



Wind Innovation Center Request for Expressions of Interest

Questions and Answers

Version 4, Posted August 30, 2023

1. Would the center be located in our facility? Do we have to find an alternative space?

The RFEI does not require the Innovation Center or test sites to be located at the Respondent's facility. Respondents may propose using their existing facilities for the Center, or identify an alternative facility (e.g., new spaces, leased spaces, partner facilities/shared space) to implement their proposed scope.

2. Would a respondent help invest in startups such as due diligence or co-investment?

Respondents may propose startup investment options and identify specific investment needs when applicable to their scope and proposed role in the Center. Additionally, Respondents may identify external investments and support required from NJEDA or other partners. Specific details on due diligence and co-investment should be described by the Respondent and will be further defined through the RFEI process.

3. Who would pay for this project? Who would manage the project? What are the obligations of each party?

As described in Section 2.2 of the RFEI, the Offshore Wind Innovation Center will follow the Strategic Innovation Centers (SICs) existing framework. NJEDA's investment in a SIC is limited to \$25 million with a requirement for private capital. For previous SIC investments, the private entity established the SIC as a limited liability corporation in which NJEDA is a non-managing member through an equity contribution. NJEDA anticipates that details on the Center's funding, management, and governance will be developed through the RFEI process.

4. Is the EDA expecting letters expressing interest on September 13 or full proposals with financing, partners and a site on that date.

Respondents must submit Expressions of Interest (EOI) by 5:00 PM ET on September 13, 2023 to windinstitute@njeda.gov. The submission must provide complete detail on their role in developing the Center. The specificity of information will depend on the Respondent's proposed role in the Center as described in Sections 3.1- 3.5 and the required information listed in Section 5.2.

5. Is the Innovative Center Feasibility Study that was completed in the fall of 2022 available?

The RFEI includes the Study's findings in Section 3.

6. In reviewing the RFEI, we are required to "Identify the partners you will bring to support collaboration across multiple disciplines throughout the private sector, research institutions, and local, state, and federal governments". Does this RFEI submission require any commitment from proposed partners at this time? Is a letter of support required?

Formal partnering agreements are not required as part of the RFEI submission package but may be included as an appendix in a separate PDF file not to exceed 20 pages. NJEDA expects Respondents that identify partnerships in their submission to have established a general framework on their participation and role in developing the Center, which is articulated in the response.

7. Can a proposal be submitted by a collaborative of NJ academic institutions to provide the programmatic delivery as a stand-alone proposal which can then be matched with whoever EDA selects as the partner who will provide the facility component of the RFEI?

Respondents may be a singular organization or coalitions of organizations and partners. Responses may address the entirety or specific aspects of the Center's vision. NJEDA will review responses and may connect partners who propose complementary scopes (e.g., programming, facilities) to develop a combined approach that best meets the Center's goals or may proceed with an application that addresses all aspects of the Center's requirements.

8. Are there any specific formatting requirements (e.g. font, margins etc.) for submissions?

There are no formatting requirements for font, font sizes, or margins. All Required Information for Submissions is detailed in Section 5.2.

9. What does the EDA think about a reference to "mid-Atlantic" in the proposal title/vision (of course led by NJ)?

NJEDA welcomes regional partnerships that will contribute to developing the Center.

10. Are out of state participants allowed/encouraged? Academic? Government labs? Industry?

Yes, out of state entities can be part of a response to the RFEI. Responses must identify each partner's role and contributions to the Center. Responses may come from a singular organization or coalitions of organizations and include out of state entities (e.g., academic, government, labs, industry) however it is expected that the physical Center be located in New Jersey.

11. Are the responses to the RFEI binding? What happens if an entity decides not to proceed after NJEDA grants an award but agreements are not signed?

NJEDA expects that Respondents will submit responses they are committed to implementing however responses are not considered legally binding. Please note that Strategic Innovation Center funding is an investment and not a grant.

12. What does the NJEDA consider a long-term sustainable R&D Facility? 5, 10, 15, 30 years, etc.

While NJEDA does not have a set definition for long-term, a sustainable R&D facility will have a clear implementation strategy and governance plan for at least 10-20 years.

