



# Request for Proposals (RFP): Installation of Off-Grid Solar Power Systems at Various Laboratory Facilities throughout Zambia

**RFP Issue Date:** 4/13/2021

**All Bids Due Date:** 5/13/2021

**Submissions due via email to:**

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House # 52 Paseli Road  
P. O. Box NM 63 Northmead  
Lusaka, Zambia

The development of, and the projects anticipated in, this RFP are supported by Cooperative Agreement Number NU2GGH002122 between the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Centre for Infectious Diseases Research in Zambia (CIDRZ) sub-awarded to Association of Public Health Laboratories, Inc. The contents of this RFP are solely the responsibility of the authors and neither represent the official views of CDC nor reflect CDC's endorsement of a product or procedure.

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## Summary

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The Association of Public Health Laboratories, Inc. (APHL or the Association) and the Centre for Infectious Disease Research in Zambia (CIDRZ), in collaboration with the Zambia Ministry of Health (MOH) and the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) anticipates undertaking various solar power projects at laboratories across Zambia. The total number of installations will depend on the amount of funding allocated by CDC to these projects and the needs and capacity of MOH. APHL expects to have solar power equipment installed at multiple laboratories during the year on a relatively aggressive time schedule.

The solar power projects will take place at various labs as described in Appendix A. APHL encourages any party who can successfully provide the requested goods and services to submit a proposal for consideration.

## Background

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APHL is a nonprofit organization that works to safeguard the public’s health by strengthening public health laboratories (PHLs) in the United States and globally. APHL is organized under the laws of the United States of America’s District of Columbia with its headquarters office at 8515 Georgia Avenue, Suite 700, Silver Spring MD, 20910. APHL is recognized as tax exempt in the United States under Section 501(c)(3) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code and its work on behalf of PHLs spans more than 60 years.

In Zambia, APHL operates through its registered branch office, Association of Public Health Laboratories Zambia Inc. APHL’s Zambian branch office operates out of House # 52 Paseli Road, P. O. Box NM 63 Northmead, Lusaka, Zambia.

APHL has been issued a subaward from CIDRZ in connection with their Cooperative Agreement Number NU2GGH002122 with the CDC. Under this subaward, APHL will manage the construction of solar panel projects in various laboratory locations in the Republic of Zambia.

## Anticipated RFP Schedule

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Applications are due to the individual(s) specified in the [Final RFP Response](#) section of this RFP by 5:00 pm Central Africa Time (CAT) on **May 13, 2021**. APHL anticipates the following schedule for the entire competitive bidding process:

Date	Event
4/13/2021	APHL issues RFP
4/14/2021-5/12/2021	Applicants set up site visits in consultation with APHL
5/13/2021	All Bids due to APHL by 5:00 PM CAT

If APHL makes any modification to this anticipated schedule, it will post the change to APHL's procurement website: [www.aphl.org/rfp](http://www.aphl.org/rfp).

## Nature of Awards

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### Overall Description

APHL will select one or more applicant(s) to provide the design and installation of solar system components based on its evaluation of received proposals. Applicants must bid on **all** 121 individual sites that are grouped together in [Appendix A-Site Surveys](#) by geographical location. The successful applicant(s) will receive a contract from APHL that sets out the scope of work, project completion timeline, budget, payment terms, invoicing requirements, and legal terms associated with the project.

APHL will select one or more applicant(s) from those receiving the highest evaluation score from the [Evaluation Team](#) based upon APHL's determination of who is able to complete the work most efficiently and economically. APHL anticipates selecting more than one applicant to complete the work. Prior to issuing contracts to selected applicants, APHL will notify an awardee of the laboratory sites that will be included in their scope of work.

