERDA first seeks Proposals for design firms to become Partners that will provide early-stage design support. Successful design firm Partner Proposers must demonstrate how their firm:

1. Successfully designed, through the completion of construction documents, three (3) or more carbon neutral-ready or net zero energy multifamily buildings, or mixed-use buildings that incorporate multifamily occupancy as the primary use,
 - i. An exception to above eligibility requirements applies to design firms interested in pursuing Provisional Design Partner status. For this designation, design firms may apply without having any completed examples. Design firms will be required to provide a Letter of Intent in lieu of project work examples.
2. Possesses expertise in clean and resilient design that achieves carbon neutral-ready performance by reducing energy use,

3. Addresses architectural design attributes, at the unit, building, and site level,
4. Delivers designs that encompass non-energy co-benefits for occupants, while providing exceptional comfort, safety, and otherwise outstanding living environments of occupants,
5. Delivers designs that reduce total carbon impacts, including reductions to embodied carbon,
6. Increases the building's and building component's resilience,
7. Has active engagement in the multifamily market and would likely be able to submit high impact, scalable, and highly replicable multifamily projects to the early design program during the open period.

Eligible Services Once a Design Firm Partner

Once the proposing design firm is selected as a Partner under the Early Design Support RFP, Partners will be able to submit funding requests for projects in the early stages of design. Funding and support is intended to assist design teams in designing clean, resilient, carbon neutral-ready projects that anticipate and meet developer needs. Early design phase services Partners can receive funding for may include, but not be limited to:

1. Complete in-depth research necessary to deliver clean, resilient, and carbon neutral-ready performance, including but not limited to topics such as:
 - i. Electrification,
 - ii. Densification,
 - iii. Renewable energy systems,
 - iv. Energy storage,
 - v. Energy system selection,
 - vi. Embodied carbon and refrigerant gases,
 - vii. Health, safety, productivity, and comfort non-energy co-benefits to occupants, and
 - viii. Building, component, community, and occupant resilience, and active and passive survivability.
2. Complete additional modeling necessary to achieve carbon neutral-ready performance, including but not limited to:
 - i. System selection and associated savings over baseline,
 - ii. Embodied carbon and refrigerant gases,
 - iii. Certifications and design elements associated with ENERGY STAR® Multifamily New Construction (ENERGY STAR MFNC), Enterprise Green Community (EGC), Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED), Passive House Institute (PHI), and Passive House Institute US (PHIUS) standards.
3. Complete early-stage applications for third party standards and certifications, including but not limited to:

- i. AIA 2030, ASHRAE beQ, ENERGY STAR, Fitwel, Green Globes, International Living Future Institute (ILFI) Living Building Challenge, LEED, RELi, and WELL Building Standards.
4. Complete additional economic analysis that will help substantively reduce the overall cost of the project, be replicated at scale, and inform design decisions including, but not limited to first cost expenditures, return on investments, total value propositions, cost benefit ratios, financing solutions, operating and maintenance costs, or non-compliance to Local Laws and other impending policies,
 5. Complete cleaning, operational, and maintenance manuals, plans, and procedures that can be used by the building owners to assist in refrigerant management and operational waste reduction,
 6. Participate in additional meetings to facilitate an integrated design and construction project,
 7. Complete a more robust promotion and publicity plan that will disseminate information to the market that will be useful to the industry and better inform the public of clean, resilient, and carbon neutral-ready performance and projects and be aimed at increasing replicability and scalability of these projects.

Early Design Project Proposal Opportunity

NYSERDA will seek project Proposals from the approved design firm Partners to provide funding for the early design services required to drive better decision making and knowledge and capacity building with respect to the incorporation of cost-effective clean energy and carbon reduction measures into project designs. The Partners must demonstrate that the design strategies of their early design support projects are replicable, scalable, and have the potential to achieve broad-based adoption within their own business practices and by other design teams, developers, and consumers. The Early Design Support RFP intends to identify and select project Proposals from design firm Partners that demonstrate the greatest potential for success and replication in the market.

Partners are encouraged to submit for early design funding to support projects that are adaptive re-use or gut rehabilitation, especially in the conversion of commercial office and retail space to multifamily housing, as defined in the Eligibility Section II of this RFP. Partners should also consider submitting projects for early design support that are greater than eight (8) stories in height, and that address and enhance active lifestyles and age-friendly inclusion and community livability. To incorporate the economic and civic strengths of the aging population, the needs and desires of aging New Yorkers must be included in the domains of outdoor space, transportation, housing, social activity, civics/employment, communication/information, and health services.

Design firm Partners may be eligible for an award of 100% of early-stage design support funding to support clean, resilient, carbon neutral-ready design of up to \$1.50/square foot, up to a per project-cap of \$100,000. Funding will not be awarded for basic architectural and design services not associated with clean, resilient, and carbon neutral-ready design.

II. Eligibility

NYSERDA, at its sole discretion, determines the eligibility of a design firm's Proposal to become a design firm Partner and for the eligibility of a project to receive early design support funding under the Early Design Support RFP.

Market Sector

1. Design Firm Partner Proposals

Design firm Partner Proposals will be considered based on the demonstrated experience and skills the design firm has serving the multifamily market sector. The project work samples included as part of this

Proposal should be for multifamily buildings located anywhere in the United States of America. Project work samples do not need to be located within New York State.

2. Proposed Project Proposals

Once the design firm is an approved Partner under the Early Design Support RFP, Partners may submit Project Proposals for early-stage funding and support to achieve carbon neutral-ready performance for new construction, adaptive reuse, or gut rehabilitation multifamily projects located anywhere in New York State, as funding allows. The proposed project site does need to be selected and identified in the Project Proposal.

Project Status

1. Design Firm Partner Proposals

The project work samples included as part of the design firm Proposal will need to have had the design completed through construction documents, at a minimum.

2. Proposed Project Proposals

Projects being proposed for the Early Design Support RFP by a Partner must be in the programming, concept, or early schematic design phase (prior to 50% schematic design), as of the date the Proposal is submitted to NYSERDA.

General Eligibility

1. Design Firm Partner Eligibility

Design firm Partner eligibility under this solicitation will be determined by the design firm's credentials and experience. Design firm Partner Proposers must demonstrate that they can provide clean, resilient, carbon neutral-ready design services as required by NYSERDA. Carbon neutral-ready design services under this RFP are defined as in-depth research, modeling, early-stage applications for third party standards and certifications, economic analysis, meetings to facilitate an integrated design and construction project, and a promotion and publicity plan. Design firm capabilities will need to be validated by NYSERDA. This will be done by reviewing firm information, past projects, and marketing efforts.

For a Partner Proposal to be deemed eligible, the design firm must provide credentials of currently employed staff members and evidence that those staff members have successfully designed carbon neutral-ready, multifamily, or mixed-use projects while employed at the proposing design firm. Joint venture entities created for the sole purpose of responding to this RFP will not be considered. Applicants do not need to have offices located in New York State to respond to this RFP. Design firm Partner Proposers must also submit a minimum of three (3) carbon neutral-ready or net zero energy multifamily buildings, or mixed-use buildings that incorporate multifamily occupancy as the primary use. Project examples and experience may be for new construction, adaptive re-use, or gut rehabilitation projects in which design has been completed through the completion of construction documents, while construction may or may not have been completed.

Firms interested in pursuing Provisional Design Partner status, may be eligible for an exception to the above project work sample eligibility requirements. For this designation, design firms may apply without having any completed examples, but must have at least one project progress to construction documents completion. This would require the developer signing off on the intent to move forward into construction with the design documents prepared by the Provisional Partner before funding for additional projects is made available. Provisional Partners are limited to receiving early design support funding for one (1) project per calendar year. However, Provisional Partners can, and are encouraged to, work on additional carbon neutral-ready multifamily projects concurrently to the project NYSERDA is funding through this RFP. For a Provisional Partner to progress to full status, three (3) carbon neutral-ready or net zero energy multifamily buildings, or mixed-use buildings that incorporate multifamily occupancy as the primary use,

will need to be completed and required project documentation as outlined within this RFP must be submitted for review.

Partners that were approved under earlier versions for this RFP and continue to be in good status will remain in an active status under the current version of the RFP.

2. Proposed Project Eligibility

To be eligible for early design support funding, the Partner must be a member of the project's design team and have the authority to modify the building design. The Partner must also demonstrate their internal and external project team, including sub-consultants, have the capabilities to perform and successfully complete the design process of the proposed project through production of construction documents, as a multidisciplinary and integrated project delivery team.

