EFFICIENCY MAINE TRUST
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR
HOME ENERGY SAVINGS PROGRAM AND LOW-INCOME INITIATIVES

EM-006-2019

Date Issued: 1/15/2019

Proposals Due: 2/25/2019, 3:00 p.m. Eastern Time (US)

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Separate attachments:
Attachment A – Proposal Cover Sheet Form
Attachment B – Standard Agreement
Attachment C – Project Proposal Cost Form

SECTION 1 – RFP INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS

1.1 Purpose

The Efficiency Maine Trust (the Trust) seeks a qualified bidder or team of bidders to administer its Home Energy Savings Program (HESP) and Low-Income Initiatives. HESP is a market-based program that provides rebates for weatherization, ductless heat pumps, and certain heating systems (geothermal and biomass boilers and furnaces). The Low-Income Initiatives include mail-in rebates (e.g., weatherization and ductless heat pumps), direct install (e.g., heat pump water heaters), and direct mail initiatives promoting energy-saving Do-It-Yourself (DIY) kits (e.g., LEDs, aerators, and showerheads).

1.2 Designated Contact Person for this RFP

Bridget Doxsee
Program Manager
Efficiency Maine Trust
168 Capitol Street, Suite 1
Augusta, ME 04330-6856
Phone: (207) 400-5130
Email: Bridget.Doxsee@efficiencymaine.com

1.3 Schedule

	Milestone	Date/Deadline
1	RFP Issued	1/15/2019
2	Questions Due	1/24/2019
3	Responses to Questions Posted	1/28/2019
4	Proposals Due at Efficiency Maine Trust Office	**2/25/2019, 3:00 p.m. Eastern Time (US)**
5	Anticipated Award Date	3/22/2109
6	Anticipated Contractor Start	4/22/2019
7	Program Launch	7/1/2019

Schedule changes: The Trust reserves the right to modify this schedule at its discretion. Any changes or additional information regarding the RFP schedule and pre-bid activities, including responses to questions, will be posted on the Trust's website at: http://www.efficiencymaine.com/opportunities

1.4 Anticipated Contract Term

For the activities solicited under this RFP, the Trust anticipates awarding three consecutive, one-year contracts to a single bidder. The contracts will provide delivery of both programs (Home Energy Savings Program and Low-Income Initiatives) to cover a period of performance from July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2022. The contracts will be structured on a Time and Materials basis with a not-to-exceed maximum budget.

1.5 Anticipated Contract Budget

The anticipated annual budget for this program is outlined in the Trust's proposed 2020-2022 Triennial Plan which can be found here: https://www.efficiencymaine.com/about/library/policies/. The actual budget will be updated upon Public Utility Commission approval of the Triennial Plan and after annual budget approvals by the Board of Trustees. Note that a portion of the authorized budgets will support program-related activities conducted by Trust staff or separate contractors. The proposed budgets for these programs, including administration, incentives and marketing, are approximately:

Program	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	Total
Home Energy Savings Program	$6,946,000	$7,442,000	$7,955,000	$22,343,000
Low-Income Initiatives	$9,100,000	$7,290,000	$7,139,000	$23,529,000
Total	**$16,046,000**	**$14,732,000**	**$15,094,000**	**$45,872,006**

1.6 Proposal Submittal Deadline

Proposals must be received at the Trust's office by the due date and time specified in section 1.3. Any proposal received after the deadline will not be considered. Proposals must be complete when submitted; changes or additions will not be accepted after the specified due date and time, except for any clarifications requested of bidders by the Trust.

1.7 Submitting Questions

Questions regarding this RFP must be submitted by email to the Designated Contact Person listed in section 1.2 prior to the due date above. The subject line of the email should be: "Home Energy Savings Program and Low-Income Initiatives RFP Questions". Responses to questions will be posted on http://www.efficiencymaine.com/opportunities.

1.8 Proposal Confidentiality

Bidders should be aware that information provided to the Trust is subject to the Maine Freedom of Access Act (FOAA), 1 M.R.S. §§ 401 et seq., unless there is a specific confidentiality exemption in the Efficiency Maine Trust Act, 35-A M.R.S. §10106. Unless there has been an express request by a bidder that certain information within the statutory exemption be designated confidential and the Trust's Board has made an express determination of confidentiality under the Efficiency Maine Trust Act, all information submitted in response to this RFP will be considered public records available for public inspection pursuant to the Maine FOAA following announcement of an award decision.

