



Induction Cooking Lending and Education Services

2021 Request for Proposals

Issuance Date: 8/30/21

Response Deadline: 10/1/21

Purpose

The electrification and decarbonization of our existing building stock is an integral part of meeting our climate goals and addressing the health and safety consequences that result from the combustion of fossil fuels in our buildings. Induction cooking technology exists and is readily available to address gas combustion for cooking but a number of barriers such as lack of education and familiarity with the technology have led to slow uptake through traditional market approaches. Additionally, unlike most end-use cases of gas combustion, conventional gas cooking continues to hold the attention of professionals and home cooks alike due to the emotional connection and familiarity individuals have with the technology. East Bay Community Energy (EBCE) seeks responses from proposers on program designs for a service territory-wide induction cooktop lending program including consumer education and training to increase hands-on experience with and consumer awareness of induction technology.

Background

East Bay Community Energy is a community choice energy aggregator (CCA), and serves as the default provider of electric generation service to over 1.5 million people in Alameda County and in the City of Tracy. EBCE launched Phase I of its service implementation with commercial, industrial, and municipal accounts on June 1, 2018. Phase II for residential accounts was launched November 1, 2018. Phase III was launched in April of 2019 and enrolled all Net Energy Meter (“NEM”) customers.

Since its formation, the JPA has consisted of the County of Alameda and all but three of its cities. These include the City of Alameda which has its own municipal utility, and the cities of Newark and Pleasanton. In 2019, the cities of Newark and Pleasanton formally joined EBCE’s JPA, along with the City of Tracy in neighboring San Joaquin County. Phase IV of implementation included the beginning of service to all new JPA cities beginning in Q1 of 2021.

EBCE currently serves over 637,000 customer electricity accounts representing a population of over 1.6 million people, 60,000 businesses, and approximately 6,500 gigawatt hours (“GWh”) of annual load. 32.5% of Alameda County residents are foreign born and with more than 45% of households reporting speaking a language other than English at home.¹ The 3 most common non-english languages spoken in the County are Spanish (16.5%), Chinese (9%) (incl. Mandarin, Cantonese), and Tagalog (3.7%) (incl. Filipino)². Of EBCE’s total customer base, about 20% of all customers are on [CARE](#) rates, representing a total 2020 usage of 524 MWh.

Formed by local governments (i.e., cities, towns and counties) as JPAs, CCAs are governed by locally elected public officials and have a unique relationship with our public sector customers.

¹ [Census QuickFacts, Alameda County](#), United States Census Bureau

² [Alameda County](#), Data USA.

CCAs manage interaction with our customers, have access to all customer interval data, and use those data to inform development of unique customer programs that help meet local climate goals while enhancing community resilience and grid reliability.

Multiple cities in EBCE's service area have adopted local Reach Code ordinances pushing for all-electric new construction. While induction cooking provides significant advantages over conventional natural gas cooking, including higher performance, quicker cooking times, and indoor air quality benefits, many customers remain reluctant to install induction cooking in their homes due to a lack of experience with the technology. EBCE sees hands-on experience with induction, supported with proper training on cooktop operation, as a key strategy for supporting the rollout of these all-electric ordinances.

EBCE previously implemented a small-scale induction lending program through member cities leveraging staff and existing community engagement channels such as libraries and community centers. This program is actively running for a number of cities and is expected to launch on an ongoing basis for others. Induction cooking kits consisted of 1 single-element induction cooktop, 1 induction compatible pot, 1 induction compatible pan, a magnet to test the induction compatibility of existing cookware, and EBCE branded educational collateral around how induction technology works and the benefits. Equipment used in this city lending program was donated to participating cities by EBCE. The desired service territory-wide lending program outlined in the present document would exist in addition to the lending happening at the individual city level.

Objectives

EBCE is seeking to provide a comprehensive induction lending and education program to customers in order to increase understanding, familiarity, and comfort with induction cooking technology. This program would provide customers with the opportunity to get hands-on experience using induction technology alongside guided education on what induction is and how to cook with it.

Proposals will be evaluated based on their ability to effectively deliver induction cooking education, provide a safe and convenient cooktop lending offering to our customers, and drive interest and participation in the program through effective marketing and community engagement strategies. Extra consideration will be given for proposals with strategies to include hard to reach communities such as those who are non-English speaking or historically excluded from energy innovation programs. This includes offering outreach and training materials in multiple languages and culturally-relevant to EBCE's service area and should include technologies such as induction woks.

