



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RfP)

**QUANTIFYING THE IMPACT OF CITY-BUSINESS ALLIANCES
ON FOOD SYSTEM GHG EMISSIONS AND PUBLIC HEALTH**

C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group, Inc.
120 Park Avenue, 23rd Floor
New York, NY 10017
United States of America

Posting date: 21 March 2025
Application deadline: 14 April 2025

1. C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group Inc. (“C40”)



C40 is a network of nearly 100 mayors of the world's leading cities, who are working to deliver the urgent action needed right now to confront the climate crisis, and create a future where everyone, everywhere can thrive. Mayors of C40 cities are committed to using a science-based and people-focused approach to help the world limit global heating to 1.5°C and build healthy, equitable and resilient communities. Through a Global Green New Deal, mayors are working alongside a broad coalition of representatives from labour, business, the youth climate movement and civil society to go further and faster than ever before.

The strategic direction of the organisation is determined by an elected Steering Committee of C40 mayors which is co-chaired by Mayor Sadiq Khan of London, United Kingdom, and Mayor Yvonne Aki-Sawyer of Freetown, Sierra Leone. Three term Mayor of New York City Michael R. Bloomberg serves as President of the C40 Board of Directors, which is responsible for operational oversight. A nine-person management team, led by Executive Director, Mark Watts, leads the day-to-day management of C40. C40's three core strategic funders are Bloomberg Philanthropies, the Children's Investment Fund Foundation (CIFF) and Realdania.

To learn more about the work of C40 and our cities, please visit our [Website](#), or follow us on [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

2. Summary, Purpose and Background of the Project

2.1. Introduction to the Food Programme within C40's Climate Solutions and Networks (CSN)

C40's Climate Solutions and Networks (CSN) Department oversees six key program areas focused on priority urban climate action: Energy and Buildings, Transportation, Urban Planning, Food and Waste, Air Quality, and Climate Resilience. Through technical assistance, policy accelerators, and city-to-city collaboration, CSN helps cities implement transformative climate solutions in alignment with the Paris Agreement. The department operates 16 specialised networks, enabling cities to share best practices, scale impactful initiatives, and accelerate climate action globally.

The C40 Food Programme, part of CSN's Food and Waste sector, supports C40 cities in reducing food-related emissions by promoting sustainable diets and minimising food waste. With food consumption responsible for 13-20% of C40 cities' total GHG emissions, and the majority of all food consumed in cities – a figure expected to reach 80% by 2050, food systems transformation is critical for climate action.

Through its [Food Systems Network](#), the C40 Food Programme connects cities to facilitate the development and implementation of integrated food policies that reduce emissions, increase resilience, and create sustainable urban environments.

Currently, over 50 cities participate in this network, and 16 mayors have signed the [Good Food Cities Accelerator](#), committing to:

- Align food procurement with the Planetary Health Diet, ideally sourced from organic agriculture.
- Increase plant-based food consumption by shifting away from unsustainable, unhealthy diets.
- Reduce food loss and waste by 50% from a 2015 baseline.
- Develop an inclusive, city-wide strategy within two years, engaging residents, businesses, and institutions, and incorporating it into Climate Action Plans (CAPs).



2.2. Project Background and Summary

Transforming urban food environments - particularly by increasing plant-based food consumption by shifting towards more sustainable, healthy diets - remains one of the most challenging commitments for cities under the Good Food Cities Accelerator.

With a majority of the global population living in cities, more than 70% of all food is consumed in cities. Mayors are committed to making the lives of their residents better, but they have limited direct authority over consumer food choices. Meanwhile, the majority of urban food supply is controlled by private-sector entities, including retailers, restaurants, and canteens. For example, in London, over 80% of food is distributed through retailers, and in most developed cities, just 350 companies control more than 80% of food distribution. Despite their significant influence, many of these companies have yet to prioritise sustainability and equity in food systems.

To drive meaningful change, cities have found success in engaging with the private sector, and have recognised an opportunity to engage consumer-facing businesses to make sustainable, plant-rich options more affordable, available, attractive, and the default choice. Instead of relying on restrictive policies - which would likely face backlash and trigger further enforcement challenges - cities can collaborate with businesses to accelerate protein shifts through consumer nudging strategies, leveraging product placement, pricing, and marketing to shape food environments.

