

Request for Information

Voluntary Contributions to the Renewable Energy Access and Community Help Program (“REACH”)

Section 1: Introduction

This Request for Information (“RFI”) is intended to support NYPA’s understanding of current industry interest in providing voluntary contributions towards the Renewable Energy Access and Community Help Program (“REACH”) to provide utility bill relief to low-income New Yorkers in disadvantaged communities. In particular, NYPA is interested to understand the level of interest of renewable energy and storage developers in contributing to the REACH program through the execution of a Voluntary Contribution Agreement (“VCA”) similar to that included as Attachment A hereto. NYPA anticipates that renewable energy developers may elect to enter into one or more VCAs with NYPA to contribute funding to REACH and to help satisfy disadvantaged community commitments under their renewable energy certificate or indexed storage credit agreements with the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (“NYSERDA”).

Responding to this RFI is optional, and failure to respond will not affect a Respondent’s ability to respond to future potential RFPs. Respondents to this RFI are not required to answer all questions and should focus on questions relevant to their field of expertise. If the question(s) does not apply, please mark it as “N/A”.

Section 2: Background

NYPA is the largest state public power organization in the U.S., operating 16 generating facilities and more than 1,550 circuit-miles of transmission lines. More than 70 percent of the electricity NYPA produces is clean renewable hydropower. NYPA uses no tax money or state credit. It finances its operations through the sale of bonds and revenues earned in large part through sales of electricity. NYPA provides the lowest-cost electricity in New York State and is the only statewide electricity supplier. State and federal regulations determine NYPA’s customer base, which includes large and small businesses, not-for-profit organizations, community-owned electric systems and rural electric cooperatives and government entities.

In July 2019, the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act¹ (“Climate Act”) was signed into law, mandating the nation-leading clean energy targets, as enhanced since enactment: 70% renewable energy by 2030, 100% zero emissions grid by 2040, 9 GW of offshore wind by 2035, 6 GW of distributed solar by 2025, 10 GW of distributed solar by 2030, and 6 GW of energy storage by 2030. The Climate Act also underscored the importance of bringing benefits to disadvantaged communities in the State’s achievement of these goals.

On May 3, 2023, Chapter 56 of the Laws of 2023 was enacted as a part of the 2023-2024 Enacted State Budget (“Enhanced Authority”). Among other things, the Enhanced Authority amended the Power Authority Act to give NYPA the ability to, among other things, establish and support the Renewable Energy Access and Community Help (REACH) Program to provide bill credits to low-income or moderate-income end-use electricity consumers in disadvantaged communities.

¹ [NY State Senate Bill S6599 \(nysenate.gov\)](https://nysenate.gov/legislation/bills/2019/S6599)

On January 31, 2024, NYPA filed a petition (“REACH Petition”) with the Public Service Commission (“Commission”) to establish REACH in cooperation with the Joint Utilities.² On October 16, 2024, after public notice and comment, the Commission issued an “Order Implementing Renewable Energy Access and Community Help Program,” in Commission Case No. 24-E-0084, approving the REACH Petition with modifications (“REACH Order”).³ The REACH Order incorporated NYPA’s proposal, as set forth in the REACH Petition, to receive voluntary contributions from third parties, such as private developers, seeking to benefit disadvantaged communities by supporting REACH.⁴

NYPA will soon be seeking such voluntary contributions from private developers to provide REACH Bill Credits to disadvantaged community members in New York. NYPA proposes to list such developers on the Authority’s website as REACH Program Participants. As set forth in the REACH Petition, NYPA anticipates that renewable energy developers may elect to enter into one or more VCAs with NYPA to contribute funding to the REACH and to help satisfy disadvantaged community commitments under their renewable energy certificate or indexed storage credit agreements with NYSEERDA. Accepting such funding will provide project developers with a simplified approach to making direct contributions to REACH, and in turn disadvantaged communities, to advance the CLCPA requirement that at least 35% with a goal of 40% of program benefits be allocated to disadvantaged communities. This RFI is designed to gather insights from such developers and receive feedback on the draft VCA included herein as Attachment A.

Section 3: Information Requested

Responses should be concise and limited to no more than 5 pages, excluding any mark-up to the draft VCA. Please follow the numbering format below.

1. Company name, address, city, state, zip code, and contact information for main contact; legal registered name of the Respondent;
2. Responses to the following questions:
 - (a) Would you be interested in participating in the REACH Program as a Program Participant, making voluntary contributions to fund REACH bill credits? Please elaborate.

² Petition of the Power Authority of the State of New York to Establish the Renewable Energy Access and Community Help Program, Commission Case 24-E-0084 (filed January 31, 2024), available at: <https://documents.dps.ny.gov/public/Common/ViewDoc.aspx?DocRefId={303B608D-0000-C11B-B9C4-7C814F8092F1}>.

³ Case 24-E-0084, Petition of New York Power Authority to Establish the Renewable Energy Access and Community Help Program, Order Implementing Renewable Energy Access and Community Help Program (Issued October 16, 2024), available at: <https://documents.dps.ny.gov/public/Common/ViewDoc.aspx?DocRefId={301D9692-0000-CD1D-9C85-F65414C77CA5}>.

⁴ See PAL § 1005 (27-b)(c)(iv), which authorizes and directs NYPA, as deemed feasible and advisable by its Trustees, to “enter into contracts for purposes of implementing REACH, including but not limited to agreements with developers, owners and operators of renewable energy systems ... to provide for bill credits to end-use electricity consumers in disadvantaged communities for renewable energy produced by renewable energy systems, upon terms and conditions approved by the [C]ommission....”

- (b) Given the CLCPA goal to provide benefits to disadvantaged communities, would you be more inclined to fund individual custom benefit projects or contribute to the REACH program as a way of providing these benefits?
- 3. If your answer to question 2(a) is yes, please provide:
 - (a) A list of publicly known energy projects in development, construction, or operation that may be considered to participate in the REACH program by executing a VCA; and
 - (b) A range of potential Contribution Amounts that the Respondent is considering for each project or portfolio of projects; and
- 4. Please provide any comments on the draft VCA, via written response and/or marking up the VCA itself, and return it as an attachment to your response to this RFI.

Section 4: Schedule

RFI issued: May 12, 2025

RFI responses due: June 9, 2025

Section 5: Conditions & Disclaimers

To request that your written responses remain confidential please mark them “Confidential” or “Proprietary.” Information labeled as such will be kept confidential to the extent allowed by Public Officers Law, Section 89(5). All information provided by any responder pursuant to this RFI shall become the property of NYPA upon receipt and without restriction or limitation on its use. Any subsequent actions recommended by NYPA will be subject to all applicable laws and regulations.

This RFI is neither a contract offer nor a request for proposals and does not commit NYPA to award a contract or pay any costs incurred by a party in the preparation of a response to this RFI. This RFI is not a procurement action, and will not result in a pre-qualification of bidders for a future procurement action. Respondents are encouraged to respond to this RFI; however, failure to submit a response will not impact a respondent’s ability to participate in or respond to any future competitive solicitation process (if any) for projects. NYPA reserves the right to discontinue or modify this RFI process at any time, and makes no commitments, implied or otherwise, that this process will result in any future solicitations.

No awards will be made or contracts offered as part of this RFI.

Attachment A: Draft Voluntary Contribution Agreement