

## **Grid Innovation Program (Section 40103(b))**

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), also known as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), was signed by President Biden on November 15, 2021. This law included billions of dollars in funding opportunities for energy infrastructure projects, some of which is to be awarded through states. The [Grid Innovation Program \(GIP\)](#), which is outlined in Section 40103(b) of the BIL, is intended to fund projects that improve grid reliability and resilience using advanced technologies and innovative partnerships and approaches. States are eligible to apply for GIP funding, with \$1.82 billion in total funding available and project awards of \$250 million, or up to \$1 billion for interregional transmission projects.

On November 18, 2022, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) issued a [Funding Opportunity Announcement \(FOA\)](#) for the GIP. As an eligible entity, the Rhode Island Office of Energy Resources (OER), on behalf of the State of Rhode Island, is interested in information that may support pursuing GIP funding and submitting Concept Papers to the U.S. DOE by the January 13, 2023 deadline.

To assist Rhode Island in exploring development of a Concept Paper and potential application for the GIP, OER requests a Notice of Interest (NOI) from any project developers interested in proposing projects for Rhode Island to consider including as part of a funding application to the GIP and/or for Rhode Island to support in a multi-state submittal with other New England states. Interested parties are requested to submit a Notice of Interest outlined in the attached document to Greg Ohadoma [Greg.Ohadoma@energy.ri.gov](mailto:Greg.Ohadoma@energy.ri.gov) by **December 28, 2022 at 4 pm**. Please include “GRIP NOI” in the subject line of your email.

Rhode Island may submit more than one Concept Paper and Full Application to this FOA, provided that each application describes a unique, scientifically distinct project and provided that an eligible Concept Paper was submitted for each Full Application. Rhode Island also is exploring coordination with neighboring states to collaborate on this effort. Project developers pursuing projects that have the potential to create significant New England regional benefits may have submitted or plan on submitting an NOI or similar filing with other New England states. In such case, OER encourages such developers to file a copy of such submittal with OER through this process. This will facilitate coordination of review with other New England states.

The Notice of Interest submitted to OER will be subject to the Access to Public Records Act under R.I. Gen. Laws § 38-2-1 *et seq.*, which contain specified exemptions from public disclosure. The NOI will be reviewed by OER and employees of other Rhode Island state agencies involved in the review process.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The content of the NOI also may be discussed with public officials and state agency employees of other New England states, subject to the execution of appropriate confidentiality agreements, if needed to protect public disclosure of the documents.

## **Other States' NOI Requests**

Additionally, other New England States have also issued related requests for Notices of Interest and Draft Concept Papers for the GIP program (see links below and upcoming deadlines). Rhode Island is coordinating on this effort with these neighboring states and encourages developers with projects of regional benefit to submit NOIs and Draft Concept Papers to these states as well as RI OER.

[Connecticut](#) (responses due December 23 by 5 p.m.)

[Maine](#) (responses due December 30 by 5 p.m.)

[Massachusetts](#) (responses due December 22 by 5 p.m.)

## Notice of Interest to Rhode Island for BIL 40103(b) Grid Innovation Program (GIP)

For each Proposed Project, please respond to the following questions. These questions address some of the goals and objectives of the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) [Funding Opportunity Announcement \(FOA\)](#). Please review the full FOA for more information. The Rhode Island Office of Energy Resources (OER), on behalf of the State of Rhode Island, intends to review all responses to determine interest in developing a Concept Paper with Proposed Project(s). However, this request for NOI does not obligate OER, the State of Rhode Island or any other state entities to pursue a Concept Paper or application.

OER will designate the information as confidential pursuant to an Access to Public Records Act exemption under R.I. Gen. Laws 38-2-2(4)(B).<sup>2</sup> The content of the NOI also may be discussed with public officials and state agency employees of other New England states, subject to the execution of appropriate confidentiality agreements, if needed to protect public disclosure of the documents.

Please limit responses to no more than 15 pages.