### Specific Information

1. Applicants must designate all components needed to construct and install the individual solar systems and SmartCare requirements based on the expected connected load and power consumption described in [Appendix A-Site Surveys](#) of this RFP for each site.
2. APHL will supply many of the components necessary to energize the sites. All APHL-supplied components are listed in [Appendix F – Components to be used in Designing Each System](#). *Awardees will not be responsible for purchasing any of the components listed in Appendix F.* APHL will store these components in a warehouse in Lusaka; awardees will be responsible for transporting such components from the warehouse in Lusaka to the project site.
3. Awardees will be responsible for supplying all other material necessary to install and energize the sites. [Appendix D-Typical Light Fixtures and Lamps](#) and [Appendix E-Typical Exhaust Fan for Battery Room Ventilation](#) provide more information on light fixtures and ventilation components that the awardee will supply.
4. APHL anticipates that awardees will mount all photo-voltaic panels on the laboratory roof unless the awardee determined that the roof is incapable of supporting the weight associated with the solar array installation or there is an insufficient room on the roof to mount the arrays.

### Proposal Structure and Content

In order to submit a complete and acceptable proposal, an applicant must submit the material described in the following four sections:

1. Completion of the Installation Contract Cost Data Entry Worksheet Excel File
  - o An applicant must complete a copy of this Excel spreadsheet, a copy of which available on APHL's procurement website at [www.aphl.org/rfp](http://www.aphl.org/rfp).
  - o More instructions on the contents needed in this spreadsheet are located in [Appendix B -Installation Contract Cost Data Entry Worksheet](#).
  - o **\*\*\*As noted earlier in this AFP, an applicant must bid on all laboratory sites.\*\*\***
  
2. Completion of the Facilities Survey and Components Design Worksheet Excel File
  - o An applicant must also complete a copy of the Excel spreadsheet, available on APHL's procurement website at [www.aphl.org/rfp](http://www.aphl.org/rfp).
  - o More instructions on the contents needed for this second spreadsheet are located in [Appendix C-Facilities Survey and Components Design Worksheet](#).
  - o In this Excel, an applicant must list the type and quantities of all components needed to construct and install the individual solar systems and SmartCare requirements based on the expected power consumption as described in [Appendix A-Site Surveys](#).
  - o This Excel provides the roof type for each site. The applicant is responsible for evaluating and reinforcing the roof structures where solar arrays are to be mounted.
    - In the event the structure is unable to be reinforced adequately, the applicant will mount the solar arrays on the ground in an area closest to the battery/ control room.
  
3. Submission of a Proposal Narrative
  - o **\*\*\*An applicant must put all documents listed below in a single PDF file.\*\*\***
  - o An applicant must include a company profile that provides (i) the physical and postal address for its headquarters office and (ii) the name, title, office/ mobile phone numbers and email address for the person responsible for managing the installation.
  - o An applicant must provide the names of at least three companies or organizations for whom the applicant has completed solar installation projects similar to those requested in the proposal.
    - The applicant must provide APHL with contact information for all references. APHL prefers references located in the U.S. or Zambia.
  - o An applicant must provide a description of the company that includes (i) a discussion of key staff members' qualifications and experience, (ii) proof of the applicant's capacity to implement projects of comparable complexity, and (iii) total number of full-time solar system installers on company payroll.
  - o An applicant must submit a copy of the applicant's certificate of company registration and evidence of good standing.
  - o Each applicant must provide a copy of the applicant's (i) three most recent monthly bank statements or (ii) most recent audited financial statements.

