



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Annual Survey of Clean Off-Road Equipment Voucher Incentive Project (CORE) Voucher Recipients

Clean Off-Road Equipment Voucher Incentive Project

<https://californiacore.org/>

<https://calstart.org/>

RELEASE DATE: October 5, 2023

IMPORTANT DATES:

Proposals Due: Wednesday, November 1, 2023, at 5:00 p.m. PST.

Please submit proposals by email to **Jacob Whitson** at jwhitson@calstart.org

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REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Title:	Annual Survey of Clean Off-Road Equipment Voucher Incentive Project (CORE) Voucher Recipients
Issuing Agency:	CALSTART
RFP Due Date:	5:00 p.m. Pacific Standard Time (PST), Wednesday, November 1, 2023.
Period of Performance:	One year with two optional add-on years
Instructions:	Proposals subject to the conditions of this request should be sent to: Jacob Whitson, Deputy Director, at jwhitson@calstart.org . Only bids submitted via electronic means will be accepted. Indicate firm name, and “Annual Survey of Clean Off-Road Equipment Voucher Incentive Project (CORE) Voucher Recipients” in the subject of the email. This is a one-step process. It is the contractor’s responsibility to assure that all materials have been reviewed and are complete.

I. Introduction

The purpose of this Request for Proposals (RFP) is to solicit qualified survey companies to conduct a comprehensive study on the experiences, preferences, and challenges faced by purchasers of zero-emission equipment under the Clean Off-Road Equipment (CORE) Incentive Project. Through this survey, we aim to understand the real-world applicability, benefits, and potential areas of improvement for the CORE initiative, thereby ensuring the program not only meets but exceeds its environmental goals while also addressing the practical needs and concerns of its participants.

II. Background

The Clean Off-Road Equipment Voucher Incentive Project (CORE) is intended to accelerate deployment of advanced technology in the off-road sector by providing a streamlined way for fleets to access funding that helps offset the incremental cost of such technology. To date has issued over 2,000 heavy duty vouchers and redeem over deployed over 700 pieces of equipment. CORE targets commercial-ready products that have not yet achieved a significant market foothold. By promoting the purchase of clean technology over internal combustion options, the project is expected to reduce emissions, particularly in areas that are most impacted; help build confidence in zero-emission technology in support of CARB strategies and subsequent regulatory efforts where possible; and provide other sector-wide benefits, such as technology transferability, reductions in advanced-technology component costs, and larger infrastructure investments. CORE funds equipment in the following categories:

- On- and off-road terminal tractors
- Transport refrigeration units
- Large forklifts

- Cargo handling equipment
- Airport cargo loaders and wide-body aircraft tugs
- Aircraft ground power units (GPU)
- Railcar movers and freight locomotives
- Construction equipment
- Agricultural equipment
- Commercial harbor craft (CHC)
- Landscaping equipment.

In addition, the CORE Incentive Project was allocated \$30 million of dedicated funds appropriated by the Legislature in SB 170 to provide incentives for professional landscaping services in California operated by small businesses or sole proprietors to purchase zero-emission small off-road equipment. CORE provides vouchers to California purchasers and lessees of zero-emission off-road equipment on a first-come, first-served basis, with increased incentives for equipment located in disadvantaged communities and that are operated by a small business.

CALSTART administers other large-scale state incentive programs, including the California Air Resources Board’s (CARB) [Hybrid and Zero-Emission Truck and Bus Voucher Incentive Project \(HVIP\)](#), and the State of California’s Energy Commission [EnerGIIZE Commercial Vehicles Incentive Program](#).

III. Scope of Work

A. Task 1: Project Kick-Off

Contractor will participate in a kick-off meeting with CALSTART via phone to discuss project details, priority issues, availability of contact lists and project information, and project schedule. Deliverables – Agenda and other material associated with kick-off meeting.

B. Task 2: Recruiting Strategy, Contact Information

Contractor will request an up-to-date list of purchasers and equipment from CALSTART and work with CALSTART to identify the relevant contacts for the 2023 survey. Based on discussion with CALSTART during the kickoff meeting, we will finalize our recruiting strategy. Contractor will coordinate with CALSTART to obtain information for all purchasers/equipment in the sample. Deliverables – Sampling strategy, receipt, and review of contact information.

C. Task 3: Update Survey Instrument, Advance Notification Emails

Contractor will update develop survey instruments to address topics outlined by CALSTART. Contractor will also develop customized advance email notifications for survey contacts. Deliverables – Develop and deploy survey instruments, develop and deploy advance notification emails.

D. Task 4: Pre-Test and Finalize Survey Instrument

Contractor will pre-test the survey instrument with four respondents. The pre-tests will provide information on respondents' reactions to questions, any confusion or misinterpretation, questions that were challenging to answer, and time to complete the survey. Based on the pre-test results, Contractor will refine the survey instrument as needed, in consultation with CALSTART. Deliverables – Up to four completed pre-tests; final survey instruments

E. Task 5: Administer Survey

Contractor will conduct the survey by phone using the approved survey instruments. Each survey administrator will review available information on the project prior to conducting the survey. In some cases, the respondent may need to conduct additional research to answer the questions. In those cases, the survey administrator will schedule a follow-up call to complete the survey or follow up via email, depending on the nature of the missing information.

Contractor will administer approximately 500 heavy duty-equipment purchasing entities and 500 landscaping purchasing entities with a target completion rate of 30%. 150 target completions for each heavy duty and landscaping purchasing entities. Additionally, the contractor may need to survey more than one respondent per equipment (i.e., procurement staff and operations staff) to answer the survey questions.