1.9 Contract Award

The Trust will notify all bidders of the contract award decision by email. The Trust reserves the right to negotiate the final terms and conditions of the contract award with a winning bidder whose proposal is selected by the Trust, and to reject any winning bidder with whom the Trust cannot agree to terms and conditions meeting the Trust's needs, in the Trust's sole judgment. The Trust reserves the right to reject any proposal that does not meet these requirements.

1.10 Contracting Process

The selection process is governed by the Efficiency Maine Trust Rule Chapter 1: Contracting Process for Service Providers and Grant Recipients, which can be found on the Trust's website: http://www.efficiencymaine.com/docs/Chapter-1-Contracting-Process-for-Service-Providers-and-Grant-Recipients.pdf .

1.11 RFP Process – Reservation of Rights

The Trust reserves the right to cancel or extend the RFP process at any time. The Trust also reserves the right to reject noncompliant submissions in response to this RFP and to waive minor formalities in the Trust's reasonable discretion. Issuance of this RFP does not commit the Trust to make an award or to pay any costs or expenses incurred by a bidder in connection with preparation of a proposal or response to this RFP.

1.12 Contract Agreement

A copy of the Efficiency Maine Trust Standard Agreement for this RFP is provided as **Attachment B – Standard Agreement.** This is the standard document that will complete the agreement for services between the winning bidder and the Trust. Information regarding a customer that has participated or that may participate in a Trust program is deemed confidential by the Efficiency Maine Trust Act. The winning bidder and its agents and subcontractors will be required to execute a nondisclosure agreement. See http://legislature.maine.gov/statutes/35-A/title35-Asec10106.html for additional information on related confidentiality restrictions.

1.13 Request for Reconsideration

An aggrieved person may request a hearing for reconsideration of a contract award decision by filing a written petition with the Executive Director of the Trust within 14 calendar days of the notification of the contract award. Each petition to reconsider must meet the requirements specified in Efficiency Maine Trust Rule Chapter 1, Contracting Process for Service Providers and Grant Recipients, Section 5(B), which can be found on the Trust's website under Documents and Services: http://www.efficiencymaine.com/docs/Chapter-1-Contracting-Process-for-Service-Providers-and-Grant-Recipients.pdf

SECTION 2 – BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2.1 Efficiency Maine Trust

The Trust is the independent administrator for programs to lower the cost and environmental impacts of energy in Maine by promoting energy efficiency, conservation and alternative energy. The Trust does this primarily by delivering rebates on the purchase of high-efficiency equipment to help customers save electricity, natural gas and other fuels throughout the Maine economy. The Trust is governed by a stakeholder Board of Trustees with oversight from the Maine Public Utilities Commission.

Given the Trust's mission, the Trust generally seeks the following qualities in delivery teams and program designs:

- Market-Based – The Trust prefers market-based programs where customers select their own prescriptive measures and installer as opposed to programs where the program administrator models or decides the upgrade and manages the installer.
- Maximize Cost-Effectiveness – While other program goals and objectives may dictate specific measure mixes, the Trust prefers delivery teams that can find creative ways to achieve all program goals while maximizing cost-effectiveness using the Total Resource Cost test.
- Verifiable Savings – Innovative program delivery and measure offerings are valued by the Trust; however, only verifiable savings can be claimed. Bidders that can show a record of achieving verifiable savings and launching new measures with means of determining verifiable savings will have an advantage.
- Drive Demand for Installed Measures – HESP and the Low-Income Initiatives are principally interested in achieving cost-effective energy savings resulting from completed efficiency projects. The Trust will not look favorably upon programs proposed or delivered through this RFP that prioritize training or increasing stock on shelves at the expense of achieving completed measure installations.
- Leverage Private Sector – The Trust makes every effort to support the private sector rather than compete with it. Therefore, the Trust seeks delivery teams that have a record of collaborating with local organizations, supply chains, and contractors.
- Core Competency of Customer Service – Program management is a function of the Trust staff. Delivery teams may be directed to undertake many tasks of varying complexity such as consultation on program design and outreach. That said, the core competency of delivery teams must be adherence to highest levels of customer service, including fast and efficient processing of participant project documents, timely communications, and ability to work with retailers, distributors, contractors and program participants to achieve best outcomes.
- Third-Party Standards – The Trust typically uses third-party standards rather than developing its own. The Trust relies on organizations like ENERGY STAR®; Building Performance Institute (BPI); the Air Conditioning, Heating and Refrigeration Institute (AHRI); DesignLights Consortium (DLC); and others. Therefore, delivery teams that are familiar with relevant third-party standards are preferred.
- Continuous Improvement – The Trust listens to stakeholders, monitors developments in energy efficiency technologies and programs, and modifies its programs as needed. Experience in continuous improvement is an advantage for a bidder.
- Pay for Energy Savings – HESP and Low-Income Initiatives place a high priority on investing funding on customer incentives for actual energy savings and minimizing costs of program delivery.

