

New Mexico's Community Solar Program: Pre-bid Conference

Thursday, November 17, 2022



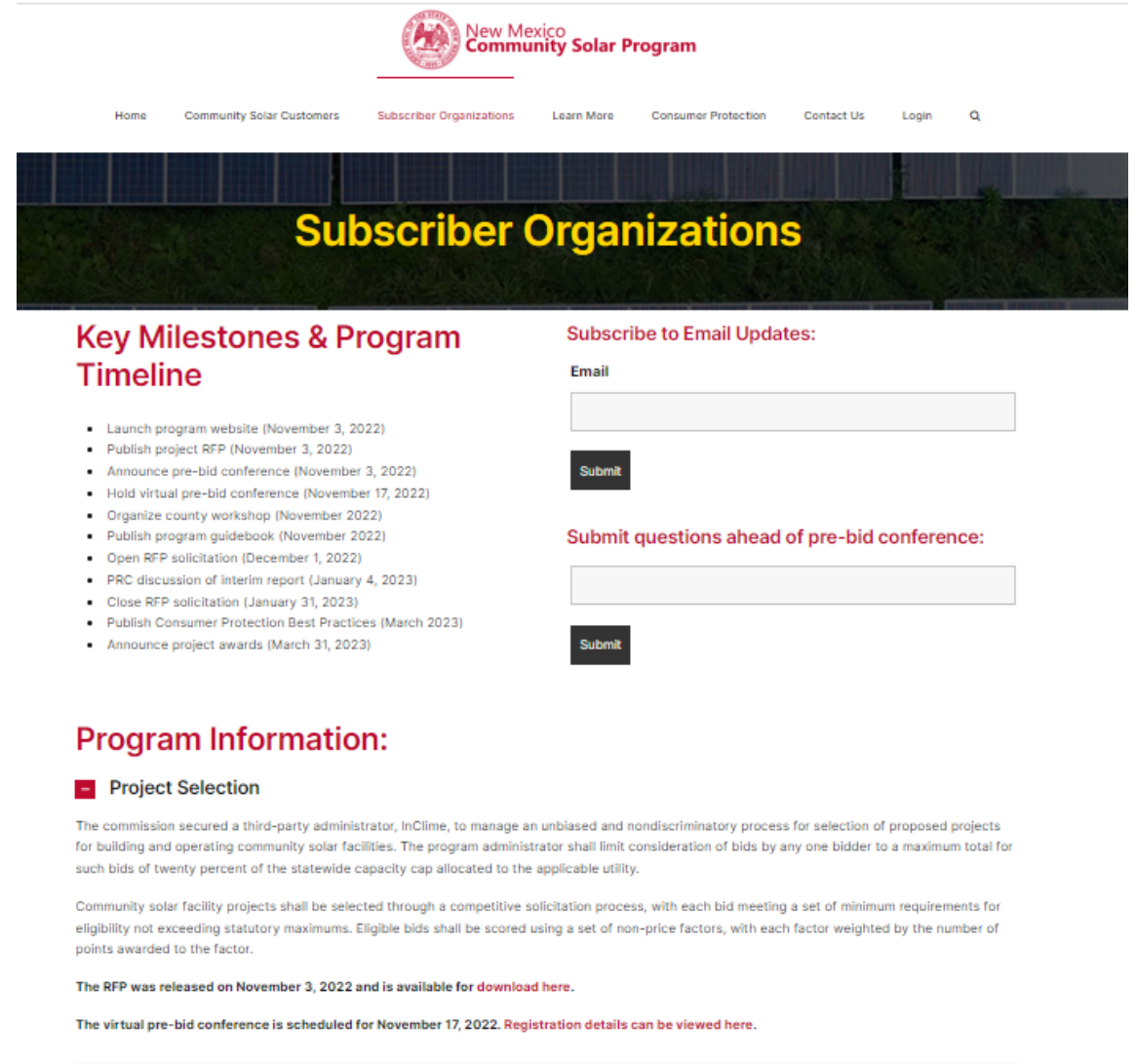
New Mexico Community Solar Program

Agenda

- Housekeeping
- Meet the Team
- Program Overview
- RFP Process Overview
- Submitted Q&A
- Live Q&A

