



**San Joaquin Valley**  
AIR POLLUTION CONTROL DISTRICT



## Request For Quotation (RFQ)

For Organizations to Assist with Facilitation and Support of  
Inclusive, Multi-Stakeholder Steering Committees Under AB 617

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

SECTION I	Background	3
SECTION II	Schedule for Steering Committee Meetings	5
SECTION III	Purpose	6
SECTION IV	Description of Requested Neutral Facilitation Services	8
SECTION V	Requested Stipend Management Services	8
SECTION VI	Submission Requirements	10
SECTION VII	Submission Contents	12
SECTION VIII	Evaluation	14

## **Section I – Background**

Despite decades of progress and significant reductions in air pollution, the San Joaquin Valley continues to face challenges in meeting the latest federal health-based air quality standards due to its unique geography, frequently stagnant weather conditions, and its position as a major goods movement corridor for the western United States. The San Joaquin Valley is also home to many of the state's socioeconomically and environmentally burdened communities, with 20 of the top 30 most disadvantaged communities in the state located in the San Joaquin Valley. These challenges are unmatched by any other region in the nation and warrant greater attention at the local, state, and federal level.

In September 2017, the California State Legislature and Governor agreed to extend Cap and Trade as part of a legislative package that included the appropriation of \$1.5 billion in Cap and Trade funding. The Cap and Trade package also included the passage of AB 617 (Cristina Garcia, 2017) that requires the California Air Resources Board (CARB) and air districts to develop and implement additional emissions reporting, monitoring, and reduction plans and measures in an effort to reduce air pollution exposure in the state's most disadvantaged communities.

Through implementation of the AB 617 Community Air Protection Program, resources have been committed to the Valley to reduce air pollution, improve quality of life, and help the region meet its clean air mandates. Building on the Valley's clean air efforts and investments to date, the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (District) will continue its work to better understand the concerns of the selected communities and identify additional opportunities for working together with local partners to further reduce air pollution and improve quality of life. Since the launch of the AB 617 program, CARB has selected four Valley communities as AB 617 communities: South Central Fresno, the City of Shafter, Stockton, and most recently Arvin/Lamont.

Consistent with the State's AB 617 Blueprint, the District has established steering committees for each of the four selected communities and is seeking an individual or organization experienced in large group meeting facilitation to serve the steering committee meetings moving forward. To ensure successful community engagement processes, the District seeks an expert neutral facilitator who will encourage participation and produce constructive and balanced input from steering committee participants.

Through this Request for Quotations (RFQ), the District expects to select a qualified individual(s) and/or organization(s) to assist the District with Community Steering Committee (CSC) engagement under AB 617. Organizations who have experience working with disadvantaged communities, including communities with limited English proficiency, are encouraged to apply. In addition, the District seeks an organization that can also manage and issue the payment of stipends to members who participate as Resident members of the CSC.

To respond to this RFQ, an interested organization should submit one (1) electronic copy (in Adobe Acrobat PDF file format) of its statement of qualifications to the District's staff contact listed below.

Statements of qualifications must be submitted by email to [jaime.holt@valleyair.org](mailto:jaime.holt@valleyair.org) by:  
4:00 p.m. on July 9, 2021  
Late submissions will not be considered.

Statements of qualifications must address all information requested in this RFQ. A statement may add information not requested in this RFQ, but the information should be in addition to, not instead of, the requested information and format.

District staff contact for the RFQ is:  
Jaime Holt  
Chief Communications Officer  
San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District  
1990 E. Gettysburg Ave.  
Fresno, California 93726-0244  
Phone (559) 230-5850  
Fax (559) 230-6111  
E-mail: [jaime.holt@valleyair.org](mailto:jaime.holt@valleyair.org)

## **Section II – Schedule for Steering Committee Meetings**

<u>DATE</u>	<u>EVENT</u>
First Wednesday of the month	STOCKTON MONTHLY MEETING
Second Monday of the month	SHAFTER MONTHLY MEETING
Second Wednesday of the month	SOUTH FRESNO MONTHLY MEETING
Fourth Wednesday of the month	ARVIN/LAMONT MONTHLY MEETING

In addition, each of the CSCs will have monthly agenda-setting meetings and may have multiple subcommittee meetings and extra CSC meetings in a month. Furthermore, there may be an additional Valley committee added to the program in late 2021.