Therefore, bidders for these programs are encouraged to avoid administratively intensive, behaviorally focused, complex programs, and incentives for activities that do not save energy.

- Simple Teams – While bidders are welcome to partner with other companies to form a team, unnecessary complexity in the team's organization would be considered a disadvantage. Simple teams with logical roles and experience working together are preferred.

2.2 Background and Context

Efficiency Maine offers rebates, discounts, loans, technical information and networks of independent installers to help homeowners and businesses to invest in energy efficiency. To do this, Efficiency Maine runs multiple residential and business programs that share a common website, call center, energy savings database, and networks of trade allies (one residential network and one commercial/industrial network). Programs are administered by competitively bid contractors referred to as "delivery teams."

2.3 Program Overview, Objectives, Design and Requirements in the Triennial Plan

This RFP covers the administration of two programs: the Home Energy Savings Program and Low Income Initiatives. The proposed Triennial Plan IV provides a detailed description of each program; a brief summary follows.

Home Energy Savings Program (HESP)

HESP is the program through which the Trust pursues savings from upgrades to a home's building envelope or certain heating systems. In a departure from prior plans, Triennial Plan IV will promote some home heating measures through other programs instead of through HESP. Specifically, central heating system upgrades for fossil-fuel-fired furnaces and boilers will be handled through the Distributor Initiatives Program, while wood stoves and pellet stoves will be addressed through the Retail Initiatives. HESP serves residential customers of all income levels who live in 1- to 4-unit residential buildings and is a market-based initiative that enlists the help of a network of independent trade allies to drive program participation.

Low-Income Initiatives

Efficiency Maine Trust delivers energy-saving opportunities to low-income customers through a portfolio of initiatives, including market-based, direct installation, and direct-mail approaches. The Trust targets households that qualify for state or federal programs based on low-income status. Some of the initiatives provide upgrades that are free to the household, while others involve a customer co-pay.

Program Objectives

Home Energy Savings Program (HESP)

- Invest in measures that lower residential heating energy demand and reduce GHG emissions;
- Significantly advance the statutory goal of substantially weatherizing by 2030 all homes whose owners or occupants are willing to participate in and share the costs of cost-effective home weatherization;
- Increase consumer awareness of cost-effective options for conserving heating fuels; and
- Promote sustainable economic development and reduce environmental damage through the more efficient use of all fuel types.

<u>Low-Income Initiatives</u>

- Target at least 10% of the Electric Efficiency Procurement collected under §10110(4-A) or $2,600,000, whichever is greater, to programs for low-income residential consumers;
- Direct a reasonable percentage of funds from the Natural Gas Efficiency Procurement to programs for low-income residential consumers, considering these consumers' share of gas load and cost-effective opportunity available at their homes;
- Direct $300,000 in Maine Power Reliability Program settlement funds (MPRP funds) to the weatherization of low-income homes each year, through FY2022;
- Weatherize substantially all low-income homes whose owners or occupants are willing to participate in and share the costs of cost-effective home weatherization;
- Increase consumer awareness of cost-effective options;
- Reduce total energy costs; and
- Help reduce arrearages and "bad debt" associated with customers who fail to pay their utility bills.

Program Design

Following are brief summaries of the program designs for HESP and Low-Income Initiatives. If requested, the winning bidder will need to review the existing program designs, including all internal and customer-facing material, recommend any changes, and provide a rationale for the recommended changes.

<u>Home Energy Savings Program</u>
The Trust will continue operating HESP using a market-based approach to promote home energy upgrades. Elements of this approach include rebates, financing, information, and a network of Registered Vendors. Leveraging HESP program incentives to achieve significant private investment in home energy improvements is central to advancing participation and savings goals.