The proposal shall:

- Define program designs for the implementation of induction cooktop lending to EBCE customers including logistics, program tracking, and post-participation surveys.
- Outline strategies for in-person and/or virtual educational curriculum on induction cooking, both to orient participants to the induction technology as well as to boost utilization of the cooktop while in circulation.
- Include strategies to utilize program budget to procure, store, and maintain a network of induction cooking kits and other necessary program materials.
- Be attentive to barriers that low-income and non-English speaking communities face when trying to participate in publicly provided programs.

The proposal may:

- Outline a plan to manage in-person induction demonstration and educational tabling events alongside existing EBCE tabling.
- Propose marketing and outreach strategies to increase program exposure and participation, including social media campaigns, partnership with local food-based organizations, or other strategies.

EBCE will provide coordinated communication and introduction to key stakeholders including member agency and community partners, program promotion support through existing internal and external community outreach channels, and, where possible, community site hosts for the program implementer to conduct training, education, and cooktop distribution from.

Response Requirements

Respondents are asked to provide input on all sections of this RFP. Respondents are asked to limit responses to under 12 pages; additional information including staff resumes, product lists, or other information may be shared as attachments. Respondents are asked to clearly define an intended project timeline with key project milestones, including estimated time for program ramp up. All responses must be submitted to energyefficiency@ebce.org electronically no later than 5 pm on 10/1/21.

Section 1: Proposed Approach and Schedule

EBCE requests details on the proposed scope of work, including a description of how the proposed approach will meet the objectives of the RFP. The proposed approach should include a set of metrics to be used in defining the program impacts. The approach should be presented in a scope of work format, including tasks, subtasks, and any proposed deliverables, though may be accompanied by narrative to present the overall program strategy.

A schedule of the project timeline should also be included. EBCE is interested in respondents able to meet outlined objectives and bring the program to fruition in Q4 of 2021 or early Q1 of 2022, however, we are willing to consider approaches that are beyond this timeline.

COVID-19 impacts should be considered carefully. EBCE is open to all approaches, but respondents should be sensitive to varying customer and community partner comfort with in-person events and are encouraged to offer a range of options to increase participation.

Section 2: Budget

The maximum available budget for this scope of work is \$75,000, though EBCE may consider proposals with a larger budget if they offer additional marketing and outreach for the program or can demonstrate how the additional budget will significantly improve the program design. EBCE prefers task-based budgeting with payments to cover different levels of program expenses as they arise but is willing to consider responses which vary.

The budget should be presented in a clear, task-based format. Any equipment expenses, travel expenses, or other miscellaneous expenses proposed should be clearly identified.

Section 3: Qualifications and References

Please include any information that will assist EBCE in evaluating the suitability of respondents to carrying out the proposed scope of work. This includes, but is not limited to, bios for key staff, examples of prior or current project work, and any references EBCE can use to verify information provided.

Section 4: Acceptance of EBCE’s Standard Terms and Conditions

A copy of EBCE’s Consultant Services Agreement has been attached to this RFP. Submission of a response presumes acceptance of EBCE’s standard form with no modifications. Any necessary modifications to the standard form should be provided with document submission and may impact respondents' scores.

Evaluation Criteria

RFP Section	Percentage
Proposed Approach and Schedule <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fit of approach to EBCE objectives ● Well-articulated strategy for facilitating induction education ● Thoroughness of proposed scope ● Ability of program proposal to start within the desired timeline 	50%

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Realistic and carefully considered program metrics 	
Budget <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget is leveraged by other resources (direct or in-kind) Budget is detailed and realistic 	25%
Qualifications and References <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responded has provided sufficient matching experience and qualifications to demonstrate ability to execute scope of work References and prior experience are relevant, recent, and available 	25%

Request for Proposal Schedule

Event	Target Date
Issuance of RFP	8/30/21
Bidders Webinar #1	9/7/21 at 2 pm
Bidders Webinar #2	9/9/21 at 11 am
Deadline to submit questions	9/16/21
Responses to questions on/before	9/17/21/21
RFP responses due to EBCE	10/1/21
Anticipated selection date	10/8/21
Anticipated date of contract execution	10/29/21

Communication

Questions on the RFP should be sent to energyefficiency@ebce.org with email subject line, “Induction Cooking Lending RFP Question - [Respondent Company Name]”.

Direct RFP responses should be sent to energyefficiency@ebce.org with email subject line, “Induction Cooking Lending RFP Submission - [Respondent Company Name]”. Please submit RFP responses no later than 10/1/21 at 5:00 pm.