1. Please describe the Proposed Project Developer business and business structure and experience developing energy transmission and/or distribution projects, including experience in New England and Rhode Island.
2. Please include a description of the Proposed Project,
  - a. Which Area of Interest is addressed by the Proposed Project;
    - i. Area of Interest 1: Transmission system applications
    - ii. Area of Interest 2: Distribution system applications
    - iii. Area of Interest 3: Combination systems applications
  - b. Technical description
    - i. Please identify the Proposed Project's location and the technical issue the Proposed Project addressed.
    - ii. Please indicate if the Proposed Project will include any of the following: distributed generation assets; load point flexibility enhancements; energy storage systems and other flexibility enhancements; technologies to increase the capacity of the transmission and distribution system; grid-edge technologies; sensing, communications, and control technologies and approaches; grid-forming power electronics; integrated system design
  - c. Project design and development description
    - i. Please indicate if the Proposed Project will include any of the following: innovative financing and permitting solutions; uncommon or innovative

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<sup>2</sup> Parties have the right to appeal the designation pursuant to the provisions of APRA, R.I. Gen. Laws § 38-2-8.

- regulatory structures, innovative planning, modeling, or cost allocation approaches, and other similar projects.
- ii. Please include an initial breakdown of anticipated Proposed Project costs, including plans to meet the required 50% cost share, and describe how the Proposed Project will provide enhanced system value, improving current and future system cost effectiveness.
  - iii. Please include a project development timeline that demonstrates that the Proposed Project that can come to commercial operation in the required 60 to 96 month period of performance.
  - iv. Please describe why the Proposed Project requires federal funding to be completed and how federal funding will address the risks identified in the application and increase the likelihood of securing additional public and/or private investment.
3. Please describe how the Proposed Project meets the following DOE funding opportunity goals and Rhode Island clean energy goals
- a. Grid Reliability and Resilience
    - i. Please indicate if your Proposed Project will address any of the following:
      1. increasing transfer capacity between regions,
      2. addressing the most consequential system needs and challenges that cause or contribute to long and increasing interconnection queue time for clean energy, and/or
      3. increasing supply of a geographically and technologically diverse sets of location-constrained energy resources to enhance resource adequacy and reduce correlated generation outages
    - ii. Please describe how the Proposed Project utilizes multiple approaches and how these approaches interact with each other and any existing infrastructure to increase overall system resiliency
    - iii. Please describe any other ways the Proposed Project will contribute to increase reliability and resilience in Rhode Island.
  - b. Innovation and Decarbonization
    - i. Please describe how the Proposed Project will contribute to the decarbonization of the electricity and broader energy system, including increasing distributed energy resources and electrification opportunities.
    - ii. Please describe how the Proposed Project can demonstrate a strategy that is suitable for wide-spread adoption.
    - iii. Please describe how the Proposed Project will enhance collaboration between and among eligible entities and private and public sector owners and operators on grid resilience, including in alignment with regional resilience strategies and plans

- iv. Please describe how the Proposed Project results will enable asset owners and operators to effectively articulate within local, state, and Federal decision-making frameworks the economic, technical, and societal benefits of new innovative approaches.
  - c. Workforce, Economic Development, and Equity
    - i. Please describe how the Proposed Project will invest in America's workforce, meaningfully engage communities and stakeholders, advance energy and environmental justice, and ensure diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility.
    - ii. Please describe how the Proposed Project
    - iii. Please confirm that the Proposed Project can meet all Justice40, Buy America, and Davis-Beacon Act requirements.
    - iv. Please confirm that the Proposed Project developer agrees to work with Rhode Island to develop and implement meaningful monitoring and reporting strategies.
- 4. Multi-State Collaboration and Project Portfolio Options
  - a. Please describe if the Proposed Project provides benefits to multiple states and may be suitable for a multi-state application. Please confirm that the Proposed Project Developer would be willing to work with multiple states on a Full Application.
  - b. Please describe if the Proposed Project Developer has pursued or identified potential partnerships or portfolios to form a GIP application
  - c. Please describe the Proposed Project Developer's willingness to be part of a portfolio of projects sponsored by Rhode Island and/or other states as part of a GIP application, and description of any terms or conditions that would be required for participation in a portfolio application
  - d. Please identify any project risks associated with joining a portfolio of projects as part of a GIP application
- 5. In addition to your responses above, please describe how the project would meet any other applicable GIP funding eligibility requirements (if sponsored by Rhode Island and/or other states), as outlined in detail in the FOA.
- 6. Rhode Island participated in a region-wide transmission request for information (RFI). Please describe whether the Proposed Project is consistent with or responsive to any of the concepts discussed in the RFI and its attachment. The RFI is available for review at <https://newenglandenergyvision.files.wordpress.com/2022/09/transmission-rfi-notice-of-proceeding-and-scoping-revised.pdf>