

IV. APPLICATION ABSTRACT

RFA Specification No.: <u>08-0326</u>	
RFA Specification Title: <u>Industry Driven Regional Collaborative (IDRC)</u>	
Amount Requested: Year 1 (2008-2009): \$ <u>207,218</u> Year 2 (2009-2010): \$ <u>261,468</u>	
Facility: <u>Sierra College</u>	Project Director: <u>Sandra Scott</u>
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NEED

This proposal is Sierra College's strategic response to the emerging demand for a photovoltaic technician training and certificate program. The project was developed in partnership with the City of Roseville, the Nevada County Economic Resource Council and regional businesses in the solar energy technology sector in Placer, Nevada and Sacramento counties. Solar, or photovoltaic (PV), energy is a clean, reliable, and affordable source of electricity. Photovoltaic technology makes use of the sun's plentiful energy and has low impact on the environment. Furthermore, photovoltaics can be used in a wide range of products, from small consumer items to large commercial solar electric systems.

The demand for trained workers in this emerging sector was identified through regional environmental scanning. Also, the demand is being fueled by a recently initiated State of California New Solar Homes Partnership (NSHP) as an element of a comprehensive statewide solar program known as the California Solar Initiative (CSI) with the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC). The California Solar Initiative was approved by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) on January 12, 2006. The initiative creates a \$3.3 billion ten-year program to put solar on a million roofs in the state. Local electric municipal utilities such as Roseville Electric and the Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD) are also offering rebates to encourage the installation of solar within the region. Based on both industry and academic research, employment in the solar industry must grow by thirty percent (30%) annually to meet the state mandates and local building demand.

RESPONSE

Currently, there is no existing community college certificate program in the north/far north region of California that addresses the education and training needs of the solar industry. Sierra College will fill the education gap and address the need for solar energy systems technicians by creating short-term training and a certificate program. These Sierra College programs will address both new construction and retrofit.

This project is a good match with the Request for Applications (RFA) as the project will create a for-credit curriculum for the longer term and agile short term contract training curriculum for incumbent workers. This new program will also create two laboratories, in cooperation with the City of Roseville at a regional training center and with the Nevada County Economic Resource Council in Nevada County for training in solar energy technologies.