

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS (RFA)**CLEAN DIESEL FUNDING PROGRAMS**

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Due: March 4, 2021 at 2:00PM CST

RFA – Clean Diesel Funding Programs

RFA Issue Date:	1/28/2021
Pre-Application Meeting:	2/9/2021 10:00am CT
RFA Questions Deadline:	2/18/2021
RFA Submission Deadline:	3/4/2021 2:00pm CT
Expected Date for MEC Selection Notification:	3/8/2021
Expected Timeframe for Award Negotiations:	04/2021

Funding allocations:

Federal funding allocated from DERA awards and new applications: \$2.5 million (approximately). Cost sharing requirements from project beneficiaries range from 25-45% of project costs, depending on technology deployed.

RFA Information:

<https://metroenergy.org/clean-diesel-rfa/>

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I. Project Overview

A. Project Summary and Background

This Request for Applications (RFA) is intended to select Beneficiaries to receive funding to implement clean diesel projects. Projects are limited to alternative fuel engine and vehicle replacements and/or electrified parking spaces that will achieve significant reductions in pollution emitted from diesel engines. Successful applicants will become Beneficiaries under MEC-managed projects funded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's National Clean Diesel Program.

With this RFA, MEC will select new Beneficiaries for current MEC-managed projects, as well as for an application to EPA for new funds under the open FY21 National Clean Diesel Grant competition.

Beneficiaries would be eligible for reimbursements of up to 25% of total vehicle cost to replace Class 5 through 8 diesel vehicles (including school buses) with new propane or CNG models using EPA-verified engine technologies. If a Beneficiary opts for the optional CARB near-zero engine for CNG or propane, the reimbursement is 35%. If a Beneficiary opts for zero emission electric vehicles, the reimbursement rate is up to 45%, which can also apply to limited electric charging installation costs necessary for the new EV's. Truck stop electrification (TSE) or electrified parking space projects are eligible for reimbursements up to 30% of labor and equipment costs.

B. Site Locations

The geographic scope of selected projects will be limited to Kansas and western Missouri, with some consideration for projects based in other areas of EPA Region 7 (KS, MO, IA, and NE).

C. Funding Allocations and Cost Sharing

Federal funding allocated from DERA awards and new applications: \$2.5 million (approximately). Cost sharing requirements from project beneficiaries range from 25-45% of project costs, depending on technology deployed.

The anticipated time for selection of the winning Applicant(s) will be early March of 2021. These funds are provided through EPA grants to Metropolitan Energy Center (MEC) and will be administered by MEC in accordance with applicable DOE rules and requirements. Funding will be provided on a reimbursement basis. Costs incurred by Beneficiaries during the application process are ineligible for reimbursement.

Cost-sharing commitments by applicants are required in line with the percentages listed in paragraph I.A. above. Applicants willing to forgo some funding (for instance, asking for 20% reimbursement instead of 25%) will improve their chances of approval, though it cannot guarantee success.

Cost Sharing Examples:

Project Description	Total project cost	Cost Sharing Split	Local Cost Share	Federal Reimbursement
Replace 6 diesel transit buses with electric (\$450,000 ea.)	\$2,700,000	45% Federal / 55% Local	\$1,485,000	\$1,215,000
Install 20 electric parking spaces at truck stop (incl equip and construction costs)	\$650,000	30% Federal / 70% Local	\$455,000	\$195,000

MEC anticipates making three (3) to five (5) awards, depending on RFA responses and funding availability. Project award is limited only by available funds. Available federal funds: \$1,300,000 (current projects) and \$1,250,000 (new applications), for a total of \$2,550,000. MEC reserves the right not to award any Applicants or to offer partial funding to Applications.

D. Eligibility

The geographic scope of selected projects will be limited to Kansas and western Missouri, with some consideration for projects based in other areas of EPA Region 7 (KS, MO, IA, and NE).