Approved Partners under the Early Design Support RFP may elect to submit more than one (1), but not more than four (4) clean, resilient, and carbon neutral-ready Project Proposals, for different projects in different locations, within one (1) calendar year, to receive early-design stage funding and support. Multiple, alternative Proposals submitted for a single project will result in the disqualification of all Project Proposals.

For a Project Proposal to be eligible for consideration to receive early design support funding, the land must be acquired for use for the project, and the project must incorporate multifamily occupancy as the primary use. This includes buildings that incorporate dwelling units, sleeping units, congregate living, or residence halls. Proposed projects may contain non-residential space; however, the non-residential space must consist of less than 50% of the occupiable square footage of the entire project. Proposed Projects must be at least 25,000 square feet. Buildings that provide student housing, including residence halls, that are owned or operated by a municipality or by New York State are not eligible to participate. Hotels, motels, or other hospitality-related buildings are not eligible to participate.

This RFP is available for projects located anywhere in New York State, subject to funding availability, regardless of whether the project will be located in an investor-owned electricity distribution company service territory. Partners are encouraged to submit projects for early design support funding that are located within Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) districts or [Disadvantaged Communities](#) (DAC) as defined by New York State. The proposed project site does need to be selected and identified in the Project Proposal.

A Project Proposal can encompass one multifamily building, or a portfolio of similar and related multifamily buildings located on the same site, on adjacent and associated sites, or involve a development project in the same neighborhood incorporating buildings that will all have similar design attributes. Project Proposals for multiple buildings that do not meet that criterion should be submitted by the Partner as separate and unique Project Proposals. One- and two-family homes or townhouses as defined within Chapter 2, the Definitions Section of the International Building Code and International Residential Code, are not eligible as a standalone project or as part of a multi-building Project Proposal. Eligible multifamily projects are as follows:

1. **New Construction:** A new building, buildings, or an addition, where a licensed professional architect or engineer has prepared and certified the building design documents.
2. **Adaptive Re-use or Gut Rehabilitation:** Substantial renovation for one of the following types of projects where a licensed professional architect or engineer has prepared and certified the building design documents:
 - i. Change of use and reconstruction of an existing building, buildings, or space(s) within a building.
 - ii. Construction work of nature requiring that the building, buildings, or space(s) within a building to be out of service and unoccupied for a minimum of thirty (30) days.

- iii. Reconstruction of a vacant structure, or structures, or space(s) within a building.
 - iv. The addition to or expansion of a building, in combination with any of the above.
3. Adaptive Re-use of Commercial Office or Retail Buildings to Multifamily Use: The existing building must have been previously occupied and used as commercial office or retail space.
- i. Substantially new mechanical systems required to support occupancy as housing must be necessary, including the installation of kitchen and bathroom waste and supply piping, balanced ventilation that meets requirements for residential occupancy, and other attributes required to support conversion of existing commercial office or retail to multifamily use.

The proposed project must also demonstrate clean, resilient, and carbon neutral-ready attributes and meet the definition of *Carbon Neutral-Ready* as defined below. Total funding available for the project may be reduced depending on the applicability of Chapter 56 of the Laws of 2023 of New York State, Part RR, signed by Governor Kathy Hochul on May 3, 2023, as described in [this linked document](#) in regards to the successful completion of Milestone 3.

Projects receiving early design stage funding and support may also be eligible for and separately propose to receive project funding through the demonstration RFP of the Competition, as well as some other funding offered by NYSERDA and/or utility service providers. However, design firm Partners must review the rules and eligibility of the other programs to determine if those funds are accessible in combination with funds offered by this RFP. Project Proposals to this RFP are not eligible for award if they intend to seek or have already been awarded Clean Energy Initiative (CEI) funding distributed by the New York State Homes and Community Renewal (HCR), or funding distributed through the New York City Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) or any of their sub-agencies that is provided by NYSERDA through the Clean Energy Fund and intended to support goals similar to those promoted through the Early Design Support RFP.

Carbon Neutrality and Energy Performance

The Partner must confirm that the projects submitted in both the design firm Partner and early design support Project Proposals will be *Carbon Neutral-Ready* based on the following criteria: A project that must exclude all fossil fuels from the building systems and equipment qualifies to be *Carbon Neutral-Ready*. Building systems and equipment refers to at a minimum: building heating, ventilating and air conditioning (HVAC), domestic hot water (DHW), kitchen, laundry, and other appliances. Projects that rely on a fossil fuel-fired generator for emergency use only, or projects which are served by an off-site fossil fuel-fired central heating plant, may at NYSERDA's sole discretion qualify as carbon neutral-ready if fossil fuel use is excluded from all other building systems and equipment. NYSERDA, at its sole discretion, will consider exemptions to the *Carbon Neutral-Ready* rule for process and other unregulated loads on the site on a case-by-case basis.

Additionally, the Partner must rely on one (1) of the following Standards to establish the minimum projected energy efficiency and building performance proposed for the project's residential-associated space¹. One (1) of the following Standards will need to be clearly indicated in the design firm Partner qualifications and Project Proposals to show the building performance was met in each of the work sample

¹ For projects that include mixed use space, only the energy use associated with the project's residential square footage should be included when determining the modeled energy performance of the residential portion of the project. The modeled energy performance shall incorporate the square footage used for residential occupancy, inclusive of all residential-associated space such as hallways, stairwells, elevators, trash, utility and exercise rooms, entrance lobbies, as well as shared laundry facilities exclusively available to the building's residential occupants. A commitment to achieving certification to Phius Core REVIVE or EnerPHit will be accepted for adaptive re-use or gut rehabilitation projects.

projects included and to show the intended building performance for all the proposed projects. The Partner must provide documentation associated with any selected Standard as a deliverable for early design support funding.

1. Appendix G of ASHRAE Standard 90.1: Design firm Partners intending to rely on this standard to model and predict energy performance must commit to designing a project that will achieve a minimum modeled source (primary) energy savings¹ of 20% when compared with a project design that complies with the relevant Energy Conservation Construction Code of New York State (ECCC of NYS), currently the 2020 version; excluding the impacts of any proposed renewable energy generation. Energy performance must be established without the inclusion of any renewable or distributed energy generation, to confirm the energy efficiency performance threshold has been met, and then again calculated after renewable or distributed energy generation has been included in the energy model and submitted by the design firm Partner Proposer for comparison with other Project Proposals. Partners will apply a 2.55 source-to-site conversion factor to support the calculation of efficiency in comparison with the natural gas baseline relied on by this standard to confirm the minimum energy performance threshold will be met. Partners must commit to use of the “90.1 Section 11 and Appendix G Compliance Form” to establish simulation inputs and complete internal quality control.
 - i. Proposing design firms that have relied on this standard for previous projects included as work samples in the design firm Partner Proposal must show documentation that this process was followed for the project, including indicating the version of the ECCC of NYS that was in place at the time of the design.
2. Projects intending to meet certification requirements as published by Phius (Passive House Institute U.S.) must identify the building(s) modeled source (primary) energy use¹ in terms of kWh/person/year; and projects intending to meet certification requirements published by PHI (the Passive House Institute) must identify the building(s) modeled source (primary) energy use in terms of kBtu/treated-floor-area/year. Design firm Partners committing to achieving certification to either passive house standard are deemed as meeting the minimum modeled source energy savings¹ requirements. Energy modeling must be completed and submitted both with and without use of renewable or distributed energy generation to support evaluation of the efficiency of the design, and to allow comparison with other Project Proposals. Alternative energy modeling will not be expected of design firm Partner Proposers committing to achieving certification to either passive house standard to support their predicted energy performance.
 - i. Proposing design firms that have relied on this standard for previous projects included as work samples in the design firm Partner Proposal must show documentation that this process was followed for the project.
3. The average Energy Rating Index (ERI) for all residential dwelling units, calculated in accordance with the Standard ANSI / RESNET / ICC 301 - 2019, entitled “Standard for the Calculation and Labeling of the Energy Performance of Dwelling and Sleeping Units Using an Energy Rating Index” or the relevant version of this standard as updated in accordance with the ANSI/RESNET/ICC protocols. To demonstrate the minimum energy performance¹ threshold will be met, the design firm Partner must commit that the project will meet the relevant EPA ENERGY STAR MFNC Program requirements; and that the average ERI will, at minimum, achieve $ERI \leq 0.95 \times MFNC \ v1.1 \ ERI \ Target$ without inclusion of renewable energy generation. The Partner should also submit the average ERI calculated with the inclusion of renewable energy generation to allow for comparison with other Project Proposals.
 - i. Proposing design firms that have relied on this standard for previous projects included as work samples in the design firm Partner Proposal must show documentation that this process was followed for the project.

