



For Immediate Release

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Next Steps for Illinois' NextGrid Utility of the Future Study

Consistent with the announcement at the June 28, 2017 Regular Open Meeting at the Illinois Commerce Commission, Ameren Illinois and Commonwealth Edison (ComEd) released an informal Request for Information (RFI) today regarding the selection of the NextGrid independent facilitator. The electric utilities are seeking a qualified individual and/or organization to coordinate and facilitate the Utility of the Future study.

Proposals must be submitted by **July 14, 2017 by 5:00 PM CT** to NextGrid@Ameren.com or NextGrid@ComEd.com. Submissions are limited to five pages, including attachments, and late submissions will not be accepted.

To access the RFI, please visit the news sections of [ComEd](http://ComEd.com) or [Ameren Illinois'](http://AmerenIllinois.com) websites, or see below.

NextGrid is an approximately eighteen-month, consumer-focused study exploring topics such as methods to leverage Illinois' restructured energy market, investment in smart grid technology, and the significant expansion of renewables and energy efficiency resulting from the recently passed Future Energy Jobs Act. The study will be led and overseen by the ICC with the assistance of an independent facilitator who will seek input from all members of the energy stakeholder community on goals and guiding principles for the process.

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About the Illinois Commerce Commission

The Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) is a quasi-judicial body made up of five Commissioners. Through its Public Utility Program, the Commission oversees the provision of adequate, reliable, efficient and safe utility services at the least possible cost to Illinois citizens served by electric, natural gas, telecommunications, water and sewer public utility companies. Through its Transportation Regulatory Program, the Commission oversees public safety and consumer protection programs with regard to intrastate commercial motor carriers of general freight, household goods movers, relocation towers, safety towers, personal property warehouses and repossession agencies. The Commission's Rail Safety Program also inspects and regulates the general safety of railroad tracks, facilities and equipment in the state.

Utilities of the Future: “NextGrid”

Project Facilitator Opportunity

Interested Parties Must Submit Information to either:

NextGrid@ameren.com or Nextgrid@comed.com

by 5:00 PM CST on July 14th, 2017.

I. INTRODUCTION: Ameren Illinois Company and Commonwealth Edison Company are seeking a qualified individual and/or organization to coordinate and facilitate the Illinois Utilities of the Future Study, also known as “NextGrid” study. The pace of change affecting the electric utility industry and Illinois ratepayers is accelerating quickly. “NextGrid” is a collaborative process initiated by the Illinois Commerce Commission (“The Commission”) in which the electric utility industry and other stakeholders can develop a shared base of information and work to build a consensus on critical issues facing the electric utility industry now, and as it continues to rapidly transform. “NextGrid” aims to take an intimate look at the functionality and design of the electric utility grid, with a focus on how the electric system can move towards the integration of distributed energy resources and technology, in an effort to create a transactional framework that allows utilities to maximize technological resources and customers the opportunity to buy, sell, produce, and store electricity at a reasonable rate. This study will take a particular look at energy efficiency, interconnected smart devices and appliances, micro-grids, electric vehicles, the use of big data and analytics, environmental objectives, and a host of new technologies, products, and services spurring the development of entirely new energy markets, and how it relates to the existing network design, capability, and regulatory policy.

II. “NEXTGRID” FACILITATOR ROLE: In pursuit of the overall objective, the Facilitator will be expected to establish a platform and structure via either direct employees, organizations, subcontractors and/or indirect partnerships and processes to deliver the “NextGrid” functions in an expedited manner (that may be calendared – i.e. some functions now, phasing in others) within a projected eighteen-month funding window. The facilitator will be selected and retained by Ameren Illinois Company and Commonwealth Edison Company in consultation with the Commission.

