

Request for Proposal (RfP)

Developing a Knowledge Product on Thermal
Comfort Guidelines for Affordable Housing in
Maharashtra

C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group, Inc.

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United States of America

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1. C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group Inc.

C40 is a network of nearly 100 mayors of the world’s leading cities 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 limit global heating in line with the Paris Agreement and build healthy, equitable and resilient communities. We work alongside a broad coalition of representatives from labour, business, the youth climate movement and civil society to support mayors to halve emissions by 2030 and help phase out fossil use while increasing urban climate resilience and equity.

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

2. Summary, purpose and background of the project

Background

India is facing an escalating climate crisis, characterized by record-breaking heatwaves and rising urban temperatures. The year 2024 was recorded as the country's warmest year since 1901 by India Meteorological Department (IMD), a trend that is seen in 2026, with major urban centres including [Mumbai](#), [Ahmedabad](#), [Bengaluru](#), and [Chennai](#) regularly enduring temperatures exceeding 38°C–40°C. This extreme heat is compounded by the Urban Heat Island (UHI) effect in these cities, as exemplified in [C40's study](#) for Mumbai, showing an average temperature rise by 0.30°C per decade since 1994. While over [75% of the population](#) faces severe heat risk, a stark cooling divide leaves an estimated [323 million people](#) vulnerable, as only about [30% of households](#) can afford active cooling appliances like air conditioners. The extreme climate shift is creating a thermal burden on urban households, especially in the affordable housing sector which are targeted for people from the Economically Weaker Sections (EWS).

This socioeconomic and climate crisis intersects with the rapid urbanisation in states such as Maharashtra. As one of India's leading economic drivers, Maharashtra has also seen an expansion in private and public-led affordable housing in cities like Mumbai and Pune for Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) and Low-Income Groups (LIG). Driven by large-scale central and state mandates including the [Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana - Urban \(PMAY-U 2.0\)](#) and Slum Rehabilitation Authority (SRA) redevelopments, there are opportunities for the state to integrate heat resilient designs and materials in these buildings. The Government of India has also introduced national frameworks, such as the [India Cooling Action Plan \(ICAP\)](#) and the Bureau of Energy Efficiency's (BEE) residential energy building code, the [Eco-Niwas Samhita \(ENS\)](#), which establish clear benchmarks to minimize building envelope heat gains.

However, a profound implementation gap persists at the local level, where these national thermal benchmarks are rarely operationalised within state housing policies, Development Control and Promotion Regulations (DCPR), municipal building bye-laws, or local Schedules of Rates (SoR). At the institutional level, the state housing boards, regional planning authorities and Urban Local Bodies (ULB) mostly tend to operate in siloes therefore lacking a cohesive mandate or the technical capacity to enforce thermal comfort benchmarks. From a procurement standpoint, since sustainable cooling technologies and materials are not specifically stated in the SoR, government bodies may face hurdles in their adoption across affording housing typologies.

To unlock such bottlenecks, an assessment of the current ecosystem is required to map these institutional barriers. Moving forward, a comprehensive set of guidelines is needed to translate high-level national targets and policies, including elements of global best practices, into actionable mandates for the sub-national policymakers and developers alike. By conducting a targeted deep-dive into Maharashtra, the aim is to develop a practical set of guidelines that will help state housing agencies and ULBs transform thermal comfort from a voluntary benchmark into an institutionalised practice across affordable housing developments in the state, and identifying key departments and partnerships between the state and city level needed for effective implementation. This will also serve as an opportunity to scale these learnings to other states and cities in India.

Purpose and Objectives

C40 Cities is seeking a firm (Consultant) to develop guidelines for mainstreaming thermal comfort and heat resilience in affordable housing typology (including slum redevelopment projects) -see definition of scope below- in Maharashtra. The guidelines will bridge the gap between national/sub-national cooling directives, and local implementation by recommending policy and implementation mechanisms, and fiscal levers to implement thermal comfort measures into existing and upcoming affordable housing.