II. Design firm Partner and Project Proposal Requirements and Format

The Early Design Support RFP is a two-step Proposal process. The proposing design firm will first submit a Proposal to become a Partner. Partners approved through this RFP will receive an Agreement (consistent with the Attachment A – Sample Agreement) that will remain in effect for two (2) years after the date the design firm Partner Proposal was received by NYSERDA. The Agreement does not guarantee work or funding from NYSERDA. At the end of each contract period, each design firm Partner will be evaluated based on the performance criteria in this RFP, and NYSERDA will reserve the right to extend the Agreement for an additional term. Upon qualification under this RFP, design firm Partners will then be able to submit Project Proposals for which they will perform early-stage design support. Both the firm qualification and Project Proposals will be reviewed on a continuous basis, until either the RFP close date or until funding has been expended.

Design firm Partner Proposals must be submitted by the proposing design firm, which must be a singular entity.

1. Design Firm Partner Proposal

The design firm Partner Proposal structure should follow the outline listed below and sequentially address the review criteria listed in the Design Firm Partner Review Criteria table in the Proposal Evaluation section III. The design firm Partner Proposer must identify the project work sample's status as of the date of submission, as defined and detailed in section II of this RFP. The firm name, RFP number, and page number should be recorded on every page of the design firm Partner Proposal, including attachments. The quality, rigor, and organization of the design firm Partner Proposal will impact its evaluation, in part as a reflection of the likelihood that a selected design firm Partner will be successful in reaching their stated goals.

The design firm Partner Proposer must submit the following for the design firm Partner Proposal:

1. Executive Summary

Design firm Partner Proposers must submit a brief description (~400 words) summarizing how the proposing firm's experience, services, and skills demonstrate the design and delivery of successful clean, resilient, and carbon neutral-ready projects and meet the stated goals of the Competition. The Executive Summary should not exceed one (1) page and include, but not be limited to:

1. Firm Information – including the company name, primary contact, location, size, overall mission, diversity equity and inclusion action policies, and market sector, specialized populations, and regions served,
2. Firm Experience and Skills – including years in practice, the number of carbon neutral-ready, net zero energy, and Passive House projects across all building sectors, awards received, specialized employee skills, and resumes and certification copies of relevant credentials that demonstrate experience in clean energy design held by current employed staff such as Certified Passive House Designer (CPHD), LEED Accredited Professional (LEED AP) or PHIUS+ Verifier, and indication that one team member is a Licensed Professional Architect (RA) or Engineer (PE),
3. Firm Services Performed – including architectural and integrated design, planning, energy modeling, advanced clean energy consultation, carbon neutral-ready research, designing to third party standards, third party certification applications, economic analysis, and creating operation and maintenance manuals.

2. Market Transformation Capability Summary

Design firm Partner Proposers must submit a brief description (~500 words) summarizing how the proposing firm's experience, services, and skills demonstrate how they create high impact influence through successful project marketing and promotion to educate and influence the market, disseminate information out to the market, and create market scalability and replicability. The Market Transformation Capability Summary should not exceed one (1) page and include, but not be limited to:

1. Firm Information – including the name and role of current employed staff who act in a primarily marketing or promotion capacity, position in the market and amongst peers, number of social media followers and email distribution list subscribers, and engagement and relationship with special interest stakeholder entities, other New York State Agencies, and other governmental entities at the local and state level,
2. Firm Experience and Skills – including the number of average annual presentations, speaking engagements, events and tours participated in, established relationships with media and press, and specialized outreach techniques employed based on targeted audience of other design professionals, developers, stakeholders, or tenants,
3. Firm Services Performed – including general marketing and project promotion activities such as case studies, technical articles, blog posts, website updates, social media posts, email blasts, e-newsletters, and any other way to demonstrate successful project marketing and promotion to educate and influence the market and create market replicability.

3. Carbon Neutral-Ready Project Work Samples

Design firm Partner Proposers must submit a minimum of three (3) project work samples (except for those firms interested in pursuing Provisional Design Partner status) for new construction or substantial renovation of multifamily or mixed-use projects in which the proposing design firm has provided design services through construction documents resulting in carbon neutral-ready or net zero energy buildings. The design firm Partner Proposer should provide a clear and concise description of each project work sample that should not exceed a three (3) page format, not including project imagery. This section of the design firm Partner Proposal should not exceed nine (9) pages of text. Supplemental documents are not included in that nine (9) page limit. Each work sample should include:

1. Project background – including design and construction schedule, year completed, square footage, number of buildings, stories, and units, construction type and methodology, building function, and populations served,
2. Project location – including the building address and if located within a Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) district, Disadvantaged Community (DAC) as defined by NYS, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Potential Environmental Justice area, Clean Energy Community (CEC), or a jurisdiction that has committed to adopting the NYS Energy Stretch Code 2020,
3. Project team – including a list of current staff member personnel, names, and roles of those who worked on the project,
4. Detailed scope of work completed – including design processes employed and a complete listing of design services provided,
5. Key architectural design attributes implemented as they relate to the aesthetics, amenities, articulation, materiality, fenestration, natural light, acoustics, functionality of the units and building, development of the project site, outdoor space, microclimate, site context, and ground level connectivity, and the project's relationship to the surrounding community such as existing character and proximity to public transit,
6. Clean, carbon neutral-ready, and energy efficiency attributes – including carbon neutral-ready or net zero status and documentation associated with the minimum projected energy efficiency and building performance, how the project eliminated fossil fuel to heat water and condition occupied areas, project compliance path followed, building performance, and energy goals, energy savings measures and systems, solutions implemented, and associated metrics, renewables, fuel types, third-party certifications, standards, or verification, expected, predicted, or modeled energy use, and the anticipated affects to the grid,

7. Building, component, occupant, and community resiliency, and passive and active survivability attributes implemented,
8. Non-energy co-benefits implemented associated with health, comfort, safety, productivity, community connectivity, economic development, and other aspects to improve the living environments for occupants, and non-energy third party certification, standards, or verification pursued,
9. Features related to reducing the project's embodied carbon, greenhouse gas emissions, and global warming potential,
10. Innovations including industrialization of construction, reduction, in construction waste, efficient mechanical systems, and how the innovations can be scaled and interact with the grid,
11. Direct and indirect replicability or scalability potential of the project to support market transformation, including any awards won, and how the project affects, benefits, and fits into the firm's business model and mission,
12. Budget, project, operation, and maintenance costs, cost effectiveness, and cost reduction strategies implemented,
13. Project renderings, photographs, and relevant architectural project drawings or design diagrams.
14. For design firms seeking the Provisional Partner status, a Letter of Intent prepared by the design firm will be required in lieu of project work samples. The Letter of Intent should include information on why the design firm would like to engage in clean, resilient, and carbon neutral projects and should identify barriers that have prevented the design firm from participating in this space before.

2. Early Design Support Project Proposal

Upon receiving an executed agreement as a design Partner in the Early Design Support RFP, Partners will be able to submit Proposals for projects in the early design stages for funding. The project must be for a new construction, adaptive re-use, or substantial renovation multifamily project in which the proposing Partner is providing design services resulting in a carbon neutral-ready or net zero energy building.

The early design support Project Proposal structure should follow the outline listed below, and sequentially address the review criteria listed in the Design Firm Partner Review Criteria Table Proposal Evaluation Section III. The Partner must identify the proposed project's status as of the date of submission, as defined and detailed in section II of this RFP. The Partner's firm name, project name, RFP number, and page number should be recorded on every page of the Project Proposal, including attachments.

