# Clean Energy Alliance
# 2026 CAISO Cluster 16 Request for Information ("RFI")

## Introduction

Clean Energy Alliance ("CEA") is hereby requesting proposals for long-term, California Renewables Portfolio Standard-eligible ("RPS") renewable energy supply and/or capacity from projects looking to participate in the California Independent System Operator ("CAISO") Interconnection Process Queue Cluster 16 ("C16") process. CEA supplies annual retail energy requirements approximating 2,300 GWh with a peak demand of approximately 500 MW.

In consideration of applicable long-term renewable energy and capacity contracting requirements, CEA has future open positions for California Renewables Portfolio Standard ("RPS") eligible energy products and resource adequacy capacity ("RA"). With regard to renewable energy, this RFI is intended to support CEA's future Portfolio Content Category 1 ("PCC1" or "Bucket 1") energy requirements through long-term power purchase agreements with one or more qualified suppliers. With regard to RA capacity, this RFI is intended to support CEA's future local, flex, and system RA obligations.

CEA is soliciting information on C16 projects in order to allocate CEA's Commercial Interest Points ("CIP") to one or multiple projects – CEA will receive its CIP allocation from CAISO by August 7, 2026 to allocate to projects this October. Depending on the size and type of projects received in response to this RFI, as well as the points CEA is allocated, CEA may elect to allocate its points across multiple projects or entirely to a single project. Please see Exclusivity Agreement and Bid Deposits below for additional information about CEA's exclusivity structure for these projects.

## About CEA

CEA was founded in November 2019, formed through a partnership between the cities of Carlsbad, Del Mar, and Solana Beach, to provide alternative energy resources to the residents of its communities. CEA has since expanded to include the cites of Escondido, San Marcos, Oceanside, and Vista.

More information about CEA can be found on our website at thecleanenergyalliance.org. Additional details related to this RFI process can be found by visiting https://thecleanenergyalliance.org/solicitations/. Prospective participants are encouraged to regularly check this website for updates to the bid requirements, response form and accompanying materials – *respondents are responsible for submitting all offers using the most current response form*.

## RFI Instructions

By participating in this RFI, each respondent acknowledges that it has read, understands, and agrees to the terms and conditions set forth in these instructions. CEA reserves the right to reject any offer that does not comply with these requirements. Furthermore, the CEA may, in its sole discretion and without notice, modify, extend, suspend, or terminate this RFI without further obligation or liability to any respondent. This RFI does not constitute an offer to buy or create an obligation for CEA to enter into an agreement with any party, and CEA shall not be bound by the terms of any offer until CEA has entered into a duly authorized and fully executed agreement.

*Standardized Response Template*: All respondents must use the standardized response template provided by CEA. CEA has posted the template to its website (https://thecleanenergyalliance.org/solicitations/) as

Attachment 1 to this RFI and will require respondents to independently access and download the template prior to response preparation. An unmodified version of the template must be completed in its entirety, reflecting all applicable details of the proposed project, based on instructions provided in the template.

*Submission Eligibility*: Each respondent may propose one or more renewable energy, energy storage, or paired project offers conforming with the following submission requirements. The submission tab can be duplicated for respondents who wish to submit multiple projects. Failure to meet the submission and project requirements defined below shall be grounds for proposal rejection.

**Submission and Project Requirements:**

**i. Resource Location** *(Response Form Section 1)***:** The point of physical interconnection for any eligible resource must be within CAISO or directly connected to and delivering into CAISO. As indicated under *Evaluation of Responses* below, CEA has a strong preference for projects that benefit CEA's local San Diego load pocket, frequently defined by the Local San Diego / Imperial Valley RA area. Evaluative preference will be given to resource(s) closer in proximity to the communities served by CEA, especially for resource types that are not geographically limited.

**ii. Resource Eligibility** *(Response Form Section 2)***:** All proposed generating resources must anticipate being certified by the California Energy Commission ("CEC" or "Commission") as Eligible Renewable Energy Resources, as set forth in applicable sections of the RPS Eligibility Guidebook, the California Public Utilities Code ("Code") or other applicable documentation. Each respondent shall be responsible for certification of the proposed resource through the certification process administered by the CEC and shall be responsible for maintaining such certification throughout the contract term.

**iii. Capacity** *(Response Form Sections 2, 3)***:** Minimum ten (10) megawatts ("MW") AC; smaller projects will also be considered if providing RA in the San Diego / Imperial Valley Local Resource Area.