New or upfit AFVs must be powered by compressed natural gas (CNG); liquefied natural gas (LNG); propane (LPG); hydrogen, or electricity. Vehicles being replaced or upfit must be Class 5-8 diesel vehicles. Eligible categories include school or transit buses, terminal trucks, work trucks, trash haulers, short-haul delivery trucks and long-haul freight tractors.

Other restrictions apply.

- Applicants cannot use DERA funding to enlarge a fleet or for fueling infrastructure (except for limited electric charging support or TSE).
- All units being replaced under this program must be destroyed, and there are specific requirements on how scrapping is to be done – photographs, invoices, and scrapping methods.
- Any income from scrapping old units will reduce the amount of funding Beneficiaries receive in reimbursement.
- Old units must be scrapped within 90 days from the date that replacement vehicles are placed in service.
- Non-diesel vehicles/equipment are not eligible for replacement,
- Diesel vehicles and engines ranging from MY1994 to 2009 are eligible for replacement or upfit under different applications. If you plan to replace diesel vehicles newer than EMY10, they must be replaced with near-zero or electric models. For a summary of eligible model years and technology, see Appendix 1 Engine Model Years at <https://metroenergy.org/clean-diesel-rfa/>.
- To ensure the planned replacement or upfit is certified and eligible for use under these funds, search engine family names through CARB, listed by EMY, class and OEM. <https://ww3.arb.ca.gov/msprog/onroad/cert/cert.php#6>

- New vehicles must perform substantially the same work as the units they replace and have substantially the same horsepower and displacement. Increases of up to 10% of GVWR within an engine's intended service class may be allowed for vocational trucks, but EPA must agree to variances like this before purchase.

II. Program Goals and Benefits

The principal goal of this project is to select Beneficiaries to implement alternative fuel engine and vehicle replacements and/or electrified parking spaces that will achieve significant reductions in pollution emitted from diesel engines. Projects that cut diesel emissions in areas of poor air quality, or where emissions negatively impact low-income communities are a priority for DERA programs. Similarly, projects that eliminate diesel emissions from school bus fleets in favor of cleaner alt-fuel models reflect DERA priorities and will be assessed accordingly.

Projects on the leading edge of technology development and that encourage innovation by service providers and regional peers are encouraged. Data capture and lessons learned is an important goal. These will be leveraged into project success stories and shared through our business and community relationships using targeted outreach and educational peer-to-peer presentations. Together, deployments and outreach will encourage adoption of increased numbers of alternative fuel vehicles.

Long-term benefits and outcomes will include:

1. Reduction of NO_x, particulate matter and other air pollutants.
2. Encouraging expanded use of cleaner alternative fuels and vehicles, with the goal of moving towards an increasingly self-sustaining regional alt-fuel market.

Beneficiaries are expected to work with their associated Clean Cities Coalition to maintain their alternative fuel deployments long-term, and to provide information to MEC on fuel consumed and emissions eliminated through these projects.

III. Criteria for Evaluation

All Applications will be reviewed by a Review Committee consisting of MEC staff and other members offering technical evaluations and assistance, as necessary.

Applicants will be notified if additional information or documentation is required. All information required to complete the Application for funding is provided in this RFA. Any additional information pertaining to submissions, including email and phone calls, will not be considered once the review process is under way.

When evaluating projects for funding, the Review Committee will consider the following criteria listed below. The overall quality of the Application, containing all required information in a clear and concise format, is a prevailing consideration throughout all categories. The potential maximum number of points is listed to the right for each category.

Complete and eligible applications will be ranked in each of the following categories, weighted by rank, and given a final score.

