

Request for Proposals Bidder Questions and Agency Answers Document

Contract Title: Energy Efficiency Advisory Council Consultant

Contract Number: NAT-14-100-EEAC

Agency Name: Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control

Effective Date: November 7, 2014

Question 1

Does the scope of work for this bid also include provision of EM&V services for DSM programs? If this contract does not include EM&V, would conducting this work constitute a conflict of interest for providing EM&V services in the future?

DNREC Response: The EEAC technical consultant will be tasked with the requirements described in the RFP Scope of Services. Including but not limited to reviewing the effectiveness of programs, identifying areas of potential program improvement, and advising the EEAC on program evaluation and reviewing evaluations and materials prepared by program evaluators hired by DNREC and/or utilities and third parties. The EEAC technical consultant is not expected to complete formal program evaluation, measurement, and verification (EM&V) as part of this contract. Serving as the EEAC technical consultant would not preclude any contractor from bidding on any potential solicitation from DNREC for an EM&V contractor.

Question 2

Does the DNREC want a proposed budget including hours? Or should bidders submit rates by staff member/billing class, with total hours to be determined on a task order basis?

DNREC Response: Bidders should provide proposed budgets for the tasks detailed in the Scope of Work. Charge rates and/or rates by staff member/billing class are recommended for inclusion in proposal.

Question 3

If the DNREC is seeking a budget with proposed hours, is there information available on the acceptable range of hours/budget available for the work to be included in this contract?

DNREC Response: DNREC has not set an acceptable range of hours or budget for this RFP. Bidders should use their professional judgment to provide proposed budgets for the tasks detailed in the Scope of Work.

Question 4

Section Number: III-B

Paragraph Number: 2

Page Number: 4

Text of Passage Being Questioned: “2. Hourly rates, costs, and other information provided in the financial proposal.”

Does the above RFP requirement mean that the financial proposal only needs to include hourly rates and other types of costs (e.g., travel) that are not included in hourly rates? Or does the financial proposal need to include a full annual budget?

If the financial proposal does need to include a full annual budget, can DEC provide a suggested level of effort? An indication of the expected total number of consulting hours would be helpful in constructing a proposed annual budget.

DNREC Response: DNREC has not set an acceptable range of hours or budget for this RFP. Bidders should use their professional judgment to provide proposed budgets for the tasks detailed in the Scope of Work.

Question 5

Section Number: D-3

Paragraph Number: a.

Page Number: 14

Text of Passage Being Questioned: “The term of the contract between the successful bidder and the State shall be for one (1) year with two optional extensions for a period of one (1) year for each extension.”

Should the financial proposal just be for one year or should it also include pricing for the two optional extension years?

DNREC Response: Proposals should clearly detail pricing for first year, separate from pricing of any extension year period. The contract is only guaranteed for a period of one year, extensions to the contract will be made at DNREC’s discretion.

Question 6

Section II, Scope of Work, Page 3, All Paragraphs: Has an annual budget been established for the consultant’s services for (i) the first year, and (ii) each of the optional extension years of the contemplated contract?

DNREC Response: An annual budget has not been set for this RFP.

Question 7

Section II, Scope of Work, Page 3, Paragraph 5: Please advise if the term “monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of programs” includes surveys, field data collection and other primary research, and field-based impact evaluation, including the measurement and verification of claimed energy savings and demand reductions by affected energy providers.

DNREC Response: The scope of the RFP requirement to “monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of programs” is not intended to include formal evaluation, measurement, and verification of utility energy efficiency programs. However, it is likely to include review, evaluation, and interpretation of third party program evaluation reports and materials. Additionally, some primary research and survey work may be required.

Question 8

Section II - Scope of Services

Paragraph #5

Page 3

Text being questioned: “Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of programs including, but not limited to, the analysis of the cost-effectiveness of energy efficiency, peak demand reduction, and fuel switching programs and measures; development of assessments that identify opportunities to improve and expand initiatives in all customer sectors; identification of opportunities to improve the operational efficiency of programs to minimize costs to ratepayers; and assist with budget development and review.”

Question: Does the role of the EEAC technical consultant include performing impact and process evaluations of programs offered by the electric and gas utilities in DE or simply advising the EEAC with respect to program evaluation? Does DNREC plan to put out a separate solicitation for an Evaluation Contractor that would design and implement independent process and impact evaluations of the programs offered by the electric and gas utilities in DE? If so, would serving as the EEAC technical consultant preclude bidders from serving as an evaluation contractor?

DNREC Response: The EEAC technical consultant will be tasked with the requirements described in the RFP Scope of Services. Including but not limited to reviewing the effectiveness of programs, identifying areas of potential program improvement, and advising the EEAC on program evaluation and reviewing evaluations and materials prepared by program evaluators hired by DNREC and/or utilities and third parties. The EEAC technical consultant is not expected to complete formal program evaluation, measurement, and verification (EM&V) as part of this contract. Serving as the EEAC technical consultant would not preclude any contractor from bidding on any potential solicitation from DNREC for an EM&V contractor.