**iv. Term of Agreement** *(Response Form Sections 2, 3)***:** Not less than ten (10) years, commencing on the Initial Date of Delivery.

**v. Development Progress** *(Response Form Section 4)***:** Information must be provided for each project regarding current progress toward, and timeline for achievement of, the following development milestones: 1) site control; 2) permitting; and 3) interconnection.

**vi. Project Financing Plan** *(Response Form Section 4)***:** Respondent shall describe its intended financing plan for each proposed project in sufficient detail for CEA to effectively evaluate the viability of such arrangements.

**vii. CAISO C16 Scoring and Requested Commercial Interest Points** *(Response Form Section 5)***:** Respondent shall indicate their planned self-scoring submitted or to be submitted to CAISO under each point category. Respondent shall also indicate their requested CIP from CEA. Respondents must be able to demonstrate that CAISO has deemed the project's Interconnection Request complete, which CAISO has indicated will be provided within 5 days of receipt during the application

window (by October 22, 2026 at the latest). CEA's selected RFI respondent(s) would provide such documentation of completeness from CAISO to CEA to validate the status of Interconnection Requests and submit CEA's CIP allocation(s) by October 29, 2026.

**viii. Project Cost Analysis** *(Response Form Sections 2 and/or 3)***:** CEA will not require firm pricing prior to allocating its C16 CIPs. Instead, CEA requests a qualitative and quantitative comparison with the resource specific cost assumptions used in the 2026 Integrated Resource Planning modeling by the CPUC for renewable resources (summarized in this presentation, starting with slide 32). As applicable, commentary should speak to any differentiating cost factors for the project, including site control, supply chain agreements, estimated interconnection cost, financing, and permitting.

**RFI Schedule***

This RFI will be administered in consideration of the following schedule:

| **RFI Activity** | **Anticipated Date** |
|---|---|
| RFI issuance | July 7, 2026 |
| Deadline for electronic question submittal | July 13, 2026 |
| CEA posts responses to questions | July 20, 2026 |
| ~~RFI response deadline~~ | ~~July 30, 2026~~ |
| CAISO posts Load Serving Entity CIP allocations | August 7, 2026 |
| RFI response deadline | August 14, 2026 |
| CEA shortlist and waitlist notifications | August 31 ~~28~~, 2026 |
| Execution of point allocation exclusivity agreements | September 30, 2026 |
| CEA deadline to inform CAISO of CIP allocation | October 29, 2026 |

*CEA reserves the right to change the schedule of these events at any time for any reason

Respondents may submit questions to CEA regarding this RFI process and associated materials no later than 5:00 P.M. PT on July 13, 2026. All questions should be submitted electronically to procurement@thecleanenergyalliance.org and must include the following subject line: "Question for CEA 2026 C16 RFI". CEA will post responses to all questions on its website after responses have been prepared.

CEA may submit clarifying questions to certain respondents or conduct interviews, as necessary, based on information provided in the response template and/or supporting materials included with each response. CEA shall have the right, at its sole discretion, to request information without notifying other respondents. CEA shall establish due dates for responses at the time of each informational request and will directly notify individual respondents in the event that follow-up and/or interviews are necessary during this process.

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Note regarding the submittal of RFI responses: only electronic submittals will be accepted; such submittals must be received by CEA no later than 5:00 P.M. PT on Friday, August 14, 2026. All responses should be submitted to procurement@thecleanenergyalliance.org and must include the following subject line: "Response to CEA 2026 C16 RFI".

## Evaluation of Responses

Determining factors for CEA's CIP allocations for C16 are, in no particular order:

- **Project location** – potential to provide Local RA for CEA, TPD eligibility, proximity to CEA's service area, and potential local community benefits
- **Technology** – including fit with CEA's latest Board-approved IRP (June 26 Board meeting, Item 9), contribution to CEA's resource diversity
- **Project viability and development risks** – including any anticipated project pricing differentiators, permitting and site control progress to date, environmental risk factors and fire safety, other project siting considerations
- **Respondent's relevant experience** – including experience developing similarly sized and scoped projects and working within the CAISO interconnection process and relevant permitting experience, as a company and/or based on experience of members of the project team.
- **Portfolio fit for CEA** – including project/offtake size, generation profile (as applicable)

## Confidentiality

All correspondence with CEA, including responses to this RFI, will become the exclusive property of CEA and will become public records under the California Public Records Act (Cal. Government Code section 6250 et seq.) All documents sent by respondents to CEA may be subject to disclosure, unless exempt due to one of the narrow exceptions to the disclosure requirements.

