

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RfP)

Breathe Cities Data Knowledge Product: Strength in numbers: how cities are using data to unlock ambitious clean air action

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

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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-Sawyerr of Freetown, Sierra Leone. Three term Mayor of New York City Michael R. Bloomberg serves as President of the C40 Board of Directors, 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. Background and Project Summary

Breathe Cities:

The [Breathe Cities Programme](#) is a global initiative jointly delivered by C40 Cities, the Clean Air Fund, and Bloomberg Philanthropies. By working with cities and coalitions to advance urban clean air action, the Programme will save lives, improve health, and reduce air pollution and climate emissions.

The fourth pillar of the Breathe Cities initiative (knowledge sharing) focuses on sharing lessons and best practices in air quality action. The pillar has two objectives: (1) to support the 14 cities in the Breathe Cities cohort to deliver ambitious action by creating opportunities for them to learn from each other; and (2) to inspire cities and stakeholders outside the initiative to take action by sharing lessons and best practices from Breathe Cities more widely.

One way that the Breathe Cities initiative does this is through the publication of knowledge products - written materials, such as reports and toolkits, that support action by highlighting lessons, examples and best practice approaches.

Purpose of this project:

This project aims to support the use of data to drive clean air action by developing a report that showcases the innovative ways that Breathe Cities are measuring, using and communicating data in their air quality work.

The report will support and inspire cities outside the Breathe Cities initiative to take the next steps in measuring, using and communicating data to drive ambitious clean air action. It will do this by:

- Showcasing the innovative ways that Breathe Cities are measuring, using and communicating data to drive air quality action
- Highlighting that there are opportunities to make progress no matter the initial level of city capacity
- Providing a light-touch self-assessment checklist/tool to help cities assess where they are now and identify possible actions they can take to make progress in measuring, using and communicating air quality data to drive action
- Linking to additional resources and tools that support cities to build their capacity to capture and use data effectively to transform air quality

N.B. In parallel to this project, C40's Clean Air Network is in the process of commissioning a service provider to support its *Equity Indicators for Air Quality Action Technical Working Group* ([RfP available here](#)). We expect the outputs from the work to be relevant to this Breathe Cities project, and so the successful applicant will be expected to collaborate and share and receive information and insights with the service provider delivering the technical working group project.

3. Description of the project

Breathe Cities is looking for a supplier with expertise in air quality and experience delivering high quality written materials to work with the Breathe Cities team (C40 Cities, the Clean Air Fund and Bloomberg Philanthropies) to deliver a high-quality externally-facing report that showcases the innovative ways that Breathe Cities are using data to drive clean air action.

Audience:

The **primary audience** for this report is city technical officials working in air quality teams in non-Breathe Cities, including cities in the wider C40 Clean Air Network. By reading the report, city technical officials will:

- Be inspired by the work of Breathe Cities to take action to increase data-driven air quality action in their cities
- Have used the self-assessment checklist to identify actions they could take
- Know where to look for further practical tools and resources

The **secondary audiences** for this report are:

- Funders, civil society and academic organisations working in the air quality space - who will be inspired by the Breathe Cities approach to data and the potential impact, and motivated to support and find out more

- Technical officials in Breathe Cities - who can use the report to showcase their city's leadership and take inspiration from the work happening across other cities in the initiative

Deliverables:

The scope of work is anticipated to include the following stages. Responses may propose reasonable alternative approaches, provided all deliverables are met.

Work package 1: Planning and research

Activity 1.1. Desk research and content gathering

The supplier will carry out desk research and liaise and engage with key members of the Breathe Cities team to collate relevant information to include in the report to meet the report objectives. This should include:

- Developing a list of existing resources relating to data and air quality action
- Liaising with the Breathe Cities project team and key members of the Breathe Cities regional teams to identify possible case studies to showcase in the report
- Liaising with the project lead for C40's Technical Working Group on Equity Indicators and proposing how content from this work could be incorporated into the Breathe Cities report

Activity 1.2. Report structure and key messages

The supplier will liaise with the Breathe Cities project team to agree on a clear structure for the report and key messages for each section.