Surveys will be conducted through a programmed version of the questionnaire where responses will be entered live as the calls are conducted. Contractor will develop an initial codebook based on the survey instrument. Analysts administering the survey will code survey responses according to the initial codebook and professional judgment. Post-administration follow-up coding and data cleaning may be necessary. Contractor will conduct all coding within 24 hours of each individual survey.

F. Task 6: Analyze Survey Data and Develop Preliminary Findings Memo

Contractor will analyze the survey data and calculate descriptive statistics for each question, including measures of central tendency (mean, median, and mode), measures of dispersion (range and standard deviation), and cross-tabulations. The team will summarize the results for all survey completions and will break out the results for each equipment category. Contractor will identify any outliers and characterize their influence on overall results. Contractor will summarize preliminary findings in a brief memo for CALSTART branded as CALSTART. Deliverables – Data and analysis files, tabulations and other statistical analysis outputs, and preliminary findings memo

G. Task 7: Draft Report

Contractor will develop a draft report on a CALSTART provided/approved template with detailed survey findings; the report will also address any feedback provided by CALSTART on the preliminary

findings memo in Task 6. Contractor will submit the draft report to CALSTART for review and input.
Deliverables – Draft report

H. Task 8: Final Report

Contractor will incorporate feedback and prepare the final report in accordance with direction and guidance from CALSTART. Deliverables – Final report completion March 2024.

I. Task 9: Data Transfer

Contractor will transfer data files and associated analysis files to CALSTART. Deliverables – all project-related data files

J. Task 10: Project Management

Contractor will participate remotely in conference calls initiated by CALSTART, management, staff and CALSTART-designated parties and presentations to such groups. These calls will be scheduled in consultation with CALSTART. Contractor also provides regular updates to CALSTART during the survey fieldwork regarding survey disposition. Monthly progress reports will be submitted with invoices. Deliverables – meetings, progress reports.

IV. Contractor Proposal Considerations

The deliverables are critical in ensuring the project receives comprehensive, actionable insights. For an RFP concerning the CORE Incentive Project and its impact on purchasers of zero-emission off-road equipment, the following deliverables could be considered:

Survey Design & Instrument:

- A draft and final version of the survey questionnaire.
- An explanation or rationale for each question, ensuring relevance to the project's objectives.

Sampling Plan:

- A detailed strategy for identifying and selecting survey participants, ensuring representation across different equipment types, business sizes, and geographical areas.

Survey Implementation Plan:

- A timeline indicating key milestones, from survey distribution to data collection and analysis.
- Strategies for maximizing response rates, such as reminder communications or incentive structures.

Data Collection:

- Raw data files, preferably in widely accepted formats like CSV or Excel.
- Metadata or codebooks explaining any codes or categorizations used in the data.

Data Analysis:

- Detailed analysis of the survey responses, broken down by relevant categories (e.g., by equipment type, business size, location).
- Use of statistical methods to identify patterns, trends, or correlations, if relevant.

Interim and Final Reports:

- An interim report highlighting preliminary findings, challenges faced, and any adjustments made.
- A comprehensive final report detailing findings, insights, recommendations, and potential areas of improvement for the CORE program. This should include data visualizations like graphs, charts, and tables to elucidate findings.

Presentation:

- A slide deck summarizing key findings, tailored for a non-technical audience, which can be presented to stakeholders.
- Potential virtual or in-person presentation sessions to key project stakeholders, with Q&A sessions.

Feedback Mechanism:

- A strategy for allowing stakeholders to provide feedback on preliminary findings, ensuring the final report is comprehensive and relevant.

Data Security and Confidentiality Plan:

- Documentation detailing how respondents' data will be protected, ensuring privacy and compliance with relevant laws and regulations.

Post-Survey Follow-Up Strategy (if needed):

- A plan for conducting follow-up interviews or secondary surveys if deep dives into certain areas are required.

Project Documentation:

- All correspondence, drafts, revisions, and notes related to the project to be archived and delivered for transparency and future reference.

Toolkits or Guides (optional):

- If relevant, a guide for stakeholders on how to implement recommendations or a toolkit for conducting similar surveys in the future.

V. How To Apply

Please submit a brief proposal (not to exceed 10 pages) containing the following information, at a minimum, to the contact email provided below:

1. Name of proposer, with contact information for proposer's primary point of contact

2. Proposer federal ID and DUNS
3. Relevant experience/qualifications (where appropriate, examples of work and other supporting content)
4. Survey strategy and scope of work
5. Proposed timeline and budget (not-to-exceed cost)

Please indicate firm name, and RFP title on email and all attachments. This is a one-step process. Only bids submitted via electronic means will only be accepted. Applications are to be submitted by email to Jacob Whitson at jwhitson@calstart.org by **5:00 p.m. Pacific Standard Time (PST), Wednesday, November 1, 2023.**

Questions concerning the specifications in this Request for Proposals (RFP) should be directed via email to Jacob Whitson at jwhitson@calstart.org. CALSTART reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to answer or not answer any question regarding this RFP.

VI. Evaluation Criteria

CALSTART will assess proposals received based on factors including:

1. Relevant and proven experience
2. Time needed to complete project
3. References
4. Other services
5. The relevance of education, experience, knowledge, and skills of the respondent and the individual(s) who will be available to provide these services
6. Recognition of and demonstrated facility with the concepts presented in this RFP
7. The expertise of the firm in working with similar clients and/or on similar projects
8. The competitiveness of cost of services

VII. Contact

Please submit proposals and direct any inquiries to:

Jacob Whitson
Deputy Director
CALSTART
jwhitson@calstart.org