These functions should include, but is not limited to:

- 1.) Identify and explore future technological advancements, and utility and regulatory models that can bring the greatest benefit to customers and communities throughout Illinois.
- 2.) Educate policy makers on the issues and challenges associated with a quickly evolving energy landscape.
- 3.) Identify and recommend to The Commission and the Illinois General Assembly a range of tangible actions and policies that can maximize benefits to our citizens and the economy.
- 4.) Assist The Commission by engaging electric utilities, communities, and other stakeholders, including industry, academia, ratepayer and environmental advocates in a process of education and discourse concerning topics including, but not limited to:
 - a. Consumers, Communities, and Economic Development,
 - b. Grid Design, Digital Networks and Markets,

- c. Regulation and Encouraging Innovation, and
 - d. Climate Change and the Environment; and
- 5.) Report progress on “NextGrid” at the request of The Commission, in interim reports.
 - 6.) Draft and present a final report to the Commission that outlines relevant issues, opportunities and challenges, identifies areas of consensus and disagreement, educates policy makers, and provides a range of recommendations aimed at empowering customers and communities, driving economic development, optimizing the electric utility industry, and creating a 21st Century regulatory model that supports innovation.
 - 7.) Help develop “areas of interest” for future “NextGrid” projects by engaging with electric utilities, stakeholders, policy makers, academia, experts, ratepayers, communities, and other stakeholders, drawing from industry expertise, knowledge of cutting edge solutions and an understanding of the various “NextGrid” initiatives.
 - 8.) Create and maintain information resources to help third parties and communities navigate and engage successfully with the various “NextGrid” opportunities in Illinois. Those resources should include: summaries of current “NextGrid” projects, descriptions of areas of interest for future “NextGrid” projects, and “how-to” guidance, FAQs, or webinars. Resources should also include synthesis, comparisons, or summaries of data released by the Commission and should be updated as “NextGrid” evolves.
 - 9.) Design, implement and maintain a central mechanism for submitting project ideas.
 - 10.) Develop evaluation criteria (i.e. applicability, financial viability, and technical “readiness” for any associated technology) and an evaluation process in coordination with industry experts, policy makers, and stakeholders, publishing descriptions of the criteria and process to ensure a greater likelihood of proposal efficiency and success.
 - 11.) Evaluate and screen ideas on a regular basis, recommend good fits to utilities via appropriate means (summaries, short web pitches etc.), and facilitate partnerships among third parties that may offer or propose part of a broader solution.
 - 12.) Deliver feedback to all third parties that submit project ideas on the apparent stage of their proposal and fit with areas of interest, meet with submitters whose submissions show promise to help workshop their ideas and push innovation, and keep track of all inbounds and next steps/close loops.
 - 13.) Partner with State and other organizations on the presentation of workshops focused on interest areas or emerging potential.
 - 14.) Summarize, develop and share best practices to enhance innovation and partnerships and drive scale and replication of successful projects, including by publishing analysis and synthesis of filed project reports or webcasts.

III. DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS:

A successful proposer is likely to have the following qualifications:

- Track record of delivering structures for new innovative projects with high throughput, high quality, and real-world impact;
- Experience forming and leading interdisciplinary, collaborative teams;
- Experience with creating and implementing innovative solutions;

- Experience evaluating the potential of new energy technologies;
- Strong knowledge of energy markets and cutting edge, new technologies and business models in Illinois and other markets;
- Experience engaging across multi-sector stakeholder groups including specific experience with utilities, distributed energy resources (DER) providers, local governments, community based organizations, universities and faculty, and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs);
- Experience with new product development, technology road-mapping and commercialization;
- Experience in creating engaging web based tools to communicate ideas, gather ideas and build engagement of communities;
- Strong business model innovation skills with a demonstrated ability to identify and communicate specific, compelling, and appropriate business model propositions;

Proposers are welcomed to assemble teams that bring together firms, academic institutions and/or faculty, or other organizations with different specialties and core competencies, in particular as part of the project evaluation role.

IV. ALL INTERESTED PARTIES SHOULD COMMUNICATE THE FOLLOWING:

- 1.) Interested Party Information: Please provide the name, title and contact information for one individual (phone and e-mail) who can be reached during business hours and who is authorized to communicate on behalf of the interested party.
- 2.) Key Information: Also identify key information about the interested party and/or organization. The proposal shall include a brief narrative and should include:
 - a. Organizational purpose and day-to-day functions.
 - b. Organizational structure, including location of Headquarters and any other offices in Illinois.
 - c. How the interested party plans to provide statewide coverage?
 - d. The interested party's intended strategy and method for achieving a successful result?
- 3.) Please limit your submission to no more than 5 pages (including attachments).

V. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION: All interested party submissions must be received no later than 5:00 PM CST, on July 14, 2017. Submissions shall be sent to either:

NextGrid@ameren.com or
Nextgrid@comed.com

Submissions will only be accepted at the address above. Late submissions will not be considered.