For businesses, reducing food-related emissions is now a strategic opportunity, driven by increasing regulatory pressures, investor expectations, and consumer demand for sustainable practices. Partnering with ambitious local governments enables businesses to demonstrate leadership, scale solutions, and align with global sustainability targets. By collaborating with city governments, industry players, and competitors at the city level, businesses can drive systemic food system change - ensuring profitability while advancing climate and health goals.

2.3. Project Purpose and Objectives

This research builds on C40's ongoing work on city-business engagement, which examined case studies of past and existing city-business collaborations in food systems across 14 cities. A key finding was that while cities are eager to engage food businesses, they face barriers, including:

- Uncertainty on how to engage businesses effectively
- Perceived political risks
- Lack of capacity or dedicated resources
- Limited awareness of city regulatory levers and influence



This research project will build on these findings by quantifying the potential impact of city-business engagement on food-related emissions reductions and public health improvements.

The study will focus on six sample cities - **Auckland, Lisbon, New York, São Paulo, Stockholm, and Vancouver** - selected from C40's existing research working group on city-business engagement. These cities represent diverse geographic locations, population sizes, market concentration, and city-business engagement models, ensuring that all key characteristics of C40's Good Food Cities Accelerator signatory cities are covered.

However, data availability is a critical factor in the feasibility of this analysis. The selected cities may be subject to change if the selected research team determines that key data is insufficient for robust modelling.

The primary objectives of this research are to:

1. **Quantify the baseline, as well as the potential GHG emissions reductions** from shifting food supply in consumer-facing businesses across the six cities, and **translate** what this means in terms of **public health benefits**.
2. **Develop scenario models** assessing the impact **of different levels of business engagement (full, mid, and low delivery)** on GHG emissions reduction and public health benefits by 2030, aligning with the target set by the Good Food Cities Accelerator commitment..
3. **Provide evidence-based recommendations** for city officials and businesses on how city-business alliances can accelerate urban food system decarbonisation.

This research will generate critical data and insights to inform city policies, support private sector sustainability efforts, and strengthen collaborative governance in food systems. The findings will directly contribute to the Good Food Cities Accelerator's mission of enabling cities to reduce food-related emissions while improving urban health outcomes.

2.4. Scope of the Work

The selected research team will work alongside C40 staff to complete the following actions:

1. **Collect baseline data** for the six sample cities - Auckland, Lisbon, New York, São Paulo, Stockholm, and Vancouver, focusing on:
 - a. Food supply chain analysis:
 - i. Market share distribution across consumer-facing food business types (retailers, restaurants, canteens).
 - ii. Segmentation of businesses by size (SMEs vs. large enterprises).



- iii. Current supply ratios of animal-based vs. plant-based and alternative proteins across different business types and sizes.
- b. Consumer food consumption patterns:
 - i. Total annual consumption of animal-based proteins and substituted plant-based and alternative proteins* (in tonnes), disaggregated by food groups in alignment to the categories outlined in the [Planetary Health Diet](#) (page 10) including alternatives.
 - ii. Current consumer spending trends on meat and plant-based alternatives.
- c. Macroeconomic and socioeconomic indicators:
 - i. Projected population changes by 2030
 - ii. Projected consumer spending trends by 2030 (e.g., expected economic growth or decline, disposable income levels).
 - iii. Expected changes in food consumption trends under a business-as-usual scenario by 2030 (e.g., natural adoption rates of plant-based foods without interventions).
- d. Qualitative sociocultural and behavioural factors:
 - i. Regional and cultural variations in food choices that may influence substitution rates.

**Note: If the consumption of alternative proteins is found to be substantial, they should be incorporated into the analysis as part of the shift from animal-based to plant-based proteins. However, if their consumption remains minimal or negligible, they may be excluded from the current research to maintain analytical focus.*

2. **Estimate consumer response rates** by modelling the impact of supply shifts on purchasing behaviour, **assuming price parity** between animal-based and plant-based, and, where applicable, alternative proteins. Utilise statistical modelling approaches, such as discrete choice models to predict the likelihood of consumers substituting meat with plant-based, and, where applicable, alternative proteins and diffusion of innovation theory to assess the adoption rate of plant-based diets over time. If data limitations prevent high-resolution modelling, apply established economic theories, including price elasticity of demand, substitution effects, and consumer choice theory, to approximate behavioural responses. Additionally, account for variations across business types, recognising that consumer responses may differ between retail settings, restaurants, and canteens due to differences in purchasing habits, meal structures, and dining environments.
3. **Conduct case studies** of selected cities to **examine how regional and cultural variations in food choices influence substitution rates**. Given the challenges of quantification, analyse trends and potential impact directions without necessarily assigning numerical values.
4. **Develop a dynamic model** to estimate the impact of different levels of business engagement and supply shifts on GHG emissions and public health. The models should take into account the following key inputs:
 - a. **Participation rate:** Business engagement levels (0%-100% scale of participation).



