

# Open Innovation Call in New York targeting Air Quality and Urban Heat Island Effect

## Questions Log from Webinar 2 July 2019

**Q: Question on the submission format: is it possible to fill the format and save it temporarily before we submit as final one?**

**A:** No, unfortunately it can't be saved temporarily. It is advisable to make the application in a Word-file (or the like) and copy into submission form, especially when it comes to answers with a limit of characters (see submission form for details).

**Q: Can I submit an independent proposal if I am an affiliate of one of the associated agencies (e.g. Urban Systems Lab)?**

**A:** Unfortunately not. Please refer to the *Competition Terms and Conditions* in the *Competition Manual*, page 16: "Employees of the City, and the judges or any of their respective affiliates, subsidiaries, advertising agencies, or any other company or individual involved with the design, production, execution or distribution of the Challenge and their immediate family (spouse, parents and step-parents, sibling and step-siblings, and children and step-children) and household members (people who share the same residence at least three (3) months out of the year) of each such employee are not eligible to participate and receive award of a stipend or agreement with the City or any award".

**Q: Should potential local partners for pilot implementation be formally included in the proposal?**

**A:** Not necessary at this time of application.

**Q: Can you please elaborate on "The Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) of the idea and related materials are owned by the contestant, or can you give suggestions of proposals that don't require applicants to have their own copyright on the technology or product being proposed**

**(and adding to that): Q: my question was not whether the city would be TAKING the IPR...it was around the idea of a proposed solution 'system' that is composed of materials and products that are owned by entities other than the person submitting the idea. for example (and this is not my idea): a green roof is made of several layers of products made by other manufacturers. if green roofs weren't already being explored by the city, would they be an acceptable submission idea? or in your Air Conditioning pilot idea, can only the manufacturer**

**of that AC unit who holds the IPR apply?**

**A:** It is not necessary to own the technologies that are being implemented. If your submission concept is a novel way to implement a technology or provide a service that includes another company's technology as a service, that would be acceptable. To continue with your cooling example, if one was to present a concept for how low-energy and affordable cooling could be implemented for heat vulnerable residents, that would help address our call for innovations.

**Q: Can you provide an idea about the budget for the winner solution?**

**A:** The budget for the pilot will depend on what the winning solution is, what pilot consists of, and which agencies are sponsoring the pilot. We intend to find the funding to ensure any pilots will be meaningfully funded in order to verify the viability of the solution within the City.

**Q: Does reducing motor vehicle exhaust through reducing the number of industrial trips count as improving air pollution**

**A:** Yes, but it needs to be an innovative and new solution for NYC in some way.

**Q: I would like to have a confirmation on lowering air pollution building materials. To apply, do we have to reduce only ozone and PM2.5/PM 10 or are you interested in building materials that can reduce NO<sub>x</sub> and SO<sub>x</sub> gases?**

**A:** We are interested in reducing all air pollutants. PM and ozone are highlighted because the City monitors them most widely and they have the widest spread health impacts but all pollutants are important to reduce.

**Q: Is there a way to submit a video as part of the submission**

**A:** No, only pdf, doc, docx files.

**Q: Should specific neighborhoods be selected at this stage?**

**A:** No, that is not necessary for the initial submission. A solution will ideally work in any part of the City but as noted in the competition manual, we are interested in focusing on the most vulnerable neighborhoods to start with.

**Q: Would you prefer a solution that tackles both issues (Air Quality + Heat Islands)?**

**A:** Co-beneficial solutions will be looked at favorably but in the context of all of our stated criteria.

**Q: NYC CoolRoofs program has coated more than 6.7 million square feet of rooftop space to-date. Why hasn't this technology been applied in a larger scale? What are the challenges in NYC with "high solar reflectance cooling paint"**

**A:** The CoolRoofs program had a limited scope and budget. For more

information on the program and its goals, please refer to the NYC Cool Neighborhoods report: [https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/orr/pdf/Cool\\_Neighborhoods\\_NYC\\_Report\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/orr/pdf/Cool_Neighborhoods_NYC_Report_FINAL.pdf)

and the program website: <https://www1.nyc.gov/nycbusiness/article/nyc-coolroofs>