Activity 1.3. External peer review panel

In consultation with the Breathe Cities team, the supplier will identify 3-5 appropriate external peer reviewers for the report and work with the Breathe Cities project team to secure their involvement.

Work package 2: Report development

Activity 2.1. Report drafting

The supplier will draft a 20-30 page report, based on the content gathered and structure agreed in work package 1. The primary audience of the report should be city technical officials working in air quality teams in non-Breathe Cities, including cities in the wider C40 Clean Air Network. The report should be written in plain English and include:

- o An executive summary
- o Clear key messages on the ways in which cities are innovating in their air quality work through data
- o At least 5 case studies from Breathe Cities cities and other city examples as agreed with the Breathe Cities project team
- o Relevant content from C40's Equity Technical Working Group

- A toolkit (list) of additional resources and tools for cities to draw on
- A reference list

Work package 3: Review and finalisation

Activity 3.1. Breathe Cities and external review

The supplier will seek and incorporate feedback on the draft report from the Breathe Cities team. The supplier will provide an updated version of the report for any further feedback from the Breathe Cities team. Upon agreement with the Breathe Cities team, an updated draft will be shared with external peer reviewers for their feedback. The supplier will agree with the Breathe Cities team on how to incorporate feedback from external peer reviewers.

Activity 3.2. Copy-editing and design

Once the report content has been agreed between the supplier and the Breathe Cities team, the supplier will professionally copy-edit the report and produce a designed version in Breathe Cities branding, using a template provided by Breathe Cities. The supplier should produce:

- A high quality, designed and copy-edited report, suitable for external publication
- A stand-alone, designed and copy-edited executive summary, suitable for external publication

[Optional] Activity 3.3. Translation

The final designed report and executive summary should be made available in the following Breathe Cities languages (English, Spanish, Brazilian Portuguese, Thai and Bahasa). If this is a service that the supplier can provide, the supplier is requested to provide a quote for professional translation of the report and executive summary in their proposal. However, the Breathe Cities team may decide to procure the translation of the report separately.

4. Proposal Guidelines

4.1 Proposal Requirements

This Request for Proposal represents the requirements for an open and competitive process. Proposals will be accepted until **5pm EDT, August 18, 2025**. Any proposals received after this date and time will not be accepted. All proposals should include clear timetables, a description of how you will work with Breathe Cities, clear costs, and details on your experience in this area.

The proposal should give the Breathe Cities team evaluators all the information they need to assess your bid. Proposals should be limited to 8 pages not including a cover page / letter and attachments. All applications must be submitted in PDF and Microsoft Word formats with at least one inch margins. The text type must be 11 points or larger. **The proposal needs to be submitted in English.**

Your proposal must include adequate information about how it responds to the evaluation criteria, assumptions about the project, risks you have identified, and appropriate mitigation measures. In addition, your proposal also needs to show that the costs were calculated to enable evaluation of cost reasonableness. Your proposal should be organised accordingly and should include (but is not limited to) the information below:

1. Organisational Profile and Key Staff
 - a. Details of organisation and proposed project team - please include relevant previous experiences and expertise, limiting CVs to two pages per person.
 - b. Information about the organisation's commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) and ethical alignment with [C40's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Statement](#). How you intend to apply EDI considerations in this project.
2. Proposed Workplan and Timeline
3. Management Plan
 - a. Explanation of how the service provider proposes to work with and involve the Breathe Cities team - key roles and responsibilities, reporting, change requests, escalation of issues, sign-off of work stages and acceptance criteria.
4. Risk Management Approach
 - a. Description of any risks and assumptions made in planning the project, along with appropriate management and mitigation strategies. Details on how a risk assessment would be completed and what it would include.
5. Budget
 - a. Detailed breakdown of costs in USD for each project task. You must include adequate information about how your costs were calculated to enable evaluation of cost reasonableness.
6. Examples of past work (e.g. published reports of a similar nature)

4.2 Supplier Diversity

Breathe Cities is committed to supplier diversity and inclusive procurement by promoting equity, diversity, and inclusivity in our supplier base. We believe that procuring a diverse range of suppliers gives us a wider range of experiences and thoughts from suppliers and thus best enables us 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 ownership and control 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 are two elements of applying equity, diversity, and inclusion to help the world limit global heating to 1.5°C and build healthy, equitable, and resilient communities.