- b. **Supply/menu shift:** Percentage of animal-based proteins replaced by plant-based, and, where applicable, alternative proteins.
- c. **Consumer response rates:** Behavioural changes in purchasing decisions in regards to supply/menu shifts, assuming **price parity** between animal-based and plant-based, and, where applicable, alternative proteins.
- d. **Macroeconomic and socioeconomic factors:** As stated above.

Given the structural differences between large enterprises and SMEs, the model may need to be differentiated per business type and per city. The modelling framework should:

- a. Be parametric, allowing adjustment of input assumptions.
 - b. Use probabilistic approaches (e.g., Monte Carlo simulations) for uncertainty estimation.
 - c. Incorporate scenario-based forecasting with adjustable engagement and substitution rates.
5. Using the dynamic model, **develop scenario models** for large enterprises and SMEs in each city:

Business size	Engagement level, i.e. participation rate		Commitment to supply/menu shift (animal-based → plant-based proteins)*
Large Enterprises (e.g., retail and restaurant chains, corporate food service providers)	Full engagement	60-100% of businesses	- 50% supply/menu shift - 30% supply/menu shift - 10% supply/menu shift
	Mid engagement	30-59% of businesses	- 50% supply/menu shift - 30% supply/menu shift - 10% supply/menu shift
	Low engagement	10-29% of businesses	- 50% supply/menu shift - 30% supply/menu shift - 10% supply/menu shift
SMEs (e.g., independent restaurants, local food businesses)	Full engagement	60-100% of businesses	- 50% supply/menu shift - 30% supply/menu shift - 10% supply/menu shift
	Mid engagement	30-59% of businesses	- 50% supply/menu shift - 30% supply/menu shift - 10% supply/menu shift
	Low engagement	10-29% of businesses	- 50% supply/menu shift - 30% supply/menu shift - 10% supply/menu shift

*Where X% supply / menu shift represents the percentage reduction in animal-based proteins, replaced by plant-based, and, where applicable, alternative proteins.

All the numbers in the table above are **indicative**. The level of business engagement and supply/menu shift showcasing high, moderate, and low levels should be the product of **local context analysis** in each city.

6. **Estimate GHG emissions reductions** for each scenario and city.
7. **Quantify public health outcomes** for each scenario and city.
8. **Perform uncertainty analysis and sensitivity testing** to make sure that GHG emissions reductions and public health impact estimates remain valid under different conditions. Provide confidence intervals for projected emissions and health benefits.
9. **Provide evidence-based recommendations** for city officials and businesses to scale city-business alliances for food system decarbonisation.



2.5. Deliverables

- a. **Methodology document** (Google doc and presentation): A detailed methodology outlining the data sources, assumptions, tools, and modelling approaches. This document must be provided prior to modelling for review by the C40 team.
- b. **Modelling files** (Google sheets, Excel, Python, R, or other relevant formats): All modelling files and data sources will be provided to the C40 team. The documents must be clearly structured and fully annotated, including sources, assumptions, comments, and methodology explanations.
- c. **Literature review on case studies** (Google sheets, Excel): A comprehensive list of case studies, including author references, links, locations, and key findings.
- d. **Report** (Google doc, designed report, or other preferred format): A comprehensive case study report, summarising findings and insights **from all 6 cities**, methodology and modelling outcomes, and policy and decision-making implications. The report must be clearly structured, professionally presented, and include data visualisations, key insights, and actionable recommendations.

Teams must demonstrate their approach to review their analysis and ensure the quality of the data. The inclusion of an external reviewer is recommended.