Category	Weight
Cost Effectiveness (cost sharing percentage)	40
Diesel fuel reduced (fuel volume displaced)	25
Operating Geography: KS/MO = Rank 1 NE/IA = Rank 2	20
Duty Cycle: School / Transit Buses = Rank 1 Urban Freight/Multimodal Yards = Rank 2 All Others = Rank 3	10
Outreach Participation	5

IV. Pre-Application Webinar and Information

A Pre-Application meeting will be held on **February 9, 2021, at 10:00AM CST**. During the meeting, MEC staff will conduct a walk-through of the RFA document. The meeting will be conducted online only; attendees should register for this meeting to receive join credentials or to receive a recording after the event:

GoToWebinar Registration URL

<https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/5870075290027785227>

Applicants will have the opportunity to ask questions about the program and Application process. A recording of the meeting will be made for prospective Applicants who cannot participate at this time, and it will be posted on the RFA web page.

Applicants are also encouraged to submit questions in writing to Jeff Windsor at Metropolitan Energy Center at rfp@metroenergy.org by **February 18, 2021**. MEC will try to respond to all questions publicly via an FAQ on its website, at <https://metroenergy.org/clean-diesel-rfa/>, by **February 22, 2021**. Emails should use the subject line: “Query for DERA RFA”.

V. Application Submission

Applications must be received by **March 4, 2021**. MEC is not responsible for technical or transmittal issues when submitting a grant application. All applications with a MEC inbox timestamp of **2:00 PM CST** or after will automatically be disqualified from the current funding round with no exceptions. Only electronic applications will be accepted. Hard copy applications will not be accepted. Please e-mail your Application to rfp@metroenergy.org subject: **“Clean Diesel Funding Programs <Applicant Name>”**. Applicants will receive an e-mail response notification of the receipt of their application within two business days upon submission.

Summary of Application Documents

- Application Form
- Budget Table/Fleet Worksheet
- Letter of Commitment (for Applicant and any cost-sharing partners)
- Optional: Letters of Support (for non-cost-sharing community partners or supporters)

VI. Administrative Information

A. Proprietary/Confidential Information

Any restrictions of the use of or inspection of material contained within the Application shall be clearly stated in the Application itself. Written requests by the Applicant for confidentiality shall be submitted to MEC in advance of the Application submission deadline, along with the Application material. The Applicant must state specifically what elements of the Application are to be considered confidential/proprietary.

Confidential/Proprietary information must be clearly identified, marked, and separated/ packaged from the rest of the Application. Co-mingling of confidential/proprietary and other information is not acceptable. Neither an Application in its entirety, nor Application price information will be considered confidential and proprietary. Any information that will be included in any resulting Agreement cannot be considered confidential.

B. Organizational Conflict of Interest – Requirements of this Application and Subsequent Agreement

Any business entity or person is prohibited from being awarded an Agreement, if the business entity or person has an “Organizational Conflict of Interest”, as described below, with regard to this solicitation and the resulting Agreement. Applicants should provide a brief written statement noting any conflict of interest within the Applicant Summary Sheet.

No person or business entity engaged by MEC to prepare the original grant Application, or who has access prior to the solicitation to sensitive information related to this procurement process, including, but not limited to requirements, statements of work, or evaluation criteria, will be eligible to directly or indirectly submit or participate in the submission of an Application for this grant solicitation. MEC considers such engagement or access to be an Organizational Conflict of Interest, which would cause such business entity or person to have an unfair competitive advantage.

If MEC determines that an Organizational Conflict of Interest exists, MEC has discretionary power to cancel the Agreement award. In the event the Awarded Applicant was aware of an Organizational Conflict of Interest prior to the award of the Agreement and did not disclose the conflict to the procuring agency, MEC may terminate the Agreement for default.

C. RFA Response Material Ownership

MEC has the right to retain Applicants’ original Applications and other RFA response materials for its files. As such, MEC may retain or dispose of all copies as is lawfully deemed appropriate. MEC has the right to use any or all information/material presented in reply to the RFA, subject to limitations outlined in the section, Proprietary/Confidential Information. Applicant expressly

agrees that MEC may use the materials for all lawful purposes, including the right to reproduce copies of the material submitted for purposes of evaluation, and to make the information available as required by law or regulation.