<u>Low-Income Initiatives</u>
The Trust will continue using a blend of approaches to overcome obstacles to cost-effective energy conservation for low-income Mainers. In market-based initiatives, low-income customers access measures available to all residential customers and may receive a higher rebate. For direct installation of conservation measures, the program covers up to 100% of the cost of equipment and installation and oversees contractor support. Direct-mail campaigns involve sending a list of eligible households an offer for free, small energy-saving devices, along with a postage-paid order form.

Measures Promoted

Both programs include building envelope improvements, or weatherization, and certain heating system upgrades. Weatherization improves a home's thermal envelope. It may include activities such as insulating or air sealing, along with energy assessments to verify improvement in the home's thermal envelope. In addition, building envelope improvements may cover the insulation and sealing of a home's heating distribution system (ducts or pipes).

HESP also includes certain heating systems, where the customer is the decision maker and works with the contractor to select an appropriate model. These systems include ductless heat pumps, geothermal systems, and biomass boiler and furnaces. In addition, the Trust is exploring the feasibility of adding controls as a measure that balances multiple heating systems to maximize the use of the most efficient units.

Measures offered through the Low-Income Initiatives include heat pump water heaters (HPWHs), ductless heat pumps, air-sealing and insulation measures, and a suite of small, do-it-yourself energy-saving measures (e.g., LEDs, aerators, and showerheads). Customer eligibility is generally limited to individuals who participate in a state or federal program based on low-income status, and by the type of heating fuel they use.

The Trust will continue to reassess measures' cost-effectiveness as new information becomes available over the course of Triennial Plan IV, and will add or remove measures from program eligibility as appropriate.

Incentives and Financial Considerations

Home Energy Savings Program

Incentives offered through HESP will include both (1) rebates to entice and lower costs associated with the uptake of envelope upgrades and equipment; and (2) financing options to help homeowners reduce upfront costs and spread out the cost of energy improvements over time.

Low-Income Initiatives

For low-Income households, market-based initiatives may pay close to 100% of the incremental cost of a measure or require a co-pay from participating households. Where a co-pay is required, it will generally be lower than the cost-share requirements for non-low-income residential customers. Additionally, the Trust couples its incentives with access to financing in the form of small, unsecured loans for qualifying customers. Through the turnkey direct-install approach, the Trust covers up to 100% of all costs of the upgrade, including opportunity assessment, project management, project materials, and installation costs. Direct-mail initiatives involve no financial contribution from the participant.

Marketing and Outreach

Home Energy Savings Program

HESP uses digital marketing as the primary approach for cost-effective outreach for the program. Digital marketing typically includes web ads, search engine optimization, video ad spots, and use of social media platforms for high-volume viewing or to engage potential participants directly. Marketing efforts are also likely to include print advertising, presentations at local events, and brochures in property tax bill mailings with participating municipalities. The program will supplement its media outreach initiatives by engaging the Trust's network of Residential Registered Vendors. This community of trade allies has grown to more than 700 residential contractors, vendors, and energy professionals who provide services to homeowners that qualify for Efficiency Maine rebates. The Trust communicates with this network to keep contractors up to date with the latest incentive levels and rebate eligibility criteria. Efficiency Maine has built, has maintained, and will continue to offer an online locator tool to enable homeowners to easily locate energy service professionals. Finally, the Trust will continue to curate a variety of informational materials on energy efficiency technology, options, and incentives. These will take the form of printed brochures, web pages, videos, and online calculators. These resources will give consumers the information they need to move forward with their energy efficiency projects.

Low-Income Initiatives

Driving demand for energy conservation services and participation in the Trust's low-income initiatives generally requires targeted messaging to eligible homeowners. Because of the sensitive nature of personal income information, identifying potential participants remains challenging for the Trust. Direct mailing and outreach through traditional low-income program delivery agencies remain the most affordable and targeted strategies. The Trust will continue to market low-income initiatives to eligible households through organizations that support this population, including the Maine Department of Health and Human Services, the Maine State Housing Authority, Community Action Agencies, General Assistance Program Officers, non-profit organizations, and the utilities. The Trust's licensed contractor network will also continue to serve as an active sales force for this sector.

The Trust will increase its efforts to market directly to customers enrolled in the utilities' Arrearage Management Program, which assists eligible low-income residential customers who are in arrears with their electricity bills. AMP establishes an affordable payment plan and provides credit towards a customer's accumulated arrears as long as that customer remains in compliance with the terms of the program. AMP is intended in part to help reduce the number of low-income customers in arrears on their electric bills or, alternatively, to reduce the amount of these customers' arrearage, and, therefore, lower the "bad debt" burden to ratepayers that is associated with customers who fail to pay their utility bills.