Each carbon neutral-ready Project Proposal should include a clear and concise description of the project, proposed early design stage services to be performed, and proposed project promotion, addressing each category detailed below and in the review criteria table. The quality, rigor, and organization of the Project Proposal will impact its evaluation, in part as a reflection of the likelihood that a selected project will be successful in reaching the Early Design Support RFP stated goals. In order to receive funding, the proposed project must plan to be engaged in at least four (4) of the eight (8) listed Early Design Support Services options. The Project Proposal should be described in a not to exceed ten (10) page format, not including supplemental project documents. Project Proposals must be submitted by the design Partner. The Partner must submit the following for each Project Proposal:

1. Proposed Project Description

1. Project description - including project status and design and construction schedule, square footage, number of buildings, stories, and units, construction type and methodology, building function, populations served,

2. Project location - including the building address and if the project is located within a Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) district, Disadvantaged Community (DAC) as defined by NYS, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Potential Environmental Justice area, Clean Energy Community (CEC), or a jurisdiction that has committed to adopting the NYS Energy Stretch Code 2020,
3. Project team - including indication of whether integrated design or construction will be employed on the project, a list of specific individual names and roles, and firms acting in either a sub consultant capacity or as another partner on the project for additional design, engineering, certification, quality control, construction manager, general contracting, or development,
4. Project scope of work to be performed by the design firm Partner - including proposed design processes to be employed and a complete listing of proposed services to be provided,
5. Key architectural design attributes - including aesthetics, amenities, articulation, material use, fenestration, project site and context, building, unit, and space functionality, acoustical quality, , innovation, development of the outdoor space, microclimate, and general site context, and the project's relationship to the larger, surrounding community such as existing character and proximity to public transit, among other design attributes.
 - i. Other design attributes can include, but not be limited to, building articulation, use of durable and high-quality materials, fenestration patterns and types, and use of efficient interior and exterior lighting,
 - ii. Specific site context considerations can include, but not be limited to, building scale, shape, massing and density, ground level connectivity, use of outdoor space, incorporating natural light and access to views in building and unit design, and controlling the associated microclimate including shadowing, wind, and snow, and incorporating native plantings,
 - iii. Relationship to the larger community can include, but not be limited to, location in a DAC, DRI, or CEC, overall community connectivity, respect of the existing community character, and site and infill development,
 - iv. Transit oriented considerations can include but are not limited to, proximity to public transportation like bus, subway, commuter and light rail lines, and rapid transit stations or commuter ferry terminals, and the inclusion of bicycle storage and vehicle charging stations,
 - v. Innovations in design can include, but not be limited to, the industrialization of construction through modular or prefabricated methodologies, reduction in construction waste, use of efficient mechanical systems, and storm water strategies,
 - vi. Consideration on how the project's overall design will be impacted by, accommodate, and integrate the energy performance, resilience, non-energy co-benefits, reductions to embodied carbon, and other strategies proposed for the project.
6. High performing building attributes and design - including carbon neutral-ready or net zero status and documentation associated with the minimum projected energy efficiency, building performance, and how the project meets the definition of the *Carbon Neutral-Ready* definition as noted in Eligibility in Section II, project compliance path followed, project performance, energy goals, energy savings measures and systems, solutions implemented, and associated metrics, renewables, fuel types, list of all third-party energy certifications, standards, or verification the project is following or pursuing, and the anticipated affects to the grid.
 - i. Other carbon neutral-ready attributes can include, but not be limited to, operational energy efficiency, densification, electrification, on-site renewable energy systems, grid interactivity controls, demand flexibility, energy storage (thermal and electric), and on-site electric vehicle charging, and transit-oriented development,

- ii. Detailed descriptions of the energy systems utilized, including but not limited to heating, cooling, domestic hot water, and ventilation components, appliances, renewable generation district, energy storage systems, envelopes, smart building controls, monitors, and other technologies,
 - iii. Indication of the expected, predicted, or modeled energy use and operational energy costs of the project. Energy use can be expressed by indicating the impacts in terms of Co2/person and Co2/SF. A description of how the energy use and operational energy cost were calculated should be provided.
 - iv. Description of how the energy efficient strategies implemented have been designed to be resilient for the lifespan of the strategy or system.
7. Design strategies that increase the resilience of the building, its components, occupants, and the surrounding community. These strategies should increase the active and passive resilience of the building,
 8. Strategies and attributes of any non-energy co-benefits incorporated into the building design, that increase occupant comfort, health, productivity, and safety, community connectivity, economic development, and other aspects to improve the living environments for occupants, and the associated non-energy third party certifications, standards, or verifications being pursued,
 9. Strategies and features to reduce the project's embodied carbon in materials, processes, or other attributes, and overall reduction in the total volume refrigerants and Global Warming Potential (GWP) refrigerants, and greenhouse gas emissions, and increased use of systems that require few or no refrigerant piping joints to be made on the construction site, and use of materials that achieve carbon sequestration,
 10. Indication of the project's innovations including industrialization of construction, reduction in construction waste, and efficient mechanical systems and how the innovations can be scaled and interact with the grid,
 11. Indication of the project's direct and indirect replicability or scalability potential to support market transformation, including how this project affects, benefits, and fits into the firm's business model and mission,
 12. Project budget, proposed operation and maintenance costs, cost effectiveness, and cost reduction strategies implemented, including listing of any additional anticipated incentive programs,
 13. Indication of any proposed third-party progress inspections and performance testing during the construction process, whether commissioning of the building or specific energy using systems will occur, or if performance validation will occur.

2. Description of Proposed Early Design Support Services to be Performed for the Project

In order to receive funding, the proposed project must plan to be engaged in at least four (4) of the eight (8) listed Early Design Support Services options.

1. Clean and Carbon Neutral-Ready Attributes and Energy Efficiency Scope of Services: Engage in practices associated with integrated design and construction to achieve clean, resilient, carbon neutral-ready, and energy efficiency attributes in the proposed project. Strategies to achieve carbon neutral-ready design attributes can include, but not be limited to, operational energy efficiency, densification, electrification, energy systems, on-site renewable energy systems, grid interactivity controls, demand flexibility, energy storage (thermal and electric), on-site electric vehicle charging, or transit-oriented development.

2. Resilience, Passive and Active Survivability Scope of Services: Conduct research to expand on strategies to increase the resilience of the building, its components, occupants, and the surrounding community. These strategies should contribute to the active and passive resilience of the building for the building's lifespan. Examples of resilience and active and passive survivability may include, but are not limited to:
 - i. Locating the building outside of the 100- or 500- year flood plain,
 - ii. Raising living spaces and critical system components above 500- year flood level, at a minimum,
 - iii. Creating areas of refuge within the building for occupants to shelter in place during extreme heat and cold events, power outages, or flooding,
 - iv. Ensuring adequate passive survivability during extended power outages by identifying the duration the building could remain safely occupied, while maintaining safe thermal conditions, natural light, natural ventilation, and other conditions,
 - v. Addressing active resiliency attributes, such as satisfying critical loads for an extended duration through use of backup power or use of energy storage in combination with renewable energy,
 - vi. Selecting building materials, components, and systems that will ensure that the building is resilient for its lifespan,
 - vii. Community resilience-enhancing strategies, such as providing community services or connection to district systems to ensure diversity of energy resources, and
 - viii. Other resilience-enhancing strategies not listed above that enable the building or community to adapt to, absorb or recover from events,

Note: The specific climate risk should be identified (e.g., more-intense heat waves), and how the proposed strategy will increase resilience by addressing that risk should be described in detail. For any buildings in the 500-year flood zone or that are otherwise at risk of current or future flooding, flood-mitigation measures should be incorporated into the design; at a minimum, critical system components should be raised above the 500-year flood elevation unless an alternative flood-mitigation plan to protect those critical components is proposed, and ultimately determined to be acceptable during the awarded project's contracting process, at NYSERDA's sole discretion.

Note: For guidance on managing future flood risk, refer to the draft (or the forthcoming final) [State Flood Risk Management Guidance](#). For guidance on climate change and building resilience, refer to [the ClimAID climate projections for New York State](#), the New York [Adapting Buildings for a Changing Climate](#) website, and the [NYC Climate Resiliency Design Guidelines](#).

3. Quality of Non-Energy Co-Benefits Scope of Services: Investigate additional non-energy co-benefits to be incorporated into the building design, including strategies that increase occupant comfort, health, productivity, and safety, including, but not limited to, actions to safeguard against transmission of air-borne contaminants that cause allergies, asthma, and illness, such as use of Minimum Efficiency Performance Value (MERV) 13 air filters or better, and use of durable materials that limit moisture intrusion, community connectivity, economic development, sustainability, durability, and other aspects to improve the living environments for occupants, combined with a commitment to certification, standards, validation or verification of non-energy co-benefits through certification to third party standard(s),
4. Reduction in Embodied Carbon Scope of Services: Conduct research to support features related to strategies that may include reductions to the project's embodied carbon in proposed materials,

processes, or other design attributes, use of materials that achieve carbon sequestration, reductions to the total volume of refrigerants, use of lower Global Warming Potential (GWP) refrigerants, and greenhouse gas emissions, the use of systems that require few or no refrigerant piping joints to be made on the construction site, modeling tools, and financing options,

5. Innovation and Innovative Attributes Scope of Services: Investigate innovations that could be incorporated into the project including industrialization of construction, reduction in construction waste, and efficient mechanical systems, how the innovations can be scaled and replicated, and how they interact with the grid,
6. Cost Reduction Strategies Scope of Services: Complete economic analyses of cost reduction strategies that have the capacity to substantively reduce the overall cost of the project, and that will likely be replicated by other projects. Economic areas the design firm Partners can explore and address, include but are not limited to:
 - i. Energy efficiency strategies, solutions, and other characteristics of the project that are expected to impact total, construction, operation, and maintenance costs, strategies to reduce total costs, the trade-offs and avoidance of cost increases, and how the overall costs of the project compare with similar projects (e.g., Low to Moderate Income, mixed-income, market-rate, or luxury homes) in the same basic locale,
 - ii. Return on investment and costs associated with improvements that can be recouped in terms of shortening the timeframe of on-site construction, increasing tenant retention rates, higher rent or sales prices, and whether energy savings and non-energy co-benefits such as thermal comfort, indoor air and environmental qualities, improved acoustics, building resilience, will accrue to the project's owner, each apartment's owner, or tenants, and lead to an improved or optimal living environment,
 - iii. The project's replicability, as demonstrated by expected ease or efficiency of construction, unique financing solutions, or other factors that would make the project a model for future projects,
 - iv. The Partner's business model intended to achieve project goals, including an integrated project delivery process,
7. Third Party Certification Scope of Services: Complete early-stage applications for third party certifications, standards, and verifications and ensure that the associated standard criteria are incorporated into the design of the project,
8. Market and Promotion Plan Scope of Services: Conduct enhanced marketing and create a promotion plan to create high impact influence as described in the Collaboration with NYSERDA, Transparency, and Promotion of Projects section of this RFP.

