

Tool #9:

Collaborative Procurement

What is it?

Collaborative procurement provides the opportunity for local governments, communities or regions to collaborate together to negotiate a reduced rate for solar installations. Collaborative procurement can result in reduced up-front costs of solar installations, overall savings due to site aggregation, administrative cost savings and favorable contract terms. Collaborative procurement can help regions reach their solar energy goals faster by accelerating solar purchases. Regional planning organizations can play the important role of convener or the main point of contact.

How do you do it?

- Convene Interested Stakeholders through open calls for participation.
- Consider issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP) to hire an outside consultant with expertise in solar collaborative procurement.
- Conduct Feasibility Studies to evaluate the economic and technical capacity for a solar installation on each interested site.
- Facilitate Stakeholder Review and approval to proceed from any involved elected officials and agencies.
- Bundle Sites by Scale to facilitate the procurement of a lower price per watt.
- Utilize the Procurement Process to evaluate solar system installers, negotiate prices and contract terms, and receive Board approval.
- Contract to finalize the system design, construction, planning, project permitting and system commissioning.

Who else is doing it?

- The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Green Power Partnership's Metro DC Clean Energy Collaborative Procurement Initiative facilitates the collaborative procurement of solar in the Metro DC region. For more information, see the collaborative procurement case study on page 34 of this *Guide* or visit, <http://www.epa.gov/greenpower/index.htm>.
- The Silicon Valley Collaborative Renewable Energy Procurement Project created a large-scale initiative intended to serve as a replicable regional example of collaborative procurement. For more information, see the Silicon Valley profile on page 20 of this *Guide* or visit http://www.jointventure.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=189&Itemid=287.
- The Merrimack Valley Planning Commission (MVPC) is implementing a collaborative RFP process after administering feasibility studies on several sites throughout the region. For more information, see the MVPC case study on page 30 of this *Guide*.

Where can I get more information?

- The World Resources Institute's Purchasing Power: Best Practices Guide to Collaborative Solar Procurement provides in-depth examples of commercial and government led collaborative procurement. http://pdf.wri.org/purchasing_power.pdf
- The Houston-Galveston Area Council created www.HGACBuy.org, an online resource for collaborative procurement within a number of programs. While the site does not contain information on solar, it can be used as a guide for the establishment of collaborative procurement programs by a regional council in general.
- The U.S. Department of Energy's Solar Powering Your Community: A Guide for Local Governments is a comprehensive resource created to assist local governments and stakeholders in designing and implementing a strategic local solar plan. The guidebook includes a section on group purchasing on page 49-50. http://www4.eere.energy.gov/solar/sunshot/resource_center/sites/default/files/solar-powering-your-community-guide-for-local-governments.pdf