Quality Assurance/Quality Control

The Trust will continue to employ the following mechanisms, where appropriate, to help promote and ensure quality work:

- 10-15% project site inspections;
- Residential Registered Vendor Code of Conduct;
- Building Performance Institute certification;
- Requirement for proper licensing by the Maine Fuel Board;
- Requirement of comprehensive general liability insurance;
- Completion of forms submitted to the Trust establishing eligibility of the home and the measures;
- Signatures by the customer and the contractor attesting to the information represented in the eligibility forms;
- Reminders in communications with Registered Vendors; and
- Possible removal of vendors from the Registered Vendor list for failure to comply with the Code of Conduct or program guidelines.

The Trust will review all rebate claims to ensure that the product and participant are eligible. In addition, The Trust will carefully monitor product pricing and incentive amounts to motivate customers and installers to purchase high-efficiency models.

2.4 Additional Sources of Information

Following are links to additional information that may bidders may find helpful in preparing a response to this RFP:

TITLE	LOCATION (link)
Efficiency Maine Trust website	www.efficiencymaine.com

TITLE	LOCATION (link)
Most recent Efficiency Maine Trust Annual Report	https://www.efficiencymaine.com/about/library/reports/
Efficiency Maine Trust – Triennial Plan	https://www.efficiencymaine.com/about/library/policies/
Program webpages	https://www.efficiencymaine.com/at-home/ductless-heat-pumps/ https://www.efficiencymaine.com/at-home/weatherization/ https://www.efficiencymaine.com/at-home/geothermal/ https://www.efficiencymaine.com/at-home/biomass-boilers-furnaces/ https://www.efficiencymaine.com/at-home/low-income-options/
Previous program information (Evaluations, Reports, *etc.*)	https://www.efficiencymaine.com/about/library/reports/
Efficiency Maine Trust Residential Technical Reference Manual	https://www.efficiencymaine.com/about/library/policies/

SECTION 3 – SCOPE OF WORK

Following is a task-by-task description of the work covered by this RFP. Unless otherwise stated, each program (HESP and Low-Income Initiatives) involves each task. As explained in section 4.3, below, bid proposals must reflect the bidder's plan, approach and capacity for each task.

Task 1: Program Transition Plan
The winning bidder must develop a transition plan that outlines all major tasks associated with taking over the management of this program.

Task 2: Program Design Review
For context, the current program in FY2019 uses the following approach for specific measures that we plan to offer under this contract. Actual measures and incentive levels may vary during the course of the contract:

- Mail-In Rebates for heat pumps and weatherization (10,000 HESP and 2,000 low-income annually)
- Direct Installation for low-income heat pump water heaters and other measures (about 750 installs annually)
- Direct Mail to low-income households offering free self-installed measures (about 10,000 DIY kits annually).

The winning bidder will need to review the existing program design including all internal and customer-facing material, recommend any changes, and provide a rationale for the recommended changes.

Task 3: Customer Service
Winning bidder will be required to handle all calls forwarded from Efficiency Maine's call center from Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., except State holidays. HESP typically receives 25 calls per day. We expect at least 90% of calls to be answered within 20 seconds.

Task 4: Efficiency Maine Call Center Coordination
All customer calls come in through Efficiency Maine's contracted central call center. Calls are forwarded to the appropriate program team. The winning bidder will be required to work cooperatively with the Trust's central call center and assist with call center training, monitoring, and support to ensure maximum customer satisfaction and cost-effective program delivery.

Task 5: Residential Registered Vendor (RRV) Database Management
Currently, over 500 Residential Registered Vendors (RRVs) offer dozens of services from weatherization to oil heating systems to heat pump water heater installations. These RRVs are independent installers. There is no fee to become an RRV and Efficiency Maine does not set any pricing guidelines. They are simply licensed, insured and committed to follow Efficiency Maine's Code of Conduct dealing with customers. https://www.efficiencymaine.com/docs/Code-of-Conduct.pdf The winning bidder may be asked to manage the Residential Registered Vendor database behind the web-based Vendor Locator Tool (https://www.efficiencymaine.com/at-home/vendor-locator/). To maintain the database, the winning bidder will need to track all records to ensure all listed vendors have current qualifications. See

the Residential Registered [Vendor Agreement Form] for current requirements (https://www.efficiencymaine.com/docs/EM-RV-form.pdf).