The Consultant will undertake:

- **Landscape mapping of thermal comfort adoption and best practice documentation:** Landscape assessment of overarching cooling policies, national-to-state alignment, and a high-level analysis of thermal comfort integration in affordable housing policies and implementation across key C40 footprint states (Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu). Successful global and Indian case studies of passive cooling designs, heat-resilient materials, and equitable thermal comfort in affordable housing segments.
- **Deep-dive gap analysis for Maharashtra with stakeholder engagement:** Technical, financial, institutional, and regulatory bottlenecks hindering implementation of thermal comfort measures in government- and private-led affordable housing and slum redevelopment projects in Maharashtra. This is to be done through secondary research and in-person engagements.
- **Finalisation of actionable state-specific recommendations and guidelines through consultation:** Concrete recommendations to bridge policy and implementation gaps to ensure thermal comfort and can feed into the DCPR, SoR and in government- and private-led affordable housing and slum redevelopment regulations in Maharashtra. A final consultation workshop with relevant experts, builders associations, and government stakeholders to finalise the output.

The target audience for the Guidelines would be policy makers at the state and city level, officials from Urban Local Bodies (such as Environment, Building construction and approval, etc.) and agencies such as state housing boards, slum redevelopment authorities etc.

Focus Area of the Guidelines: Recommend thermal comfort and heat-resilience interventions - such as policy measures, material selection, energy-efficient cooling, and passive design - covering both new construction and retrofitting within the affordable housing sector. These recommendations should ideally feed into affordable housing policies and regulations such as the DCPR and SoR. **For the purpose of this assignment, Affordable Housing (AH) includes both new and existing government-led or facilitated, and private-led group housing projects for Economic Weaker Sections (EWS) and Low Income Groups (LIG), including slum redevelopment projects¹.**

Scope of work:

The project is broken down into the following deliverables:

- **Deliverable A: Landscape assessment and gap analysis**
This deliverable focuses on a comprehensive landscape assessment of existing policies, model building bylaws, and any other statutory provisions that support implementation of cooling measures in affordable housing, as well as identifying actual implementation barriers. The

¹ Slum redevelopment - a government-led urban renewal strategy that transforms informal settlements into formal housing where private developers build free homes for eligible slum dwellers, and are compensated with incentives.

Consultant will review the provisions for thermal comfort in existing national policies/ guidelines/ schemes for affordable housing such as Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana Urban 2.0 (PMAY-U 2.0), India Cooling Action Plan (ICAP), Eco-Niwas Samhita (ENS), etc. and their adoption at sub-national level in four states (Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu), alongside other national and global best practices. This landscape assessment will be paired with deep-dive gap analysis of the thermal comfort policies and implementation in the affordable housing sector of Maharashtra, which will be strengthened through in-person stakeholder engagements (interviews/focused group discussions) in the state. This analysis should uncover the specific institutional, financial, and technical bottlenecks preventing local bodies and developers from implementing thermal comfort measures across diverse affordable housing typologies including new construction and existing building stock. The analysis will also identify the key departments and agencies, across city, state and national level, that are key for the measures to be effectively implemented, including the key decision makers necessary to engage in order to revise the relevant housing policies

- **Deliverable B: Development of guidelines for Maharashtra for cooling affordable housing**

This deliverable translates the insights and gaps identified in the first phase into practical, state-specific policy updates for Maharashtra that can be directly adopted in the DCPR and other relevant policies. The Consultant will draft actionable guidelines and mechanisms for adoption to integrate cooling policies and implementation measures for thermal comfort in government- and private-led affordable housing. To ensure these recommendations are realistic, the Consultant will conduct a stakeholder consultation with relevant experts and government officials. The final feedback will be synthesized to deliver a guideline document that provides a clear set of recommendations to institutionalise and implement heat-resilient affordable housing.

