

35 Companies Express Interest In Constructing LUCELEC Solar Farm

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St Lucia Electricity Services Limited's (LUCELEC) Request for Proposals (RFP) for the construction of a 3 megawatt (MW) solar energy farm is drawing significant interest from around the world. A recent meeting and site visit for interested bidders attracted seventy representatives from thirty-five companies from the US, Canada, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, many of whom are partnering with local solar, engineering and construction firms.

Meeting participants received an overview of the project and its importance to St. Lucia, and information on St. Lucia's energy transition strategy and the RFP process. They were also given the opportunity to ask questions and get clarification on the project, and to examine the proposed site at La Tourney, Vieux Fort first-hand to assist them in preparing their bids.

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The meeting was hosted by LUCELEC, the Ministry of Sustainable Development, Energy, Science and Technology, the Clinton Climate Initiative (CCI), Rocky Mountain Institute-Carbon War Room (RMI-CWR), and DNV GL who are assisting with coordinating the administrative and technical aspects of the RFP and tender process. CCI, RMI-CWR, and DNV GL will provide project management services during bid evaluation and technical support during the construction implementation.

LUCELEC's Business Development Manager Victor Emmanuel is leading the project. Speaking at the start of the meeting, Mr Emmanuel said the company was "pleased in the interest expressed to date in the project, particularly with the number of potential bidders from all over the world."

He explained that although there are currently about 50 small solar photovoltaic (PV) systems connected to the LUCELEC grid, providing about 500 kilowatts of electricity from renewable sources, the 3MW solar farm is historic in that it will be the first utility scale renewable energy project in St. Lucia.

LUCELEC will own and operate the solar farm. Potential bidders have until April 22, 2016 to submit their bid for the construction of the solar farm. The shortlist of candidates will be finalised on May 6 and the project will be awarded on May 20. The submitted bids will be evaluated both technically and financially by a Bid Evaluation Committee made up of representatives from the company and its partners.

LUCELEC intends to construct at least 1 megawatt of the project this year and develop the remaining project phases subsequently.

The solar farm demonstrates LUCELEC's and the Government of Saint Lucia's continued commitment to the energy transition process they agreed to when they signed the National Energy Transition Strategy in January 2016.

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