Task 6: Installer Support

HESP and Low-Income Initiatives currently utilize a field team using three field representatives (reps) who inspect installations to ensure that measures are installed as per the program guidelines, help participants to get the most out of their upgrades, and measure customer satisfaction. They also collect best practices to share amongst all installers and perform other tasks as requested.

Task 7: Updating Efficiency Maine's energy savings tracking database ("effRT")

The winning bidder will be required to upload to Efficiency Maine's existing tracking database, called "effRT," all data required to claim savings and facilitate program evaluation. Information may include customer information, installer information, installation location, incentive, rebate claim date, etc. This information must be uploaded as rebates are paid. Incentive-related information must be uploaded weekly. Administrative costs can be billed and uploaded monthly.

Task 8: Program marketing

The winning bidder will be responsible for all program marketing needed to drive demand that will fully invest available funds. Any customer-facing material will need to be approved by Efficiency Maine in advance.

Task 9: Incentive Processing

Combined HESP and Low-Income Initiatives process about 12,500 rebate checks per year. We allow customers to have their rebate mailed to their installer if desired. Efficiency Maine asks customer to allow up to six weeks to receive mail-in rebates.

Task 10: Supporting Efficiency Maine "Corporate Marketing"

The winning bidder will provide support such as identifying potential testimonial participant recommendations, providing and analyzing program progress data, and providing any other information needed by Efficiency Maine for promotional initiatives that may go beyond program marketing.

Task 11: Maintenance of efficiencymaine.com Website

The winning bidder will provide program-related recommendations to Efficiency Maine's web team and provide information necessary to keep the site accurate at all times.

Task 12: Supporting Efficiency Maine Home Energy Loans

Efficiency Maine offers loans for all energy efficiency measures that are eligible for rebates. While loans are outside the scope of this RFP, the winning bidder must support the loan team as requested. Examples include modifying program materials like brochures, web pages (via Efficiency Maine's web team) and mailers.

Task 13: Supporting Program Evaluation Studies

The winning bidder will support independent program evaluators, as requested. Requests may include information such as inspection reports, sample rebate claim forms, program participant contact information, installer contact information, etc.

Task 14: Weekly Program Reporting

The winning bidder will need to provide weekly reports in Excel, Google sheets or similar format as approved by the Trust. At a minimum, reporting includes the following elements:

1. Fiscal year-to-date actual vs plan and forecasted full-year vs plan:
   - Rebates by upgrade type
   - Incentive, administrative ("delivery"), and marketing costs by fund type
   - Energy savings
2. Full-year rebate quantity and cost forecast by week by measure
3. Trade Ally program participation (e.g., by number of upgrades)

Task 15: Budget Management

The winning bidder will be responsible for managing the program in such a way as to exceed savings goal without exceeding the budget.

Task 16: Billing

Invoices must include sufficient backup to allow the Trust to confirm that they are legitimate. For example, billed hours by employee and rates matching the contracted rates must be outlined and any expenses passed through without markup.

Task 17: Program Transitions

The Trust expects the winning bidder to work with all preceding and succeeding contractors to accomplish smooth transitions. Transitions must be performed in an organized and efficient manner with a minimum of disruption to customers, trade allies, retailers, distributors, manufacturers and other energy-efficiency service partners.

SECTION 4 – PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

4.1 Proposal Packaging and Physical Contents

Proposals must be delivered to the Trust in an envelope or package clearly labeled, "**Response to Efficiency Maine Home Energy Savings Program and Low-Income Initiatives RFP EM-006-2019**".

The proposal submission must include:
- One signed, original document that is unbound and includes all sections, forms and appendices,
- Four bound, hard copies of the entire original, and
- One electronic copy of the complete proposal. Files must be provided in Microsoft Word and/or PDF format and a copy of Attachment C must be provided in Microsoft Excel format.

4.2 Format Requirements

Proposals will be evaluated for adherence to the following format requirements:
- Proposals must be typewritten.
- Pages must be numbered.
- Unnecessary attachments (i.e., any attachments beyond those sufficient to present a complete, comprehensive, and effective proposal) will not be considered in the evaluation of the proposal.
- Proposals must adhere to prescribed page limits specified in this RFP. The Trust values concise proposals.

