

October 21, 2024

**DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

**COMMUNITY RESOURCE HUBS**

**Notice of Public Meeting and Opportunity for Written Comment on a [Draft Request for Qualifications \(RFQ\)](#)**

*DEEP is issuing this notice of an opportunity for comment on a Draft Request for Qualifications (RFQ) and will hold two public meetings on November 7, 2024 to inform a final RFQ for a new initiative: Community Resource Hubs.*

***Comments on the draft RFQ are due by 3 p.m. on November 18, 2024***

**I. Introduction**

DEEP is seeking preliminary feedback on the design of a [Community Resource Hubs](#) program to serve one or more [environmental justice \(EJ\) communities in the state](#). DEEP's broad mission includes outdoor recreation, environmental conservation, environmental quality, and clean, reliable, affordable energy in Connecticut. The Department pursues this mission through a wide range of programs, many of which include specific focus on deploying funds or reducing environmental harms in environmental justice communities. The purpose of the Hubs will be to help connect DEEP programs and initiatives with communities that experience disproportionate environmental harms. DEEP Community Resource Hub(s) will deliver a range of services within an EJ community or EJ communities designed to strengthen connection between communities and DEEP policies, programs, services, and workforce opportunities. Hubs will facilitate communication, education, outreach, and engagement with EJ communities.

The selected [Community Resource Hub\(s\)](#) will directly, or through subcontract, provide services including but not limited to:

- Facilitating community input on DEEP policy and program design
- Increasing effective community access to state and federal resources and funding
- Facilitating education programs and informational awareness to initiatives aligned with DEEP's mission
- Facilitating community access to and participation in DEEP events and opportunities
- Facilitating community participation in workforce development and business creation opportunities associated with DEEP programs

Hubs will also be equipped to provide essential resources, including equipment and technical assistance, to ensure residents have the tools they need to participate fully in beneficial environmental and energy initiatives.

**II. Notice of Public Meetings and Written Comment Opportunity**

DEEP will accept written comments on the [attached Draft RFQ](#) via email until November 18, 2024, at 3:00pm EDT or during two virtual public meetings via ZOOM. Responses may include answers to as many or as few questions as is relevant or practical to the respondent. All materials submitted by stakeholders in this proceeding will be posted on the DEEP website. Please do not include any confidential information. Any questions can be directed to [DEEP.EJ@ct.gov](mailto:DEEP.EJ@ct.gov).

Please ensure that your e-mail screening software, if used, recognizes and accepts emails from [DEEP.EJ@ct.gov](mailto:DEEP.EJ@ct.gov). You do not need to respond to all questions or sub-questions to submit a response. Please attach your response as either a Microsoft Word or PDF file, although shorter responses or general thoughts/feedback on the [draft RFQ](#) can be submitted in the body of an email. Please email the written comments to [DEEP.EJ@ct.gov](mailto:DEEP.EJ@ct.gov) with “Community Resource Hub Draft RFQ Comments” in the subject line.

- Virtual Meeting 1 on November 7, 2024, from 9:00 am to 10:30 am;
  - To register: <https://ctdeep.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZcqc-ugrT4vHNNHqhSCmIB796nLhVYmdfVRG>
  
- Virtual Meeting 2 on November 7, 2024, from 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm:
  - To register: <https://ctdeep.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMude-sqDwjGNSql0uTCYDC6GtgslC4ESoX>

If you would like to request Spanish interpretation for the meetings, please email [DEEP.EJ@ct.gov](mailto:DEEP.EJ@ct.gov) by November 5, 2024. Can't join us? These meetings will be recorded and made available on the Community Resource Hubs website: [Community Resource Hubs](#).

DEEP welcomes all comments on the Draft RFQ, and is particularly interested to hear from stakeholders about the following questions:

1. DEEP has provided a list of potential services with example activities (See Draft RFQ, Concept Questions & Demonstration of Expertise), reflecting the areas where DEEP has existing programmatic responsibility and funding for these services.
  - a. Provide any feedback on the proposed Scope of Services. Are there any changes that you would recommend to this list? Please explain, including linking the services to DEEP’s mission and to a community need.
  - b. Do you have questions about what would be expected of the chosen organization(s), such as about the scope of services?
  - c. The RFQ allows for responses from (1) a single entity; (2) a team of partners—with one partner as the “lead” respondent; or (3) one entity that identifies subcontractor(s) to provide some of the services. Question: Does this seem like the right list of options to match the capacities and capabilities of potential respondents? If not, what else should the RFQ allow for?

2. The target respondent to this Draft RFQ is a CT-based organization, which includes a non-profit organization, community action agency, or state- and/or federally recognized tribal government.
  - a. Are there any concerns or considerations that DEEP should be aware of in terms of the types of entities that could or should be eligible to apply?
  - b. Do you think the services listed are the kinds of services that potential applicants will be able to provide? What would help organizations be able to provide the needed services?
  - c. What types of characteristics or capabilities should DEEP prioritize in selecting a Community Resource Hub (see *Evaluation of Proposals* section in the draft RFQ).
3. DEEP has proposed EJ communities as the ideal location to establish a Hub. What should DEEP prioritize or consider when weighing sites for establishment of a Community Resource Hub-co-location with existing facilities offering similar services? Physical accessibility and proximity to the community to be served? Accessible office hours, meeting space? Other features?
4. How should DEEP measure the success of a Community Resource Hub? (e.g., project reviews, surveys, attendance logs etc.). Are there any other metrics that should be utilized for the work of the Hub(s)?
5. Please let us know anything else we should be considering that is not already addressed here, or that you would suggest about any aspect of the draft RFQ itself.

*NOTE:* The [draft RFQ](#) and future RFQ materials will be posted in Spanish on the Community Hubs webpage. Also note that DEEP webpages can be translated into Spanish by clicking the “language + settings” widget on the top right corner of a webpage.

**The Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer that is committed to complying with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Please contact [DEEP.EJ@ct.gov](mailto:DEEP.EJ@ct.gov) if you are seeking a communication aid or service, have limited proficiency in English, or require some other accommodation. If you wish to file an ADA or Title VI discrimination complaint, you may submit your complaint to DEEP Office of Diversity and Equity at (860) 418-5910 or via email at [deep.accommodations@ct.gov](mailto:deep.accommodations@ct.gov). In order to facilitate efforts to provide an accommodation, please request all accommodations as soon as possible following notice of any agency hearing, meeting, program or event.**