

**Request for Proposal  
RFP #2020-005  
Communications & Marketing Services  
Questions & Answers  
June 15, 2020**

**Q. How long has SEA been up and running and how many of the 60,000 stated service accounts do they make up?**

A. SEA began serving customers in June 2018 and serves approximately 7,500 accounts.

**Q. Can you provide additional detail on what opt-ups may include and if there are any specific goals associated with this? Do you feel any are more important than others?**

A. The CEA Board has not taken action to approve any specific opt-up program at this time, however they are considering a 100% renewable opt-up program. Priority of any opt-ups is established by the Board.

**Q. Why has SEA decided to transition its customers to CEA and cease operating as a CCA? Have any announcements already been made? If yes, what has been done?**

A. The City of Solana Beach was the first city to launch a community choice aggregation (CCA) program. At the time there were no other agencies ready to move forward with a CCA for their community. The Solana Beach City Council was always open to working with other agencies to expand CCA in San Diego region. The City Council has adopted an Amended SEA Implementation Plan and filed it with the California Public Utilities Commission. No other formal announcement has been made.

**Q. Is there just one mass enrollment period in May 2021 or will there be multiple periods? If multiple, can you please share when these will be?**

A. It is currently planned that all customers will enroll in a single phase in May 2021.

**Q. As part of the Social Media needs, will the contract be expected to execute social media content or just support/create? Do you have any internal employees who will work on this?**

A. CEA has no employees or consultants that are working on communications and marketing. It is envisioned the successful firm selected will fill these needs for CEA. The firm may be called upon to execute social media content as well as support/creation.

**Q. Will there be expected travel outside of the San Diego region?**

A. There is no anticipated travel outside of the San Diego region related to this engagement.

**Q. What date should be used as the contract start date? For budgeting purposes what dates should be used for year one and year two?**

A. The contract start date will be the date that the contract is fully executed by both parties. CEA's fiscal year runs July 1 – June 30.

**Q. What is your anticipated budget? Do you have any anticipated budget broken out by year one and year two?**

A. The budget for communications and marketing is \$50,000 - \$75,000 per year. The Board has not yet set the next Fiscal Year's budget.

**Q. Are there any major milestones or events that CEA has committed to that should be included in the timeline/schedule?**

A. The only major milestone is the May 2021 launch of CEA. No events have been committed to. We encourage responders to propose an event schedule that supports the customer outreach and public information tasks in the RFO.

**Q. The evaluation allocates 35 points to Qualifications and Experience. Is there any area of the proposal we should include case studies/descriptions of specific projects or should we just include this information within our Approach and Project Staffing.**

A. The responders should communicate qualifications and experience in whichever section they feel best would represent their qualifications and experience.

**Q. What is the target date to have all customers transitioned from SEA to CEA?**

A. All customers would be transitioned by the end of May 2021.

**Q. In the Approach to Scope of Services it says to include:**

***\* Outline sequentially the activities that would be undertaken in completing the tasks and specify who would perform them and what the associated costs would be.***

**Should we include costs in this section, in the Fee Schedule or both? Do we need to define personnel roles in this section, in the Project Staffing section or both? Are we able to combine the outlined sections to do they need to be separated in the order listed in the RFP (i.e. can we include costs and timing within our approach or do they need to be called out in separate sections)?**

A. Fees are required to be reflected in the Fee Schedule and can also be included in the Approach to Scope of Services if the responder chooses. Personnel responsible should be identified for the activities as indicated in the RFP. Responders are encouraged to follow the instructions provided in the RFP in preparing their response.

**Q. In the Fee Schedule section it says to include:**

***Firms' hourly billing rate fee schedule for all personnel likely to be completing the tasks should be included. Does this mean we need to include an hourly rate by personnel or an we provide an hourly rate by task.***

A. Applicable billing hourly rates must be provided for those personnel that will be billed in this engagement at an hourly rate basis to CEA.

**Q. Does SEA have a current email newsletter/database? If yes, how has SEA been acquiring subscribers?**

A. SEA is a service of the City of Solana Beach, and the City of Solana Beach does have an email database. SEA has utilized this databased to communicate to customers on a limited basis, as not all subscribers are customers of SEA.

**Q. What are some of the biggest challenges SEA has faced? What are some of the biggest successes?**

A. SEA has faced challenges dealing with regulatory changes that have affected energy markets. One of SEA's biggest success is providing energy to customers from 50% renewable/75% carbon free sources.

**Q. Does SEA currently work with a consultant to perform the tasks listed in the RFP and if so, will they be considered an incumbent consultant?**

A. SEA does not currently work with a consultant for the tasks listed in the RFP.

**Q. For ability to opt-out of the program and other interactive features of the website – Are you working with a consultant team already for enrolling and tracking customers? What platform are you using for this?**

A. CEA's data manager handles the enrollment and tracking of customers through a proprietary system. The data manager provides the link to the website for customer choice selections to be processed.

**Q. Do you know yet how many sub-products you will have?**

A. The CEA Board has not made final decisions with regards to product offerings.

**Q. Should we assume the cost of printing collateral, or will you handle those costs separately?**

A. Printing and mailing costs have not been assumed to be included in this RFP.

**Q. What will the review process be like on the client side? Who needs to be involved in review and approval of work products?**

A. The review process and the persons involved will be dependent on the work product, its purpose and intended audience.

**Q. Are there specific legal requirements for the Solana Energy Alliance transfer?**

A. Solana Energy Alliance must comply with California Public Utilities Commission requirements related to the transfer.

**Q. What level of directly related education, training, professional certification or accreditation if any will be taken into account when awarding the RFP? What level of "preference" will be given to firms who have prior CCA experience? If a firm is fully qualified but lacks experience on these specific types of client contracts, should it move forward with submitting a bid? How will you avoid the tendency in public agency RFPs to shut out smaller contractors who can't gain experience because they are never given a chance? As a result the same three or four firms always win these contracts. How can other firms overcome this seeming major disadvantage?**

A. Responses will be evaluated as detailed Section V. Evaluation in the Request for Proposal.

**Q. Who will be involved in the decision as described by job title to award this contract from among the board of directors, CEO, other senior staff, outside panel members, elected officials, or others with specific demonstrated expertise?**

A. A yet to be determined committee made up of CEA and member agency staff will evaluate and rate the responses as well as participate in the interview process. Final award will be made by the CEA Board of Directors.

**Q. Is your agency okay with a WordPress platform for organization's website?**

A. CEA does not have a preferred platform for its website.

**Q. Will your agency entertain a monthly retainer agreement over a pre-determined length of time (such as a year)?**

A. An optional fixed monthly flat fee is provided for in the fee schedule format provided in the RFP.

**Q. Does the RFP require ALL prospective subcontractors for the full run of this contract to be listed?**

A. The RFP does not specifically request a list of subcontractors, however, it does require that responder identify who will be performing activities in completing the required tasks.

**Q. How much will proposed budget influence your final decision – over expertise or experience?**

A. Responses will be evaluated as detailed Section V. Evaluation in the Request for Proposal.

**Q. Can you rank the items in the scope by priority – is there a way to rank the scope in “must, should, may” categories?**

A. Responders are not required to propose all tasks as listed in the RFP and should clearly identify the tasks that are included as provided in the RFP instructions.