

## **ACCESSolar: Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Q: Where can I find the list of sites available under the ACCESSolar program?**

A: The available sites are listed on the linked Site Proposal Form. Details of each site are available is posted on the NYC Open Data Portal. <https://data.cityofnewyork.us/Housing-Development/NYCHA-ACCESSolar-Opportunities/gbgg-xjuf>

The NYC Solar Map website will announce updates to the ACCESSolar listing here:

<https://nysolarmap.com/nyc-solar/nycha-25-mw-solar-program/public-purpose-shared-solar-program/>

### **Q: Why can't NYCHA buy the power generated on its roofs?**

A: NYCHA purchases its power from the New York Power Authority (NYPA). NYPA rate structures and regulations make it impractical to construct PPA systems on NYCHA property and currently forbid NYCHA from serving as an off-taker for any community solar systems.

### **Q: Under what circumstances will NYCHA ask selected developers to pay a roof lease?**

A: If the project can support a least payment to NYCHA *after* taking into account resident hiring and LMI enrollment goals, then NYCHA will seek to negotiate a lease payment with the selected developer. If the selected developer demonstrates that a lease payment would make the project non-viable, then it will not be required.

### **Q: Will different teams be awarded license agreements covering the same sites, creating competition between the teams?**

A: For this first ACCESSolar solicitation, NYCHA aims to select five teams, each of which will focus on separate areas within the city. The exact areas they will be awarded a license agreement for are to be determined and will depend on what sites are included in the applications received. NYCHA will not have multiple teams working on the same site.

### **Q: What is an LMI household?**

A: Low and Moderate Income (LMI) households are those that make 80 percent or less of the area median income; for New York this is calculated at the metropolitan area level. For more details see <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/il.html>. For purposes of this program, anyone living in NYCHA public housing or receiving Section 8 vouchers is already pre-qualified under the HUD definition of LMI.

### **Q: If a developer submits a final proposal before expiration of the 12-month license agreement, will NYCHA review the proposal when it is received?**

A: NYCHA welcomes proposals submitted at any time before the expiration of the 12-month license agreement, and will start reviewing proposals as soon as they are submitted.

### **Q: What sort of technical assistance will be available?**

A: Selected applicant teams will be asked to participate in workshops facilitated by NYCHA and its technical assistance partners at Sustainable CUNY and ICF. These workshops will cover such topics as permitting, safety and security on multifamily housing, VDER (Value of Distributed Energy resources) and consumer protections.

**Q: Why will selected teams be required to participate in workshops?**

A: NYCHA wants this pilot ACCESSolar program to be a collaborative process, where teams learn from each other. NYCHA also wants to share technical guidance with the selected teams to improve the chances of each projects' success.

**Q: Why will only 5 teams be selected?**

A: NYCHA wants to select a manageable number of teams for this first pilot phase of the ACCESSolar program. Teams will be selected to cover as wide a geographical range as possible. For example, depending on the sites chosen by Applicants, there may be one team selected per borough.

**Q: How many sites can I select?**

A: Applicants can select as many sites as they wish. Chosen applicant teams may be awarded a license agreement for some or all of their proposed sites at the sole discretion of NYCHA.

**Q: When will the 5 selected teams be chosen?**

A: NYCHA will complete the evaluation process and notify selected applicant teams by August 2018.

**Q: Why are Applicants asked to register into the Shared Solar NYC Gateway?**

A: The Shared Solar NYC Gateway is a platform for various entities to team up on solar projects. Solar projects developed on NYCHA buildings will require many team members (solar developer, community solar manager, solar installer, workforce development organization, etc.), more than traditional solar installations often require. The Shared Solar Gateway and the connections made possible by Sustainable CUNY through the Gateway will enable developers and CBOs to build the teams they need to execute these projects. It will also help confirm to NYCHA and its partners that the teams are complete.

**Q: When will the Shared Solar NYC Gateway be open?**

A: An updated version of the Shared Solar Gateway will be available on the NY Solar Map website starting on April 23rd.

**Q: Will there be future opportunities to participate in ACCESSolar?**

A: NYCHA will conduct additional rounds of ACCESSolar solicitations in the future as long as suitable sites remain available to develop solar power.

**Q: Will more sites be available later?**

A: Yes, more sites will be made available following the first pilot phase. Smaller rooftops (generally those estimated to have 40 kW of solar capacity or less) that have roof replacements planned will be made available upon completion of those roof replacements. In addition, sites that are offered but not developed by selected vendors under the Commercial Solar Program (run through the procurement process) will subsequently be made available through ACCESSolar.

**Q: I have another question! How can I contact NYCHA?**

A: NYCHA has set up a dedicated email address, [accessolar@nycha.nyc.gov](mailto:accessolar@nycha.nyc.gov), to answer any other questions you may have. NYCHA will respond to all questions about the ACCESSolar program within one week.

**Q: Will Q&A responses be posted publicly?**

A: Yes. This FAQ will be periodically updated with NYCHA's answers to your questions.

---

**ACCESSolar Questions: Update 6/21/18**

**Q: We are a non-profit organization but we are facilitating this program/managing its implementation. Do you consider us a CBO or developer?**

A: You don't need to specify whether you count as a CBO or developer- we just want to make sure that teams will be able to cover all aspects of this project.

**Q: Our team includes at least five distinct organizations; do all of our partners need to register on CUNY's website and provide resumes for key personnel along with our application?**

A: No, we won't require that all of your partners register on CUNY's Shared Solar Gateway- while that step is strongly encouraged for interested parties who are still looking for partners, if you have a full team already it's not necessary. We do ask that you include resumes for key personnel from each organization as part of your application to NYCHA.

**Q: We are planning to partner with multiple community groups each covering a different area of the city. Do you recommend that we submit multiple applications or can we submit a single application with all the sites that we hope to include across both geographies?**

A: This is up to you- you are welcome to submit one application with all sites as long as it's clear in your answers (or supplementary uploads) which partners will be focusing on which sites. However, as the form only allows for ten uploads per application (the Site Proposal Form and nine others) you may wish to submit two applications if that makes it easier for you to include all the material you need.

**Q: I know we're required to provide answers in the online application portal and supplement those responses with (1) resumes of team members and (2) the site proposal form. We'd like to know if there are any other questions/responses that we're required to answer in the portal once we've submitted the initial answers. As I understand it, the only questions required are those attached that my team pulled directly from the portal. I just want to make sure that once we answer these, there are no additional questions that will pop up.**

A: Once the application period closes and we move to the evaluation phase, we may ask follow-up questions via email and/or invite applicants to come in for a brief in-person interview. However, we can confirm there are no additional questions or responses required now- everything required is on the initial form and nothing else will pop up.

**Q: Will NYCHA allow organizations to apply independently and have a teaming meeting to let organizations meet others who are interested in the opportunity?**

A: Our partners at Sustainable CUNY are providing assistance in finding partners through the Shared Solar NYC Gateway, available here: <https://shedsolarnyc.org/accessolar/>. Solar developers and CBOs/non-profits who are looking for ACCESSolar partners can register in the Gateway, and Sustainable CUNY will contact registrants with compatible goals and provide them with the opportunity to connect.