



**EFFICIENCY MAINE TRUST
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP) FOR
COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL PRESCRIPTIVE INITIATIVES
SUPPORT SERVICES**

RFP EM-013-2025

Date Issued: January 15, 2025

Proposals Due: March 12, 2025, 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time (US)

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Separate attachments:

Attachment A – Project Cost Proposal Form

Attachment B – Standard Agreement

Attachment B-1 - Services Agreement for ARPA-Funded Projects

Attachment B-2 - Services Agreement for IRA-HEAR Funded Projects

Attachment B-3 - Services Agreement for IRA-HER Funded Projects (Coming Soon)

Attachment C – Team Commitment Form

Attachment D – Confidentiality, Non-Disclosure and Protective Agreement

Attachment E – Delivery Team Manual

SECTION 1 – RFP INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS

1.1 Purpose

The Efficiency Maine Trust (the Trust) seeks a qualified contractor or team of contractors to provide support services for Commercial and Industrial (C&I) Prescriptive Initiatives. The awardee will serve as the program “delivery team.”

1.2 Designated Contact Person for this RFP

Satchel Toole
Program Manager
Efficiency Maine Trust
168 Capitol Street, Suite 1
Augusta, ME 04330-6856
Email: satchel.toole@efficiencymaine.com

1.3 Schedule

	Milestone	Date/Deadline
1	RFP Issued	01/15/2025
2	Questions Due	01/29/2025
3	Responses to Questions Posted	02/12/2025
4	Proposals Due	03/12/2025, 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time (US)
5	Anticipated Award Date	04/02/2025
6	Anticipated Contractor Start	04/16/2025
7	Program or Project Launch	07/01/2025

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 RFP EM-013-2025 webpage at <https://www.efficiencymaine.com/opportunities/rfp-em-013-2025/>.

1.4 Anticipated Contract Term

The Trust anticipates awarding multiple contracts to a single bidder or team of bidders to cover a period of performance from July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2028. Separate contracts will be issued to cover each fiscal year (July 1 through June 30). If any activities utilize federal funding, one or more additional separate contracts and riders with federal requirements will be issued. Contracts are typically time-and-materials with a not-to-exceed limit.

1.5 Anticipated Contract Budget

The anticipated annual budget for this program is outlined in the Trust’s proposed Triennial Plan VI (Fiscal Years 2026 –2028) which can be found here: <https://www.efficiencymaine.com/triennial-plan-vi/>. The actual budget each year will be updated pursuant to approvals by the Trust’s Board of Trustees and orders by the Maine Public Utilities Commission related to the Trust’s Triennial Plan.

The proposed budgets for this initiative cover all costs under the awarded contract, such as administration (including, but not limited to, rebate processing and customer and vendor support); measure incentives; technical field representatives; and marketing. Note that a portion of the authorized budgets may support program-related activities conducted by Trust staff or separate contractors.

The proposed budgets for this program are noted in the table below:

Table 1: C&I Prescriptive Initiative – Proposed Program Budgets

Funding Source Category	FY2026	FY2027	FY2028	Associated Contract
Electric	\$14,921,000	\$17,599,899	\$19,314,828	Standard Contract (Attachment B)
Unregulated Fuels	\$3,345,704	\$2,861,413	\$2,713,264	
Other	\$633,333	\$633,333	\$633,333	
Federal ARPA	\$3,880,000			Services Agreement for ARPA-Funded Projects (Attachment B-1)
Federal IRA	\$11,328,331	\$11,348,598	\$5,481,559	Services Agreement for IRA-Funded Projects (Attachments B-2 and B-3)
TOTAL	\$34,108,369	\$32,443,242	\$28,142,984	

Table 2: Thermal Energy Investment Program – Anticipated Program Budgets

	FY2026	FY2027	FY2028	Associated Contract
Other	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	Standard Contract (Attachment B)
TOTAL	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	

Note that it is also possible that the Trust receives new funding for, or reallocates existing funding to, C&I Prescriptive Initiatives during the Triennial Plan VI period.