Housekeeping

- All participants are muted
- Please submit any questions in the Q&A
- All Q&A will be posted to the Program website
- If we are unable to answer any specific questions or run out of time we will continue update our website with additional information
- RFP is available at www.csnewmexico.com/subscriber-organizations



New Mexico Community Solar Program

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Subscriber Organizations

Key Milestones & Program Timeline

- Launch program website (November 3, 2022)
- Publish project RFP (November 3, 2022)
- Announce pre-bid conference (November 3, 2022)
- Hold virtual pre-bid conference (November 17, 2022)
- Organize county workshop (November 2022)
- Publish program guidebook (November 2022)
- Open RFP solicitation (December 1, 2022)
- PRC discussion of interim report (January 4, 2023)
- Close RFP solicitation (January 31, 2023)
- Publish Consumer Protection Best Practices (March 2023)
- Announce project awards (March 31, 2023)

Subscribe to Email Updates:

Email

Submit

Submit questions ahead of pre-bid conference:

Submit

Program Information:

Project Selection

The commission secured a third-party administrator, InClime, to manage an unbiased and nondiscriminatory process for selection of proposed projects for building and operating community solar facilities. The program administrator shall limit consideration of bids by any one bidder to a maximum total for such bids of twenty percent of the statewide capacity cap allocated to the applicable utility.

Community solar facility projects shall be selected through a competitive solicitation process, with each bid meeting a set of minimum requirements for eligibility not exceeding statutory maximums. Eligible bids shall be scored using a set of non-price factors, with each factor weighted by the number of points awarded to the factor.

The RFP was released on November 3, 2022 and is available for [download here](#).

The virtual pre-bid conference is scheduled for November 17, 2022. [Registration details can be viewed here](#).