**Q: For Track 1, will the city subsidize the purchase of the customers?**

**A:** If this question is referring to subsidizing purchases of equipment for individual residents, the answer is that it is possible depending on the solution proposed. Please refer to this recent example of the City providing subsidized cooling technology to residents for public health and safety reasons: <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/nycha/about/press/pr-2019/pr-20190617.page>

**Q: Would it be possible to speak with NYC Department contacts to get feedback on our proposal?**

**A:** Not for the initial proposals. Feedback will be given for proposals/submissions after finalists are selected.

**Q: How many apartment units will be part of this program?**

**A:** There is no aspect of this open innovation call that directly deals with apartments. If a proposed technology is apartment related, we would determine how to pilot the solution if selected as a winner.

**Q: Should solutions be more about urban design or more traditional architecture?**

**A:** The primary concern is reducing air pollution and the harmful effects of the urban heat island effect. There is no preference in how these solutions are implemented. Keep in mind that we are emphasizing the adaptation of existing City infrastructure rather than building new neighborhoods from the ground up.

**Q: What are the most important data points of interest? Also, can a link of the information be sent?**

**A:** We have included our most important areas of interest and links in the Competition Manual.

**Q: How much participation or potential for partnership can we expect from other city services e.g. municipal buses?**

**A:** We will work to connect with every agency and partner that is needed to run a successful pilot, keeping in mind that not all relevant agencies are a part of the City government. The MTA, who run the municipal buses, are an independent agency run by New York State.

**Q: Is reduction in GHG emissions also an objective or only reduction of pollutants (such as PM2.5)?**

**A:** Co-beneficial solutions will be looked at favorably but in the context of all of our stated criteria. The main objective of this OIC is the reduction of pollutants but the City has a strong GHG reduction commitment so this benefit will be taken into account while evaluating submissions.

**Q: If you have a product/service that is used in service of better/more targeted designs, you recommend we apply for both**

**A:** Yes. I would suggest that the application not be the same for both tracks however. It should be clear why the submissions are in their selected tracks and not appear to be arbitrarily in both to increase the chance of selection.

**Q: Is Urban X selecting finalists in each track overall? Or just for their cohort 7?**

**A:** To be clear, the role of the external evaluators are to provide the agency evaluators with their professional opinions of the submitted proposals. They will be participating specifically in the final round of evaluations and not be contributing to the direct selection of the winners. Only the agency evaluators will have a direct vote for the winning submissions. Regarding Urban X, they will have the opportunity to identify applicants from the finalist pool that they wish to interview for their Cohort 07 accelerator group.

**Q: If we submit a PowerPoint deck to supplement the application, is there a maximum presentation length?**

**A:** First, you must make it into a pdf-file, and remember that with many applications, very long presentations are likely to be skimmed more than read carefully – be as concise and as clear as possible. We recommend 10 slides.

**Q: Ideally, if we are short-listed after proposing our ideas, we would need funding to develop a working demo for NY. Any idea about envelope to cover a pilot/demo?**

**A:** Funding will only be provided to the winning solution. The funding will cover the cost of piloting and verifying the efficacy of said solution. Submissions that are as yet untested will have that taken into consideration during the judging process.

**Q: Can ideas be existing solutions, but not implemented within NYC itself?**

**A:** Yes.

**Q: Is funding provided for any stage in this competition under Track 1 and Track 2?**

**A:** No. Funding will only be provided to the winning solution, and at this point, we are conceiving of the pilot being for Track 1. The funding will cover the cost of piloting and verifying the efficacy of the solution.

Since Track 2 proposals are presumably larger in scope and scale, and possibly conceptual in nature, we are not currently envisioning a pilot but that determination will be made once we have reviewed the applications.

**Q: When chosen to pilot the product, will the city pay the vendor or will this all be at the expense of the vendor?**

A: The pilot will be paid for by the City and supporting partners. The vendor will not be expected to cover the cost of the pilot itself but some expenses might not be covered like travel, etc.

**Q: Does hydrogen fuel cell vehicles qualify as a desirable solution?**

A: If the solution reduces air pollution or the urban heat island effect, it will be considered desirable. Any solution that solves the presented challenge will be accepted.