1.6 Proposal Submittal Deadline

All proposals must be submitted electronically via the online Submission Form on the RFP EM-013-2025 webpage (<https://www.efficiencymaine.com/opportunities/rfp-em-013-2025/>). Proposals must be received by the due date and time specified in section 1.3. Bidders will receive a time-stamped confirmation email when their proposals are submitted. (Note: There may be a delay of a few minutes between submission and this confirmation email.) 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. The Trust encourages bidders to submit their proposals with sufficient time to account for any technological challenges (e.g., Internet disruptions).

1.7 Submitting Questions

It is the responsibility of all bidders and other interested parties to examine the entire RFP and to seek clarification, in writing, if they do not understand any information or instructions. Questions regarding this RFP must be submitted by email to the Designated Contact Person listed in section 1.2 prior to the due date for questions noted above in section 1.3. The subject line of the email should be: "C&I Prescriptive Initiatives Support Services". Responses to questions will be posted on

<http://www.efficiencymaine.com/opportunities/rfp-em-013-2025>, as will all clarifications and amendments released in regard to the RFP. It is the responsibility of all interested parties to check this website periodically to obtain clarifications and amendments. Only those clarifications and amendments posted on this website are considered binding.

1.8 Proposal Confidentiality

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. Bidders should assume that 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, and to issue clarifications and amendments to the RFP. The Trust also reserves the right to reject noncompliant submissions in response to this RFP. The Trust, in its sole discretion, reserves the right to recognize and waive minor informalities and irregularities found in proposals received in response to this RFP. Issuance of this RFP does not commit the Trust to make an award. The Trust will not pay any costs or expenses incurred by a bidder in connection with preparation of a proposal or response to this RFP.

1.12 Contract Agreements

A copy of the Efficiency Maine Trust Standard Agreement appropriate to this RFP is provided as **Attachment B – Standard Agreement**. This document will be one of the agreements for services between the winning bidder and the Trust. Some initiatives within this program will be funded with federal awards and will be managed under separate contracts subject to additional terms and conditions (riders) as described in Attachments B-1 and B-2. The Trust will post Attachment B-3 when it becomes available. If the Trust receives additional grant funding from other sources during the period of performance, new separate agreements may be issued.

The winning bidder and its agents and subcontractors will be required to execute a nondisclosure agreement, see **Attachment D -- Confidentiality, Non-Disclosure and Protective Agreement**. Certain information regarding a customer that has participated or that may participate in a Trust program is deemed confidential by the Efficiency Maine Trust Act. 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 Efficiency Maine Trust is the independent, quasi-state agency established to plan and implement energy efficiency programs in Maine. Through its suite of nationally recognized programs, the Trust provides consumer information, marketing support, demonstration pilots, discounts, rebates, loans, and other initiatives to promote high-efficiency equipment and operations that help Maine’s homes, businesses, and institutions reduce their energy costs and lower their greenhouse gas emissions. The result is job growth, better grid reliability, improved energy independence, a stronger local economy, and critical progress toward meeting the State’s climate change goals. The Trust is governed by a Board of Trustees with oversight from the Maine Public Utilities Commission.

2.2 Commercial and Industrial Prescriptive Initiatives

C&I Prescriptive Initiatives provide financial incentives, technical assistance, and project management support for the installation of energy-efficient equipment through a mix of broad, market-based initiatives and targeted initiatives. The program promotes “off-the-shelf,” widely available equipment that has predictable operating characteristics and applications across the C&I sector. The program’s targeted initiatives focus on specific sectors, hard-to-reach markets, or certain technologies, providing enhanced incentives or technical support.

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

This program serves all non-residential customers, including businesses, industrial customers, manufacturers, municipalities, agriculture, non-profit building owners, and multifamily buildings of three or more units.