13. Can the applicant propose a facility with expansion plans for later phases?

Yes, Respondents can propose a facility with expansion plans for later phases.

14. How many SICs does EDA plan to award for this RFEI considering the divergence of the two testing facilities (transmission testing site and deep saltwater tank)?

NJEDA may choose to invest in one or multiple facilities (convening spaces, offices, labs, and specialized testing facilities) that will collectively achieve the Center's vision. The physical assets may be co-located on a single site or located across multiple sites and linked through common branding and/or operations.

15. Is the expectation that only two major projects will be awarded \$25 Million? How will the funding be divided between the different SIC's proposed?

NJEDA's investment in a SIC is limited to \$25 million with a requirement for private capital. NJEDA may seek additional funding to supplement their investment in the Center. NJEDA's may choose to invest in multiple projects, or connect partners who propose complementary scopes (e.g., programming, facilities) to develop a combined approach that best meets the Center's goals or may proceed with an application that addresses all aspects of the Center's requirements. Allocation of funds will be based on the cost estimates in the Respondents Expression of Interest and evaluated during the Post-Submission Process as described in Section 6.0.

16. What is the NJEDA's expectation for the funding match (e.g. 50-50, 25-75, etc.)? Can funding match be an in-kind contribution such as labor hours or resources or only financial contribution?

Strategic Innovation Center funding is required to be a 1:1 match. NJEDA's preference is for a cash match, but other forms of matching will be considered. Regardless of the match type, the mix of resources must be able to support the development of the Center and its ongoing business operations.

17. Timing and frequency of NJEDA distribution of funds? Will NJEDA provide capital upfront for the facility or only a specific budget per year?

NJEDA anticipates that funds will be distributed at specific milestones over the project period. A timeline for distribution of funds will be developed with selected partners based on their submitted plan and budget.

18. Are there any restrictions of how the funds could be utilized for the innovation center? For example, will the NJEDA only contribute funding for research? What about equipment and/or overhead/facility costs?

NJEDA investment will follow the policy for previous Strategic Innovation Centers (SIC) investments and is described in Section 2.2. NJEDA investment in a SIC is capped at \$ 25 million per project. Further information on the NJEDA SIC investment policy can be found on NJEDA's website at <https://www.njeda.gov/strategic-innovation-centers/>. NJEDA funding may be used to support all aspects of the Center's development.

19. Does each innovation center have to target all 5 core research priorities, or can they select a specific track?

NJEDA has set a vision for the Center that includes five focus areas. However, Respondents are not required to address all five areas in their response. Respondents may choose to express interest in one or all Research Focus Areas based on their proposed scope.

20. What confidence level estimate does the NJEDA expect in the RFEI submission? How much flexibility will there be for unexpected cost that were not accounted for in the initial submission?

Respondents should identify project goals, budgets, and funding sources that will support their contributions to the Center. During the review period, NJEDA reserves the right to request adjustments to the proposed budgets and implementation timelines.

21. In the RFEI, Section 7, it states "The highest-scoring Respondent(s) shall also be expected to draft SIC formation documents and the investment agreements to reflect NJEDA's investment." Is the expectation that the applicant should submit the SIC formation documents and investment agreements to NJEDA as part of the response to the RFEI or are these documents developed after the selection of an entity Post-RFEI?

Respondents are not required to submit SIC formation documentation as part of their September 13, 2023 submission deadline. SIC formation documents will be developed after partners are selected.

22. Can the development and application preparation cost be counted towards 50% cost share as part of the total project?

Development and application preparation costs associated with responding to this RFEI do not count towards cost share towards the project costs.

23. Does the Innovation Center need to be set up as an LLC? Or can it be set up as a Consortium?

There are no requirements on how the Innovation Center will be setup or governed. NJEDA can partner with more than one entity to form an LLC that can develop and/or operate the Center. On the two Strategic Innovation Center (SIC) investments within the NJEDA portfolio, the private entity established the SIC as a limited liability corporation in which NJEDA is a non-managing member through an equity contribution. NJEDA anticipates that details on the Center's management and governance will be developed during the Post-Submission Process as described in Section 6.0.