**Q: The most heat vulnerable neighborhoods are in Central Brooklyn, the South Bronx, and Upper Manhattan. Do you know if there are other areas where it would make sense to act?**

A: There are other neighborhoods with varying amounts of heat vulnerability but the aforementioned ones rank highest.

**Q: Will we select our own sites for a more detailed proposal for the finalists?**

A: No, NYC will choose the sites for the proposals and eventual pilots.

**Q: Can we have access to Neighborhood Air Quality and Cool Neighborhood data. If so, what format will that will be?**

A: The links to this information can be found in the competition manual. To present it again here, the latest City data relating to air quality can be found here:

<https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/data/data-publications/air-quality-nyc-community-air-survey.page>

The NYC Cool Neighborhoods report can be found here:

[https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/orr/pdf/Cool\\_Neighborhoods\\_NYC\\_Report\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/orr/pdf/Cool_Neighborhoods_NYC_Report_FINAL.pdf)

**Q: Which organization owns the air quality monitoring network in NYC?**

A: NYC Dept. of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) is responsible for the air quality monitoring while the Dept. of Environmental Protection is responsible for the enforcement of the air code. More information can be found in the Reference Material section of the Competition Manual.

**Q: Do you prefer focused solutions that solve only one specific problem or broader solutions oriented to solve several**

**dimensions of the problem?**

**A:** Co-beneficial solutions will be looked at favorably but in the context of all of our stated criteria.

**Q: Are the submissions confidential?**

**A:** This is stated about confidentiality in the Competition Manual at page 11: *"The Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) of the idea and related materials are owned by the contestant. However, we urge the contestants to bear in mind that this is an open innovation call that is looking for co-creation and joint development. The contestants will decide what kind of sensitive business information they would like, or need, to share in the competition. Individually confidentiality agreements to protect sensitive business information will be accepted to protect the business idea. It is the contestants' responsibility to point out the sensitive information and deliver the confidentiality agreement. All submissions will be published on Access Cities' website, as written documentation associated with the competition, on websites of the organizing partners and network or under other circumstances in which the organizing partners and network may want to inform others about the competition and its results. When contestants submit for the competition, they accept that their proposal can be published."*

**Q: What is the max amount of funding possible for a pilot project within existing rules?**

**A:** There is no stated maximum of funding. The source and amount of funding can only be determined once we know what the pilot project is.

**Q: What do you mean by relevant financial information to assess the solution. Would that be the cost of the R&D?**

**A:** To assess the affordability of the solution, it will be helpful to have financial information about the proposal and associated costs of implementation.

**Q: Can two entities collaborate on a solution for track one, e.g. a data aggregator and another start-up?**

**A:** Yes.

**Q: Do you have to be incorporated as a for profit company to apply?**

**A:** No.

**Q: Is there a limit to the amount of pilot money without triggering an RFP according to NYC law and procurement?**

**A:** There is no stated maximum of funding. The source and amount of funding can only be determined once we know what the pilot project is because the procurement rules vary depending on the type of procurement and whether or not the company is a registered

MWBE.

**Q: Is there a file size limit for submitting attachments? Can links to websites be submitted?**

**A:** Yes, check the submission form for the relevant questions.

**Q: Can a spouse of a city agency, that's not part of the voting agency, be part of the presenting team?**

**A:** Check *Competition Terms and Conditions* in the *Competition Manual*, page 16: "Employees of the City, and the judges or any of their respective affiliates, subsidiaries, advertising agencies, or any other company or individual involved with the design, production, execution or distribution of the Challenge and their immediate family (spouse, parents and step-parents, sibling and step-siblings, and children and step-children) and household members (people who share the same residence at least three (3) months out of the year) of each such employee are not eligible to participate and receive award of a stipend or agreement with the City or any award".

**Q: Will the winner of the Track 1 have some financial support (funds) to deploy the Pilot project and what would be the duration of the Pilot?**

**A:** The pilot will be paid for by the City and supporting partners. The vendor will not be expected to cover the cost of the pilot itself but some expenses might not be covered like travel, etc. The duration of the pilot will be determined after the winner is selected.