4.3 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 Service Provider Agreement](#).

These terms and conditions are non-negotiable. Organisations unable to accept them as drafted should not submit bids in connection with this opportunity.

If Breathe Cities is 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.

4.4 Subcontracting

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

5. Budget

The total contract amount for this project will be between USD 40,000 and USD 45,000, including applicable taxes (exclusive of any additional costs for translations). The contracting entity will be C40 Inc. registered in the United States. Payment will be made according to meeting project milestones as approved by the Breathe Cities point of contact.

6. RfP and Project Timeline

RfP Timeline:

RFP Timeline	Due Date
Request for Proposals sent out	<i>July 15, 2025</i>
Questions submitted to C40	<i>15 - 23 July 2025</i>
C40 responds to questions	<i>24 July 2025</i>
Deadline for receiving Offers	<i>August 18, 2025</i>
Evaluation of Proposals	<i>August 18, 2025 - August 26, 2025</i>
Interviews with shortlisted Suppliers	<i>week commencing 15 September 2025</i>
Selection decision made	<i>September 22, 2025</i>

All Potential Suppliers notified of outcome	<i>September 24, 2025</i>
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Project Timeline	Due Date
Supplier kick-off call	<i>W.c. 06 October 2025</i>
Project research/info gathering phase must be completed by	<i>31 October 2025</i>
Project report drafting phase is expected to be completed by	<i>28 November 2025</i>
Project report review phase is expected to be completed by	<i>09 January 2026</i>
Report design and translation is expected to be completed by	<i>26 January 2026</i>
The project is due to run until	<i>W.c. 09 Feb 2026</i>

7. Proposal Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated against the following criteria

Evaluation Criteria	Weighting
Workplan and approach to project delivery The proposal should demonstrate a clear understanding of the project requirements, ability to meet the requirements listed within the timeframe, and clear approach and proposed ways of working.	<i>30%</i>
Knowledge and experience The successful applicant and team members will need to demonstrate a track record of delivering similar projects to a high standard and have relevant subject matter expertise (i.e. relating to the measurement, use and communication of data to support air quality action).	<i>30%</i>
Written communication Through the proposal and examples of previous work, the applicant should demonstrate an ability to write in a clear and engaging manner, tailored to different audiences.	<i>20%</i>
Equity and Ethical Alignment Breathe Cities is looking to appoint an organisation that shares our values and is grounded in local contexts. The proposal should demonstrate clear consideration of equity and inclusion principles and how to ensure relevance of the report for cities in different contexts. Organisations based in the global south are strongly encouraged to apply.	<i>10%</i>

Cost reasonableness The proposal should set out a clear rationale for costs proposed, demonstrating value for money: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economy: minimising the cost of resources used / spending less • Efficiency: the relationship between the output from goods / services and the resources to produce them • Effectiveness: the relationship between the intended and actual results • Equity: the extent to which services reach the intended recipients fairly 	10%
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7. C40 and CAF Policies

Breathe Cities 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

Proposals will be accepted until **5pm EDT, August 18, 2025.** Any proposals received after this date and time will not be accepted.

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AND

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

Disclaimer

Clean Air Fund and C40 will not accept liability or responsibility for potential suppliers' costs incurred in preparing a response for this RFP. Responses submitted will be accessible to all Clean Air Fund and 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 Clean Air Fund or C40 (or any of its partners) to enter into a contractual arrangement. Nothing in this RFP should be interpreted as a commitment by Clean Air Fund or C40 to award a contract to a Potential Supplier as a result of this procurement, nor to accept the lowest price or any tender.