D. Binding Offer

An Application submitted in response to this RFA shall constitute a binding offer. Acknowledgment of this condition shall be indicated by the signature on the Application of the Applicant or an officer of the Applicant legally authorized to execute contractual obligations and shall bind the Applicant to the Application. By submitting an Application, the Applicant affirms its acceptance of the terms and requirements of this RFA, including its attachments and appendices, without exception, deletion, or qualification - and does so without making its offer contingent. The Applicant further agrees to cooperate with MEC and expedite the contracting process upon notice of award. MEC reserves the right to make partial awards or no awards.

E. Debarment and Suspension

By submitting an Application in response to this RFA the Applicant certifies that it, its principals, and proposed sub-contractors (if any):

- Are not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for disbarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from covered transactions by any Federal debarment or agency;
- Have not within a three-year period preceding the Due Date of this Application been convicted of or had a civil judgment rendered against them for commission of fraud or a criminal offense in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a public (Federal, State or local) transaction or Agreement under a public transaction; violation of Federal or State antitrust statutes or commission of embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements or receiving stolen property;
- Are not presently under investigation for, indicted for or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a governmental entity (Federal, State, or local) with commission of any of the offenses enumerated in Paragraph IV.K.2 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR); and
- Have not within a three-Year period preceding the Due Date of this Application had one or more public transactions (Federal, State, or local) terminated for cause or default.

If the Applicant is unable to certify to any of the statements in this certification, an explanation must be provided as an attachment to the Application. This explanation is exempt from page limitations on the Application, if any apply. The inability of the Applicant to provide the certification will not necessarily result in disqualification of the Applicant. The explanation will be considered in connection with MEC's determination whether to select an Applicant.

F. Disclaimer:

All statistical and fiscal information contained within this RFA, and any amendments and modifications thereto, reflect the best and most accurate information available to MEC at the time of RFA preparation. No inaccuracies in such data shall constitute a basis for legal recovery of damages or protests, either real or punitive, except to the extent that any such inaccuracy was a result of intentional misrepresentation by MEC.

G. Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN)

Applicant is required to provide their FEIN in their Application.

H. DUNS Number

Applicant is required to provide their DUNS in their Application, or a pledge to obtain one prior to beginning work. Additionally, successful Applicants are required to submit their DUNS prior to the Agreement, or purchase order issuance, or payment from MEC.

I. Incurred Cost

MEC is not liable for any cost incurred by the Applicant prior to issuance of a legally executed Agreement, purchase order or other authorized acquisition document.

J. Compliance with all Federal, State and Municipal Laws and Regulations

Successful Applicants (Beneficiary) shall comply with applicable Federal, State, and local laws and regulations in the performance of all work under resulting Agreement. Beneficiary shall obtain all Federal, State, and local permits, authorizations, and approvals of all work performed under the Agreement. This includes the governing grant agreement between MEC and DOE. See attached Prime Award Flowdown (Terms and Conditions).

K. Beneficiary

Successful Applicants who complete a contract agreement will be considered a Beneficiary of the Grant. Beneficiary will manage and expend funding to maximize these benefits, including commencing expenditures and activities as quickly as possible, consistent with prudent management. Contract planning, evaluation, and award to vendors will be required to align with the program's core goal as stated above. MEC's evaluation will be based in part on how the Application positively achieves each of the goals.

VII. Selection Process

Additional information may be requested from Applicants by MEC prior to final award determination. MEC is under no obligation to fund any Application and reserves the right to deny Applications for any reason. Funding is limited. Applications meeting all the program's general policy guidelines may not necessarily receive an award. MEC reserves the right to delay any decision due to budgetary constraints.

MEC reserves the right to vary from the evaluation criteria listed within this document during the bid solicitation period as necessary or appropriate. Any modifications to evaluation criteria will be posted to MEC's website. It is the responsibility of the Applicant to check for these changes.

