



Central New York Regional Planning & Development Board

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Paul W. Pinckney, Chairman

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SOLAR COMMUNITY CAMPAIGN

Request For Proposals

DATE OF ISSUE: 08/25/2025

RESPONSE DUE DATE: 09/19/2025

ISSUED BY: Central New York Regional Planning and Development Board (CNY RPDB)

RESPONSES MUST BE SUBMITTED TO AOTIS@CNYRPDB.ORG

QUESTIONS MAY BE DIRECTED TO AOTIS@CNYRPDB.ORG OR 315-422-8276 X1206

REGISTER FOR THE INFO WEBINAR ON SEPTEMBER 2, 2025 AT 4 PM AT
[HTTP://BIT.LY/CNYRPDBsolarRFP](http://bit.ly/CNYRPDBsolarRFP)

1. OVERVIEW

The Central New York Regional Planning and Development Board (CNY RPDB), lead contractor for New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA)'s Central New York Regional Clean Energy Hub, is releasing this request for proposals ("RFP") for rooftop solar installers and community solar providers to provide installation services or subscription opportunities to homes and businesses in Central New York (Cayuga, Cortland, Madison, Onondaga, and Oswego Counties) as part of CNY RPDB's EnergySmart CNY Community Campaigns.

CNY RPDB, in partnership with other organizations including the Alliance for a Green Economy (AGREE) and Greater Syracuse Works (GSW) (collectively the CNY RPDB's "ENERGYSMART CNY" program) and local community partners will encourage the installation of solar panels and subscription to community solar. Over the course of the next year, **THE ENERGYSMART CNY COMMUNITY CAMPAIGNS** will seek to increase the number of homes and businesses in Central New York connecting to solar energy through either installing on-site solar or subscribing to community solar farms.

CNY RPDB is seeking proposals from contractors that are interested in participating in the **ENERGYSMART CNY COMMUNITY CAMPAIGNS** as trusted campaign partners to serve campaign participants, support on-site and community solar installations and technologies, and expand awareness of these technologies over the course of the program. The goals of **THE ENERGYSMART CNY COMMUNITY CAMPAIGNS** include:

1. Continuing to promote on-site Residential and Commercial solar installations;
2. Promoting Community Solar subscriptions; and
3. Helping to educate customers on all their solar options to adopt the method of solar energy that is most appropriate for them.

CNY RPDB invites responses from businesses ("installer/contractors") who can provide services relating to subscribing accounts to community solar and on-site solar installations. CNY RPDB may select multiple installer/contractors to ensure adequate coverage of all Central New York.

The selected installer/contractor(s) will work collaboratively with the CNY RPDB's **ENERGYSMART CNY** program to design and implement a 12-month campaign, which is expected to commence in October 2025. The selected installer/contractor(s) will be the recipient(s) of customer leads from **THE ENERGYSMART CNY COMMUNITY CAMPAIGNS** within their assigned campaign area and will be actively promoted as **THE ENERGYSMART CNY COMMUNITY CAMPAIGNS'** competitively selected installer/contractor(s).

2. ABOUT THE ENERGYSMART CNY COMMUNITY CAMPAIGNS

THE ENERGYSMART CNY COMMUNITY CAMPAIGNS are organized by the CNY RPDB with financial support from the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) Regional Clean Energy Hubs Program.

NYSERDA aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, accelerate economic growth, and improve the quality of life for all New Yorkers equitably. The Regional Clean Energy Hubs Program supports local nonprofits in connecting their communities with clean energy resources. Visit the [Regional Clean Energy Hubs Program](#) for more information.

THE ENERGYSMART CNY COMMUNITY CAMPAIGNS will be open to anyone of any income located within the CNY region (Cayuga, Cortland, Madison, Onondaga, and Oswego Counties) to participate. However, there will be a targeted focus of partnership and outreach in at least one municipality or region within each of the five counties, primarily focusing on NYSERDA-designated Disadvantaged Communities (DAC). Partner communities will be selected based on DAC status/LMI household concentration, fuel use and energy burden, and willingness of municipal leaders and/or local organizations to partner with the campaign. Community selection is happening concurrently with the RFP process. The City of Syracuse is the first community campaign.

3. SUMMARY OF CAMPAIGN ACTIVITIES

This section provides an overview of activities that will be completed over the course of 12 months. Partnering with municipalities, the community campaign will work within Cayuga, Cortland, Madison, Onondaga, and Oswego Counties. By August 2026, the campaign hopes to have 500 enrollments and 200 contracts signed.