Question 9

Section number: Section III (Required Information)

Paragraph number: Paragraph B.2

Page number: Page 4

Text of passage being questioned: Hourly rates, costs, and other information provided in the financial proposal.

Question: Should consultants propose specific budgets, or is it sufficient to just provide charge rates?

DNREC Response: Bidders should provide proposed budgets for the tasks detailed in the Scope of Work. Charge rates and/or rates by staff member/billing class are recommended for inclusion in proposal.

Question 10

Section number: Section II (Scope of Services)

Paragraph number: N/A

Page number: Page 3

Text of passage being questioned: Scope of work

Question: Is there any end date in mind for the contract term?

DNREC Response: The term of the contract between the successful bidder and the State shall be for one year with two optional extensions for a period of one year for each extension. The end date for the contract term will initially be one year from the date the contract is executed.

Question 11

Is the contractor required to attend meetings in Delaware? If yes, how many meeting will be needed each month/year?

DNREC Response: We expect that the EEAC will meet monthly for the first year. As per the Scope of Work, the need for the EEAC technical consultant to attend other EEAC technical support meetings during the year may arise. Bidders will need to use their professional judgment in their proposals to determine how they will be able to perform their role as technical consultant and complete the tasks listed in the Scope of Work.

Question 12

Will the contractor be conducting any evaluation efforts on any programs, or is it limited to assisting with the oversight and implementation of the evaluations conducted by others?

DNREC Response: The EEAC technical consultant will be tasked with the requirements described in the RFP Scope of Services. Including but not limited to reviewing the effectiveness of programs, identifying areas of potential program improvement, and advising the EEAC on program evaluation and reviewing evaluations and materials prepared by program evaluators hired by DNREC and/or utilities and third parties. The EEAC technical consultant is not expected to complete formal program evaluation, measurement, and verification (EM&V) as part of this contract. Serving as the EEAC technical consultant would not preclude any contractor from bidding on any potential solicitation from DNREC for an EM&V contractor.

Question 13

How is the contractor expected to ensure all goals are met and tasks are accomplished? What authority will the contractor have to assure this?

DNREC Response: The EEAC and DNREC will be setting goals and developing a process for implementing the requirements and duties required by Title 29 Section 8059 of the Delaware Code. The EEAC technical consultant will report directly to DNREC, assist with development of reasonable EEAC goals and implementation plans, and serve in part in a facilitatory role to assist DNREC and the EEAC with meeting the goals and implementation plans.

Question 14

Is the technical support provided to the DEC to include any special studies or work products not specified in the SOW? If so, what work is expected? Or is this general or targeted informational interaction with staff that can be characterized as support?

DNREC Response: No, DNREC does not have any special studies or work products planned outside of the items detailed in the RFP Scope of Work.

Question 15

What degree of interaction with the utilities or evaluation contractors conducting the program evaluation is expected?

DNREC Response: Delaware utilities hold 4 of the 13 seats on the EEAC. DNREC anticipates that the EEAC technical consultant will have extensive interaction with all EEAC members. Additionally, some interaction is expected between evaluation contractors and the EEAC technical consultant.

Question 16

In SOW task 5 it says to “Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of programs including, but not limited to, the analysis of the cost-effectiveness of energy efficiency, peak demand reduction, and fuel switching programs and measures”. Can you be more specific about what is needed in this task? What type of monitoring and what type of evaluation is expected over which programs? Or is this only to monitor what others are doing with respect to evaluation tasks and report on those efforts?

DNREC Response: The EEAC technical consultant will be tasked with the requirements described in the RFP Scope of Services. Including but not limited to reviewing the effectiveness of programs, identifying areas of potential program improvement, and advising the EEAC on program evaluation and reviewing evaluations and materials prepared by program evaluators hired by DNREC and/or utilities and third parties. The EEAC technical consultant is not expected to complete formal program evaluation, measurement, and verification (EM&V) as part of this contract. Serving as the EEAC technical consultant would not preclude any contractor from bidding on any potential solicitation from DNREC for an EM&V contractor.

Question 17

What advocacy tasks are expected in SOW number 6? What level of effort is expected in the advocacy function? Is this an educational task, and who is the advocacy targeted at reaching. What are the expected results of the advocacy tasks?

DNREC Response: Scope of Work Task 6 requires the contractor to “advocate for program design and delivery improvements, including, but not limited to, providing recommendations for increasing the benefits of efficiency to under-served sectors.” This task includes, but shall not be limited to, reviewing utility-created program plans; developing and advocating for program plans for the affected energy provider; reviewing, evaluating program design throughout the implementation process; suggesting improvements; and similar activities the EEAC will be charged with during the implementation of Title 29, Section 8059 of Delaware Code. The EEAC technical consultant will be advocating to the affected energy providers and EEAC, the goal of this task is to help the EEAC and affected energy providers develop and implement the most cost-effective and optimal energy efficiency program portfolios.

Question 18

What level of technical support is needed to develop and promulgate regulations under SOW task 7? What type of regulations, what is the expected scope?