Some initiatives target specific customer types or geographic areas of Maine. For example, the program caters to Maine’s smallest businesses (i.e., those with peak demand of 50 kW or less) through the Small Business Initiative. Other targeted initiatives have focused on small municipalities, rural schools, businesses in the hospitality industry, and congregate living facilities (e.g., long-term care). Triennial Plan VI will increase the focus on multifamily buildings. A significant multifamily building focus is the Initiative for Electrification in New Affordable Multifamily Housing, funded through the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) and offers rebates for qualifying efficient HVAC heat pump systems in new construction of multifamily buildings that will serve low-income households. This initiative is being launched under a Funding Opportunity Notice (FON or “opportunity”). *Attachment B-2, Services Agreement for IRA-HEAR Funded Projects, is the delivery contract associated with this work.*

Another multifamily initiative will be funded through the IRA-Home Efficiency Rebates (HER). Maine’s HER program will provide rebates for efficiency upgrades in existing multifamily buildings that achieve a minimum of 35% energy savings. Though this program is technology-neutral, it will emphasize heating system retrofits that replace fossil fuel systems with heat pump technologies. Enhanced incentives will be available for projects in buildings serving low-income households. *Attachment B-3, Services Agreement for IRA-HER Funded Projects, is the delivery contract associated with this work, and will be shared on the RFP website when it becomes available.*

Efficiency Maine’s Green Bank will provide financing for a targeted initiative for congregate living facilities (supervised group living facilities, such as long-term care, group home, and supportive housing facilities) to replace fossil fuel-fired HVAC systems. Congregate living is a challenging market segment for energy

efficiency. These facilities operate 24/7 and have significant and costly energy consumption. Additionally, many facilities are small businesses operating on tight margins, making investments in new energy efficient equipment challenging. Many facilities also lack the in-house capacity to identify and scope out energy efficiency investment priorities. Participating facilities will also be accessing rebates available through C&I Prescriptive Initiatives and the C&I Custom Program.

2.4 Thermal Energy Investment Program

As described above, the delivery team will support the Thermal Energy Investment Program in addition to Prescriptive Initiatives. In 2021, the Legislature enacted LD 597, An Act to Establish the Thermal Energy Investment Program, requiring the Trust to establish a new program to provide incentives and loans to businesses, municipalities, educational institutions, and non-profit entities for the installation of new thermal energy-derived projects. The goal of the legislation is to strengthen the state's forest products industry and lower energy costs by increasing the efficient use of thermal energy production.¹ Thermal energy-derived projects are defined in the statute as projects that produce thermal energy and thermal renewable energy credits (TRECs) under Maine's renewable portfolio standard, such as wood-fueled combined heat and power or the conversion of fossil fuel-fired boilers to wood-fueled boilers or boilers using biofuels derived from wood. The statute does not stipulate any cost-effectiveness requirements for these projects. The law provides that the Thermal Energy Investment Fund will be funded through alternative compliance payments from electricity suppliers that fail to secure their required quota of TRECs.²

The Trust launched the Thermal Energy Investment Program in December of FY2023. The program provides an incentive that is set at a certain percent of project costs (currently 35%), requiring a majority customer co-pay. The program also provides an additional incentive (currently 10%) for projects that include the installation of advanced emission controls or energy meters.

2.5 Recent Program Activity and Budget Levels

The C&I Prescriptive Initiatives' delivery expenditures have been between 12% and 16% of the overall Program budgets in FY2023 and FY2024. Attachment A, the Project Cost Proposal Form, includes an estimate of hours by major task category (per the Scope of Work).

2.6 Efficiency Maine Reporting and Tracking (effRT)

The Trust's programs are data-driven and their success hinges on the capacity to measure and verify the energy and cost savings derived from program participation. The primary tool that Efficiency Maine has developed for data management is known as the Efficiency Maine Reporting & Tracking System (effRT) database. The database platform manages the data for all the Trust's active programs and ensures consistent and accurate estimates of energy savings. The system also enables trade allies (such as Qualified Partners, or QPs) to expedite the processing of incentives, significantly reducing paperwork.

The winning bidder must use effRT to document and process project applications as well as to report on program results. The effRT database is SQL-based with an online interface created and currently maintained with ASP.net tools. Since its initial development to support delivery of the Business Incentive Program, the effRT database has been continuously refined to address the evolving needs and features of additional programs offered by the Trust. The Trust continues to work toward a fully unified data

¹ 35-A MRS §10128.

² 35-A MRS §3210(9)(C).

management structure that can capture and report on a diverse array of data originating from a variety of sources, without being burdensome to program administration, delivery, and reporting requirements.

