



Sources Sought Notice No. SS-2023-2048

“Federal Data Commons and Buy Clean Act support”

September 14, 2023

Background:

The National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) is a national laboratory of the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE), operated and managed by the Alliance for Sustainable Energy, LLC (the Alliance). NREL advances the science and engineering of energy efficiency, sustainable transportation, and renewable power technologies and provides the knowledge to integrate and optimize energy systems. Located in the foothills of Golden, Colorado, NREL is the only federal laboratory dedicated to the research, development, commercialization, and deployment of renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies.

The Alliance, as the Prime Contractor for the DOE to manage and operate NREL, is seeking a subcontractor to provide support for the Federal Life Cycle Data Commons (FDC) and the USLCI Database to facilitate deployment of the Buy Clean Act.

NREL manages the U.S. Life Cycle Inventory (USLCI) Database (<https://www.lcacommons.gov/lca-collaboration/>, <http://www.nrel.gov/lci/about.html>), which serves as the repository for life cycle inventory (LCI) data representative of U.S. base processes and products. LCI data funded and developed by NREL, and federal agencies is valued by researchers and Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) practitioners as being reliable, complete, transparent, and comprehensive. The Federal LCA Data Commons (FDC) (<https://www.lcacommons.gov/>) is an inter-agency effort leveraging the existing expertise of the participants, defining a sustainable model for reducing costs, and improving conformity amongst federal agencies working in the LCA field. Collaboration with the FDC effort supports the collection, availability, and usability of federal agency LCA data.

This project will coordinate with other government agencies and labs to ensure the most current and complete and robust LCI data is available in a consistent, integrated, reliable, and usable format. Reliable process and life cycle-oriented industry data are the building blocks for evaluating the industrial systems. The ability to evaluate the impacts of the industrial sector is highly dependent on the availability of these data. Some data are available in various FDC repositories including the USLCI repository, developed and provided by industry and publicly available. The intent for this work is to identify significant gaps in the available data and then to work with Federal partners, industry, and other LCA practitioners to develop the necessary data to fill those gaps. Additionally, it is important for the data to be provided in a findable, accessible, interoperable, and reusable (FAIR) format, which will be done through coordination with other federal agency data providers. NREL will coordinate with other government agencies and labs to ensure the most current, complete, and robust data are available in a consistent, integrated, reliable, and usable format. This task also includes developing and providing training and support to facilitate increased use of FDC data for stakeholders. Based on the data challenges review white paper (Data-Driven Buy Clean: Decarbonization & Beyond, NREL/SR-6A20-

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84772, <https://www.nrel.gov/docs/fy23osti/84772.pdf>), some areas of work to support the Buy Clean legislation could include mechanisms to protect data privacy; working with industry partners and associations to provide training and education and facilitate development of life cycle inventory data for products covered under Buy Clean; and identifying and filling data gaps in the USLCI and other FDC repositories to improve the scope and coverage of background datasets.

This is a market research tool for informational and planning purposes. Your responses will assist the Alliance in the development of its acquisition strategy for a possible Request for Proposal (RFP), to be issued at a later date, and in determining whether any type of small business set-aside is possible for this procurement or whether full and open competitive procedures should be utilized.

This notice shall not be construed as an RFP or as any commitment or obligation on the part of the Alliance to issue a solicitation. The Alliance does not intend to award a subcontract based on this request, so proposals will not be considered. No reimbursement will be made for any costs associated with providing information in response to this notice or any follow-up information requests.

Objective:

The objective of this Sources Sought Notice is to identify interested parties that are responsible, qualified and capable of meeting the project objectives. The project objective is to provide support for the Federal Data Commons and the US LCI Database in the development and curation of life cycle inventory data and tools that are needed to facilitate the implementation of the Buy Clean Act requirements.

Project Details:

- Provide data curation and submission support to the Federal Data Commons stakeholders to include streamlining and automation and QA/QC of the data submission process.
- Provide tool management support for the FEDEFLL and LCIA Formatter tools.
- Provide a gap analysis of the existing FDC and USLCI datasets for quick turnaround updates as well as alignment with USEPA Buy Clean requirements.
- Update the data submission guidelines and processes as needed to align with new Buy Clean requirements as well as updates to the framework and structure of the FDC repository.