Meet the Team

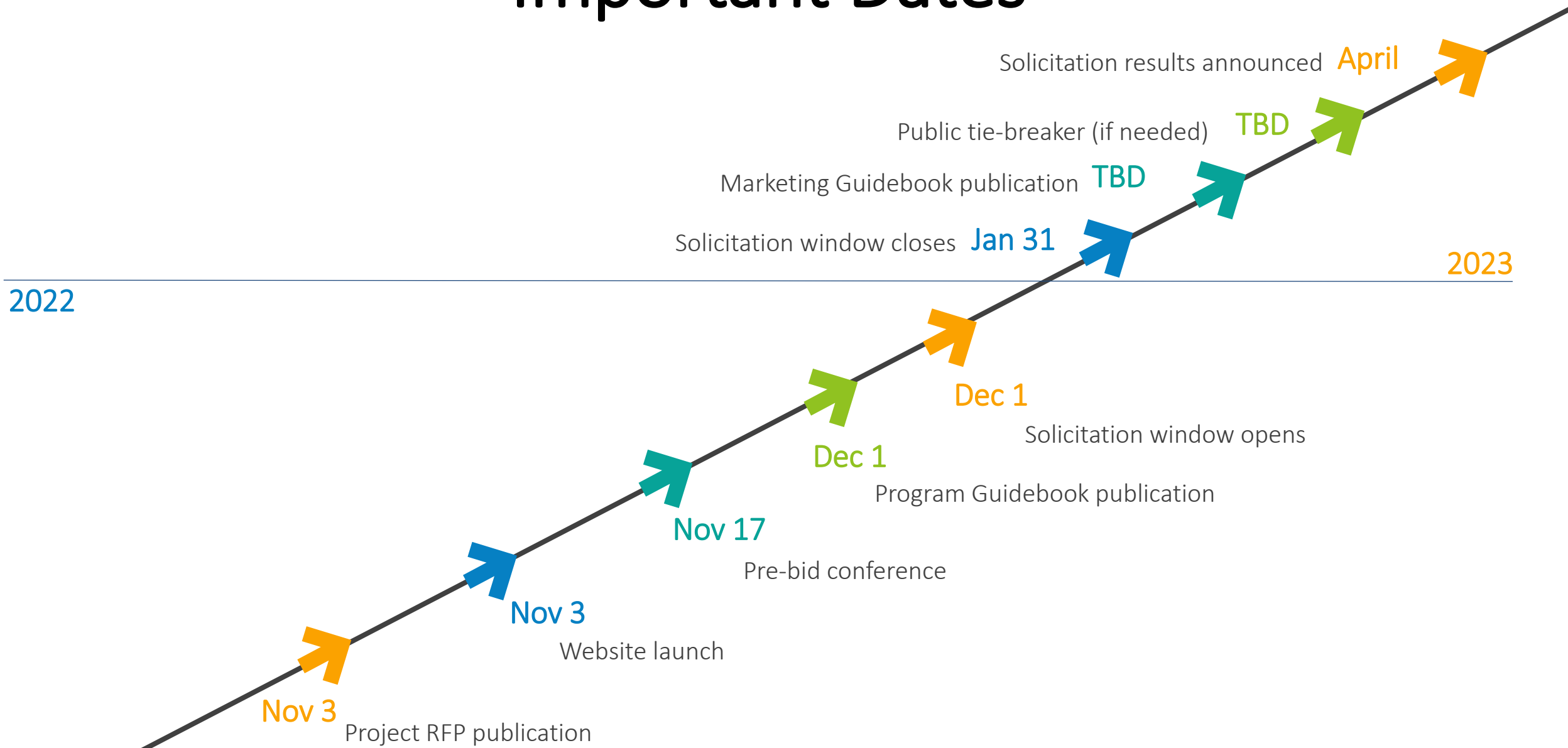


Program Overview

Program Administrator Role

The role of the Program Administrator to manage an unbiased and nondiscriminatory process for selection of proposed projects for building and operating community solar facilities on behalf of the Commission

Important Dates





Program Overview

Important Terms:

- Community Solar Program
- Subscriber Organization
- Affiliate
- Partner
- Subscribers



RFP Process Overview

The New Mexico Community Solar Program will be available to the public in April 2023.

New Mexico Community Solar

The New Mexico Community Solar Program gives New Mexicans the option to subscribe to a community solar project and receive credits back on their utility bill.