- o The proposal narrative must include a statement that all prices are valid for 45 days after RFP Deadline.
- o The proposal narrative must also include a full description of all warranties. The applicant will provide a minimum one-year warranty on all labor and supplied materials provided under this contract. The warranty will commence upon the issuance of a certificate of completion from APHL. APHL will note any extension of this one-year minimum in the applicant's evaluation.
- o The narrative must include a description and price per unit of each electrical and mechanical item required to install the lighting, ventilation, sockets, and branch circuit requirements. An applicant should list all items not provided by APHL. [Appendix F – Components to be used in Designing Each System](#) lists all items supplied by APHL (applicant may list this in the Budget).
  - Include SmartCare System Design materials: Provide details and pricing for materials supplied by the applicant for the SmartCare system that the applicant will install, to include but not limited to additional lighting, switches and outlets required to be installed. Applicant is responsible for all costs to provide branch circuitry, power outlets, lighting and switches sufficient to meet requirements of the SmartCare System as part of this proposal.
- o The proposal must provide a recommended maintenance schedule and a complete training program for the operational personnel. APHL will value applicants that provide one site visit six months after the commissioning date to verify that the system is functioning as designed.
- o The narrative must include all information regarding the technical specifications that the applicant considers important for APHL to consider prior to purchasing the solar equipment components, such as the DC voltage of the solar system, the capacity of the charge controller, the capacity of the inverter, the number and rating of the PV panels, or any other accessories that will support the installations (e.g., fuses, MCBs, tamper/theft- proof frame for the PV panels, cabling, etc.).
- o The applicant must provide a detailed and complete critical path method (CPM) schedule that will identify all critical steps throughout the contracted process from receiving the solar components from a centralized distribution depot located in Lusaka, Zambia to the commissioning of the system. This will include installing the solar components and all lighting and branch circuitry to energize the project site, providing the commissioning of each system and training of designated personnel on the operation and maintenance of the systems for each site.
- o Applicant must submit bids for all ten provinces and all sites listed in [Appendix A- Site Surveys](#) to be considered for a contract award.
  - Applicants should include any additional discounts for aggregate pricing in the event that APHL issues a contract to a successful applicant that includes more than one province.

#### 4. Budget

- o The applicant must provide a budget reflecting its total price which includes costs for services, materials and labor broken down by project site. The applicant may have provided this information in earlier sections but must include in a stand-alone budget. If awarded a contract, the applicant's total compensation will be based on the on the total price provided in the budget. The applicant will provide the following in their budget:
  - Cost of all components, materials, or devices necessary to complete the projects. **\*\*\*Do not include components supplied by APHL for the solar systems themselves. (See list of those components in [Appendix F – Components to be used in Designing Each System](#))\*\*\***
  - Total cost of all labor to complete the projects.
  - Total cost of all travel and related expenses to complete the projects.
  - Total cost of all logistics charges to transport APHL-supplied components from the warehouse in Lusaka to the project site.
  - Cost of all fees, taxes, and permits required to complete the projects.
  - Cost of any preparation, materials or labor needed to secure, install, and reinforce the additional weight of the solar arrays and other system components within or upon the allocated spaces and structures at each project site. This includes proper ventilation and security of the battery/control rooms.
  - Cost of training to site operators on use and maintenance.

### Project Duration

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Installation project will start as soon as APHL both (i) receives the components listed in [Appendix F – Components to be used in Designing Each System](#) at its warehouse in Lusaka and (ii) received a ratified contract back from an awardee. APHL expects all installation projects to be completed by the selected contractors by no later than 29 September 2021.

### Response Submittal

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#### Pre-Award Site Visits and Proposal Development

Site visits are not mandatory but encouraged to familiarize the applicants with any issues they need to consider while performing the contracted work in accordance with the specifications and requirements. This includes evaluation of the roof structure upon which the solar arrays are to be mounted. Applicants who are interested in conducting site visits to selected labs should email [Mary.Chileshe-Lombe@zmb.aphl.org](mailto:Mary.Chileshe-Lombe@zmb.aphl.org) for possible scheduling. In lieu of a site visit, the applicant can find details about each site in [Appendix A-Site Surveys](#).

If the applicant determines that the roof structure is unsuitable to support the additional

weight of the solar arrays, the applicant should consider reinforcing the existing roof structure in such a manner that will support the additional weight or provide an alternate ground mounted design. The applicant costs should include additional costs to reinforce the roof in the “*Installation Contract Cost Data Entry Worksheet*” under Column O in the “**Locally Purchased Site Materials**”. Any additional labor will be reflected within Column L under the heading “**Labor**”.