The District may contract with one or more organizations to provide facilitation services for the different steering committees, and manage and issue the payment of stipends per the AB 617 Community Air Protection Resident Stipend Policy and Enrollment Form.

## Section III – Purpose

The San Joaquin Valley communities of South Central Fresno, the City of Shafter, Stockton, and most recently Arvin/Lamont have been selected as communities of focus under AB 617. The CSCs, District staff, partner agencies, and the public have been meeting regularly to accomplish the goals of the program to reduce emissions and exposure of community residents to criteria and toxic air pollution. Community participation and engagement has been and will continue to be critical to the development and implementation of successful Community Emissions Reduction Programs (CERPs) and Community Air Monitoring Plans (CAMPs), and the District is looking for a facilitator(s) who will work to foster active community partnerships toward this end.

The District encourages any interested individual or organization to visit the District's AB 617 website to learn more about the current work being done with the four active steering committees: [www.valleyair.org/community](http://www.valleyair.org/community). Additional information on the statewide AB 617 program is available at: <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/our-work/programs/community-air-protection-program>.

### **Community Steering Committee (CSC) Objectives**

The Valley's AB 617 CSCs are special committees that are responsible for advising the District's development of the CAMP and CERPs under AB 617<sup>1</sup>.

Committee objectives include identifying areas of concern regarding air pollution sources within and outside of the community that impact the community and sensitive receptor sites, and reviewing existing available information on air quality to provide strategic input toward development and implementation of CAMPs and CERPs. Upon adoption of CERPs, the CSCs continue meeting to support and advise District staff on the implementation of AB 617, and to assist sharing progress made in the form of regular reporting. Committee objectives also include disseminating and soliciting information to and from community stakeholders that each committee member represents.

Details regarding Steering Committees include:

### **Membership:**

- The core of the steering committee directly represents the residents and businesses in the community.
- Additional committee members include partner agencies, including city and county, transportation, health departments, and school agencies.
- To further encourage a comprehensive discussion and more thorough understanding of issues impacting the community, and possible solutions, the

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<sup>1</sup>Assembly Bill 617 (Chapter 136, Statutes of 2017) is a state-mandated program that uses a community-based approach to monitor and reduce local air pollution in communities around the state that continue to experience disproportionate impacts from air pollution.

District has invited additional participants to inform the process as necessary (e.g., academia, health services providers, professional engineering services, etc.).

- All interested stakeholders not appointed to the steering committee are encouraged to participate at all public meetings.

The CSCs must primarily consist of residents of the community, businesses within the community (e.g., community residents, small businesses, facility managers/facility workers, and school personnel), community-based and environmental justice organizations, and governmental agencies. Government official committee members serve as full participants in the committee, except that they serve in an advisory role, not a voting role, in final consensus building and decision-making processes.

**Role:**

To inform their role of advising the District in its development of the CERP, the committee members will be responsible for discussing a variety of topics including:

- Community issues and contributing sources to develop a shared understanding of the community's air pollution challenge
- Who has responsibility and authority to address those issues
- Proposed strategies for the community emissions reduction programs
- Mechanisms for engaging with other agencies
- Approaches for additional community outreach
- Other topics of interest to the committee

The committee will discuss the major elements of the CERP as they are developed including:

- Community engagement;
- The community profile and technical assessment
- Targets and strategies; the enforcement plan; and metrics to track progress

## **Section IV – Description of Requested Neutral Facilitation Services**

Minimum qualifications: A minimum of three years proven experience facilitating multi-stakeholder groups.