Your Dashboard

1

Company Registration

View Registration

Manage Affiliates



INFORMATION

DASHBOARD

RFP BIDS

Welc

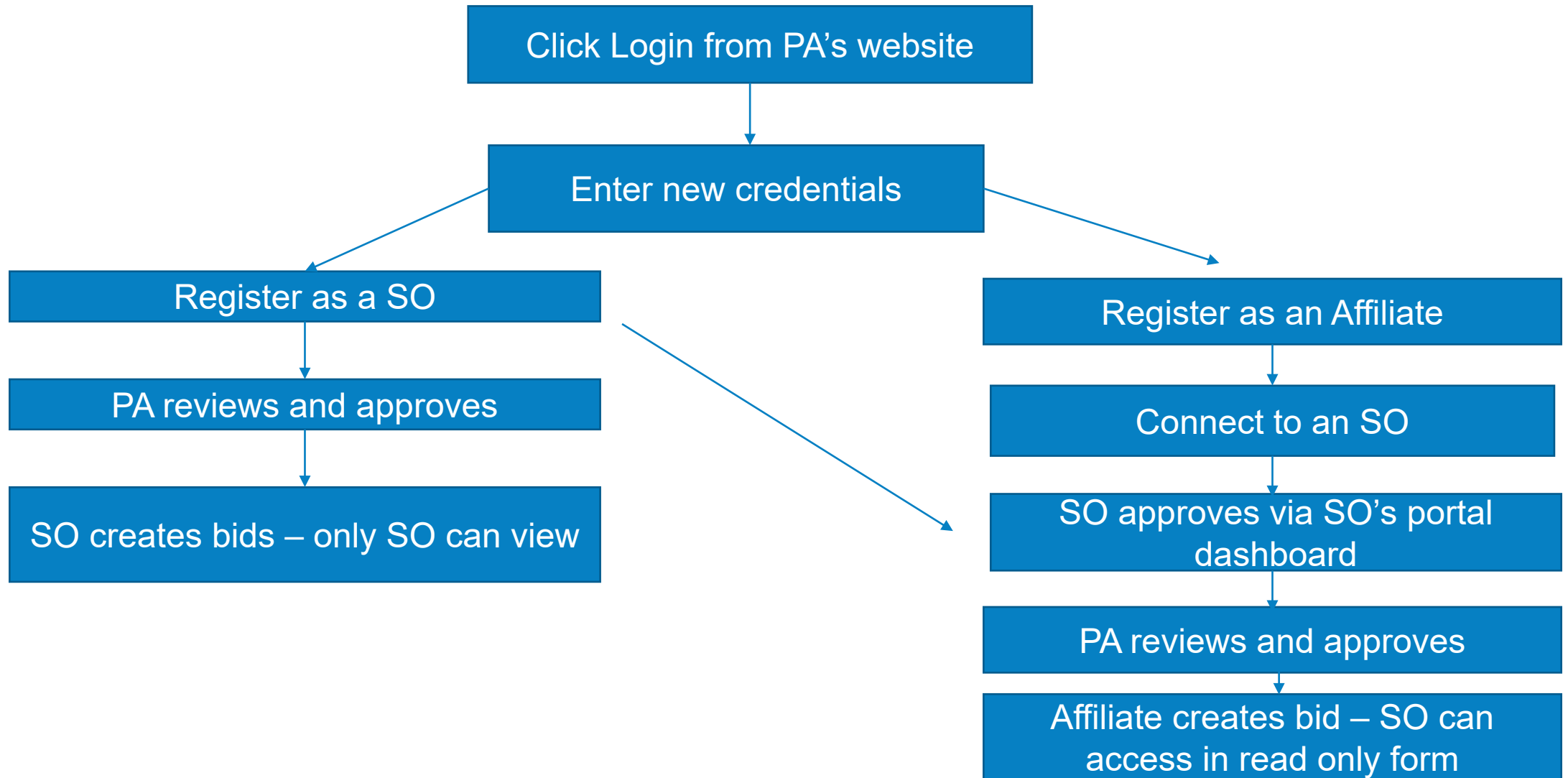
RFP Bid Dashboard

You must complete your company registration before being able to submit an RFP Bid Application.