DNREC Response: Technical support will include assistance researching and drafting Delaware Administrative Code Regulations pursuant to Title 29 Section 8059(h)(3) of the Delaware Code. The regulations will be prepared and promulgated in accordance with Delaware Administrative Code requirements: <http://regulations.delaware.gov/AdminCode/>. The EEAC technical consultant will assist DNREC with all stages of promulgation, including conducting one or more stakeholder workshops.

Question 19

The contractor is expected to “develop and review policies on a range of issues”. What kinds of development efforts are expected and how is this expected to be provided?

DNREC Response: The technical consultant will develop and review policies on a range of issues relevant to the EEAC’s duties and functions including, but not limited to, review of the program plans, schedules, and budgets submitted by the affected energy providers; energy efficiency program plan development and implementation; energy efficiency savings targets; program budget and financing; cost-effectiveness; and evaluation, measurement, and verification. It is expected that the technical consultant will provide these services and work products most frequently in the form of written memos and reports.

Question 20

The contractor is expected to promote public understanding of energy efficiency and office activities. What is expected in this task? What promotion is expected?

DNREC Response: As per the RFP Scope of Work, the technical consultant will be expected to “promote public understanding of energy efficiency and EEAC activities.” This task is expected to be a lower tier responsibility of the technical consultant, however as the EEAC begins its work and the requirements of Title 29 Section 8059 of the Delaware Code are implemented DNREC anticipates a need for transparency and communication with the public regarding EEAC activities and energy efficiency in general.

Question 21

In the evaluation requirements (B. General Evaluation Requirements) you reference evaluating, “hourly rates, costs, and other information provided in the financial proposal.” This is the only direction we found related to the financial proposal. In what format would you like the financial proposal? In addition to the electronic copy do you also want a paper copy of the financial document?

Section number: III Required Information

Paragraph number: Three (B. General Evaluation Requirements)

Page number: Four

Text of passage being questioned: Hourly rates, costs, and other information provided in the financial proposal.

DNREC Response: To be considered, all proposals must be submitted in writing and respond to the items outlined in this RFP. The State reserves the right to reject any non-responsive or non-conforming proposals. Each proposal must be submitted with six (6) paper copies and one (1) electronic copy on CD or DVD media disk, or USB memory drive. There is no required format for the financial proposal. Bidders should provide proposed budgets for the tasks detailed in the Scope of Work. Charge rates and/or rates by staff member/billing class are recommended for inclusion in proposal.

Question 22

Is there a required format for how you would like the Scope of Work and Vendor Capabilities addressed?

Section number: III Required Information

Paragraph number: First paragraph through Questions A1-A5

Page number: Four

Text of passage being questioned: The following information shall be provided in each proposal in the order listed below. Failure to respond to any request for information within this proposal may result in rejection of the proposal at the sole discretion of the State.

A. Minimum Requirements

1. Provide Delaware license(s) and/or certification(s) necessary to perform services as identified in the scope of work. Prior to the execution of an award document, the successful Vendor shall either furnish the Agency with proof of State of Delaware Business Licensure or initiate the process of application where required.
2. Vendor shall provide responses to the Request for Proposal (RFP) scope of work and clearly identify capabilities as presented in the General Evaluation Requirements below.
3. Complete all appropriate attachments and forms as identified within the RFP.
4. Proof of insurance and amount of insurance shall be furnished to the Agency prior to the start of the contract period and shall be no less than as identified in the bid solicitation, Section D, Item 7, subsection e.
5. Provide response to Employing Delawareans Report (Attachment 9)

DNREC Response: There is no required format for responding to the Scope of Work and Vendor Capabilities requirements beyond what is detailed in Section III of the RFP.

Question 23

Are implementers and evaluators of current energy efficiency programs eligible to respond to this RFP?

Section number: II Other Bidder Requirements

Paragraph number: One (Question 2)

Page number: Four

Text of passage being questioned: Question 2. Demonstrated technical expertise, including experience in energy, peak demand reduction, and fuel switching programs planning, budgeting, implementation, oversight, and evaluation, measurement, and verification.

DNREC Response: Yes.

Question 24

What are the expected Top Five tasks from the scope of work (based on percentage of time to be spent on the tasks listed in the scope of work)?

DNREC Response: At this stage of implementation of the requirements of Title 29 Section 8059 of the Delaware Code, DNREC is not in a position to rank the items in the RFP scope of work. All tasks in the Scope of Work are important and the priorities for the tasks are expected to shift throughout the first year of EEAC activities and program implementation.

Question 25

Is the scope of work weighted toward evaluating past activities or interpreting results and preparing for future opportunities?

Section number: II Scope of Work

Paragraph number: Nine plus questions 1-14 (Scope of Work)

Page number: Three

Text of passage being questioned:

Scope of Work (Page 3)

DNREC Response: Initially during the early phases of the contract period the majority of the technical consultant's work will be focused on developing and implementing energy efficiency program plans and portfolios with the EEAC and affected energy providers pursuant to Title 29, Section 8059 of Delaware Code. As program implementation occurs, EEAC and technical consultant tasks will transition to evaluation and interpretation of past activities, planning of future programs, and proposing program modifications to improve efficacy.