### Final RFP Response

APHL must receive a complete proposal by no later than **5:00 PM (CAT) on May 13, 2021**. Applicants may send proposals via email to [Mary.Chileshe-Lombe@zmb.aphl.org](mailto:Mary.Chileshe-Lombe@zmb.aphl.org) copying [Clement.Phiri@zmb.aphl.org](mailto:Clement.Phiri@zmb.aphl.org). Applicants should use “*Proposal for Zambia Solar Power Installation*” in the email subject line.

Applicants may send hard copies via certified, registered, or express mail providing the postal service or trackable mail delivery services provided by DHL, FedEx, UPS, other established delivery service providers or hand-delivery to the following address:

c/o Mary Chileshe-Lombe  
Association of Public Health Laboratories Zambia Inc  
House Number 52 Paseli Road, Northmead  
Box NM 63,  
Lusaka, Zambia

APHL will send an email acknowledging the receipt of your application. If you do not receive an acknowledgement within 48 hours, please email the points of contact above to confirm receipt.

APHL may terminate or modify the RFP process at any time during the response period. All changes to the RFP will be posted to the APHL’s procurement website, [www.aphl.org/rfp](http://www.aphl.org/rfp).

## Evaluation of Proposals

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### Initial Review

APHL staff members or consultants under contract with APHL will conduct a review of all proposals for completeness. APHL reserves the right to ask applicants to supplement incomplete proposals and consider them for evaluation even if supplements are received after the RFP Deadline. APHL will also have the right to reject and not consider any incomplete proposal that does not fulfill the requirements set out in Proposal Structure and Content above.

### Evaluation Team

The evaluation team will consist of the following individuals:

Sarah Snyder, APHL (US) staff member



Clement Phiri, APHL (Zambia) staff member  
Mary Chileshe-Lombe, APHL (Zambia) staff member  
Tim Traynor, APHL consultant  
Mpande Mwenechanya, CIDRZ staff member  
John Salaka, CIDRZ staff member  
Kudakwashe Mucheka, CIDRZ staff member  
Cynthia Chileshe, CIDRZ staff member

### Conflict of Interest

APHL will ask potential reviewers to complete and sign APHL's Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statement to disclose any real or perceived conflict of interest prior to the start of the evaluation process. Reviewers will affirm that they have no conflict of interest that would preclude an unbiased and objective review of the proposals received. APHL will not select reviewers with a perceived or potential conflict of interest.

### Evaluation Process

The evaluation team will select one awardee for each project site. APHL will evaluate proposals based on the following factors: overall price, CPM schedule, size of the installation team, design plan, and other factors. APHL will give most weight to the price and the CPM schedule. While price is important, APHL may select a higher priced proposal if other parts of the applicant's proposal justify APHL paying a premium price. APHL may also disqualify applicants whose price reflects lack of technical expertise to complete the project.

APHL will conduct the entire review via a combination of email communication between the evaluation team, teleconferences and/or webinar evaluation sessions.

APHL will award a contract to each applicant who receives the highest overall score for the respective site.

### Supplemental Proposal Information

The evaluation team may request follow up interviews with applicants and/or supplemental information on an applicant's proposal. Once the evaluation team has the additional material from the interviews and supplemental information, the team will evaluate whether this material alters the relative ranking of any individual applicant. If the consensus of the evaluation team is that the new material merits adjusting the applicant rankings, the team will do so.

### Questions from Applicants

Applicants may ask APHL questions and clarifications regarding the RFP to Sarah Snyder at [sarah.snyder@aphl.org](mailto:sarah.snyder@aphl.org). APHL will post questions and answers on its procurement website at [www.aphl.org/rfp](http://www.aphl.org/rfp). APHL will not disclose the name of the applicant submitting a question.

## Applicant Past Performance and Integrity Assessment

APHL reserves the right to tour an applicant's facilities (in-person or virtually) and reach out to an awardee's references. APHL may choose to disqualify an applicant if APHL receives or observes information regarding questionable business practices.