Register with CS New Mexico

Subscriber Organization Registration

Company Registration Options



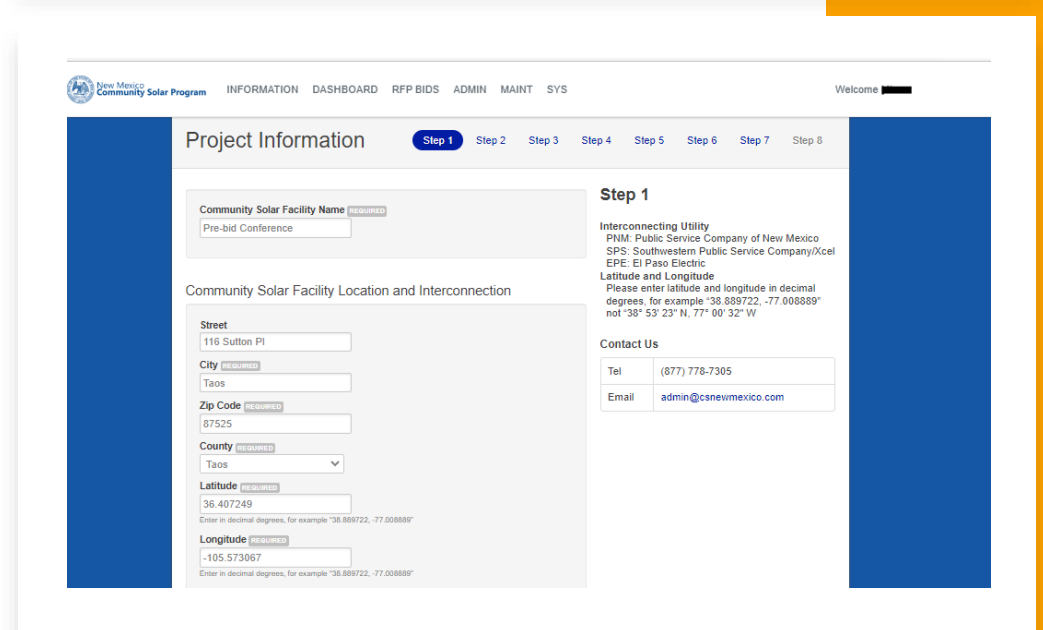
How to Submit a Bid

- **Application Steps:**
- Review Requirements
- Register as a Subscriber Organization or Affiliate
- Gather and submit information
- Pay application fees

- **Primary Screening:**
- Application will be reviewed first for completeness
- Subscriber Organization has 5 business days to respond to requests
- Projects cannot be fully reviewed until after the close of the bid window



The screenshot shows the homepage of the New Mexico Community Solar Program. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the program logo and a 'Select Language' dropdown. Below the navigation bar is a yellow banner with the text: 'The New Mexico Community Solar Program will be available to the public in April 2023.' Underneath the banner is a dark section with the title 'New Mexico Community Solar' and a brief description of the program. The description states: 'The New Mexico Community Solar Program gives New Mexicans the option to subscribe to a community solar project and receive credits back on their utility bill. Community solar is solar energy that is generated from a central location and shared by multiple owners or subscribers. You don't need your own rooftop panels to benefit from Community Solar. Community Solar is also often referred to as roofless solar, solar gardens, solar farms, or shared solar.'



The screenshot shows the 'Project Information' step of the application form. The form is titled 'Project Information' and has a progress bar with steps 1 through 8. Step 1 is currently active. The form contains several sections:

- Community Solar Facility Name** (REQUIRED): A text input field with the value 'Pre-bid Conference'.
- Community Solar Facility Location and Interconnection**: A section with multiple input fields:
 - Street**: 116 Sutton Pl
 - City** (REQUIRED): Taos
 - Zip Code** (REQUIRED): 87525
 - County** (REQUIRED): Taos (dropdown menu)
 - Latitude** (REQUIRED): 36.407249
 - Longitude** (REQUIRED): -105.573067
- Interconnecting Utility**: A list of utility providers: PNM Public Service Company of New Mexico, SPS: Southwestern Public Service Company/Xcel, and EPE: El Paso Electric.
- Latitude and Longitude**: A text input field with the value 'Please enter latitude and longitude in decimal degrees, for example '38.889722, -77.008889' not '38° 53' 23" N, 77° 00' 32" W'.
- Contact Us**: A section with two input fields:
 - Tel**: (877) 778-7305
 - Email**: admin@csnewmexico.com



Minimum Requirements

- Legally binding site control
- Commitment to meet statutory subscriber requirements
- Utility pre-application
- Proof of access to collateral for the applicable project deposit
- Payment of \$1000 application fee
- Less than or equal to 5 MW AC
- Located and interconnected on property wholly within the State of New Mexico, including Native lands.
- Commitment to statutory minimum subscriber requirements

Subscribers

- Projects must have at least ten subscribers
- No single subscriber may be allocated more than forty percent of the generating capacity
- at least forty percent of the total generating capacity of a community solar facility available in subscriptions of twenty-five kilowatts or less.
- A minimum of thirty percent of electricity produced from each community solar facility to be reserved for low-income customers and low-income service organizations.



Consumer Protection

Upcoming Documents:

- Best Practices Tool Kit
- Program Guidebook
- Uniform Disclosure Form
- Attestation at project selection

No subscriptions can be offered ahead of project selections

The Disclosure Form must be presented and executed ahead of a subscription agreement

Announcement of Awards

Staggered announcements by utility of 30 MW every two business days starting April 1

Project selection date will be the first of the month following the award announcement

\$2500 MW AC fee

Tie breaking process will be published if needed





Submitted Questions by Topic

Submitted Questions

Admin

Has InClime accepted Community Solar Program applications?