3. Collaboration with NYSERDA, Transparency, and Promotion of Projects

The design Partner should describe in the Project Proposal how they intend to create high impact influence through successful marketing and promotion of the proposed project, including disseminating information to the market that could be useful to the industry and better inform the public about clean, resilient, carbon neutral-ready building performance that supports the elimination or reduction in use of fossil fuels, and be aimed at increasing market replicability and scalability. Marketing information the Partners can share includes but is not limited to information about the architectural design; clean, carbon neutral-ready, and energy efficient attributes; resilient, active, and passive survivability attributes; non-energy co-benefits; cost reduction strategies; anticipated building performance; how this project will comply with upcoming local laws, policies, and advancing code cycles; and how the project will generate interest in other projects and support market transformation, including how this project affects, benefits, and fits into the firm's business model and mission. In accordance with the Proprietary provisions located in Section VIII General Provisions, the design firm Partner should indicate which aspects of this additional

information can be publicly shared by NYSERDA in its promotional activities and should stipulate if any portion or portions of the information should be reserved for NYSERDA's internal use and/or for anonymized analysis, and not publicly shared as project-specific information. The extent to which the design firm Partner commits to sharing additional data, as well as the quality of the design firm Partner's marketing plan intended to showcase the proposed project's design and carbon neutral-ready strategies, are considered during evaluation of the project Proposal. After a Project Proposal has received funding under this RFP, NYSERDA may elect to disclose unprotected information, in whole or in part, on websites, social media, in publications, in presentations, or other venues.

Design firm Partners should submit a marketing and promotion plan that will be implemented and explain how the plan will generate public interest in and demand for clean, resilient, and carbon neutral-ready buildings. The marketing plan should outline the proposed methods or mechanisms for sharing project, marketing, and promotional information out to the market. These methods may include but are not limited to website content, magazine and technical articles, books, blogs, case studies, social media, videos, Podcasts, presentations, and speaking engagements. Creating a more expansive marketing, promotion, and publicity plan is an eligible service for early design support funding. Partners are expected to cooperate with NYSERDA in the development and review of marketing materials. NYSERDA credits the project name and design firm Partner in all promotional material. Partners are expected to participate in presentations and other promotional events.

4. Supplementary Documents

In addition to the project description, proposed early design support services, and marketing and promotion narrative, the following documents must be submitted, including:

1. Scope of work budget associated with the proposed early design support services to be performed for the project. Each scope of work item should have an associated funding amount. Embodied carbon investigation will be capped at 15% of the total requested funding. Scope of work budgets should include line items for both the partner and any design team subconsultants performing early design support services. Project developers are not eligible to receive early design support funding.
2. Billable Rate Schedule for design firm Partners,
 - i. The Partner shall use the Project Personnel and Billing Rates form (found within Attachment A) to clearly indicate hourly salary rate range for each title classification proposed under the agreement with NYSERDA and other overhead multipliers you propose to use for the duration of the agreement with NYSERDA,
 - ii. Provide rare and multiplier for services to be provided from date of the Project Proposal submission. These rates shall be independent annual rates. The multiple state shall include all overhead, profit, and other costs. NYSERDA reserves the right to conduct a rate comparison amongst consultants and request changes to the rate schedule as applicable.
 - iii. Please do not provide fully burdened rates in the chart.
3. Personnel Resumes – one (1) page resumes that highlight recent relevant experience of the proposed design team personnel who will be directly involved in the early design support services. The RA or PE resume must be included. Submission of a company-wide resume representing general services to be provided by various personnel does not meet the submission requirement.
4. Architectural drawings as available, including but not limited to:
 - i. Floor and unit plans,
 - ii. Site plans,

- iii. At least one (1) building section and elevation,
 - iv. Wall sections,
5. Project rendering(s) - at least one (1) high-quality rendering,
 6. Design details as available, including but not limited to:
 - i. Addressing energy efficient design,
 - ii. Building envelope conditions,
 - iii. Building resilience strategies,
 7. Project diagrams as available, including but not limited to:
 - i. Building diagram(s) showing or explaining low-energy/low-carbon features, including how they will remain resilient for their lifespan,
 - ii. Building diagram(s) of quality of building characteristics and design features,
 - iii. Building and site diagrams that show the project's sustainability features,
 - iv. Site diagrams that show how the project integrates with urban features,
 8. Energy modeling files and report(s) summarizing energy performance-related design strategies, if available,
 9. Scorecard(s) or checklist(s) for proposed, submitted, or achieved certifications, if available.

Notes:

- 1) Submitted materials may be used for the presentation of winning projects in various forums.
- 2) Photographs and other images may be submitted as .pdf at the time of the Project Proposal but must be provided as high-resolution image files at 24 inches wide and 300 dpi for projects funded and upon request.
- 3) Updates to the initially submitted materials may be requested for projects funded under the Early Design Support RFP.

III. Design firm Partner and Project Proposal Evaluation

1. Design Firm Partner Proposal

Design firm Partner Proposals will first be reviewed for completeness and to ensure they meet General Eligibility requirements as detailed in the Eligibility Section II of this RFP. Design firm Partner Proposals that do not meet the listed requirements will not be further reviewed.

The General Eligibility requirements for the Design Partner submission to be considered prior to content review include the following:

1. The project work samples identified in the design firm Partner Proposal must meet the market sectors, *Carbon Neutral-Ready* definition, and meet and provide documentation to show the minimum achieved or projected energy efficiency and building performance criteria as detailed in the Eligibility Section II of this RFP.

Following the initial completeness review, Proposals for the design Partners will be evaluated based on their overall response and specifically based on the Categories and Category Descriptions as detailed in the Design Firm Partner Review Criteria table.

DESIGN FIRM PARTNER REVIEW CRITERIA

Category	Category Description
Design Firm Experience	This category will consider how successfully design firm Partner Proposers have addressed summarizing how the proposing firm’s experience, services, and skills demonstrate the design and delivery of successful clean, resilient, and carbon neutral-ready projects and meet the stated goals of the Competition.
Market Transformation Capability	This category will consider how successfully design firm Partner Proposers have addressed summarizing how the proposing firm’s experience, services, and skills demonstrate how they create high impact influence through successful project marketing and promotion to educate and influence the market, disseminate information out to the market, and create market scalability and replicability.
Project Work Samples	This category will consider how successfully design firm Partner Proposers have addressed summarizing three (3)* carbon new construction or substantial renovation multifamily, and mixed-use projects in which the proposing design firm has provided design services resulting in carbon neutral-ready or net zero energy buildings.

*An exception to above project work samples’ eligibility requirements applies to design firms interested in pursuing Provisional Design Partner status. For this designation, design firms may apply with a Letter of Intent prepared by the design firm in lieu of project work samples.

2. Early Design Support Funding Project Proposal

Early design support Project Proposals submitted by Partners will first be reviewed for completeness and to ensure they meet General Eligibility requirements as detailed in the Eligibility Section II of this RFP. Project Proposals that do not meet the listed requirements will not be further reviewed.

The General Eligibility requirements for the early design support Project Proposal submission to be considered prior to content review, include the following:

1. The Proposed early design support Project is located in New York State, reflects multifamily occupancy as the primary use, meets the *Carbon Neutral-Ready* definition, meets the Project Status, and meets and will provide documentation to show the minimum projected energy efficiency and building performance criteria as detailed in the Eligibility Section II of this RFP.