Campaign activities will include press events, workshops, marketing through locally appropriate news and information sources, mailers where appropriate, and recruitment of volunteers. Contractors will be expected to attend at least one workshop in each of the communities selected within their assigned campaign area to participate in Q&A panels and will be invited to participate in other events as they desire.

A system for sharing leads acquired at events and subsequent customer status will be established with the contractor(s) chosen. Installer/contractor(s) will be required to update customer status once a contract is signed, at minimum.

4. INSTALLER/CONTRACTOR ELIGIBILITY

At a minimum, installer/contractor(s) must meet the following eligibility requirements to participate in **THE ENERGYSMART CNY COMMUNITY CAMPAIGNS**. Prospective installer/contractors must:

1. Hold all relevant licenses, certifications and other requirements for the jurisdiction(s) served by **THE ENERGYSMART CNY COMMUNITY CAMPAIGNS**, or have subcontractor relationships to meet these requirements. These communities may include the cities of Syracuse, Fulton, Auburn, Cortland, Oswego, and/or Oneida.
 - a. If a contractor has the relevant licenses for some, but not all the communities to be served, they may still be considered.
2. Meet eligibility requirements for or be approved as a participating installer/contractor in all relevant NYSERDA program opportunities.
3. Have completed a minimum of **15** installations within New York State and/or **10** installations within the areas served by the campaign and/or **10** installations through the aforementioned relevant NYSERDA programs (**for on-site residential/commercial solar installers only**).
4. Provide a guaranteed subscription discount of at minimum 5% (**for community solar providers only**)
5. Be willing to work in coordination with any other selected installer/contractor(s) (if applicable) for lead management and outreach activities.
6. Submit a complete response containing all required information described in Section 7.
Response Requirements by **SEPTEMBER 19, 2025**

5. SCOPE OF SERVICES

The scope of services to be provided by installer/contractors participating in **THE ENERGYSMART CNY COMMUNITY CAMPAIGNS** are described below:

Installation Services: For on-site solar, participating installer/contractors will provide site visits, quotes, and installation services in a timely fashion to program participants. This shall include:

- Conducting outreach to customers to screen customer suitability for relevant technologies;
- Providing assessments to evaluate a site's suitability for relevant technologies, including any structural, electrical, or mechanical issues;
- Providing information to customers about all relevant incentives, as well as basic information on system financial analysis and energy savings potential;
- Installing relevant technologies that meet the minimum requirements for eligibility for relevant available NYSERDA, state, and federal incentive programs, including;
 - Federal Tax Credits
 - State Tax Credits
 - NY-SUN incentives

- *Note: If Applicant seeks to install equipment that do not meet the eligibility requirements for these incentive programs, Applicant shall provide this information in the response materials, as well as reasoning for including equipment and how it will be presented to customers.*
- Providing turnkey contracting, permitting, installation, and all other activities associated with the sales and installation process within one year of contract signing, unless mutually agreed upon with the customer;
- Completing incentive paperwork and providing support for completing financing paperwork (if applicable) for all customers who sign contracts;
- Providing clear communication to customers about installation timeline, expected pricing, and any anticipated delays.

Subscription Services: For community solar, participating contractors will review energy bill information, provide draft contracts, execute contracts, and answer questions customers have in a timely fashion. Contracts provided to customers must include, at minimum:

- Guaranteed savings of at least 5-20% through subscription;
- Early termination requirements and penalties (if applicable); and
- The amount of the solar farm allocated to the customer in terms of the customer's annual kWh, % of their energy consumption, or some other metric to indicate the amount of the solar energy that is allotted to the customer.

Lead Management and Reporting: Participating installer/contractors will manage customer leads, track data on leads, and work with **THE ENERGYSMART CNY COMMUNITY CAMPAIGNS** team to provide regular reporting so that CNY RPDB's **ENERGYSMART CNY** program is apprised of the status of customers participating in the program. This shall include:

- Tracking and managing leads to provide timely customer service to all interested leads;
- Participating in a process in collaboration with the CNY RPDB's **ENERGYSMART CNY** program and other installer/contractor(s) to manage leads that are not suitable for the technology and, if relevant, share leads with other installer/contractor(s) if the site is not suitable for the installer/contractor's technology;
- Providing contact information for leads generated during the campaign with the CNY RPDB's **ENERGYSMART CNY** program;
- Providing data on lead status on at least a monthly basis to CNY RPDB's **ENERGYSMART CNY** program, which shall include but not be limited to leads enrolled and contracts signed;
- Participating in monthly calls with members of the CNY RPDB's **ENERGYSMART CNY** program;
- Providing data detailing work completed for each customer;
- Providing a final summary of work completed upon completion of the campaign.

