



**New Jersey Economic Development Authority**

**REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ("RFI")  
REQUEST FOR INFORMATION  
2023-RFI-187  
for  
Maritime Workforce Needs**

**1. INTENT/SUMMARY OF SCOPE**

The New Jersey Economic Development Authority ("Authority"), an independent Authority of the State of New Jersey, is seeking information and ideas from qualified entities ("Respondents") such as maritime and offshore wind industry professionals and stakeholders to:

- Better understand the state of the maritime workforce and any existing workforce gaps.
- Familiarize with the mariner recruitment and training process.
- Collect information on potential projects, approaches, or solutions to support maritime workforce training and development needs.
- Learn about existing models in the United States and throughout the world that should be explored when developing workforce development programs.

This Request for Information (RFI) is issued by the New Jersey Economic Development Authority ("Authority", "NJEDA") to seek information from firms with perspectives on the current state and needs of the maritime workforce. The NJEDA is interested in receiving comments, questions, recommendations, facts, information, ideas, and responses that will help the NJEDA better understand the scope and characteristics of maritime-related workforce development programs in anticipation of shaping new programs and initiatives to support workforce development for occupations as licensed captains, pilots, mates, and crew, and all workers on a vessel operating at sea to install or maintain offshore wind energy components.

**2. BACKGROUND**

The New Jersey Economic Development Authority serves as the State's principal agency for driving economic growth. The Authority is committed to making New Jersey a national model for inclusive and sustainable economic development by focusing on key strategies to help build strong and dynamic communities, create good jobs for New Jersey residents and provide pathways to a stronger and fairer economy. Through partnerships with a diverse range of stakeholders, the Authority creates and implements initiatives to enhance the economic vitality and quality of life in the State and strengthen New Jersey's long-term economic competitiveness.

Under the leadership of Governor Murphy, New Jersey has taken bold action to reduce climate pollutants and accelerate the transition to clean energy, while fostering growth of the clean energy economy. Governor Phil Murphy's economic development plan, "The State of Innovation: Building a Stronger and Fairer New Jersey Economy" identifies offshore wind (OSW) as one of the State's strategic sectors for accelerating growth in New Jersey's economy. OSW is also a key energy source in the State's plan to reach 100 percent clean energy by 2035 with an established target of 11 GW of OSW by 2040. NJEDA is committed to making New Jersey a national model for inclusive and sustainable economic development in offshore wind energy. Under Governor Murphy's direction, NJEDA is developing the Wind Institute for Innovation and Training to coordinate and galvanize cross-organizational efforts to accelerate the development of a robust and diverse offshore wind workforce.

Offshore wind is a vital component of the United States' net-zero goals and the domestic energy future. It can provide a source of renewable energy, help decarbonize the electrical grid, and accelerate the nation's clean energy transition. Based on the current national and international pipeline of projects, offshore wind has the potential to be the fastest growing energy source this decade. Offshore wind development also represents a critical opportunity to concurrently stimulate low carbon energy development and create jobs. NJEDA is interested in creating opportunity for New Jerseyans to build out the State's renewable energy workforce and offshore wind deployment value chain.

The maritime workforce is integral to the success of offshore wind projects. Maritime operations provide direct access to lease areas and supportive services throughout the full lifecycle of a project. The maritime workforce is one of the highest gap occupations-based on state specific projected offshore wind employment needs. The Authority is considering developing grant or other types of programs to bridge the workforce gap, expand maritime training in New Jersey and support offshore wind workforce development initiatives to address the talent needs of offshore wind maritime operations.

While there are many other occupations that require additional workforce training support to meet the needs of the offshore wind industry, this RFI is focused on maritime workers and specifically captains, pilots, mates, and crew, and other vessel-based workers operating at sea to install or maintain offshore wind energy components.

### **3. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA (If applicable)**

The RFI is seeking responses from all interested stakeholders. Specifically, this RFI welcomes input from entities, organizations, and individuals including:

- Maritime workforce groups
- Maritime labor unions
- Maritime training providers
- United States Merchant Marine Academies
- Offshore wind developers
- Maritime services providers

- Private entities interested in mariner training and development
- Private entities with a need for mariners

Qualified entities do not need to be located within the State of New Jersey to provide a response.

#### **4. RFI RESPONSE QUESTIONS**

In submitting responses to this RFI, respondents are encouraged to answer any questions they consider relevant and to the best of their ability. Respondents do not need to answer all questions for their response to be considered. Answers are understood to be preliminary and non-binding. Respondents are free to go beyond the scope of the questions and/or structure responses as necessary to increase clarity and efficiency of responses. Respondents should also feel free to submit additional or alternate information as deemed necessary.

##### Background

1. Please provide information on you/your entity's background (name, location, organization/business type and size), and your involvement or interest in maritime activities or maritime workforce development.