Following the initial completeness review, Proposals for proposed early design support projects will be evaluated based on their overall response and specifically based on the Categories and Category Descriptions as detailed in the Early Design Support Project Review Criteria table.

EARLY DESIGN SUPPORT PROJECT REVIEW CRITERIA

Category	Category Description
Project Design: Quality of Architectural Design	This category will consider how successfully design Partners have addressed key architectural design attributes of the proposed project and how the project’s overall design will be impacted by, accommodate, and integrate the energy performance, resilience, non-energy co-benefits, reductions to embodied carbon, and other strategies into the proposed for the project.
Project Design: Clean, Carbon Neutral-Ready, and Energy Efficiency Attributes	This category will consider how successfully design Partners have addressed clean, carbon neutral-ready, and energy efficient attributes of the proposed project.

Project Design: Resilience, Passive and Active Survivability	This category will consider how successfully design Partners have addressed strategies that increase the passive and active resilience of the proposed building, components, and its occupants.
Project Design: Quality of Non-energy Co-benefits	This category will consider how successfully design Partners have addressed incorporating non-energy co-benefits into the proposed project design to ensure occupant comfort, health, productivity, and safety, community connectivity, economic development, sustainability, durability, and other aspects to improve the living environments for occupants.
Project Design: Reduction in Embodied Carbon	This category will consider how successfully design Partners have addressed incorporating features related to reducing the proposed project's embodied carbon, greenhouse gas emissions, and global warming potential of refrigerants.
Project Design: Innovation	This category will consider how successfully design Partners have addressed incorporating innovative features into the proposed project.
Project Design: Cost	This category will consider how successfully design Partners have implemented cost reduction strategies.
Project Design: Market Transformation Capability	This category will consider how successfully design Partners have addressed the proposed project's direct and indirect replicability or scalability potential to support market transformation, including how this project affects, benefits, and fits into the firm's business model and mission.
Early Design Support Scope of Services: Clean and Carbon Neutral-Ready Attributes, and Energy Efficiency	This category will consider how successfully design Partners have addressed how they plan to engage in practices associated with integrated design and construction to achieve clean, carbon neutral-ready, and energy efficient attributes in the proposed project.
Early Design Support Scope of Services: Resilience, Passive and Active Survivability Attributes	This category will consider how successfully design Partners have addressed how they plan to expand on strategies to ensure the building and its' components as designed, will be resilient for the lifespan of the building, able to protect and serve its' occupants and surround community, and increase the active and passive resilience of the building.
Early Design Support Scope of Services: Quality of Non-Energy Co-Benefits	This category will consider how successfully design Partners have addressed how they plan to investigate additional non-energy co-benefits to be incorporated into the proposed project to ensure occupant comfort, health, productivity, and safety, community connectivity, economic development, sustainability, durability, and other aspects to improve the living environments for occupants.
Early Design Support Scope of Services: Reduction in Embodied Carbon	This category will consider how successfully design Partners have addressed how they plan to investigate additional features related to reducing the proposed project's embodied carbon, greenhouse gas emissions, and global warming potential impacts of refrigerants.
Early Design Support Scope of Services: Innovation and Innovative Attributes	This category will consider how successfully design Partners have addressed how they plan to investigate innovations that could be incorporated into the proposed project.
Early Design Support Scope of Services: Cost Reduction Strategies	This category will consider how successfully design Partners have addressed how they plan to complete additional economic analyses for the proposed project.
Early Design Support Scope of Services: Third Party Certifications	This category will consider how the design Partners have completed early-stage applications for third party certifications, standards, and verifications.
Early Design Support Scope of Services:	This category will consider how successfully design Partners have addressed how they plan to create high impact influence through successful marketing and promotion of the proposed project, including

Marketing and Promotion Plan	the sharing of information that could be useful to the industry and better inform the public of carbon neutral performance.
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To receive funding, the proposed project must plan to be engaged in at least four (4) of the eight (8) listed Early Design Support Services options.

Program Policy Factors

NYSERDA reserves the right to accept or reject Project Proposals based on the following program policy factors:

1. The degree to which the proposed project, including proposed cost share(s), optimizes the use of available funding to achieve NYSERDA’s overall programmatic and portfolio objectives, as specifically set forth in the RFP.
2. Diversity of awards within multiple locations, climates, regions, or other geographically articulated criteria (for example, Disadvantaged Communities or Regional Economic Development Regions).
3. The degree to which there is portfolio diversity, including considerations as to funding duplicative efforts stemming from the RFP itself or similar, previously funded efforts and considerations as to development stage of the cohort of proposed projects (for example, secured permits or financing, shovel-ready).

IV. Funded Projects, Subsequent Submissions, and Required Updates

Selected design firm Partners are required to execute an agreement (see Attachment A – Sample Umbrella Agreement) with NYSERDA and deliver completed projects that meet the requirements detailed in this RFP. The project deliverables and associated time and material or milestone payments will be as detailed in this RFP and the agreement executed between the selected design firm Partner and NYSERDA.

At any point during the design process, NYSERDA must be notified and provided associated details if significant deviation from the original Project Proposal is expected, including whether the project is expected to fall short of the building performance and related goals as detailed in the original Project Proposal, including the design firm Partner’s commitment to achieving the source energy savings in their original Project Proposal to NYSERDA. Projects funded through this Early Design Support RFP must ensure that the cumulative changes during design will not increase the predicted source energy use or carbon emissions in comparison to the project as originally submitted. Continuation of any project that deviates from the original Project Proposal will be subject to NYSERDA’s discretion. NYSERDA reserves the right to terminate any project should it fall below the originally committed energy performance or will not meet NYSERDA’s definition of being *Carbon Neutral-Ready* or if [Chapter 56 of the Laws of 2023 of New York State, Part RR, signed by Governor Kathy Hochul on May 3, 2023](#) require the building in question to be built without the use of fossil fuels.

Additionally, the following submissions and updates are required:

Following notification of early design support funding:

- a. One-page summary of major changes from initial Project Proposal including general project information, square footage, stories, and units, construction type, populations served, location, project team, project design, design and construction schedule, clean, resilient, carbon neutral-ready, and energy efficiency attributes, embodied carbon features, innovations, project cost changes, and anticipated early design support services to be performed, items or systems that were value engineered, if applicable,
- b. Updated drawings, renderings, or diagrams, if applicable,

- c. Updated Marketing and Promotion Plan, if applicable,
- d. Updated energy modeling files, if applicable,
- e. Populated cost and performance data collection documentation.

At 50% completion of schematic design:

- a. One-page summary of major changes from initial Project Proposal including general project information, square footage, stories, and units, construction type, populations served, location, project team, project design, design and construction schedule, clean, resilient, carbon neutral-ready, and energy efficiency attributes, embodied carbon features, innovations, project cost changes, and anticipated early design support services to be performed, items or systems that were value engineered, if applicable,
- b. Updated documentation associated with carbon neutral-ready design standard to show the minimum projected energy efficiency and building performance, (energy modeling must be completed and submitted both with and without use of renewable energy generation to support evaluation of the efficiency of the design, and to allow comparison with other Project Proposals) or a one- to two-page memo of any reduction in projected performance in comparison to the initial Project Proposal,
- c. Documentation of submission to the certification(s) and standard(s) committed to by the design firm Partner,
- d. Updated Marketing and Promotion Plan that focuses on promotion of the proposed project to the public,
- e. Updated drawings, renderings, or diagrams,
- f. Updated energy modeling files,
- g. Updated schedule of design and construction,
- h. Updated project cost-related documentation,
- i. Updated cost and performance data collection documentation,
- j. Documentation associated with proposed early design support services that have been performed for the project, such as which attributes have been investigated, how the attribute has been investigated, results of the investigation, how the results relate to whether the attribute will be incorporated into the proposed project, and how the investigation affects, benefits, and fits into the firm's business model and mission. Topics can include, but not be limited to:
 - i. Practices associated with integrated design and construction to achieve clean, carbon neutral-ready, and energy efficient attributes,
 - ii. Expanded strategies that ensure the building, and its components will be resilient for the lifespan of the building, able to protect and serve its occupants and surrounding community, and increase the active and passive resilience of the building,
 - iii. Investigations of non-energy co-benefits to be incorporated into the building design, including those to ensure occupant comfort, health, productivity, and safety,
- k. Investigations of features related to reducing the proposed project's embodied carbon, greenhouse gas emissions, and global warming potential impacts of refrigerants,

- l. Investigates of innovations that could be incorporated into the proposed project including industrialization of construction, reduction in construction waste, and efficient mechanical systems,
- m. Economic analyses and cost-related documentation.