To assist in the productive and positive neutral facilitation of the Valley AB 617 steering committees and public engagement goals described above, the District seeks to obtain the following facilitation services:

- Design and run successful steering committee meetings that are concise, inclusive and neutral
- Design and execute neutral facilitation/discussion techniques to bring out different points of view and encourage broad-based participation, while also preventing individuals from monopolizing discussions
- Design and facilitate large and/or small group exercises to help build consensus
- Provide meeting facilitation that keeps meetings on schedule and on topic using a variety of collaborative facilitation strategies
- Provide summary of action items at the end of each meeting
- Provide District staff meeting notes to assist with formulating Meeting Summary notes which are posted to community specific webpages
- Assist with meeting logistics including, providing virtual meeting participation instructions, taking and tracking attendance, CSC member naming for virtual meetings, and live streaming the meeting to District social media accounts
- Assist the District with the development and sharing of interactive tools and resources for CSC members (surveys, in-meeting polls, breakout groups, and other consensus building tools)
- Demonstrated skills at providing meeting facilitation for both in-person and virtual online environments utilizing tools such as Zoom and Microsoft Teams

## **Section V – Requested Stipend Management Services**

To assist in the implementation of the District's AB 617 Community Air Protection Resident Stipend Policy and Enrollment Form, the District seeks to obtain the following services:

- Manage monthly CSC attendance logs to ensure individuals receiving stipends have properly attended meeting
- Coordination and issuance of the payment of stipends for all eligible CSC members on a monthly basis
  - Including hard costs such as postage, envelopes, bank fees, etc.
- Issue, collect and catalogue 1099 tax forms for each resident requesting a stipend
- Process monthly report, reimbursements and billing to the District
- Ensure compliance with any applicable laws regarding payment of government funds

The District may contract with one or more organizations for stipend management services for the different steering committees.

## Section VI – Submission Requirements

### General

1. All submittals must be made in accordance with the conditions of this RFQ. Failure to address any of the requirements is grounds for rejection of this submission.
2. All information should be complete, specific, and as concise as possible.
3. Submittals should include any additional information that the respondent deems pertinent to the understanding and evaluation of the bid.
4. The District reserves the right to reject any and all submittals.
5. The cost for developing submittals is the responsibility of the responding entity and shall not be chargeable to the District.
6. Selection and the execution of a contract with the District does not guarantee any particular amount of work.

### Submittal of Statements

1. Due Date – All submittals are due no later than 4:00 p.m., July 9, 2021, and should be submitted via email:

Jaime Holt  
Chief Communications Officer  
San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District  
Phone (559) 230-5850  
E-mail: [jaime.holt@valleyair.org](mailto:jaime.holt@valleyair.org)

2. Submittals received after the date and time previously specified will not be considered.
3. Signature – All submittals should be signed by an authorized representative of the responding firm.
4. Submittals – Submit one (1) electronic copy (in Adobe Acrobat PDF file format).
5. Grounds for Rejection – A submittal may be immediately rejected at any time if it arrives after the deadline, or is not in the prescribed format, or is not signed by an individual authorized to represent the firm.
6. Disposition of the Submittals – All responses to this RFQ become property of the District and will be kept confidential until a recommendation for award of a contract has been announced. Thereafter, submittals are subject to public inspection and disclosure under the California Public Records Act. If a respondent believes that any portion of its submittal is exempt from public disclosure, it may mark that portion “confidential.” The District will use reasonable means to ensure that such confidential information is safeguarded, but will not be held liable for inadvertent disclosure of the information. Statements marked “confidential” in their entirety will not be honored, and the District will not deny public disclosure of any portion of submittals so marked. By submitting a document with portions marked “confidential,” a respondent represents it has a good faith belief that such portions are exempt from disclosure under the California Public Records Act and agrees to reimburse the District for, and to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the District, its officers,

employees, and agents, from and against any and all claims, damages, losses, liabilities, suits, judgments, fines, penalties, costs, and expenses, including without limitation, attorneys' fees, expenses, and court costs of any nature whatsoever, arising from or relating to the District's non-disclosure of any such designated portions of a statement.

### **Interviews**

1. The District, at its option, may interview firms that respond to this RFQ. The interviews will be for the purpose of clarifying the submittals.
2. Submittal of new materials at an interview will not be permitted.
3. Interviews may involve a presentation and/or a question-and-answer session.

## Section VII – Submission Contents

### Contents

Submittals should follow the format outlined below and include all requested information. Please number your responses exactly as the items are presented here, and limit to ten (10) one-sided pages, except work samples, which should be included in a separate appendix.