##### Maritime Industry Occupations and Skills

2. What are the greatest opportunities and/or challenges for growth of the maritime workforce in the coming decade?
3. What support does the maritime industry need to avoid future workforce bottlenecks?
4. What maritime positions are in greatest demand? What is the turnover and how long does it take to train/hire staff?
5. Do you train/hire certified staff or have them obtain certifications once employed? Does this approach provide longevity to business needs, job security and retention?
6. What level of education do you require for new hires?
7. What specific certifications, training, and skills are required for mariners to work in the offshore wind industry?
8. What are the timelines, costs and training needs for achieving those certifications?
9. What are the biggest challenges individuals face when seeking to obtain these certifications?

10. Are there other secondary trainings employees typically need to complete to fulfill job responsibilities?

#### Training Programs

11. What are the most successful existing education or training programs in the United States for specific maritime occupations?
12. If not currently readily accessible for New Jersey residents, how can these training programs be replicated, or linked to programs in New Jersey to increase this accessibility?
13. What types of training programs are needed to address gaps in the maritime workforce?
14. What is the cost to develop and run needed maritime training programs? What type of equipment is needed?
15. What types of incentives or programs are needed to accelerate the growth of the maritime workforce?
16. What innovations can training providers utilize to accelerate or improve maritime training? What innovations can training providers use to reduce at-sea specialized trainings?

#### Recruitment and Retention

17. Where and how do you currently recruit training participants or maritime workers? What partners do you work with to assist with recruitment?
18. What are the biggest challenges/obstacles to maritime workforce recruitment and retention?
19. What type of programs or partnerships exist or are needed to achieve a diverse and inclusive maritime workforce?
20. What programs or services can remove or reduce employment barriers for potential mariners?

#### **5. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS (From Respondents to the EDA)**

All questions concerning this RFI must be submitted in writing no later than 5:00pm EST, on Friday, October 13, 2023, via e-mail to: [windinstitute@njeda.gov](mailto:windinstitute@njeda.gov).

The subject line of the e-mail should state: **Questions-2023-RFI-187.**

Answers to questions submitted will be publicly posted on the Authority's website on or about Friday, October 20, 2023, at: [Bidding Opportunities - NJEDA](#) as Addendum.

**IT IS THE RESPONDENT'S RESPONSIBILITY TO CHECK THIS URL REGULARLY FOR UPDATES.**

**6. RESPONSE DETAILS** (Info Provided to Respondents Regarding Document Submission)

All RFI responses must be submitted in writing no later than 5:00pm EST, on Monday, October 30, 2023, via e-mail to: [windinstitute@njeda.gov](mailto:windinstitute@njeda.gov).

The subject line of the e-mail should state: **RFI Response-2023-RFI-187**.

**7. FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS** (from EDA) / **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Respondents may be asked to provide additional information to allow the Authority to better understand the responses or services available.

**8. PROPRIETARY AND/OR CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION**

The Authority reserves the right to copy any information provided by the Respondents. The Authority reserves the right to use ideas that are provided by Respondents, applicants, stakeholders, or vendors. By submitting a Response, the submitter represents that such copying or use of information will not violate any copyrights, licenses, or other agreements with respect to information submitted or product solutions demonstrated, if applicable. Responses must clearly be marked for any information the Respondent deems Proprietary and/or Confidential.

**9. DISCLAIMER / NO OBLIGATION**

This RFI is not a request for qualification/proposal. It may or may not result in further action.

This RFI is issued solely as a means of gathering information regarding the Authority's desire to understand the types of products and level of service available in the market to meet the Authority's needs. Interested parties responding to this RFI do so at their own expense. There will be no monetary compensation from the Authority for the time and effort spent in preparing the response to this RFI. All expenses incurred are the sole responsibility of the Respondent.

Should the Authority decide to move forward and issue an RFQ/P or announce a program/product related to this RFI, Respondents need not have submitted a response to this RFI in order to be eligible to respond to the RFP. Should an RFQ/P be issued, responding to this RFI will not affect scoring or consideration for that process.

The Authority is under no obligation to contact Respondents to this RFI.

**10. NEW JERSEY OPEN PUBLIC RECORDS ACT**

Respondents should be aware that responses to this RFI are subject to the “New Jersey Open Public Records Act” (N.J.S.A. 47:1A-1 et seq.), as amended and including all applicable regulations and policies and applicable case law, including the New Jersey Right-to-Know law. All information submitted in response to the RFI is considered public information, notwithstanding any disclaimers to the contrary, except as may be exempted from public disclosure by OPRA and the common law.

Any proprietary and/or confidential information submitted in response to this RFI will be redacted by the Authority. A person or entity submitting a response to this RFI may designate specific information as not subject to disclosure pursuant to the exceptions to OPRA found at N.J.S.A. 47:1A-1.1, when such person or entity has a good faith legal and/or factual basis for such assertion (i.e. information that may be included in another ongoing public procurement or solicitation). The Authority reserves the right to make the determination as to what is proprietary or confidential and will advise the person or entity accordingly. The Authority will not honor any attempt to designate the entirety of a submission as proprietary, confidential and/or to claim copyright protection for the entire proposal. In the event of any challenge to the Respondent’s assertion of confidentiality with which the Authority does not concur, the Respondent shall be solely responsible for defending its designation.