Request for Proposal (RFP) For the EnviroStars Regional Green Business Program

This RFP seeks the best combination of lead and/or sub-contractors who can serve as project administrators for the 3-year development and implementation of the EnviroStars Regional Green Business Program.

Key activities will be front-end web design support to customize a web framework created by the California Green Business Program (CAGBN), some development of custom modules that link to the CAGBN back-end database, light re-branding of EnviroStars, and development of an overall marketing campaign. These activities will exercise skills in working closely with the program's steering committee to move from discussion to action.

The below questions were collected from the RFP Release Date (8/20) through the Information Session (9/1).

Q1.
The RFP summarizes the grant funded partnership with the California Green Business Program that will include "mirroring" California's database to use for this program. What language does that platform use, or can we use something else? If we do write the code, does it get shared with the other states?
A. The California Green Business Program uses an open access system via API that will give many different partners (such as the EnviroStars regional program) access to data now and into the future. The Code base for the website and application are in MySQL, Python and Django. Code, applications, modules, or extensions made for this program will be shared with the other states participating in the National Environmental Information Exchange Network (NEIEN) grant. California Green Business Program, and their contractor Ecology Action, are currently working on the federal contract to execute the NEIEN grant.

Q2.
What will be the first phase of working with businesses from a database perspective?
A. Businesses participating in current Green Businesses Programs such as Get on the Map, EnviroStars and Kirkland Green Business Program will be migrated to the new regional EnviroStars program.

Q3: Is this proposal for us to write code or just specs to send to California team to do the actual build out?
A. We're looking for proposals to work with the CAGBN team as they are the primary website and database builders. We are looking for a business analyst function that can explain the

enhancements and functions of the platform that are needed to serve this region's needs and act as a liaison between the EnviroStars group and the CA Team.

Q4. Is there a licensing fee for the core platform that we need to expect as an expense?

A. Seattle's Office of Economic Development on behalf of the EnviroStars regional program has a licensing agreement with CAGBN to access and use the GreenBiz Track website and database to "promote, develop and support the EnviroStars regional program as part of the National Environmental Information Exchange Network Grant (NEIEN funding)." These funds will help support the mirroring process as outlined in the Appendix in the RFP.

However, the EnviroStars committee members have shown an interest in expanding the database Customer Relationship Management functions to support referrals, and business support which is not included in the NEIEN grant funding. The Committee is also interested in gamification elements that could be added to the mirrored database perhaps in year 2 or 3 of the program.

The CAGBN website has a test server which the hired contractor(s) will be able to use to understand and test current functionality and future developments.

Q5. Will the existing resources that go into "grandfathered programs" such as Get on the Map be rebranded as well?

A. Seattle Public Utility's Get on the Map program is currently under discussion with the contractor and SPU staff. The EnviroStars regional program will completely replace Kirkland's existing program, absorbing funds and staff time and replacing marketing collateral. The current EnviroStars program will also transition into the new program. Some brand funds have been pooled already and will continue to support the regional brand.

Q6. What does the RFP mean as a "minor EnviroStars Brand refresh?" Are you open to interpretation on what that means, such as creating a Design Charrette?

A. The brand will be built on the existing trademarked EnviroStars brand. We would like to visually refresh the existing logo with a more modern look, retaining brand recognition through an adaptation of the current mark, including possible color and graphical changes. The name "EnviroStars" is expected to stay the same, but typographic changes could be part of the logo update.

Q7. Do all the existing Green Business Programs use different databases and websites?

A. Yes, all members of the developing regional program currently use different formats and are housed in different locations. Each will likely keep their own databases, but relevant data such as business participant contact, industry type, and qualification information, metrics and conversions will go into the shared database for coordinated tracking and reporting.

Q8. Are there long term plans to have all datasets merge into one large program?

A: We are not sure yet, but we are building the program to be scalable.

Q9. What format are all the databases in now?
A. They are in a variety of formats, such as SQL Server and Excel.

Q10: Is the goal to have one checklist that all programs (members) use?
A: Yes- the goal is to increase effectiveness and efficiency in delivering existing services to businesses. If a business is getting support from one particular area, for example recycling, field staff would use the EnviroStars regional program to encourage the completion of other actions, such as energy and water reduction. A goal is to have businesses type in their address and business type to see what services and resources are available to them in their locale, while working through a minimum set of requirements ("the checklist") that would qualify them for recognition as an EnviroStar Green Business.

Q11: Is it the job of the contractor to do the verification?
A: No- the existing local teams in each EnviroStars jurisdiction will go out into the field, using the tools and templates developed through the marketing component of the EnviroStars regional program. This program can be thought of as an umbrella over existing services that complete verification in their area of service.

Q12: Who will collect the metrics?
A. There will be a need for work by the contractor to help the EnviroStars committee members best access their metrics and streamline the data sharing process with the California Green Business Network. The contractor will help facilitate what data are needed and conversions/calculations performed in the platform using CAGBN's best practices and data available from the EnviroStars team.

Q13: For an Administrator of the program, are you looking for an independent type or more collaborative?
A. This Administrator will work closely with the committees, especially during initial program development and build out. We expect a collaborative project management approach that will encourage effective use of committee staff time in combination with that provided by the Administrator.

Q14: What are the typical business types that will be in the program?
A. The program will have an emphasis on small businesses, especially at the outset; however the program will be designed to be scalable to all business sizes and sectors.

Q15: What information from proposers is expected about appliance rebates, managing information about savings and expected outcomes?
A. We're relying on EnviroStars committee members shared reporting, California Green Business Program experience, the hired contactors guidance and projected savings. Rebates and programs will still be performed by local utilities. We're seeking a program administrator that will analyze program participation data that would include deemed savings and expected outcomes for monitoring and evaluation purposes.

Q16: What is the status of the CGBN database and what functionality does it have? Can we have access to the system?

A. The CGBN database updated their software and created upgrades for their California Network in 2015. It currently supports 23 agencies in the California Bay area. The database tracks environmental impacts while "walking" a business through the steps of certification. With the NEIEN funding, CGBN will be mirroring their database on a separate server but will also be sharing the same base source code. That means all participant states in the NEIEN grant will benefit from any bells and whistles added to the system, but we don't get hindered or slowed down by having too many users on our systems, since they will be separate. The Contractor(s) hired through this RFP process can have access to the CGBN test database site.