At 100% completion of schematic design:

- a. One-page summary of major changes from initial Project Proposal or the 50% schematic design submission, including general project information, square footage, stories, and units, construction type, populations served, location, project team, project design, design and construction schedule, clean, resilient, carbon neutral-ready, and energy efficiency attributes, embodied carbon features, innovations, project cost changes, and anticipated early design support services to be performed, items or systems that were value engineered, if applicable,
- b. Updated documentation associated with carbon neutral-ready design standard to show the minimum projected energy efficiency and building performance, (energy modeling must be completed and submitted both with and without use of renewable energy generation to support evaluation of the efficiency of the design, and to allow comparison with other Project Proposals) or a one- to two-page memo of any reduction in projected performance in comparison to the initial Project Proposal or the 50% schematic design submission.
- c. Documentation of submission or updates to the submission to the certification(s) and standard(s) committed to by the design firm Partner,
- d. Updated Marketing and Promotion Plan that focuses on promotion of the proposed project to the public,
- e. Updated drawings, renderings, or diagrams,
- f. Updated energy modeling files,
- g. Updated schedule of design and construction,
- h. Updated project cost-related documentation,
- i. Updated cost and performance data collection documentation,
- j. Updated documentation associated with proposed early design support services that has been performed for the project, such as which attributes have been investigated, how the attribute has been investigated, results of the investigation, how the results relate to whether the attribute will be incorporated into the proposed project, and how the investigation affects, benefits, and fits into the firm's business model and mission. Topics can include, but not limited to:
 - i. Practices associated with integrated design and construction to achieve clean, carbon neutral-ready, and energy efficient attributes,
 - ii. Expanded strategies that ensure the building and its components will be resilient for the lifespan of the building, able to protect and serve its occupants and surrounding community, and increase the active and passive resilience of the building, Investigations of non-energy co-benefits to be incorporated into the building design, including those to ensure occupant comfort, health, productivity, and safety, Investigations of non-energy co-benefits to be incorporated into the building design, including those to ensure occupant comfort, health, productivity, and safety,
- k. Investigations of features related to reducing the proposed project's embodied carbon, greenhouse gas emissions, and global warming potential impacts of refrigerants,

- l. Investigations of innovations that could be incorporated into the proposed project including industrialization of construction, reduction in construction waste, and efficient mechanical systems,
- m. Economic analyses and cost-related documentation.

At the completion of design phase (at the completion of construction documents):

- a. One-page summary of major changes from initial Project Proposal, the 50%, or 100% schematic design submission, including general project information, square footage, stories, and units, construction type, populations served, location, project team, project design, design and construction schedule, clean, resilient, carbon neutral-ready, and energy efficiency attributes, embodied carbon features, innovations, project cost changes, and anticipated early design support services to be performed, items or systems that were value engineered, if applicable,
- b. Updated documentation associated with carbon neutral-ready design standard to show the minimum projected energy efficiency and building performance, (energy modeling must be completed and submitted both with and without use of renewable energy generation to support evaluation of the efficiency of the design, and to allow comparison with other Project Proposals) or a one- to two-page memo of any reduction in projected performance in comparison to the initial Project Proposal, the 50%, or 100% schematic design submission. Documentation of submission or updates to the submission to the certification(s) and standard(s) committed to by the design firm Partner,
- c. Updated Marketing and Promotion Plan that focuses on promotion of the proposed project to the public,
- d. Final design drawings, renderings, or diagrams (suitable for presentations),
- e. Final energy modeling files,
- f. Updated schedule of construction,
- g. Updated project cost-related documentation,
- h. Updated data collection documentation,
- i. One-page summary of lessons learned.

V. Schedule of Payments

	Milestone	% Of Total Award
1	50% completion of schematic design	60%
2	100% completion of schematic design	30%
3	Completion of design, construction documents	10%

NYSERDA reserves the right to negotiate type (time and materials or milestone) as well as the amount or schedule of payments for a funded project. At its sole discretion, NYSERDA may reduce or withhold payments for a project that falls short of the proposed level of performance, or that has not met this solicitation’s minimum submission requirements.

VI. NYSERDA Responsibilities

NYSERDA provides funding and support to projects in accordance with the Early Design Support RFP of the Competition, as detailed in this RFP.

VII. Design Firm Partner Responsibilities

1. Design firm Partners are responsible for completing and promoting the use of effective, energy efficient products, services, and designs, as defined by this RFP. The credibility of Partners and the quality of the design services they deliver are essential to NYSERDA's success.
2. Design firm Partners must update the project information that was initially provided in the project submission, assist NYSERDA in promoting the project, and share information that will help the industry accelerate the design, construction, and operation of clean, resilient, high-performance buildings. All of which may be shared publicly unless otherwise noted.
3. Design firm Partner must provide updated information related to the project's expected and evolving performance and cost data, throughout the course of the project design, in data collection formats requested by NYSERDA.
4. Design firm Partners must allow the project to be part of NYSERDA's promotional efforts and to cooperate with NYSERDA in the creation and implementation of those efforts, including but not limited to articles, books, case studies, exhibitions, presentations, tours, social media, and other electronic marketing promotions including a Competition website. NYSERDA reserves the right to brand and market the funded projects as NYS Buildings of Excellence projects or a similar reference.
5. Design firm Partners are responsible for abiding by the Terms and Conditions in this RFP.
6. If the design firm Partner does not meet the minimum project responsibilities, their design Partner status will be suspended until the project responsibilities have been met.
7. If NYSERDA identifies an instance where these rules have not been followed, the design firm Partner is responsible or for fully cooperating in any investigation of a possible violation. Failure to comply may result in the design firm Partner losing its active status.

Becoming a design firm Partner is complete voluntary and NYSERDA can remove a design firm Partner from the list at any time for any reason. NYSERDA may revoke the active status of the design firm Partner and remove them from the website if the Partner does not meet all the Program requirements. Design firm Partners may also request to be removed from the active design firm Partner list.

I. GENERAL CONDITIONS

Proprietary Information: Careful consideration should be given before confidential information is submitted to NYSERDA as part of the proposal. Review should include whether the information is critical for evaluation and whether general, non-confidential information, would suffice for review purposes. The NYS Freedom of Information Law, Public Officers law, Article 6, provides for public access to information NYSERDA possesses. Public Officers Law, Section 87(2)(d) provides for exceptions to disclosure of records or portions thereof that "are trade secrets or are submitted to an agency by a commercial enterprise or derived from information obtained from a commercial enterprise and which, if disclosed, would cause substantial injury to the competitive position of the subject enterprise." Information submitted to NYSERDA that the proposer wishes to have treated as proprietary and confidential trade secret information should be identified and labeled "Confidential" or "Proprietary" on each page at the time of disclosure. This information should include a written request to excluding it from disclosure, including a written statement of the reasons why the information should be excepted. See Public Officers Law, Section 89(5) and the procedures set forth in [21 NYCRR Part 501](#). However, NYSERDA cannot guarantee the confidentiality of any information submitted.

Omnibus Procurement Act of 1992: It is the policy of New York State to maximize opportunities for the participation of New York State business enterprises, including minority- and women-owned business enterprises, as bidders, subcontractors, and suppliers on its procurement agreements.

Information on the availability of New York State subcontractors and suppliers is available from the following:

Empire State Development
Division for Small Business
625 Broadway
Albany, NY 12207

A directory of certified minority- and women-owned business enterprises is available from the following:

Empire State Development
Minority and Women's Business Development Division
625 Broadway
Albany, NY 12207

State Finance Law sections 139-j and 139-k: NYSERDA is required to comply with State Finance Law sections 139-j and 139-k. These provisions contain procurement lobbying requirements which can be found on the [Office of General Services' website](#). Proposers are required to answer questions during proposal submission, make required certification under the State Finance Law, and disclose any Prior Findings of Non-Responsibility (this includes a disclosure statement regarding whether the proposer has been found non-responsible under section 139-j of the State Finance Law within the previous four years).

Tax Law Section 5-a: NYSERDA is required to comply with the provisions of Tax Law Section 5-a, which requires a prospective contractor with a monetary value in excess of \$100,000, prior to entering an agreement with NYSERDA, to certify to the Department of Taxation and Finance (DTF) whether the contractor, its affiliates, its subcontractors and the affiliates of its subcontractors have registered with the DTF to collect New York State and local sales and compensating use taxes. The DTF has created [ST-220-TD](#) to allow a prospective contractor to readily make such certification. Prior to contracting with NYSERDA, the prospective contractor must also certify to NYSERDA that such certification with the DTF has been filed. The DTF has created a second form, [ST-220-CA](#), that must be completed by a prospective contractor and filed with NYSERDA, prior to contracting. [Guidance for contractors](#) can found on the [DTF's website](#).