1. Experience, Structure, Personnel
  - a. Organization Contact Information – Provide the following information about the firm:
    - i. Address and telephone number of office nearest to Fresno, California.
    - ii. Name of organization’s representative designated as the primary contact and their email address
    - iii. Name of project manager, if different from the individual designated as the primary contact
  - b. Organization History – Provide a history of your organization’s experience in providing services similar to those sought through this RFQ, including any services provided to governmental organizations and any facilitation conducted virtually via Zoom or similar platform. Provide references for any similar projects listed, including contact name, title, and telephone number. Describe the technical capabilities of the organization in all areas relevant to the services sought through this RFQ.
  - c. Assigned Personnel – List all key personnel who would be assigned to contract fulfillment by name and role. Identify the primary individual who will be assign to lead the meeting facilitation. Provide descriptions of education and training, along with a summary of experience in providing services similar to those sought through this RFQ. Background descriptions can be a resume, CV, or summary sheet. Note that the standard District contract will not permit substitution of primary facilitator without prior written approval of the District.
  - d. Relevant Facilitation Work Summaries (Does not count against 10-page limit) – Samples of up to five (5) major projects that the organization has facilitated in the areas sought through this RFQ. Include the client, the name of a contact person who is able to provide a reference, a description of the nature of the work, and the size and complexity of the project. Particularly as it relates to the facilitation of existing steering committees, for more information about these existing committees visit:  
[www.valleyair.org/community](http://www.valleyair.org/community)
  - e. Conflict of Interest – Address possible conflicts of interest or appearance of impropriety regarding other clients of the organization or activities of the organization that could be created by providing services to the District. To ensure neutral facilitation is being provided, qualified applicants would not have any actual or potential conflicts of interest or evidence of personal bias, including but not limited to:

- i. Participation as a member of the CSC.
    - ii. Familial relationships to members of the CSC.
    - iii. Direct personal or business interests which may be impacted or involve the work done as part of CERP and CAMP development and implementation.
    - iv. Business/organization affiliates participating as members of CSCs
  - f. Additional Information – Provide any other information that the organization wishes the District to consider in evaluating the submission.
2. Explanation of organization’s prior experience in facilitating for a community-driven process, including efforts to understand community history, working with community members to develop meeting agendas, handling of voting procedures, and experience facilitating in a virtual setting (such as Zoom and/or Microsoft Teams).
3. Explanation of specific experiences incorporating diversity, equity, and inclusion principles while providing facilitation services.
4. Explanation of organization’s prior experience successfully facilitating community-wide meetings to develop a prioritized list of consensus-based strategies across diverse audiences through a highly transparent and community driven process.
5. Explanation of organization’s ability to provide stipend management services in the four existing steering committees and additional new community(s) if selected by the California Air Resources Board. District may contract with multiple entities if necessary to serve the steering committee needs.
6. Cost Information (Does not count against 10-page limit)
  - a. The normal hourly rate of primary facilitator and support staff members whose resume is provided or whose job category may be required, and the rate that would be charged to the District.
  - b. A list of anticipated reimbursable expenses if any, such as expenses for presentation materials, supplies, deliveries, B/W and color printouts and copies, faxes, photo scans and travel, copywriting and copyediting services and the rate charged for each.
  - c. Any reduced fees offered to other municipalities, governmental entities, economic development or nonprofit organizations, and civic organizations.
  - d. Itemization of any value added or in-kind contributions your organization can bring to the table.
  - e. Any other fees or charges.

## **SECTION VIII – EVALUATION**

The District will review submitted proposals for completeness, capability and experience providing the facilitation services requested in this RFQ. Upon selection, District staff will work with the contractor(s) to develop a scope of work and a budget to be included in the final contract(s) to carry out the work described in this RFQ and take contract to the District's Governing Board as appropriate.

In evaluating statements of qualifications submitted pursuant to this request, the District places high value on the following factors, not necessarily in order of importance:

- Fee structure relating to proposed facilitation and related services
- Demonstrated understanding of and ability to provide services required by the District
- Quality and diversity of work product as demonstrated through submitted facilitation work summaries
- Understanding of the unique environmental, socio-economic and cultural characteristics of the San Joaquin Valley and specifically, the Valley's AB 617 selected communities
- Proven track record working collaboratively with community stakeholders including, but not limited to, community residents, businesses, community-based organizations and local government

The District reserves the right to reject any and all statements of qualifications submitted and/or request additional information.