RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS

RFQ EM-020-2025: REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS TO PROVIDE VARIOUS RESEARCH, EVALUATION, VERIFICATION, AND GRID MODERNIZATION SUPPORT SERVICES

Last Revised ~~12 March 2025~~ ~~5 May 2026 (April 2026 Extension)~~20 November 2026 (Fall 2026 Extension)

Q1: **Are bids considered confidential?**

A1: No.

Q2: **On the RFQ submittal website, one of the questions refers to uploading "letter of commitments for each additional organization that is part of the bid team." Is this requirement in addition to submitting the Letter of Commitment form (Attachment C in the RFP materials)? If so, please confirm whether Efficiency Maine Trust requires these to be submitted on subcontracting firm letterheads.**

A2: Uploading Attachment C is sufficient.

Q3: **Is the page limit one page per person for each category? Or is the limit one page per person regardless of the number of categories they can support?**

A3: The limit is one page per person, regardless of the number of categories they can support.

Q4: **Am I correct in assuming that "Attachment 4 – Confidentiality, Non-Disclosure, and Protective Agreement.pdf" does not need to be signed for the RFQ submission?**

A4: Correct. This will only need to be signed on a case-by-case basis, depending on the specifications of each individual scope of work.

Q5: **Service Area 4 (Interval Data Analysis): Could the Trust clarify who owns the interval data, where it originates, how frequently it is refreshed, and whether it is made available directly to contractors or requires a separate data sharing arrangement with the relevant electric distribution utility? Is the anticipated scope limited to load disaggregation and virtual energy audits per Section 3.4, or does the Trust anticipate broader applications such as baseline modeling or demand flexibility measurement?**

A5: Maine utilities share interval data with the Trust when requested, on an as-needed basis. The Trust may share it with a contracted third-party who agrees to the Trust's Confidentiality, Non-Disclosure, and Protective Agreement. The anticipated scope may include the examples listed in Section 3.4, but is not limited to those items.

Q6: **Pricing and Contracting: Section 1.8 describes compensation on a time-and-materials basis. Will the Trust consider alternative structures such as SaaS software licensing or subscription-based platform fees for vendors whose primary offering is an analytics**

platform rather than hourly professional services? If so, would fixed-price contract provisions under Section 1.8 be the appropriate mechanism?

A6: Yes, the Trust may consider alternative payment structures where appropriate, including but not limited to fixed-price.

Q7: Service Area 5 (Grid Modernization Support) and the Demand Management Program: Could the Trust describe how it envisions Grid Modernization Support contractors interacting with the Demand Management Program; specifically, whether anticipated work includes analyzing or supporting transactive energy pilots, non-wires alternatives, or DER aggregation strategies that draw on demand management program participant endpoint/meter data or participating device data?

A7: All of these examples are possible scopes that the Trust could contract through the RFQ process.

Q8: My firm has acquired another firm that has already been qualified under this RFQ. Does that prequalification still stand for the new acquiring company?

A8: The Trust would need to process an amendment to assign the contract to the new entity, which could then complete the period of performance of the original company using the same rates and individuals referenced in the existing contract. If rates and individuals are changing, the Trust recommends submitting a new prequalification package.

Q9: Please confirm whether bidders are required to submit three to five project examples and three references in total, or three to five project examples and three references for each selected service area.

A9: Bidders are required to submit three to five project examples and three references in total.

Q10: I see our firm is listed in the Notice of Prequalification for Vendors already prequalified as of April 28, 2025 and that the RFQ website states no action is needed for approved vendors to have the terms extended. Please can you confirm then that reapplication is only needed if a firm wishes to update its rates and/or significantly change its key personnel or entities included?

A10: Correct. Vendors who have already been prequalified as of April 28, 2025 are still prequalified with their prior bid and rates through June 30, 2027. A rate update or significant change in personnel would require a new bid.

Q11: Does all of the work need to be completed by June 30, 2027, or can work on specific tasks extend past June 30, 2027?

A11: Specific scopes can extend past June 30, 2027.

Q12: Would the Trust be looking for support on benefit-cost modeling and best practices? If so, under which service area would that fall?

A12: Benefit-cost modeling and best practices best fit the Economic Modeling service area.

Q13: **Can you please share examples of prior requests for work for pre-qualified bidders?**

A13: Discrete requests for work are sent via email to the organizations whose qualifications match the specific scope. These emails often include a draft scope and timeline for bidding/contracting, and request feedback.

Q14: **Please refer to section 5.4.c. Is there a limit to the number of personnel that can be listed for each service area or in total?**

A14: No.

Q15: **Please refer to section 5.4.c. Are contractors able to add and adjust staff for specific scopes of work, depending on the services requested by the Trust?**

A15: Yes, with written agreement from the Trust.

Q16: **Please refer to the Scoring Criteria. How will rates be compared in scoring? For example, will they be compared by service area, by staff level, or as a blended rate?**

A16: The Trust does take staff level into account when considering rates. Section 6 of the RFQ outlines the scoring criteria.

Q17: **Do attached project examples contribute to any page limit?**

A17: No.

Q18: **Are contractors expected to complete any work on site in Maine (e.g., providing testimony)?**

A18: Contractors may be expected to complete work on-site in Maine only if agreed upon by both parties in a specific scope of work.