3. Proposal Guidelines

This Request for Proposal represents the requirements for an open and competitive process. Proposals will be accepted until **11:59 PM GMT, April 14, 2025**. Any proposals received after this date and time will not be accepted. All proposals should include clear timetables, how you will work with C40, clear costs and detail on experience in this area. **The proposals should not exceed 15 pages including annexes.**

The proposal should give C40 evaluators all the information they need to assess your bid. Please clearly indicate where applicable:

- How your proposal is responsive to the Evaluation Criteria;
- Description of your proposed approach* to the scope of work, including a proposed methodology outlining data sources, data modelling methods, and tools to be used, as well as key assumptions considered;
- Risks you have identified and appropriate mitigation measures;

- Proposed timeline of implementation;
- Any additional support that you need to make the project a success, including any inputs you will need from third parties or C40 staff;
- Proposed working partnership with C40, including (as applicable) project governance and management, key personnel, key roles and responsibilities, and escalation procedure for issues;
- Brief description of technical expertise and experience on relevant topics through examples of past work;
- List of key personnel who would be working on the contract, their job titles and responsibilities on the project. Please include relevant experience and expertise and limit CVs to a maximum of one page per person;
- Information about your fee(s);
- A full, detailed project budget breakdown of deliverables and costs inclusive of taxes and hours allocated to tasks per project team member and daily rates of the project team needs to be included in the submission.



You must include adequate information about how your costs were calculated to enable evaluation of cost reasonableness.

**Please note that the methods and models outlined in the scope of work are flexible and may be adapted if your proposal presents a well-founded narrative and strong rationale for alternative approaches. Additionally, adjustments may be made throughout the research process to accommodate data limitations, emerging insights, and key findings from the analysis.*

Supplier Diversity

C40 is committed to supplier diversity and inclusive procurement through promoting equity, diversity and inclusivity in our supplier base. We believe that by procuring a diverse range of suppliers, we get a wider range of experiences and thoughts from suppliers and thus are best able to deliver to the whole range of our diverse cities and the contexts that they operate within.

We strongly encourage suppliers (individuals and corporations) that are diverse in terms of size, age, nationality, gender identity, sexual orientation, majority owned and controlled by a minority group, physical or mental ability, ethnicity and perspective to put forward a proposal to work with us.

Feel welcome to refer to [C40's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Statement](#) as supplier diversity and inclusive procurement is one element of applying equity, diversity and inclusion to help the world limit global heating to 1.5°C and build healthy, equitable and resilient communities.

Contract

Please note this is a contract for professional services and not a grant opportunity. Organisations unable to accept contracts for professional services should not submit bids. The work will be completed on the [C40 Standard Services Contract](#).

These terms and conditions are accepted as drafted by the majority of our suppliers and we reserve the right to penalise your bid on the basis of non-acceptance of terms. If you do wish to include any requested amendments with your proposal, please do not mark up the document in tracked changes but provide [a separate negotiation document](#) for review setting out clearly your rationale for the change.



If C40 are unable to execute a contract with the winner of this competitive process, we reserve the right to award the contract to the second highest Potential Supplier

Subcontracting

If the organisation submitting a proposal needs to subcontract any work to meet the requirements of the proposal, this must be clearly stated. All costs included in proposals must be all-inclusive of any outsourced or contracted work. Any proposals which call for outsourcing or contracting work must include a name and description of the organisations being contracted.

4. RfP and Project Timeline

RfP Timeline:

RFP Timeline	Due Date
Request for Proposals sent out	<i>March 21, 2025</i>
Questions submitted to C40	<i>March 21, 2025 - April 9, 2025</i>
C40 responds to questions	<i>Within 2-3 business days - refer to this live Q&A document to see questions received</i>
Deadline for receiving Offers	<i>April 14, 2025</i>
Clarification of Offers	<i>April 14, 2025 - April 21, 2025</i>
Evaluation of Proposal	<i>April 21, 2025 - April 25, 2025</i>
Presentation of Proposal (top 3 candidates)	<i>April 28, 2025</i>
Selection decision made	<i>April 28, 2025</i>
All Potential Suppliers notified of outcome	<i>May 9, 2025</i>

The project is expected to run from May to October 2025. Bidders must submit a detailed timeline that accounts for data availability/accessibility, data collection methods, team capacity, and summer holiday periods. The timeline should outline all key steps from the scope of work - either the current one or a proposed alternative - including the development of the data structure and methodology,

submission of initial and subsequent drafts, incorporation of feedback from C40 staff, and delivery of the final report. Timelines must be realistic, and proposals extending beyond the first two weeks of October will not be considered.