More information on effRT and how the delivery team will use the database and support trade allies in its use may be found in Attachment E: Delivery Team Manual.

2.7 Additional Sources of Information

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

TITLE	LOCATION (link)
Efficiency Maine Trust website	www.efficiencymaine.com
Efficiency Maine Trust Annual Reports	https://www.efficiencymaine.com/about/library/reports/
Efficiency Maine Trust – Triennial Plan	https://www.efficiencymaine.com/about/library/policies/
Efficiency Maine Trust IRA Rebates	https://www.efficiencymaine.com/IRA-Home-Energy-Rebates/
Thermal Energy Investment Program	https://www.efficiencymaine.com/thermal-energy-investment-program/

SECTION 3 –SCOPE OF WORK

Following is a task-by-task description of the work covered by this RFP. As explained in section 4.3, below, bid proposals must reflect the bidder's plan, approach, capacity for each task and describe related experience.

The winning bidder must commit to completing all tasks within the time frames established in the proposal (see item 3 under section 4.3, Statement of Work) and as approved by the Trust. The contractor(s) must provide the Trust with electronic copies of all deliverables in Microsoft Office software format or other appropriate format approved by the Trust.

3.1 Scope of Work Tasks

Please find an overview of major tasks below. For a more detailed description of current program activities, please see the Delivery Team Manual posted as Attachment E.

Task 1: Program Management

As described in section 2.6, the Trust's central repository for tracking program activities is through the Efficiency Maine Reporting and Tracking System (effRT). There are currently pre-defined program activity reports such as installed solution summaries, incentive payment reports, project pipeline reports as well as the ability to develop new and ad-hoc reports. The winning bidder will be required to provide program status reports, energy savings reports as determined by the Trust.

The winning bidder will be responsible for reviewing and recommending revisions to the program's current qualifying solutions and incentives as well as developing and implementing new offers as the market demands.

The winning bidder will be responsible for separately tracking costs and program activity associated with the delivery elements of focused initiatives including incentive payments, contractor activities and product supply procurement.

Task 2: Project Management

The effRT database is used to manage individual projects from the project inception to final payment. Following is a summary of the project steps tracked in effRT:

- The Application workflow step is used to collect all information about the project including customer information, premise information, and solutions installed. After the project is completed, it is subject to inspection.
- The Inspection workflow step collects results from the inspection.
- The Management Review workflow step is used by the Delivery Team to review the project for accuracy. During Management Review, the program Delivery Team will determine if a Technical Review is required. The Management Review also ensures that the latest savings and factor schedules are being referenced for savings calculations. If it is not, a technical review will automatically kick-off.
- The Technical Review workflow step allows engineers to review and update solution information based on review results.

Upon completion of the workflow, the project will be released for incentive payment. All incentive applications are screened for completeness, including a review of equipment cut sheets and contractor invoices. In addition, all applications are signed (electronically through effRT) by the customer to ensure that applicable terms and conditions have been reviewed by both the customer and the contractor.

Applications over a certain threshold (currently incentives greater than \$5,000) receive a technical review before project pre-approval is granted. At project completion, these larger projects are reviewed again, or an on-site inspection is conducted before incentive payment is issued. In addition (for the smaller projects), a random sample of projects are inspected on-site (currently 10%). Issues identified while on-site are addressed with the installation contractor.

Task 3: Project Payment Processing

The Trust uses a paperless online incentive application process. QPs submit Prescriptive Project Applications (known as “enrollments”) directly into effRT. The winning bidder must ensure that incentive payments are processed, issued, and tracked in a timely fashion and with a high level of accuracy. For additional information regarding the database workflow, see Attachment E – Delivery Team Manual. Additionally, the winning bidder must ensure that all required Internal Revenue Service (IRS) reporting requirements and State of Maine unclaimed property reporting is properly adhered to and administered (e.g., issuing 1099s, return check protocols). Finally, the Trust prefers that the winning bidder have incentive payments (checks to customers) drawn from a Maine-based bank. Project incentive checks are typically paid out to the customer, with the exception of the certain targeted initiatives, in which the project incentive check is issued to the QP installer.