## Post-Evaluation Procedures

APHL staff will notify the selected applicant(s) within ten business days of the completion of the evaluation and will post the name of the awardee(s) to APHL's procurement website, [www.aphl.org/rfp](http://www.aphl.org/rfp) on the same day. Unsuccessful applicants will receive notification of these results by email within 30 days of the date the name of the winning applicant is posted. All applicants will be entitled to utilize APHL's RFP Appeals Process to formulate a protest regarding alleged irregularities or improprieties during the procurement process. Specific details of this policy are located on the procurement website.

## Conditions of Award Acceptance

The eligible applicants must be able to contract directly with APHL. APHL will give the awardee a reasonable amount of time to accept APHL's contract which includes all terms and conditions. If APHL and the awardee cannot finalize a contract in the allowed time, APHL may re-issue the award to the next in-line applicant.

## Disclaimer and Other General Matters

This RFP is neither an agreement nor an offer to enter into an agreement with any respondent. Once the application evaluation is complete, APHL may choose to enter a definitive contract with the selected RFP applicant(s).

APHL must ensure that the selected applicant is neither suspended nor debarred from receiving federal funds and that the applicant meets any other funding eligibility requirement imposed by the Cooperative Agreement. APHL's determination of whether the applicant is eligible to receive Cooperative Agreement funding will be definitive and may not be appealed. If APHL determines that the selected applicant is ineligible to receive Cooperative Agreement funding, APHL will nullify the contract or will cease negotiation of contract terms.

Each applicant will bear its own costs associated with or relating to the preparation and submission of its application and as otherwise noted throughout this RFP. These costs and expenses will remain with the applicant, and APHL will not be liable for these or for any other costs or other expenses incurred by the applicant in preparation or submission of its application, regardless of the conduct or outcome of the response period or the selection process.

## Appendix A-Site Surveys

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APHL has conducted a site survey of each site. Applicants should base their surveys on the information in these surveys and any site visits. This information is available via the following [link](#) or a USB thumb drive containing the surveys may be collected from the APHL Zambia office.

Some of the included files are of significant size and will require a high-speed internet connection to download. Please collect a thumb drive if you do not have a high-speed internet connection. To collect the thumb drive, please contact [Mary.Chileshe-Lombe@zmb.aphl.org](mailto:Mary.Chileshe-Lombe@zmb.aphl.org).

These files include individual site surveys along with Longitude/ Latitude information to locate the proper solar radiation capabilities. Each survey also contains information regarding the lab equipment and SmartCare devices to be wired and connected to the off-grid solar system. There are numerous photos that show aspects of the site and interiors of the labs.

## Appendix B -Installation Contract Cost Data Entry Worksheet

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This document titled “Installation Contract Cost Data Entry Worksheet” requests information regarding the applicant’s costs for logistics, labor, food and lodging, and site materials. This Worksheet is available at the following [link](#).

The applicant will utilize the site survey information from Appendix A including the total KW requirements at each location along with the required 50% extra capacity. The applicant must design and size the system accordingly.

- o Applicants must provide the following information in the Worksheet:
  - o *Logistic Cost*: the rate to move the APHL-supplied solar system components from Lusaka to the site in USD
    - o *Net Handling Cost*-automatically populates
  - o *Labor*: all labor costs to complete the installation of the solar system components and other required ancillary work detailed herein based upon a daily rate in USD
  - o *Food and Lodging Cost*: total number of person/days per site multiplied by per diem costs in USD
  - o *Locally Purchased Materials (total costs)*: there will be various materials other than the APHL-supplied solar components which the applicant must provide to include but not limited to branch circuit cable, electrical outlets, lamps and light sockets, junction boxes, fans and other appurtenances to accomplish the designated work (**\*\*\* Applicant will provide a list of these items and their individual break-down in the Narrative section\*\*\***)
  - o *Total Contract Costs per Site*: the Worksheet will total the amount of all goods and services provided by the applicant in USD
- o \*\*\* Please note that all solar equipment required to construct the anticipated solar systems will be supplied by APHL at a centrally located distribution point in the immediate Lusaka area. Those items are listed in Appendix F. APHL will entertain alternative components along with the justification for the deviation from the items designated. \*\*\*

APHL reserve the right to change any of the components listed in Appendix F in response to market conditions. All necessary adjustments to the Installation pricing will be entertained if such an exercise be necessary.