Outreach and Education: Participating installer/contractors will be responsible for working closely with CNY RPDB's **ENERGYSMART CNY** program to directly support marketing and outreach activities to

promote awareness of CNY RPDB's **ENERGYSMART CNY** program. Over the course of **THE ENERGYSMART CNY COMMUNITY CAMPAIGNS**, this may include:

- Collaborating with the CNY RPDB's **ENERGYSMART CNY** program to refine the campaign marketing strategy and activities prior to the launch of the campaign and over the course of the campaign;
- Participating in in-person educational “meet the installer/contractor” events, where the installer/contractor will have the opportunity to meet and collect sign-ups from customers;
- Participating in other public in-person events coordinated by the CNY RPDB's **ENERGYSMART CNY** program;
- Working with the CNY RPDB's **ENERGYSMART CNY** program to ensure that campaign staff and volunteers are familiar with the installer/contractor's technology, operations, and workflow;
- Addressing inquiries from prospective customers and the CNY RPDB's **ENERGYSMART CNY** program;
- Providing information to prospective customers about relevant technologies, incentive programs, and other initiatives supported by the CNY RPDB's **ENERGYSMART CNY** program;
- Supporting other relevant marketing, outreach, and educational activities (e.g. providing content for marketing materials, developing stories, mailer campaigns, etc.).

6. RFP AND PROGRAM TIMELINE

Please note that the dates provided below are estimates and subject to change.

RFP/Program Milestone	Date
RFP released	August 25, 2025
Informational Webinar	September 2, 2025 4 PM
Written questions due	September 8, 2025
Question responses posted online	September 12, 2025
Responses due	September 19, 2025
Interviews with installer/contractors	Late September/early October 2025
Installer/contractor(s) announced	October 2025
First campaign launch event	Late October/early November 2025
Campaign public outreach and education events	October 2025 - July 2026
Deadline for participants to sign contracts	August 2026
Deadline to complete installations contracted through EnergySmart CNY Community Campaigns (for on-site solar installers only)	August 2027

7. RESPONSE REQUIREMENTS

Responses must include the following documents:

- **Response Checklist (Attachment A)**
- **Individual Response Form (Attachment B for on-site solar installers or Attachment C for community solar providers)**

Responses must also include the following documents.

- **Addendum 1: Example customer project proposals and contracts that may be used for this campaign**
- **Addendum 2: Sample marketing materials** (if available)
- **Addendum 3: Relevant licenses of key members of the installer/contractor team**, including any subcontractors (if necessary).

8. APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Written questions must be submitted to **AOTIS@CNYRPDB.ORG** by September 8, 2025. Responses will be posted online at <https://www.energysmartcny.org/> by September 12, 2025.

All responses must be received by September 19, 2025. Late responses may be rejected without review by the CNY RPDB's **ENERGYSMART CNY** selection committee.

9. EVALUATION CRITERIA

In order to be evaluated by the CNY RPDB's **ENERGYSMART CNY SELECTION COMMITTEE**, the Applicant must meet all eligibility requirements described in Section 4. Installer/contractor Eligibility. Responses to the RFP that do not include all required information may not be reviewed by the selection committee at its sole discretion. Respondents to the RFP that meet the criteria will be included in our larger guide to companies in the region doing this work and will be the foundation of future partnership, even if not selected as a partner for this campaign.

Responses will be evaluated by the selection committee in accordance with the criteria listed below. Additionally, a select number of respondents will be invited to interview with the selection committee and provide a brief presentation on their firm's qualifications to serve the campaign:

- **Overall quality and value:** Overall quality of the response and specified equipment.
- **Experience:** Degree of installer/contractor's experience and proficiency in the scope of work, including demonstrated experience in developing, designing, and installing all relevant technologies included in the installer/contractor's response, record of customer service, and experience working within the region to be served by **THE ENERGYSMART CNY COMMUNITY CAMPAIGNS**

- **Outreach and marketing plan:** Ability of the proposed outreach and marketing activities to drive community adoption of relevant technologies and reduce costs of installations.
- **Collaboration:** Ability of the installer/contractor to collaborate with the CNY RPDB's **ENERGYSMART CNY** program and any other selected installer/contractor(s) (if applicable) to implement a successful outreach and education campaign focused on all relevant technologies.
- **Capacity and implementation:** Ability to provide timely, quality customer service and installations or subscriptions throughout the duration of the program, as well as ability to work with the CNY RPDB's **ENERGYSMART CNY** program. Ability of installer/contractor to educate customer on benefits of technologies and communicate options available.