Various funding sources, some federal, are used to pay for project incentives depending on the measure or program that the customer and QP have applied for. effRT is used by the delivery team to separately track and report program activity and billing by funding source and/or initiative.

Task 4: Qualified Partner (QP) Support

The winning bidder will provide technical assistance to participating independent contractors in several ways. The winning bidder will help contractors register to become eligible Qualified Partners and manage the training necessary for this process. The winning bidder will make equipment information available on the QP website, as well as program information and answers to frequently asked questions. The winning bidder will also assist the Trust staff in developing and sending QPs general information on the industry, the program, and case studies in a monthly, email newsletter and a monthly QP webinar.

The winning bidder will assist the Trust staff in developing and presenting annual QP certifications usually conducted in June. The exclusive QP website ([click here to visit the website](#)) is available as a technical resource with program resources and as a sales tool. Technology-specific information may also be addressed through trainings on new technologies or advanced installation techniques (e.g., the program has previously offered trainings on advanced heat pump installation and lighting controls). Lastly, QPs are invited to call program staff with questions on eligible solutions or technical questions.

Task 5: Customer Service

The winning bidder must work cooperatively with the Trust's call center contractor and assist with call center training, monitoring, and support to ensure customer satisfaction and cost-effective program delivery.

For Qualified Partners:

The winning bidder must be available to support the QP network during normal working hours (8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.) on weekdays, except State holidays. Beyond providing toll-free access for the Qualified Partner network with the winning bidder, the winning bidder shall provide training opportunities to support the changes or additions in program guidelines as well as related technologies.

For Customers:

Periodically, the winning bidder must work directly with customers in the development of energy efficiency projects, including the Qualified Partner Network as early in the project development as necessary. Calls from customers regarding project development that are referred to the winning bidder will normally be transferred by the Trust's call center. The winning bidder is expected to take all calls assuming that the customer is on the line ("hot transfer"). Other customer service roles include explaining program eligibility, connecting customers to the Qualified Partner locator, and tracking incentive payments.

The winning bidder will be responsible for developing and implementing a process to deal with complaints from customers and other stakeholders.

Task 6: Program Modification and Updates

From time to time, the Trust may ask the winning bidder to provide recommendations for program delivery modifications, new or modifications to the prescriptive solutions or marketing and outreach strategies. For example, the Trust may ask the winning bidder for input on HVAC incentive modifications or new HVAC system incentives. The Trust may also work with the delivery team on targeted initiatives or sectors.

Upon request, the winning bidder must review and recommend revisions to the program's current qualifying solutions and incentives as well as collaborate with Trust staff on developing and implementing new offers as the market demands, or as additional funding becomes available.

Task 7: Transition Plan

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, and other energy-efficiency service partners.

Non-incumbent winners, in consultation with the Trust, will organize and facilitate a project kickoff meeting to be held at the Trust's offices with virtual participation as appropriate. The purpose of the meeting is for the Trust and the contractor to establish a common understanding of the deliverables, the overall project schedule, expectations regarding the conduct of the program, and to provide the foundation for development of the work plan. At a minimum, this meeting should include discussion of

the proposed statement of work and schedule, initial data requests, and communication protocols and expectations.

Non-incumbent bidders must develop a transition plan that outlines all major tasks associated with taking over the management of this program. The plan must include an anticipated budget associated with transition plan activities (use the appropriate tab in Attachment A).

3.2 Project Deliverables

The winning bidder must complete all requirements specified in the Scope of Work in a timely manner. Specific deliverables may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Program Implementation Plan, including how approaches could differ between general and targeted initiatives;
- Process Plan for program modifications;
- Original data files and final, cleaned data and analysis files resulting from the program activities; and
- Weekly, Monthly, and Quarterly project status/pipeline reports, budget management reports as well as an annual program performance reports.

The willing bidder must commit to completing all tasks within the time frames established in the proposal and as approved by the Trust. The contractor(s) must provide the Trust with electronic copies of all deliverables in Microsoft Office software format or other appropriate format approved by the Trust.

