

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

California Public Utilities Commission

Deadline for Submittal is 5 p.m. PST, Monday, June 15th, 2020

Interconnection Dispute Resolution Panel: Technical Advisor

Electric Rule 21 is a tariff that describes the interconnection, operating and metering requirements for generation facilities to be connected to a utility's distribution system. The tariff provides customers wishing to install generating or storage facilities on their premises with access to the electric grid while protecting the safety and reliability of the distribution and transmission systems at the local and system levels.

In recent years, growth in the number of requests to interconnect solar photovoltaic (PV) systems to the utility grid has raised new issues and challenges for PV installers, utilities, and ultimately the PV customers who absorb the costs of interconnection challenges. The increased volume of interconnection requests and the evolving market for distributed energy resources (DERs) has led California to revisit and revise Rule 21 interconnection requirements and have caused utilities to streamline and automate interconnection processes.

Assembly Bill (AB) 2861 (Stats. 2016, Ch. 672), signed into law in September 2016, authorizes the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) to establish an expedited dispute resolution (EDR) process that will issue binding determinations to electric distribution grid interconnection disputes based on the recommendations of a technical panel within 60 days of the Commission receiving the Application regarding a particular dispute.

AB 2861 is intended to address the inadequacy of the existing interconnection dispute resolution process described in utility tariffs in Section K of Rule 21, which relies on protracted mediation and does not benefit from readily-leveraged technical expertise to review the engineering determinations and upgrade cost allocations that often lead to disputes.

Specifically, AB 2861 directs the CPUC to, among other things, establish an eight-member technical panel (EDR Technical Panel), consisting of four members from utilities and four non-utility members. Two members from each group will serve on sub-panels responsible for reviewing individual disputes.

The California Institute for Energy and Environment (CIEE) and the Center for Law, Energy & Environment (CLEE) at UC Berkeley Law are looking to identify and recommend for CPUC selection a group of Technical Advisors to conduct research and/or provide expertise in support of the EDR Technical Panel and its members as needed.

The selected Technical Advisors will assist the State with the following activities*:

- Serve as a Technical Advisor when called upon (with advance notice) in support of individual expedited interconnection dispute resolution sub-panel reviews. Technical Advisors would have no decision-making authority or responsibility.
- Conduct background research and/or provide expert advice on issues before members of the EDR Technical Panel as needed.
- Produce and deliver copies of written assignments concerning distribution grid engineering topics, such as policy guidance and background research, associated with support of individual expedited interconnection dispute resolution sub-panel reviews.

* All work activities described above are to be performed on an hourly, as-needed basis, with some remote participation in dispute proceedings.

Eligibility:

Respondents cannot be employed by any of the three major Investor Owned Utilities (Pacific Gas & Electric, Southern California Edison, San Diego Gas & Electric). If an economic conflict of interest is positively determined, respondents will be automatically disqualified. A Statements of Economic Interests - Form 700 will be initially required for review of potential conflicts and then reevaluated prior to service in support of any individual interconnection dispute resolution sub-panel.

Qualifications:

Minimum Qualifications:

- Degreed professional with familiarity of the issues described below. Degree can be in engineering, physical sciences, economics, business, or law.
- Extensive working experience with electrical grid interconnection issues, including strong understanding of distributed generation, grid integration, and electric power systems and protection.
- Technical Advisor shall be independent and shall not have the appearance of an economic conflict of interest that may restrict the ability of the person to provide the services outlined in this Scope of Work. The person must not be subject to the one-year or permanent ban on providing such services outlined in this scope of work, pursuant to the Political Reform Act, California Government Code Sections 87400-87410.

Desired Qualifications:

- Knowledge of CPUC Rule 21 interconnection process, rules, and requirements (or equivalent), including steps in the process and their purposes; obligations of IOUs and applicants; and technical, business, and procedural priorities of CPUC, IOUs, applicants, and other Rule 21 stakeholders.
- Comprehensive knowledge of technical, functional, distribution grid integration, permitting and compliance issues related to technologies such as, but may not be limited to:
 - Behind-the-meter (BTM) solar + energy storage systems (and implications for distribution grids);
 - Two-way meters and programmable smart inverters
 - Transformers and synchronous condensers on primary and secondary distribution systems
 - Technologies amenable to demand response, such as electric vehicle chargers
- Knowledge of concerns regarding interconnection of distributed generation resources in relation to distribution grid system protection and overcharging on secondary distribution lines and impacts associated with reverse flow on electrical distribution lines, including analog protection systems
- Working knowledge of utility costs and safety concerns related to interconnection and timelines related to distribution line construction and upgrades.
- Knowledge of economics and legal/permitting issues associated with the insertion of distributed energy systems on the grid.

Required information for consideration:

- Curriculum Vitae (CV) not to exceed 2-pages in length.
- Brief 1-page statement of interest and relevant experience.
- Proposed hourly rate for services.
- Anticipated month-to-month availability to potentially serve on panels through the end of calendar year 2020.

Instructions for Submission of RFQ Response:

RFQ Response must be submitted via email as a single PDF file. The deadline for submissions is **5 p.m. Pacific Standard Time on Monday, June 15th, 2020**. The email address for submissions is Rule21@berkeley.edu. Earlier submission is encouraged to avoid potential last minute issues with transmittal.