4.3 Content and Organization Requirements

The proposal must include the following contents, which should be presented in the following order:

1. **Proposal Cover Sheet Form**
   - Include a completed, signed Proposal Cover Sheet Form, which is provided in Attachment A of the Request for Proposals.
   - Proposals that include teaming arrangements must designate one party as the lead bidder.

2. **Table of Contents**

3. **Letter of Transmittal (1 page)**

Include a brief Letter of Transmittal, on company letterhead, signed by an appropriate officer of the lead bidder who can bind the company to a contract.

4. **Letters of Commitment (1 page each)**

If the proposal involves any subcontractors, include a letter of commitment from each subcontractor, signed by an appropriate officer of the subcontractor who can bind the company to a contract. Include a statement certifying that the provision of services to the Trust will not result in a conflict of interest.

5. **Introduction (2 pages maximum)**

Summarize understanding of the services requested in the RFP and proposed approach to fulfilling the requirements of this RFP. Briefly describe the proposed project team and qualifications.

6. Statement of Work (25 pages maximum)

Provide the following information by task to address the activities described in Section 3.

Task 1. Program Transition Plan
Outline all major tasks associated with taking over the management of this program. Describe the tasks, who will take the lead on each and the start and end date for each. Include activities such as establishing an in-state office (if proposed); hiring/training personnel; updating all program materials (such as Program Manuals, forms, web pages/tools, agreement templates, printed materials, and marketing materials); and negotiating new agreements with retailers. Describe your team's experience and proposed approach to taking over existing programs.

Task 2. Program Design Review
Describe your team's experience and approach to program design optimization.

Task 3. Customer Service
Describe your experience, capabilities and approach to customer call routing, handling, staffing, and training.

Task 4. Efficiency Maine Call Center Coordination
Describe your approach and any experience working with a third-party call center.

Task 5. Residential Registered Vendor (RRV) Database Management
Describe your experience and proposed approach to maintaining a trade ally network database.

Task 6. Installer Support
Describe your experience and proposed approach to supporting trade allies such as retailers, manufacturers and installers.

Task 7. Updates to Efficiency Maine's Energy Savings Tracking Database ("effRT")
Describe your ability to accomplish this task. Include relevant experience updating other tracking databases.

Task 8. Program Marketing
Describe your experience with and approach to developing and using a Communications Plan that maps out a schedule for key messages, target prospects and marketing channels necessary to drive demand. List all the marketing channels you have experience with such as email, direct mail, on-line advertising and social media. Describe your experience with program marketing in general and specifically outline any experience with maintaining program websites, in-store Point of Purchase (POP), email, direct mail, social media, print advertising, and digital advertising.

Task 9. Incentive Processing
Describe your experience, capability and proposed approach to processing incentive claims. Include all relevant claim processing capabilities like mail-in, emailing, on-line rebate claims, retailer/wholesaler instant rebates, buy down or markdown claim processing and any other relevant incentive claim approach.

Task 10. Supporting Efficiency Maine "Corporate Marketing"
Confirm you will provide support such as identifying potential testimonial participant recommendations, providing and analyzing program progress data, and providing any other information needed by Efficiency Maine for promotional initiatives that may go beyond program marketing. Describe your relevant experience.

Task 11. Maintenance of efficiencymaine.com Website
Confirm that you will provide program-related recommendations to Efficiency Maine's web team and provide information necessary to keep the site accurate at all times. Describe your relevant experience.

Task 12. Support Efficiency Maine Home Energy Loans
While loans are outside the scope of this RFP, confirm that you will support loan team as requested. Describe your relevant experience.

Task 13. Support Program Evaluation Studies
Confirm that you will support independent program evaluators as requested. Describe any relevant experience in the following areas: inspection reports, sample rebate claim forms, program participant contact information, and installer contact information.

Task 14. Weekly Program Reporting
Confirm your commitment to providing detailed weekly program reporting and describe any relevant experience in the following areas:

1. Fiscal year-to-date actual vs plan and forecasted full-year vs plan:
    - Rebates by upgrade type
    - Incentive, administrative ("delivery"), and marketing costs by fund type
    - Energy savings
2. Full-year rebate quantity and cost forecast by week by measure
3. Trade Ally program participation (e.g., by number of upgrades)

Task 15. Budget Management
Describe your experience, capability, and approach to accomplishing this task.

Task 16. Billing
Confirm your ability to meet this requirement.

Task 17. Program Transitions
Confirm your commitment to transitioning the programs and describe any relevant experience or expertise working with other companies taking over from them, or transitioning programs to them.