Work packages:

Deliverable A: Landscape assessment of cooling frameworks for affordable housing and deep-dive gap analysis with in-person engagements

Activities	Project Inception ● Prepare a detailed work plan clearly identifying key deliverables and associated timelines aligning with this RfP. ● Map the various typologies of affordable housing and the relevant stakeholders - government departments, housing boards, domain experts, etc. in Maharashtra. ● Conduct a kick-off meeting with C40 to align on scope, expectations and data requirements. Landscape assessment and review of best practices ● Through secondary research, map the existing policies and any other statutory provisions that support implementation of cooling measures in affordable housing. ● Map the provisions for thermal comfort in existing national policies / guidelines/ schemes for affordable housing such as Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana Urban 2.0 (PMAY-U 2.0), India Cooling Action Plan (ICAP), Eco-Niwas Samhita (ENS), etc. ● Map the fiscal and non-fiscal incentives (if any) to increase adoption of cooling measures in affordable housing.
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	• Develop a high-level comparative matrix of thermal comfort mandates for affordable housing in Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu. • Document 3 successful national case studies, and 3 international best practices (preferably from similar climate zones) highlighting equitable thermal comfort frameworks and cooling measures adopted in affordable housing typologies in the cities. Deep-dive gap analysis for Maharashtra and stakeholder engagement • Assess the institutional, financial, and technical provisions for enabling heat resilient cooling measures for affordable housing typologies in government- and private sector-led affordable housing in Maharashtra. • Document retrofitting efforts being undertaken by the housing bodies in Maharashtra to improve the heat-resilience and cooling in such projects, if any. • Identify specific institutional, financial, and technical bottlenecks (e.g., lack of technical awareness, funding constraints, rigid procurement norms, Ease of Doing Business(EODB) mechanisms) preventing local bodies and developers from adopting heat-resilience measures in affordable housing typologies. • Strengthen the gap analysis through targeted in-person engagements and consultations with the relevant government stakeholders and the industry associations (CREDAI, NAREDCO, etc.), officials and slum redevelopment authorities. • Engage with subject-matter experts, wherever needed.
Outputs	• Inception Report including detailed work plan and stakeholder engagement plan • Landscape assessment and deep-dive gap analysis report • Minutes of discussion of in-person meetings with the government officials
Indicative timeline	August to October 2026

Deliverable B: Development of guidelines for Maharashtra to enable integration of cooling policies in affordable housing regulations

Activities	Drafting state-specific guidelines and recommendations: • Develop actionable guidelines for Maharashtra to integrate thermal comfort and heat-resilient measures into affordable housing projects. These recommendations must be applicable to both new construction and existing structures. The consultant should include: ◦ Biobased & non-heat trapping natural materials ◦ Passive design measures such as shading, cool roofs, vernacular/heritage design solutions ◦ Solar powered ventilation systems • Recommend comprehensive revisions to the Mumbai DCPR 2034, the Maharashtra UDCPR, the State PWD Handbook (Technical Guidelines), and the State Schedule of Rates (Procurement & Budgeting) to institutionalize thermal comfort.
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	- Map the decision makers and agencies that are key to revising the relevant housing policies and execute projects, and draft engagement strategy to bring about adoption of the recommendations. Propose a plan of action to engage the decision makers to take the guidelines from planning to implementation. - The Guidelines for thermal comfort in affordable housing for Maharashtra should be applicable for the following two categories - (1) new construction of buildings, and; (2) the existing stock of buildings Stakeholder consultation workshop and knowledge product finalisation: - Conduct a structured stakeholder consultation workshop with think tanks, academic experts, housing and builders associations, and government agencies to present the identified gaps and the draft guidelines for the state to gather feedback, and build consensus on the recommendations. - Synthesize and integrate the feedback received from the stakeholder consultations to finalise the complete knowledge product.
Outputs	- Draft of the state-specific guidelines and recommendations for Maharashtra. - Outcomes summary report of the stakeholder consultation documenting participant feedback and consensus points - Finalised Guidelines (in English) for both new construction and retrofitting of existing stock, alongside a final executive summary of the Guidelines in Powerpoint/Google Slides presentation format.
Indicative timeline	November 2026 to February 2027

3. Proposal guidelines

This Request for Proposal represents the requirements for an open and competitive process. Proposals will be accepted until **11:59 PM IST 31 July 2026**. 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 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 outlined in [Section 5](#);
- The assumptions you are making about the project;
- Risks you have identified and appropriate mitigation measures;
- Information about your fee;
- 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.