## Appendix C-Facilities Survey and Components Design Worksheet

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The applicant will identify the APHL-supplied components in the “Facilities Survey and Components Design Worksheet.” This Worksheet is available at the following [link](#). Please find some notes on completing the Worksheet:

Columns H– K: The applicant must provide individual kWp and proposed system size for each site based upon the information located in Columns E – G. Next the applicant will indicate in Column J the number of 300-Watt monocrystalline panels required at each site. The applicant may offer an alternative to this specification in Column K.

Columns L – V: The use of 12v, 200 AH batteries is preferred, and each site proposal should reflect that designation. The applicant may choose to offer combinations of gel cell batteries rated at 100 AH, 150 AH and 250 AH. These combinations should be shown in Columns M – P. Lithium batteries are being considered as an alternative to gel cell batteries. If the applicant wishes to offer this option, please indicate the voltage and AH in the the data entry columns. Use the estimated kWhr to determine the appropriate number and capacities of the designated batteries.

Columns W – AH: Indicate the proper designation and number of the PV Array Combiner boxes

Column AI– AJ: Use 5 KW inverter controllers in combination for systems 20 KW and smaller. Use e10 KW units in combination for systems larger than 20 KW

Columns AK- AM: We supply the type roof found at each location.

- Please note-while the roof type is provided, the applicant is responsible for evaluating and reinforcing the roof structures where solar arrays are to be mounted. In the event the structure is unable to be reinforced adequately, the applicant will mount the solar arrays on the ground in an area closest to the battery/ control room designated by APHL.

Columns AN–AZ: Please indicate quantities of other supplies needed to complete the design.

## Appendix D-Typical Light Fixtures and Lamps

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Applicant will provide light fixtures and lamps. Here are some examples of what applicant should propose:

Porcelain Sockets, 10 W LED and Outdoor base, 12 W LED flood lamps at 230 VAC, Medium Edison Base as required. Some pictures:

Leviton Lampholder Keyless, Porcelain Single Circuit  
250 V



## Appendix E-Typical Exhaust Fan for Battery Room Ventilation

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Applicant will provide exhaust fans for battery control room. Here are some examples of what applicant should propose:

Exhaust Fan for battery/ control rooms with access to outside walls:  
2500 CU M/H, 230 VAC, 125 W exhaust fan



## Appendix F – Components to be used in Designing Each System

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This is a list of the APHL-Supplied components:

Solar Arrays – 300-watt standard (alternative sizes may be offered in addition to this requirement)

Solar Brackets and Mounting Hardware for asbestos and metal tilt roofs

MC4 Connectors

PV Array Combiner Boxes-these devices should utilize 600 VDC or 1000 VDC ratings

Combination Inverter/ MPPT Controllers – 5 KW and 10 KW units (alternative sizes may be offered in addition to this requirement)

Solar Batteries – 12 VDC, 100 AH, 150 AH, 200 AH and 250 AH Gel Cell (alternative sizes may be offered in addition to this requirement)

Battery Cabinets – 4, 8, 12, 16 position lockable units

Cable size and quantities as noted per meter: 2.5 mm, 4 mm, 10 mm and 16 mm

Distribution Panels with 100 A MCCB switches

Please note that alternative product sizes may be offered based upon the competitive nature and availability of the products.

**Note:** *The selected applicant will need to provide branch circuitry the new SmartCare system and solar dedicated sockets, lighting and switching according to the load distribution outlined in the RFP. The selected applicant will also ensure that the outlets feeding the designated equipment sockets are colored **red** and clearly labelled “**Solar Power Use Only.**”*