24. Regarding letters of support,

i. Is there specific language/wording that we should make sure the companies include in their letters?

NJEDA does not require letters of support are included with responses. If a Respondent chooses to submit letters of support with their expression of interest, they may state: (1) the name and overview of the entity; (2) the commitment; and (3) how the commitment will support the Center's vision and goals. Each letter must not exceed 1 page.

ii. Is it ok if the companies are not just local NJ companies?

Yes, out of state entities may submit letters of support for the Wind Innovation Center.

iii. Is there a minimum number of letters we need to procure?

There is no minimum number of letters of support to submit with an expression of interest.

iv. Are the letters submitted together with the proposal or sent independently to the NJEDA?

Letters of support shall be submitted as an appendix in a separate PDF file not to exceed 20 pages.

v. To whom should the letters be addressed, at the top of the letter in the traditional address box?

Letters of support shall be addressed to:

New Jersey Economic Development Authority
36 West State Street
Trenton, NJ 08625

25. Are we obligated to fulfill the contract if we are awarded?

NJEDA expects that Respondents will submit responses they are committed to implementing however responses are not considered legally binding.

26. What is the ideal size of the hub?

Details on the Physical Requirements and Components of the Center are outlined in Section 3.2.

27. Is there an ideal region of the State for this hub? Are there existing assets or facilities that the State would prefer to utilize?

The ideal location will support a state-wide offshore wind network and consider:

- Presence of existing research activity focused on innovation and/or one or more of the Center's focus areas;
- Proximity to OSW industry activity (e.g. manufacturing, transmission, and/or operations);
- Available physical characteristics that meet the needs of the Center (e.g., square feet available, coastal/port access, conditions for research and testing facilities; access to transportation and electrical infrastructure);
- Financial viability (cost of land, etc.);
- Ability to derive significant state/local economic development; and
- Ease of implementation.

NJEDA has not set a preference for particular existing assets or facilities to utilize for the Center but is looking for Respondents to identify existing assets and/or new developments.

28. If accelerators or programmatic operators submit application separate from space operators, is NJEDA going to matchmake different proposals

NJEDA may connect partners who propose complementary scopes (e.g., programming, facilities) to develop a combined approach that best meets the Center's goals and vision.

29. Is there operational or programmatic funding included in the budget for the program?

NJEDA funding may be used to support all aspects of the Center's development.

30. Is it preferred that the testing site operator and the office/lab space operator are the same applicant, or could an applicant be awarded one component of the project?

NJEDA has not set a preference for who operates the Center's facilities but expects the entity possess the qualifications, relevant experience, and capacity to carry out their proposed scope.

31. Initial draft agreements are estimated for Q2 2024, when would the potential awardee first be notified about a potential interview or award?

Communication between NJEDA and potential partners may begin as early as Q3 2023. NJEDA may invite Respondents to provide additional information via meetings or interviews to allow NJEDA to better understand information provided in the submittal as part of the Post Submission Process.

32. Is there a preference that the Center be a non-profit facility?

NJEDA does not have a preference on the Center's governance model. A successful governance model will prioritize the Center's long-term sustainability and have the relevant legal structure as well as the proposed leadership to support its vision and goals.

33. Is NJEDA willing to make a list of interested parties in case groups want to indicate partnership prior to the application?

NJEDA is not facilitating matchmaking prior to the RFEI submission date.

34. How will responses to this RFEI be evaluated in collaboration with the evaluation of New Jersey 3 offshore wind procurement bids?

Evaluation of responses to this RFEI will be completed independently of New Jersey's third offshore wind solicitation.

35. What is the target duration of the innovation center?

NJEDA anticipates the Center will be supported by a long-term sustainability and have a clear implementation strategy and governance plan for at least 10-20 years.

36. Following the creation of a Wind Innovation Center, would the state invest more at an innovation or R&D project level?

NJEDA may seek additional funding to supplement investment in the Center and support future R&D projects.