The Selection Notices are anticipated to be made in **early March 2021**, and Applicants will be notified of the Review Committee's determinations via email. Awardees are expected to sign and return the Agreement to MEC within 4 weeks of receiving the document unless otherwise noted in writing by the MEC Contract Specialist.

Funding decisions are final. Funds awarded are based on a competitive process where Applications are weighed against other Applications and overall program goals. Changes unapproved by MEC to an awarded Applicant's scope of work after funds are awarded will not be allowed and may result in the nullification of the award.

VIII. Awarded Applicant Reporting and Payment Procedures

All funding is conditioned upon veracity of information provided within the Application and will require accountability and reporting by the successful Applicant (Beneficiary). Such reporting will be in accordance with the procedures developed and prescribed by MEC. MEC staff will also conduct periodic site visits during and after installation to ensure compliance with the Agreement. The following reporting requirements will be included in MEC's Agreement with the Beneficiary:

A. Progress Reporting

Beneficiary will participate in monthly status calls with other project participants. In addition, it will submit on a quarterly basis a written progress report of activities under this Grant. The preparation of reports in a timely manner will be the responsibility of Beneficiary and failure to comply may result in the delay of payment of funds and/or termination of the Grant.

The report will refer to the status of work to be performed pursuant to this Grant, including a description of the deliverables and tasks completed during the reporting period. It will include a description of any findings or results, any unanticipated outcomes or roadblocks encountered, and any potential future Applications of project results. The report will indicate clearly whether work is proceeding according to schedule, ahead of schedule or behind schedule. If the work is behind schedule, the report must include a summary of the reasons for the delay and a plan of action to bring the project back on schedule, which will be subject to review and approval by the MEC prior to implementation.

Beneficiary will produce and submit to MEC a project completion report that provides a technical account of the total work performed and contains a comprehensive description of the work tasks specified herein, the results achieved, documenting the success/lessons learned/technology implementation of the project and shall include a financial status summary outlining expenditures.

Through the life of the project, Beneficiary will track performance metrics of deployed and installed equipment, including fuel volume used and/or dispensed, successes and problems encountered, and lessons learned.

Compliance with all local building and operational codes, as demonstrated by a signed permit or similar from the local Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) is required for construction activities. Non-compliance will result in the nullification of the Agreement and repayment of any Grant funds received by the Beneficiary.

B. Annual Reporting

After the project concludes and through the life of the vehicles and/or deployed/installed equipment, Beneficiary will track and report to MEC on an annual basis performance metrics of deployed and installed equipment, including fuel volume used and/or dispensed, successes and problems encountered, and lessons learned. This data and information will aggregate with our Clean Cities Annual Report to help justify program funding to the Clean Cities network nationwide.

Beneficiary must also maintain equipment on property registry, provide disposition information to MEC, and allow MEC access on at least a bi-annual basis to verify equipment through site visits until such time as the equipment has a fair market value of less than \$5000.

C. Payments

The following payment procedures will be included in MEC's Agreement with the Awarded Applicant (Beneficiary):

Payments must be made in accordance with the provisions set forth in the Grant. MEC will pay Beneficiary the reasonable, allocable, and allowable costs for equipment installed based on satisfactory monthly progress and required documentation of the work defined in the Grant, as determined by MEC.

The Beneficiary will be compensated only for equipment installed by the Beneficiary and accepted by MEC pursuant to the terms of the Grant. Payment will also be contingent upon MEC's timely receipt and acceptance of the required reports described herein.

The Beneficiary will be reimbursed based on the submission of a Request for Payment and an Invoicing Report form provided by MEC providing a detailed account of the amount of costs, including receipts/invoices, incurred relating to line items per the project budget. MEC will withhold payment of the final ten percent (10%) of the total amount until the Beneficiary has submitted, and MEC has accepted, all required narrative and financial progress reports enumerated in the Grant and Agreement.

For more information, please contact:

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