



One Thomas Circle, NW
Suite 1050
Washington, DC 20005
www.verra.org

Request for Proposals

Support for Verra's Engagement Strategy in Carbon Market Activity in the United States

August 2021

1. Background

Verra is a global leader helping to tackle the world's most intractable environmental and social challenges. As a mission-driven non-profit organization, Verra is committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, improving livelihoods, and protecting natural resources by working with the private and public sectors. We support climate action and sustainable development with standards, tools and programs that credibly, transparently, and robustly assess environmental and social impacts and enable funding for sustaining and scaling up projects that verifiably deliver these benefits.

The Verified Carbon Standard (VCS) Program is our flagship program. It allows vetted projects to turn their greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reductions and removals into tradable carbon credits called Verified Carbon Units (VCUs). Since its launch in 2006, the VCS Program has grown into the world's largest voluntary GHG program with over 1700 registered projects in 82 countries that have cumulatively generated more than 700 million VCUs. A relatively small number of projects are in the United States.

The growth in US investment in carbon market activities to date has been driven primarily by private actors. Federal and state legislation related to carbon markets has progressed slowly (except for initiatives in California and a few other states). Recent developments indicate an interest and willingness to move forward legislation, regulations, and public programs related to climate action at the state, federal, and multi-state levels. There is also an increasing recognition by the market and policy makers of the value of nature-based solutions. The VCS is well-positioned to contribute to these efforts.

The support for incorporating carbon credits into climate policies and government programs is not without its critics. One reason for the criticism, and its impact on market actors, is a lack of robust understanding of the opportunity presented by activities that sequester carbon and avoid carbon losses through mechanisms such as the VCS program. Similarly, better communication on how the voluntary carbon market can enable necessary and urgent reductions and removals in greenhouse gas emissions will help to drive finance to these projects.

The Verra Policy and Markets Team's Regional Outreach Unit is responsible for framing Verra's value and viability to operate in light of the socio-political and economic context of the United States. It is set to engage in and develop opportunities for Verra's independent standards to contribute to desired climate outcomes.



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2. Objective

Verra seeks a consultant who can assist with prioritizing the various climate-related opportunities to reflect Verra's strategic goals and mission.

Based on such prioritization, the consultant will design and implement, together with the Verra Team, an engagement strategy for Verra that will leverage the value of Verra's programs and teams in support of US climate and sustainability goals. In addition, the consultant will guide liaisons with key Verra stakeholders in the public and private arenas across national, subnational, and local settings.

3. Scope of Work and Deliverables

The scope of work for this consultancy is outlined below. We welcome proposals that recommend additional or different actions in the interest of effectively promoting Verra's role, mainly of the VCS Program, in the United States.

- 1) **Opportunities Assessment.** Based on obtaining an adequate understanding of Verra's strengths, goals, and existing relationships in the United States, the consultant will produce an overview of the most relevant policy and program actions (existing and forthcoming) in climate at the federal, state, and multi-state levels, as well as private initiatives in the United States.
- 2) **Prioritization of Opportunities.** Based on market analysis criteria provided by Verra and recommended by the consultant, and Verra's feedback to the opportunities assessment, consultant will prioritize these opportunities.
- 3) **Design of Engagement Strategy.** Based on an institutional map of the critical public and private sector actors related to climate-related processes and initiatives in the US that the consultant completes, the consultant will propose an engagement strategy to lay the foundation for making progress on our goals in the US. This Engagement Strategy will provide timelines, significant dates and milestones, and also contain an outreach component, listing pertinent audiences, fora, outlets, and events.
- 4) **Facilitate Engagement and Relationships.** Working with Verra staff, the consultant will support and facilitate introductions, meetings, and development of materials in support of the above engagement strategy.
- 5) **Status and Review of Opportunities.** After two months, consultant will conduct an early-stage assessment of progress in the key opportunity areas.
- 6) **Revised Engagement Strategy.** Proposed updates to the Engagement Strategy will be developed based on early progress and external developments as needed.



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4. Timeline and Milestones

The below table sets out the timeline for the deliverables. Proposals can include an alternative timeline if that is deemed a better approach.

Deliverable/Milestone	Tentative Timeline
1) Opportunities Assessment	
a) Review of Verra's strengths, goals, existing relationships	1 week after contract signing
b) Analysis of opportunities	1 week after completing Milestone 1.a
c) Prioritization of opportunities	1 week after completing Milestone 1.b
2) Presentation of Prioritized Opportunities to the Verra team; revision based on feedback from the team	Upon completion of Milestone #1
3) Design of Engagement Strategy	2 weeks after completing Milestone 2
a) Mapping of key public sector actors and processes	
b) Mapping of key private sector actors and initiatives	
c) Mapping of fora / outlets/ events of importance for Verra, including recommendations of key messages and positions	
4) Facilitate Engagement and Relationships	Months 2-4 (mid-October through mid-December)
a) Facilitate introductions to and meetings with key contacts	
b) Support Verra staff on engagements as needed	
5) Status and Review of Opportunities	28 December 2021
6) Revised Engagement Strategy	15 January 2021



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5. Budget

Verra has budgeted up to US\$50,000 for this consultancy. Follow-on work, if any, would be conducted on a retainer basis. Please also provide us with your daily or hourly rate(s) for ongoing advice and support.

Skills & Qualifications

The consultant should have:

- An in-depth understanding of the voluntary carbon market and the role of independent standards in voluntary and compliance mechanisms.
- Experience with climate policy at the federal and state level in the United States.
- A strong network of market stakeholders and other influential parties in the United States.
- A proven track record of executing consulting projects with high-quality outputs in allotted time frames and on budget.

Responses to the RFP

Proposals should not exceed six pages total and should include the following:

- Description of how the consultant plans to undertake the described scope of work;
- Budget and cost proposal of no more than one page;
- Description of the consultant's qualifications to undertake the described scope of work and examples of similar projects or clients the proponent has worked for;
- Description of how the consultant would avoid any conflict of interest in undertaking the described scope of work;
- Short bios of the people who will work on the project.

All proposals must be submitted to Angelo Sartori, Director of Regional Outreach, at asartori@verra.org and Carina Bracer, Manager, United States and Canada, at cbracer@verra.org. Verra intends to start reviewing proposals on 25 August 2021 and to finalize the selection of the Consultant by 3 September 2021.

Note: All proposals submitted to Verra will be kept confidential.

Legal Nature of this RFP

This RFP is an invitation for proposals and Verra is under no legal obligation to accept any proposal or proceed with the RFP. Verra reserves the right to amend the requirements at any time.