Potential Suppliers should provide the following information as part of their proposal for information:

- Cover letter with authorised signature;
- Details of the organisation and proposed project team, including relevant experience and expertise. CVs should be limited to two pages per person. Clearly indicate the project lead, roles and responsibilities of each team member;
- Information about the organisation's commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion and ethical alignment with C40;
- At least two references or recommendation letters from similar clients (with phone and email contact details) from the past three (3) years;
- Detailed work plan which includes the timeframe for your tasks, milestone(s) delivery and completion of the project;
- Project management methodology;
- Cost offer for the delivery of this service (including the daily rates for the proposed project team which will be fixed for the duration of the contract)
- Confirmation of adherence to C40's terms and conditions;
- Any additional deliverables and / or information relevant to this tender
- Information on Data Protection (if it is a system, software or a supplier utilizing personal data like passport number, birthday, address, etc): C40 is subject to the European Union and United Kingdom data protection regulations and the winning proposal must ensure its continued compliance. If a successful proposal will require that you process or control personally identifiable information (PII), please describe your familiarity, and ability to comply, with Directive 95/46/EC and the forthcoming General Data Protection Legislation
- **The documents submitted must be in English and should include proposed costs, any relevant CVs, clients, experience, and detailed work plan in accordance with the deliverables and work packages in [Section 2](#) of this document.**

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

Consultant requirements:

- Applicants **must** be a firm. Individual consultants are not eligible to apply;
- Relevant experience in similar assignments and expertise in areas such as urban governance, sustainable urban development, heat-resilience, energy and buildings, research and analysis, and stakeholder engagements. Understanding of regional context in building construction, governance, and working procedures of different government agencies in India;
- Proven experience in developing guidelines, policy briefs, and preparation of implementation-level reports and knowledge products;
- Right to work and on-ground presence in India, with key team member(s) able to travel to and within Maharashtra to engage with relevant stakeholders
- The Consultant will need to participate in periodic review meetings with C40 Team (virtual)
- The Consultant's team may have sectoral experts with relevant academic background to guide the team and support all the deliverables.
- Consultant should **consider all the costs** (inclusive of all taxes) which includes costs associated with in-person engagements, organising the consultation workshop, local travel or Out-of-pocket expenses required for the deep dive engagements.

Programme Management

- C40 will oversee and manage the project, however the consultant's representative/person will facilitate engagement with the points of contact and work closely with the key stakeholders in Maharashtra as needed. All documents/deliverables will be submitted to the C40 team for review before submission to any of the government organisations and external stakeholders for approvals. Payment will align to the work packages and subject to satisfactory submission of deliverables based on review and approval by C40.
- The successful bidder will be expected to engage at least one representative/person as part of the in-person engagements with the state.
- At C40, the project will be anchored at the C40 South and West Asia Regions team and all deliverables and requests will need to be approved by the C40 Regional Director, South and West Asia. C40 staff including various sectoral teams will provide overall guidance and will be involved in technical review of each deliverable.
- All written and analytical outputs to be delivered in draft first with at least 10 days review time for C40. Additionally, overall progress review meetings will be organised every 2 weeks with C40. The consultant will be expected to oversee all project-management related matters (e.g. minutes taking, agenda, etc.) of this project.
- If the firm submitting a proposal must outsource or contract any work to meet the requirements contained herein, this must be clearly stated in the proposal. Additionally, all costs included in proposals must be all-inclusive to include any outsourced or contracted work. Any proposals which call for outsourcing or contracting work must include a name and description of the agencies being contracted. Except Consortium (which is clearly stated in the submitted proposal), the selected consultant needs to take C40's prior approval for sub-contracting and/or addition of partners to the consortium post signing the contract with C40.
- The consultant is expected to foster close and constructive working relationships with the project management team, who will act as the main focal point within C40. All deliverables must be approved by C40.