High-level proposal timeline:

RFP Timeline	Due Date
Kick-off workshop	<i>May 12, 2025</i>
Methodology draft	<i>May 26, 2025</i>
Methodology review (C40)	<i>June 2, 2025</i>
Methodology final	<i>June 9, 2025</i>
Data collection & cleaning	<i>July 7, 2025</i>
Modelling baseline	<i>July 21, 2025</i>
Modelling baseline review (C40)	<i>July 28, 2025</i>
Modelling scenario	<i>August 11, 2025</i>
Modelling scenario review (C40)	<i>August 18, 2025</i>
Report outline	<i>September 1, 2025</i>
Report draft	<i>September 15, 2025</i>
Report review (C40)	<i>September 22, 2025</i>
Report final	<i>September 29, 2025</i>
Final deliverables	<i>October 6, 2025</i>

5. Proposal Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated against the following criteria and weighting:

Evaluation Criteria	Evaluated by	Weighting
Criteria 1: Technical Expertise & Approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear understanding of the project scope, objectives, and context. • Strength and feasibility of the proposed methodology, including data sources, data collection methods, modelling techniques, and analytical approaches. • Demonstrated ability to deliver high-quality outputs based on robust data-driven research. • Proven experience in similar projects, including food systems research, urban climate policies, GHG emissions modelling, and public health impact projection, incorporating macroeconomic factors influencing the food market. • Availability and capability of the proposed team, including relevant qualifications, expertise, and clearly defined roles. 	50%
Criteria 2: Project Management & Deliverability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Realistic and well-structured timeline with clear milestones and deliverables. • Identification of potential risks and appropriate mitigation strategies. • Clear collaboration and engagement plan, outlining how the research team will work with C40 staff. • Defined governance structure, project oversights, and escalation procedures. • Internal quality control measures to assure accuracy, data integrity, and reliability of findings. 	20%
Criteria 3: Value for Money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economy: Cost efficiency and transparency in budget allocation. Clear justification of costs relative to project scope and deliverables. • Efficiency: Feasibility of the project management approach, resource allocation, and ability to maximize impact within budget constraints. • Effectiveness: Suitability and viability of proposed methods, tools, and models to achieve the research objectives. 	20%
Criteria 4: Equity and Ethical Alignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alignment with C40's values, including commitment to sustainability, equity, diversity, and inclusivity. • Bidders are encouraged to link to their relevant organisational policies and principles. 	10%

6. Project Budget

A maximum budget of **USD 70,000 inclusive of all taxes and fees** is available for the services. Bids exceeding this amount will not be considered. Full payment will be made upon satisfactory completion of the services described above.

The logo for C40 Cities, featuring the text "C40" in a large, bold, sans-serif font above the word "CITIES" in a smaller, bold, sans-serif font, all enclosed within a black rectangular border.

All proposals must include proposed costs to complete the tasks described in the project scope, including all VAT and taxes. Costs should be stated as one-time or non-recurring costs or monthly recurring costs. Costs should be presented in USD. All costs incurred in connection with the submission of this RfP are non-refundable by C40. Payment will be made **according to meeting project milestones** as approved by the C40 point of contact.

7. C40 Policies

C40 expects third parties to be able to abide by these C40 policies

- Non-Staff Code of Conduct Policy [here](#)
- Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy [here](#)

8. Submissions

Each Potential Supplier must submit 1 copy of their proposal to the email address below by **11:59 PM GMT, April 14, 2025**:

Artemis Tomadaki Balomenou, Manager of Food Data & Research,
atomadaki@c40.org

To be in copy:

Stefania Amato, Head of Food Strategy, samato@c40.org
Zöe Fitzgerald, Head of City-Business Engagement, zfitzgerald@c40.org

All questions related to this RFP by potential bidders should be directed by email to atomadaki@c40.org, CC samato@c40.org, zfitzgerald@c40.org.

Anonymised responses to questions will be provided [here](#) when the Q&A period closes.

Based on the submissions received, C40 reserves the right to promote the establishment of consortium relationships or request potential suppliers refine their submission after receipt.

Disclaimer

C40 will not accept any liability or be responsible for any costs incurred by Potential Suppliers in preparing a response for this RFP. Responses submitted will be accessible by all C40 staff and external evaluators (if any).

Neither the issue of the RFP, nor any of the information presented in it, should be regarded as a commitment or representation on the part of C40 (or any of its partners) to enter into a contractual arrangement. Nothing in this RFP should be interpreted as a commitment by C40 to award a contract to a Potential Supplier as a result of this procurement, nor to accept the lowest price or any tender.