Solicitation Details:

At the conclusion of the two steps, the Alliance intends to enter into a single subcontract with the selected offerors at the conclusion of negotiations.

Step 1 Selection (SSN): Parties that meet the minimum criteria outlined herein are encouraged to submit their capabilities statements. Submitted capabilities statements that meet the Alliance's stated criteria will be included in the source list to receive the planned RFP.

Step 2 Selection (RFP): Once the source list is compiled (the Alliance reserves the right to add additional sources to the source list at its discretion), the Alliance will send each potential source the solicitation document (Request for Proposals (RFP)). Sources will then be asked to submit in accordance with that formal solicitation document. The Alliance will then evaluate the submitted qualifications against the selection criteria.

Small-Business Requirements: The Alliance is seeking to determine the appropriateness of a total set aside to small businesses. The number of qualified responses received from this Sources Sought Notice will inform NREL’s decision regarding the RFP set aside status. NAICS code applicable to this Sources Sought Notice is **541690** Other Scientific and Technical Consulting Services.

Period of Performance: This project will have a period of performance totaling two (2) years.

Submission Requirements:

1. Interested parties shall provide a narrative of their company’s expertise with projects of similar scope, size, and complexity.
2. The following links are provided for convenience:

<https://www.sba.gov/document/support--table-size-standards>
<https://www.sba.gov/size-standards>

3. **Capability:** NREL is seeking interested parties that have demonstrated success with similar projects, have experience with federally funded projects, are knowledgeable with challenging schedules on project delivery, and are well versed and skilled in effectively integrating with all project team stakeholders. Please review the table below for additional requirements.

Respondents must address the criteria in the following table and include in your Capabilities Statement.

Capabilities Statement Content	
The respondents shall demonstrate experience/expertise in the following:	
1.1	Demonstrated knowledge and expertise in the curation of life cycle inventory data, specifically around the structure, framework and practices developed and utilized by the USLCI Database and the FDC.
1.2	Demonstrated knowledge and expertise in the existing tools that have been developed for managing the FDC (specifically the Federal LCA Commons Elementary Flow List (FEDEFL) and the LCIA Formatter tool.
1.3	Demonstrated knowledge and expertise with the USLCI and FDC data submission process and guidelines.
1.4	Demonstrated established working relationship with the FDC members and stakeholders to allow for immediate development and curation of life cycle inventory data developed by those agencies.
1.5	Demonstrated knowledge and expertise of the existing data in the FDC and the USLCI Database for the purposes of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) troubleshooting challenges b) data utilization c) connecting with other LCA tools d) adjusting and updating the FDC and the USLCI Database as the EPA Guidance for Buy Clean is finalized and deployed
1.6	Ability to commence work immediately upon execution of subcontract.

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No contract award will be made to any contractor that is not registered or in the process of registering (or renewing registration) with the System for Award Management (SAM). Please visit the SAM website at <https://sam.gov/content/entity-registration> for instructions on how to register.

For parties interested in competing for the “**Federal Data Commons and Buy Clean Act support**” RFP, please submit the following via email to Alex Joseph at alexander.joseph@nrel.gov with the subject line to read “SS-2023-2048 Federal Data Commons and Buy Clean Act support” on or before 5:00 p.m. (MST), 09/28/2023:

1. Capabilities Statement (including responses to criteria as listed in the table above)
2. Organization Name and Address (include bona-fide location as stated above)
3. Point of Contact Information (Email, Direct Phone Number)
4. Small business status of vendor (8(a), HUBZone, SDVOSB, etc.)
5. SAM Unique Entity ID Number
6. Respondents must address the criteria as stated above to be considered for receipt of the RFP.
7. The page limit for responses shall be limited to 2 pages.

Disclaimer: Responding to this request identifies your organization as an interested party only. Your submittal is not in response to an RFP. This is a Sources Sought Notice, not a Request for Proposal. Verbal replies will not be accepted. All inquiries must be in writing via email. Project-related questions will not be entertained at this point in the procurement process.

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