Will InClime host a state program resource website similar to the Solar Incentives New Jersey site for the New Mexico Community Solar Act?

Will the application be via an online application form that we can pre-fill and submit the day the RFP opens? or a word or pdf document that gets attached to an online portal, also would the time stamp of the submission be taken into account in the weighing process?

Will there be specific sections in the online portal which respondents need to fill out, or will respondents need to upload documents to the portal?

Submitted Questions

Admin

The RFP contemplates a project deposit. What are the fees associated with each project?

How will InClima address the volume of applications?

How will InClima ensure consistency in scoring so that one person doesn't score differently than another for a given category. “

Page 12, Section 2.7 (4) Prior to bid acceptance, the Program Administrator reserves the right to: Reject bids for reasons other than price or energy production; -What is the purpose of this language and how does InClima envision it being used?

Submitted Questions

Admin

Will InClima allow for cloning capabilities of bid information?

Will the portal have word count restrictions?

Appendix A is just the Bid Certification and Anti-Collusion is there anything else that needs to be supplied?

Submitted Questions

Registration



What are 'warning/disciplinary letters' from partners which are needed (Pg 13 Sec 3.1)



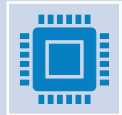
Clarify that developers are eligible respondents, even when they may not ultimately be the Subscriber Organization that owns or operates the facility.

Submitted Questions

Project Sizing



Does InClime have a preference of 5 MW-ac projects to make the program have less selected projects to manage? Or might smaller sizes be preferred so more awards can be given out? Ex: 40 awards x 5 MW-ac = 200 MW vs. 70 awards x 3ish MW-ac = 200 MW.



Will developers have a chance to downsize a project size from 5 MW to a smaller size in order to utilize the remaining capacity of an IOU allocation or based on what rolls over to the waitlist?



If a bidder chooses to not accept the reduced capacity allocation could they retain their #1 waitlist position in an effort to secure the full capacity of their bid.

Submitted Questions

Admin



Can InClime provide detail on what forms of payment are acceptable for the bid fees.



Section 2.1: The paragraph states that bids submitted no later than 4pm MT Jan 30th, but in the table below, it states the bid window closes 4PM Jan 31st.

Submitted Questions

Affiliates/Partners



In the current July 12 rule, it says “a bid made by a bidder composed of partners” but what is the definition of “partners”?



Is any legal partnership required to be considered “partners” or if we have there is an MOU for example with a subscription management company that we intend to work with on the projects, be considered a partnership?



How is any one bidder defined?

Submitted Questions

Permitting



What is the definition of a Non-ministerial permit and what documentation is required?



State Land sites may require non-ministerial permits from the state but due to State Land procurement processes, those permits are not able to be applied for/obtained until a bid has been awarded for selection, how is this scored?



If a project has secured all permits for a project except the building and electrical permits, required to start construction, is it considered that necessary permits/approvals have been secured and will this be categorized as "Fully Permitted"



Clarify what a permit plan is – is it an engineered drawing or a matrix of permits required



If a project has secured all permits for a project except the building and electrical permits, required to start construction, would that bid get the maximum 15 points?

Submitted Questions

Permitting

Under what conditions, permits/approvals are considered "secured," "granted" and "pending?"

Do we need the permitting plan to be signed by a licensed engineering firm? If yes, does it have to be an engineering firm or can it be a sole proprietor?

How does one prove that Certain jurisdictions do not require land use/zoning permits for solar projects?

Submitted Questions

Site Control



Are projects on state lands exempt from just proof of site control? Or are they exempt from site control as well as proof of receipt of non-ministerial permits?



For legally binding site control is it acceptable if the Bidder will have contractual access to the site control but site control will be in another entity's name?



what specific documentation is required to prove legally binding site control



Municipal, county, or state land - what documentation is required?