SECTION 4 –PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

4.1 Proposal Submission

Proposals must be submitted electronically via the online Submission Form on the RFP EM-013-2025 webpage (<https://www.efficiencymaine.com/opportunities/rfp-em-013-2025/>). All proposals must adhere to the instructions and format requirements outlined in this RFP, in the online Submission Form instructions, and in the written supplements and amendments issued by the Trust.

The online Submission Form will request the following documents:

- RFP response (see 4.3), including Additional Materials (References, Resumes, Samples)
 - PDF format file named "Proposal_Bidder_Name_RFP_013_2025"
- Attachment A - Project Cost Proposal Form
 - Excel format file named "Project_Cost_Bidder_Name_RFP_013_2025"
- Suggested redlines to contract documents, including, Attachment B - Standard Agreement [if applicable]
 - Word format file named "Standard_Agreement_Bidder_Name_RFP_013_2025"Attachments B-1, B-2, and B-3 include federal flow down requirements, some of which may not be applicable to all aspects of program activity. While the Trust invites bidders to suggest redlines to the proposed contracts, exceptions to the federal flow-down requirements are not possible.
- Attachment C – Team Commitment Form [if proposal involves any subcontractors]
 - PDF format file named "Team_Commitment_Bidder_Name_RFP_013_2025"

- Any additional relevant documents (Word, PDF, or Excel format, as appropriate) [if applicable]

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 (e.g., 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. Table of Contents

2. 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.

3. Statement of Work (20 pages maximum)

Provide a detailed implementation plan that specifies the overall approach for each of the tasks described in Section 3.1 above, including the deliverables required to deliver the program. Describe your capacity for each task and related experience.

4. Qualifications, Staffing and Management (10 pages maximum)

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. If the prime bidder and/or team meet the federal criteria for one or more of the following business types, please include the relevant information as part of this section: Small Businesses, Minority Businesses, Women's Business Enterprises, Veteran-Owned Businesses,³ and/or Labor Surplus Area Firms⁴.

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 in with other Additional Materials (see section 4.3(6)).

³ Please see the U.S. Small Business Administration website for full definitions (<https://www.sba.gov/>)

⁴ Please find more information on labor surplus areas here: <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/lsa>

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. Disclosures

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. Disclose and provide details regarding any debarring or delisting from performance on federal government contracts or by the State of Maine within the three years preceding the date of submission of this proposal.

5. Cost Proposal (use Attachment A - Project Cost Proposal Form provided)**a. Narrative**

Provide a brief narrative explanation of the project cost proposal, including the total not-to-exceed price, and an explanation of all relevant cost assumptions.

b. Cost Form

Provide a completed Project Cost Proposal Form (Attachment A) detailing the breakout of costs by primary program activity category, including an estimate of hourly rates and costs for all personnel, including any subcontractors; other direct costs; and total costs in sufficient detail to allow assessment of the reasonableness of the basis for the not-to-exceed level proposed. Note that the Trust has input estimated labor hours for each program activity category based on its past experience. Bidders will not be held to these hours – they are simply a way for the Trust to compare relative pricing across multiple bids. Bidders may propose different allocations for hours based on their experience if desired. All related expenses must be included and itemized on this form; any costs not included on this form will be disallowed. Provide separate rates by program year (July 1 – June 30) for FY2026, FY2027, and FY2028 on separate spreadsheet tabs.

The Trust will determine a final not-to-exceed cost for each fiscal year based on the proposal labor rates and approved Program budgets. The winning bidder will be bound by the labor rates and not-to-exceed level specified in the contract and will be required to complete all tasks specified in that agreement without charges above the total agreement price.

6. Additional Materials

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. 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.

5.1 Evaluation Criteria

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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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? 	25
2. Staff and Organization Qualifications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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? 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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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
4. Overall Quality and Responsiveness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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? c. Does the proposal seek changes or exceptions? 	10
5. Small Businesses, Minority Businesses, Women's Business Enterprises, Veteran-Owned Businesses, and/or Labor Surplus Area Firms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Does the prime bidder or subcontractors listed on the team meet the criteria for one or more of these designations? 	5
Total	100