



WORLD
RESOURCES
INSTITUTE



The Leon Lowenstein
Foundation

2021 Large-Scale Renewables Aggregation Cohort Overview

World Resources Institute (WRI) and RMI formed the [Renewables Accelerator](#) in 2019 to provide free tools, resources, and technical assistance to local government staff to accelerate renewable energy adoption and electricity decarbonization in their communities. With the generous support of the Leon Lowenstein Foundation, we are pleased to announce the opportunity for cities, counties, and other local institutions to join a cohort of likeminded leaders who are exploring the potential to pursue buyer-led aggregated purchasing of renewables to meet their clean energy demand.

Cohort Description

WRI/RMI are launching a second iteration of our large-scale renewable energy procurement aggregation cohort in spring 2021 to help local governments, businesses, and institutions join forces with other buyers to procure large-scale renewables at economies of scale. Over the course of approximately 15 months, we will support small groups of buyers through the aggregation procurement process and facilitate group alignment on key elements of a joint request for proposal (RFP) for a virtual or physical power purchase agreement (PPA). We will provide virtual trainings, resources, and access to experienced technical experts, as well as draw upon the collective cohort expertise, to help participants release a joint RFP for aggregated procurement in 2022.

Cohort Objectives

Many local governments, corporations, and public entities have set ambitious renewable energy goals that often cannot be achieved through on-site solar installations and traditional utility solutions alone. Large-scale renewables procurement through a physical or virtual PPA can fill the remaining gap while bringing new renewable resources online. Aggregation results in bigger impact, better economics, lower risk for all buyers, and compelling communications. The cohort will also explore issues and risks associated with virtual PPAs, many of which may be new for local governments.

Aggregation can also be used to support local economic and equity priorities, for example, through partnerships with woman- and minority-owned businesses or historically black universities that may not have the resources or load size to support large-scale renewables procurement on their own. Additionally, replacing dirty energy sources with renewables can address disproportionately impacted communities of color, who are more likely to live near coal plants and be impacted by environmental justice issues. Finally, local governments can incentivize and prioritize projects that have equitable workforce development components and result in local jobs.

Expectations for Participants

While the technical assistance and training provided through the cohort is free, WRI and RMI ask that participants are committed to taking action. To ensure the success of the cohort, it is important that local government and other cohort participants:

- Dedicate the necessary resources and staffing necessary to assess the potential for aggregated procurement and release an RFP. We estimate this will require roughly 0.25 FTEs of staff time commitment over the course of the project.
- Enlist participation from across the local government/institution as needed, including from sustainability, legal, accounting, and procurement departments.
- Commit to the ethos of peer learning – be willing to both share openly and listen respectfully.



Proposed Workshop Schedule

Date	Virtual Workshop Information
March/April 2021	<u>Kickoff meetings, Energy & Off-site Procurement 101</u>
May 2021	<p><u>Building Renewables Aggregation Knowledge</u> Activities: Overview of aggregation process. Facilitated discussions with aggregation groups on key procurement elements. Outcome: Understand process and key alignment points.</p>
June 2021	<p><u>Determining Governance Structure & Managing the Group (MOU)</u> Activities: Presentation on various governance structures and approaches, best practices for MOUs. Work time for aggregation groups. Outcome: Determine aggregation group governance structure.</p>
July 2021	<p><u>Identifying Legal and Accounting Risks</u> Activities: Presentation on legal and accounting challenges. Aggregation groups discuss procurement challenges with experts and align on any deal breakers. Outcome: Understand legal and accounting barriers. Additional Participants: Local government legal and accounting staff.</p>
August 2021	<p><u>Pitching Your Project to Senior Leaders</u> Activities: Review pitch deck template, Q&A on behavioral best practices to get to a “yes,” and small group work time to craft a pitch. Outcome: Prepare each team member to get approval from senior leadership to pursue this project further.</p>
September 2021	<p><u>Developing Risk Mitigation Strategies</u> Activities: Presentation on risk mitigation strategies for large-scale renewable procurement. Work time for aggregation groups. Outcome: Align on risk mitigation strategies the aggregation group wants to pursue. Additional Participants: Local government procurement staff.</p>
October/November 2021	<p><u>Aligning on Procurement Deal Terms (individual workshops)</u> Activities: WRI/RMI will facilitate an alignment convening for each aggregation group on resource criteria (COB, resource type, location, MW, etc.). Outcome: Alignment on RFP criteria and importance of each category.</p>
January 2022	<p><u>Drafting Your Request for Proposal (RFP)</u> Activities: Review RFP template and align as a procurement group. Outcome: Draft RFP for aggregated deal.</p>
February-June 2022	Additional check-ins and support to help release RFP.

If you have questions on this cohort, please contact Zach Greene, Clean Energy Associate at WRI (zach.greene@wri.org) and Yuning Liu, Senior Associate at RMI (yliu@rmi.org).