

May 19, 2023

RE: NASEO Request for Information (RFI) – Implementation Options for Home Energy Performance-Based Whole-House Rebate Program and High-Efficiency Electric Home Rebate Program

Category 3: Indication of Vendor Interest

22. Kellen McSweeney, 608-210-7135, kmcsweeney@slipstreaminc.org, Slipstream

23. Overview of DEIA Approach Slipstream’s overall approach to advancing diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) has two main areas: community and project team. This approach necessarily evolves based on local context and partnerships.

Community Each community—whether defined geographically, in terms of a shared and connecting experience, or otherwise—should have meaningful voice and decision-making in matters that affect it. An important part of the way we approach our work is to listen first. We draw and expand on existing stakeholder networks built in previous initiatives to inform project planning, and the definition, realization, and measurement of benefits. Early and ongoing participation by historically underserved communities and underrepresented groups, specifically, are encouraged through proactive outreach and awareness raising about a given project. We value existing and new invitations to collaborate with representative nonprofits and community-based organizations who have the best local knowledge of community needs and solutions. For example, when working on an initiative involving building energy efficiency and decarbonization, our team would take stock of how familiar these topics and opportunities are to the people in the state, municipality, or other area where the project is occurring. If familiarity is low, we would provide an introduction to energy efficiency, the role of relevant program interventions, and the jobs and other benefits that can result. This could be delivered in listening sessions, with a focus in disadvantaged communities. Participants might include community-based organizations and the community members with whom they collaborate, businesses, educational institutions, training organizations working in the name of under-represented communities and those facing systemic barriers to quality employment such as those with disabilities, returning citizens, youth, and veterans. The project team would collaborate with relevant local organizations and leaders to plan and deliver these listening sessions, and inclusion measures such as co-establishing meeting norms would be used.

Project Team A project team’s composition and practices are part of our approach to advancing DEIA while forwarding a clean energy initiative. Slipstream’s mission is focused on equitable decarbonization in the built environment, and the services we provide and partnerships we seek aim to deliver on this mission. Elements of our DEIA approach organizationally and in the project teams we form include: centering equity in Slipstream’s formal statement of organizational values; developing a DEIA resource to inform programs we design; centering DEIA in human resource policies and processes; when hiring and procuring services to support a project, we proactively encourage participation of Minority Business Enterprises, Minority-Owned Businesses, Woman-Owned Businesses, Native American-owned businesses, LGBT-owned business, and Veteran-Owned Businesses or organizations with a mission to support greater equity and inclusion in service delivery; when applicable, we recruit a student project team member with lived experience in disadvantaged communities (DACs), with poverty, who are first in their family to pursue a clean energy career, or who have other disadvantaged background; offering and participating in regular DEIA education and activities that are evidenced-based. Slipstream has an existing and ongoing function for all employees to engage in uprooting bias and furthering antiracist organizational culture that are leveraged for establishing project team norms.

Justice40 Initiative Our DEIA approach is recently updated to account for the Justice40 Initiative, particularly when involving federal funding. We are committed to helping implement Justice40, and excited to design projects to drive a minimum of 40 percent of their benefits into DACs while planning, implementing, and evaluating results with DACs. Employees throughout the organization have built an understanding and familiarity with: the Justice40 Initiative overall; composition and status of the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST) and Environmental Justice Scorecard; DOE and other agency adaptation of Justice40 planning and tools, especially including DOE’s DACs mapping tool and underlying data and

methodological explanations; and, DOE's policy priorities expressing Justice40 benefits and metrics. In addition to using CEJST to identify DACs, our team members are fluent in using EJSCREEN to quantitatively characterize the demographics and environmental conditions of communities.

24. Planning, Administering, and/or Field Delivery Experience Slipstream is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit with mission to accelerate climate solutions for everyone. Since 1980 we have conducted a range of energy efficiency, renewable energy, and efficient electrification research and planning initiatives; designed and implemented clean energy programs; offered financing, and provided education and training. Highlights of federal and state programming include partnerships with US Department of Energy, US Department of Defense, State Energy Offices in Wisconsin and Minnesota, State of Wisconsin Department of Administration Division of Energy, Housing and Community Resources, and NYSERDA. Slipstream has designed and delivered scores of energy audit, rebate/incentive, and financing, and training programs optimizing federal and state funding. Project examples include:

Department of Energy, Energy Efficiency Conservation Block Grant Slipstream received a \$20 million ARRA grant to establish the Wisconsin Energy Efficiency Program (WE2), a three-year residential and commercial energy efficiency retrofit program for the cities of Milwaukee, Madison, and Racine. The residential retrofit program used targeted community-based outreach and was delivered in cooperation with Focus on Energy, local utilities, participating cities, and local community resources.

NYSERDA Green Jobs Green New York: Slipstream provides statewide loan origination and program administration services for financing products that support implementation of energy efficiency and renewable energy projects.

Weatherization Training and Technical Services Provider for WAP: Slipstream delivers trainings and credentialing to ensure a high-quality weatherization workforce. Courses address building science principles, home energy diagnostics, air sealing and insulation techniques, and quality HVAC installations, among other topics. We also support the state's weatherization research and evaluation activities and conduct quality assurance and site inspection of weatherized homes. We support WAP current in Minnesota and Wisconsin. In Wisconsin, we also support training for Wisconsin's Energy Assistance (WHEAP) provider network under contract with DEHCR and provide customer care, marketing and research to support WisWAP.

In addition to these programs, Slipstream has designed and delivered numerous incentive/rebate programs in the energy utility sector. Examples include:

- Focus on Energy – portfolio-wide and individual residential and commercial pilots and programs including developing and administering a whole house energy efficiency program, which was one of two Home Performance with Energy Star programs serving moderate income households in the country. The program was Targeted Home Performance with Energy Star and was delivered to households over income for WAP up to 250% of poverty.
- ComEd Affordable Housing New Construction Program and All Electric New Construction Program – program design and implementation for homes of all incomes.
- MECA, Vectren, Indiana Michigan Power, Nicor Gas, Citizens Energy Group – portfolio-wide and individual program design and implementation, including low and moderate income programs.

25. Services Slipstream can Provide to State Energy Offices Slipstream can support State Energy Offices with program design and a broad range of rebate program implementation, including: contractor network development, program delivery, marketing, incentive fulfillment, and complementary financing as well as pre and post implementation activities such as market characterization and impact evaluation and reporting.

Statement Regarding Use of RFI Response

Slipstream authorizes NASEO to publish and distribute this response to the NASEO RFI on its website and through other means to the states and general public. We have included no confidential or proprietary information in our response.

Signed by Authorized Representative: *Robin Lisowski*