7. Qualifications, Staffing and Management

a. Corporate Qualifications

Describe the bidding team's qualifications, including brief descriptions of past experience on contracts of similar scope and size. For each, provide the client name, the results achieved, and how the work is relevant to the current RFP.

b. Individual Qualifications

For each staff member that is bid on the project, please provide a brief narrative that includes a description of the individual's role on this project and a summary of his or her relevant education, training, experience and expertise. Include resumes.

c. Organizational Chart

Provide an organizational chart of the proposed team for the program. The chart should identify key team members where identified, their roles, and relationships between staff and organizations (the Trust, the contractor, and any subcontractors). Clearly indicate the day-to-day primary point of contact for the Trust as well as the lead executive contact.

d. Financial capability

Disclose and provide details regarding any bankruptcy petition (whether voluntary or involuntary), receivership, insolvency event, or similar adverse financial circumstance suffered or incurred by bidder (or any predecessor entity) within the three years preceding the date of submission of this proposal. Disclose and provide details regarding any litigation, arbitration, or administrative proceedings involving bidder within the three years preceding the date of submission of this proposal in which the amount claimed or adjudged against bidder exceeded $50,000.

8. Cost Proposal (use Project Cost Form provided)

For each program covered by this RFP, provide a time-and-materials cost estimate with applicable rates and a not-to-exceed bid for the Statement of Work for each year of the Triennial Plan and a three-year Summary using the Project Proposal Cost Form (Attachment C) provided with the RFP. Any costs not included on this form will be disallowed. Note that the current year expenses are 85% incentives, 14% administrative costs, and 1% marketing costs.

9. Appendices

a. Appendix A - References

Provide a list of references for the lead bidder and any subcontractors included in the bid. At least three references must be provided for each organization included in the bid. For each reference, please provide current contact information (name, company, telephone number, and email address) and a brief description of the work conducted for the reference and its relevance to the current RFP. If evaluations of bidder's programs are available, please provide a list of them that includes the report title, author/independent evaluator, publication date, and URL (or filename if provided electronically) for accessing the report.

b. Appendix B - Resumes

Provide resumes of key project team members. Key project team members identified in the proposal must be dedicated to the proposed project in the role proposed. Any substitutions of key project team members must be approved by the Trust.

SECTION 5 – PROPOSAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

Proposals that meet the requirements established in the RFP will be evaluated by a proposal review team. The Trust reserves the right to decide whether a proposal is acceptable in terms of meeting the requirements of this RFP and to accept or reject any or all proposals received.

In evaluating proposals, the Trust reserves the right to take any of the following steps, with respect to either all of the proposals received or to a subset of proposals selected as superior to the others: (1) consult with prior clients on the performance of the bidder or of particular persons proposed for this bid; (2) schedule presentations or interviews with representatives of the bidder or persons proposed for the project; (3) conduct a review of past performance, including a review of reports, analyses, or other materials that would reflect the bidder's performance; and, (4) request additional data or supporting material.

In evaluating proposals submitted in response to this RFP, the proposal review team will use the following criteria:

Scoring Category	**Maximum Points**
1. Statement of Work a. Does the Statement of Work present a comprehensive, sound approach for accomplishing the requirements of this RFP? b. Is the Statement of Work thorough, specific and responsive to the requirements and details specified in the RFP? c. Does the proposal demonstrate a clear understanding of the Statement of Work and the Trust's expectations? **d.** Does the Statement of Work reflect best practices in delivering the specific programs described in this RFP?	30
2. Staff and Organization Qualifications a. Is the proposed project staffing plan clear, well-defined, appropriate and realistic for the scope of the services requested? b. How qualified are the proposed personnel in terms of skills, expertise and experience relevant to this program, and to what extent will these personnel will be available to the program's tasks? **c.** How qualified are the proposed organizations (lead bidder and subcontractors) in terms of demonstrated experience and capacity to execute this type of program?	30
3. Project Cost/Budget a. Are appropriate resources being devoted? b. How does the total bid cost compare to other comparable proposals? c. Is the proposed budget consistent with the requested Statement of Work? **d.** How do the quoted rates compare to other comparable proposals?	30

Scoring Category	**Maximum Points**
4. Overall Quality and Responsiveness a. What is the overall quality of the proposal submission, including: completeness, clarity, attention to detail, adherence to instructions and lack of errors? **b.** Does the proposal reflect and respond to the Trust's priorities?	10
Total	**100**