Submitted Questions

Financing



Clarify if we'd need a commitment letter from both a cash equity and a tax equity financier.



Is a commitment 100% of the total build cost or something less?



Will projects be allowed to change financing partners after award or change from internal financing to external financing?

Submitted Questions

Project Location

Confirm that the entire community solar facility must be wholly located within the IOUs distribution service territory

Confirm that interconnection must be to the local utility's distribution system

Have there been any minimum land size requirements or design requirements for the option of co-location. For instance, if there is a 5 MW CS facility next to an 8 MW standard PPA, would easily fulfill the requirement for "other energy resources [strictly not CS]." But the term "energy resources" sounds vague.

Submitted Questions

Utility Pre-App

What documentation is required for the Utility pre-application report ?

After the RFP was issued on Nov 3, PNM said they did not have a Community Solar pre-application process in place, and the pre-application process for the CS program PNM has not been clearly explained by the PRC or PNM

What if our pre-application study came back with no capacity, but then after speaking to the utility, they indicate that through the interconnection study, they can propose to us the upgrade of the feeder and hence provide the required capacity for the project. Will it be OK to submit a preapplication that shows zero capacity or a lower capacity than what we are bidding for?

These are just estimations and may not reflect the actual capacity that could be installed on a feeder as they do not take into account a bidder's ability to perform system upgrades to increase hosting capacity. Will InClime take the results of these into consideration when selecting bids?

What if our pre-application comes back with a 5MW capacity available, we submit our bid through the RFP process, and get awarded a 5MW contract, only to find out later from the utility that we can only connect a 3 MW project?

Submitted Questions

Subscriptions

Due to the tight timeline to subscribe within 12 months of project selection could you provide clarity on delays

"Is this meant as total savings; "A bid including a commitment to supplement the community solar bill credit for any low-income subscriber, for a minimum period of five years, by including, in addition to the credit as calculated and provided by the utility, a credit from the subscriber organization to the subscriber in the amount of an additional 20 to 30 percent of the utility solar bill credit"

Please clarify whether the percentages are calculated based on numbers of customers or the percent of overall CSG capacity (kW-ac).

Submitted Questions

Subscriptions

Description on how LI verification will occur

Will eligibility for LI only be checked when a subscriber is initially assigned to a project?

Where will low-income self-attestation/qualifying documents be stored?

How will subscriber verification affect non-US citizens that want to participate as subscribers?

Define Direct-billed customer

Submitted Questions

Subscriptions

What constitutes as Proof of commitments to low-income subscribers around upfront costs, termination fees, and credit checks?

The RFP states “Each Subscriber Organization shall provide a copy of the agreement they intend to use to acquire subscribers for the project”. At what point do we need to provide a copy of the subscription agreement? Does this agreement need to be included in the RFP bid?

Submitted Questions

Scoring

Will securing maximum points without bonus points make us eligible for securing projects?

Is our understanding correct that the maximum point you can get for the provisions of Section 13-1-21NMSA 1978 is 5 points (5% * 100 points) for a resident business?

What would be considered as examples of “innovative commitment” or beneficial provision noted in the CS Rule?

Will a bid evaluated based on the maximum points of 92 or 106.2 out of 92

Submitted Questions

Scoring

Certain criteria mentions that points will be awarded on a scale (Workforce training, education opportunities & Existing and continuing relationship categories). Will points in these sections be awarded relative to other bids or will all bids that meet certain thresholds of depth be awarded the same points?

Can you clarify what constitutes "racial minorities" in Section 4.3?

How will InClima evaluate the Respondent's response as per the Bonus Points, are Respondent's contractors and subcontractors considered as part of the Respondent?

Submitted Questions

Bill Credits

Have the community solar bill credit rate values per utility been determined, and if so, where are they published?





Live Q&A

How to Contact Us

- Email: admin@csnewmexico.com
- Phone: (877) 794-0109
- Website: www.csnewmexico.com