Contract Award: NYSERDA anticipates making multiple awards under this solicitation. A contract may be awarded based on initial applications without discussion, or following limited discussion, or following negotiations pertaining to the statement of work. Each offer should be submitted using the most favorable cost and technical terms. NYSERDA may request additional data or material to support applications. NYSERDA uses the sample agreement to contract successful proposals. NYSERDA may at its discretion elect to extend and/or add funds to any project funded through this solicitation. NYSERDA reserves the right to limit any negotiations to exceptions to standard terms and conditions in the Attachment B–Sample Agreement to those specifically identified in the checklist questions. Proposers should keep in mind that acceptance of all standard terms and conditions generally results in a more expedited contracting process. NYSERDA expects to notify proposers in approximately 12 weeks from the proposal due date whether the proposal has been selected to receive an award. NYSERDA may decline to contract with awardees that are delinquent with respect to any obligation under any previous or active NYSERDA agreement.

Accessibility Requirements: If awardees from this solicitation post anything on the web, or if the awardee produces a final report that NYSERDA posts to the web, the following language must be included. NYSERDA requires contractors producing content intended to be posted to the web to adhere to New York State's Accessibility Policy. This includes, but is not limited to, deliverables such as documents (pdf, Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, etc.), audio (.mp3, .wav, etc.), video (.mp4, .mpg, .avi, etc.), graphics (.jpg, .png, etc.), web pages (.html, .aspx, etc.), and other multimedia and streaming media content. For more information, see [NYSERDA's Accessibility Requirements](#).

Limitation: This solicitation does not commit NYSERDA to award a contract, pay any costs incurred in preparing a proposal, or to procure or contract for services or supplies. NYSERDA reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals received, to negotiate with all qualified sources, or to cancel in part or in its entirety the solicitation when it is in NYSERDA's best interest. NYSERDA reserves the right to reject proposals based on the nature and number of any exceptions taken to the standard terms and conditions of the sample agreement. NYSERDA reserves the right to disqualify proposers based upon the results of a background check into publicly available information and the presence of a material possibility of any reputational or legal risk in making the award.

Disclosure Requirement: The proposer will disclose any indictment for any alleged felony or any conviction for a felony within the past five years, under the laws of the United States or any state or territory of the United States and will describe circumstances for each. When a proposer is an association, partnership, corporation, or other organization, this disclosure requirement includes the organization and its officers, partners, and directors or members of any similarly governing body. If an indictment or conviction should come to the attention of NYSERDA after the award of a contract, NYSERDA may exercise its stop-work right pending further investigation or terminate the agreement. The contractor may be subject to penalties for violation of any law which may apply in the particular circumstances. Proposers must also disclose if they have ever been debarred or suspended by any agency of the U.S. Government or the New York State Department of Labor.

Vendor Assurance of No Conflict of Interest or Detrimental Effect - The proposer shall disclose any existing or contemplated relationship with any other person or entity, including any known relationships with any member, shareholders of 5% or more, parent, subsidiary, or affiliated firm, which would constitute an actual or potential conflict of interest or appearance of impropriety, relating to other clients/customers of the proposer or former officers and employees of NYSERDA, in connection with proposer's rendering services as proposed. If a conflict does or might exist, please describe how your company would eliminate or prevent it. Indicate what procedures will be followed to detect, notify NYSERDA of, and resolve any such conflicts.

The proposer must disclose whether it, or any of its members, or, to the best of its knowledge, shareholders of 5% or more, parents, affiliates, or subsidiaries, have been the subject of any investigation or disciplinary action by the New York State Commission on Public Integrity or its predecessor State entities (collectively, "Commission"), and if so, a brief description must be included indicating how any matter before the Commission was resolved or whether it remains unresolved.

Public Officers Law – For any resulting awards, the Contractor and its subcontractors shall not engage any person who is, or has been at any time, in the employ of the State to perform services in violation of the provisions of the New York Public Officers Law, other laws applicable to the service of State employees, and the rules, regulations, opinions, guidelines or policies promulgated or issued by the New York State Joint Commission on Public Ethics, or its predecessors (collectively, the "Ethics Requirements"). Proposers are reminded of the following Public Officers Law provision: contractors, consultants, vendors, and subcontractors may hire former NYSERDA employees. However, as a general rule and in accordance with New York Public Officers Law, former employees of NYSERDA may neither appear nor practice before NYSERDA, nor receive compensation for services rendered on a matter before NYSERDA, for a period of two years following their separation from NYSERDA service. In addition, former NYSERDA employees are subject to a "lifetime bar" from appearing before any state agency or authority or receiving compensation for services regarding any transaction in which they personally participated, or which was under their active consideration during their tenure with NYSERDA.

Any awardee will be required to certify that all of its employees, as well as employees of any subcontractor, whose subcontract is valued at \$100,000 or more who are former employees of the State and who are assigned to perform services under the resulting contract, shall be assigned in accordance with all Ethics Requirements. During the term of any agreement, no person who is employed by the contractor or its subcontractors and who is disqualified from providing services under the contract pursuant to any Ethics Requirements may share in any net revenues of the contractor or its subcontractors derived from the contract. NYSERDA may request that contractors provide it with whatever information the State deems appropriate about each such person's engagement, work cooperatively with the State to solicit advice from the New York State Joint Commission on Public Ethics, and, if deemed appropriate by the State, instruct any such person to seek the opinion of the New York State Joint Commission on Public Ethics. NYSERDA shall have the right to withdraw or withhold approval of any subcontractor if utilizing such subcontractor for any work performed would be in conflict with any of the Ethics

Requirements. NYSERDA shall have the right to terminate any contract at any time if any work performed is in conflict with any of the Ethics Requirements.

Due Diligence – NYSERDA, at its discretion, may conduct broad due diligence to validate any or all elements of an application and to assess applicants' prospects of success, including gathering information to assess a proposal relative to any of the topics listed in evaluation criteria, whether or not such topic is explicitly addressed in a proposal. NYSERDA may conduct due diligence on some or all proposals based on NYSERDA's current guidelines at the time of a review. NYSERDA staff may follow up with proposers to request additional information or clarification regarding applicant's proposal, including questions regarding applicant's business prospects and resources, whether or not those questions are specifically related to the elements of the proposal. Additionally, customized due diligence may be conducted by internal or external staff or contractors based on questions on any proposal raised by NYSERDA staff and/or the Scoring Committee. Due diligence may include (but is not limited to): interviews of independent references and background checks of team members; assessment of prior business experience of any team member associated with a proposal; research on intellectual property claims; customer and partner reference checks; market research on the applicants' target market and any other related or possibly competitive technology or market area; research to validate any assumptions on current or future revenues, costs, capital needs, and financing prospects for proposers' business, including similar (or unrelated) technologies, processes, or competitive solutions; or any other research that could reasonably inform the evaluation of a proposal, or the prospects for commercial success of the proposers' business (whether directly related to, or unrelated to the specific elements in a proposal). Due diligence may include discussions with proposers' former and current business partners, employees, investors, customers, and competitors. Due diligence may be conducted by NYSERDA personnel or contractors including members of the scoring committee, before, during, or after a scoring process, and prior to finalization of a contract award, any information gleaned in diligence may be used to score or re-score a proposal or apply a program policy factor.

EO 16 Protocols – Pursuant to Executive Order No. 16 issued on March 17, 2022, all vendors responding to bids or contracting with New York State must certify, using the form provided as part of this solicitation, their status with regard to conducting business operations in Russia, and that any such business operations in Russia conducted on behalf of the vendor are determined to be permitted under any of the allowable exemptions. The term vendor is intended to encompass bidders prior to contract award, contractors who have received a contract award, contract assignees, or contractors for whom an extension to an existing contract is being pursued. Exemption decisions are in NYSERDA's sole discretion and are final decisions. NYSERDA reserves the right to solicit additional materials or information regarding the responses or materials provided by a vendor.

Pursuant to Executive Order No. 16, all vendors will be vetted to ensure that they are not on the federal sanctions list at <https://sanctionssearch.ofac.treas.gov/>. There is no waiver or exemption process for vendors appearing on the federal sanctions list.

The Executive Order remains in effect while sanctions imposed by the federal government are in effect. Accordingly, vendors who may be excluded from award because of current business operations in Russia are nevertheless encouraged to respond to solicitations to preserve their contracting opportunities in case sanctions are lifted during a solicitation, or after award in the case of some solicitations.

II. Attachments:

Attachment A–Sample Umbrella Agreement