In order to designate information as confidential, the respondents must clearly stamp and identify the specific portion of the material designated with the word "Confidential" and provide a citation to the California Public Records Act that supports keeping the information confidential. Respondents should not over-designate material as confidential. Over-designation would include stamping entire pages or series of pages as confidential that clearly contain information that is not confidential.

Therefore, any proposal which contains language purporting to render all or significant portions of their proposal "Confidential", "Trade Secret" or "Proprietary", or which fails to provide the exemption information required as described below may be considered a public record in its entirety subject to the procedures described below. A respondent should not mark its entire proposal as "Confidential".

If required by any law, statute, ordinance, a court, governmental authority or agency having jurisdiction over CEA, including the California Public Records Act, CEA may release confidential information, or a portion thereof, as required by the applicable law, statute, ordinance, decision, order or regulation. In the event CEA is required to release confidential information, they shall notify the respondent of the required disclosure, such that the respondent may attempt (if it so chooses), at its sole cost, to cause the recipient of the confidential information to treat such information in a confidential manner, and to prevent such information from being disclosed or otherwise becoming part of the public domain.

CEA does not intend to disclose any part of any proposal before it announces a recommendation for award, on the ground that there is a substantial public interest in not disclosing proposals during the evaluation process.

**Exclusivity Agreement and Bid Deposits**

CEA will require exclusivity agreements for all C16 projects to which CEA is allocating CIPs. Bid deposits of $5,000/MW times the project's guaranteed capacity will be required (note: for solar plus storage projects, both solar and storage capacity will be summed to determine the total guaranteed capacity).

CEA will accept bid deposits in the form of cash or an agreed upon form of a Letter of Credit. Letter of Credit means an irrevocable standby letter of credit, in a form reasonably acceptable to CEA, issued either by (i) a U.S. commercial bank, or (ii) a U.S. branch of a foreign commercial bank that meets the following conditions: (A) it has sufficient assets in the U.S. as determined by CEA, and (B) it is acceptable to CEA in its sole discretion. The issuing bank must have a credit rating of at least A- from S&P or A3 from Moody's, with a stable outlook designation. All costs of the Letter of Credit shall be borne by Offeror.

## ANTI-DISCRIMINATION

CEA does not, and will not discriminate, and requires in its contracts with suppliers that they will not discriminate, on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, age, disability (physical or mental), sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital or domestic partner status, religion, political beliefs or affiliation, familial or parental status (including pregnancy), medical condition (cancer-related), military service, or genetic information.

CEA strives to support local jobs, sustainable and inclusive workforce opportunities, local economic sustainability, and diversity through contracting for its power sources (see CEA's Inclusive and Sustainable Workforce Policy) in a manner that is consistent with anti-discrimination laws. CEA encourages respondents to submit information regarding planned efforts by respondent and respondent's contractors to:

- Employ workers and businesses from the local area of the proposed project(s).
- Employ properly licensed contractors and CA Certified electricians.
- Utilize local apprentices, particularly graduates of San Diego County pre-apprenticeship programs.
- Pay workers prevailing wage for each craft, classification and type of work performed.
- Provide workers compensation coverage to on-site workers.
- Support and use State of California approved apprenticeship programs.

Pursuant to California Senate Bill 255 (Public Utilities Code Section 366.2(m)(2)), CCAs are required to report to the California Public Utilities Commission ("CPUC") on their diverse suppliers, as defined by CPUC General Order 156. Consistent with the California Public Utilities Code and California Public Utilities Commission policy objectives, respondents are encouraged to complete a Supplier Diversity questionnaire with their submission (linked in the Response Form), and respondents that execute an agreement with CEA will be asked to complete the aforementioned questionnaire and provide any other information that CEA needs to comply with its reporting requirements set forth in Public Utilities Code Section 366.2(m)(2) or

other applicable law.

CEA encourages all eligible parties to get a Supplier Clearinghouse Certification with the CPUC. For overview information on the CPUC Supplier Diversity Program, please visit the program homepage (https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/supplierdiversity/). For information on the certification process and requirements, please visit the CPUC's Certifications page (https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/about-cpuc/divisions/news-and-public-information-office/business-and-community-outreach/supplier-diversity-program/certification).