Language

All the deliverables/outputs including stakeholder consultation outcomes reports and the final Knowledge Product (including the executive summary), should be provided in English.

Documentation

All documentation should use C40 templates (unless otherwise specified) and be provided in an editable and portable document format, compatible with computer software used by C40 and C40 Cities. Editing, formatting, and presentation of electronic files should be of a consistent, professional, and publishable standard. All documentation to be shared with cities or other external partners should only feature C40's and respective government partner's name and logo (to be decided later); successful bidders may not use their own name(s) or logo(s) except with prior written permission by C40. All project deliverables, reports and documentation, content and intellectual property will be owned by C40.

Other terms

- C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group reserves the right to change or cancel the above requirements at any time, without incurring any liability towards any interested party and/or any obligation to inform any interested party of the grounds for its action.
- All costs mentioned in connection with the submission of this RFP must be in USD (US\$).

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 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](#). Supplier diversity and inclusive procurement is one element of applying equity, diversity and inclusion to help deliver the goals of the Paris Agreement 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 non-negotiable. Organisations unable to accept them as drafted should not submit bids in connection with this opportunity.

If C40 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.

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	Due date
Date of publishing the RfP	6 July 2026
Questions submitted to C40	13 July 2026
C40 responds to questions	17 July 2026
Deadline for receiving Offers	31 July 2026
All Potential Suppliers notified of outcome	14 August 2026

The project is due to run till **28 February 2027**. The timeline for the deliverables are given in [Section 2](#) under 'Work packages'.

5. Proposal evaluation criteria

Proposals will be evaluated against the following criteria.

Evaluation criteria	Weighting
Robustness of the project delivery proposal and specific technical experience: Project delivery approach proposed, including project management approach (ability to deliver outputs on time and with quality). The successful applicant will need to demonstrate in-depth knowledge and experience aligned with the needs of the procurement.	40%
Quality of staffing and past experience: The successful applicant will need to have team members with suitable experience to address the needs of the procurement.	30%
Financial Proposal: Cost Reasonableness measured by: 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	20%
Commitment to diversity and inclusion: C40 is looking to appoint an organisation that shares our values and is grounded in the context of the South and West Asia region, and having a team that clearly incorporates C40 policies (e.g. gender balance in teams and roles, etc.)	10%

Following the evaluation of written submissions, C40 reserves the right to invite a shortlist of the highest-ranked bidders for an interview or technical presentation to further validate their proposals. If conducted, the results of these sessions will be incorporated into the final scoring.

6. Project budget

A maximum budget of **USD 27,000 (US\$)** is available including all applicable taxes. Bids must not exceed this value. *Travel is expected for this work and estimated expenses are to be included in the budget. Costs for in-person engagements and conducting workshop(s) are also included.* The selected firm should inform C40 of its plans to engage government stakeholders.

Payment Schedule:

Payment will be made according to meeting project milestones as approved by the C40 point of contact.

S.No.	Activity	Payment tranche
1	Upon submission of Inception Report and Work Plan	10%

2	Upon successful submission and acceptance by C40 of all the deliverables listed under 'Deliverable A'	40%
3	Upon successful submission and acceptance by C40 of all the deliverables listed under 'Deliverable B'	50%

All proposals must include proposed costs to complete the tasks described in the project scope, including all VAT/GST and taxes. Costs should be stated as one-time or non-recurring costs or monthly recurring costs. All costs incurred in connection with the submission of this RfP are non-refundable by C40.

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 **one copy of their proposal** to the email address below by **11:59 pm IST 31 July 2026**:

procurement_swa@c40.org , mferrarino@c40.org

Anonymised responses to questions will be provided here ([link](#)) 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.

Have a concern?

C40 is committed to the highest standards of ethical behaviour. As such, we are committed to being open and responsive to complaints and suggestions on how we can improve from outside the organisation. Please refer to [C40 Complaints Procedure](#) on how to reach us.

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.