

## RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS

### RFP EM-009-2023: Distributed Energy Resource Management Service (DERMS) Provider

*Last Revised 12.09.2022, 12:00 p.m. ET*

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**Q1: Are bids considered confidential?**

A1: No. Please do not include any confidential information in your bid package (see section 1.7 of the RFP).

**Q2: Related to the SOC 2 Type II certification, can a certification from the vendor's cloud service provider (e.g., AWS) meet the requirement, or does the vendor's platform specifically need to be certified? If the vendor's platform needs to be certified, is there any flexibility in the timeline for the certification needing to be obtained (e.g., by the end of 2023)?**

A2: If the vendor is not SOC 2 Type II certified, but its cloud services provider is, the vendor's platform must reside solely within the API of its cloud services provider's environment. If the vendor's products and services reside anywhere outside of this cloud environment, the vendor must have an SOC 2 Type II certification.

**Q3: Does Efficiency Maine have a plan on how to gather load data for the residential systems and communicate that data?**

A3: Yes.

**Q4: Can Efficiency Maine tell us if the KYZ pulse will be available from utilities for the commercial sites? Or would we need to install recorders at the meter (helps us to identify costs)?**

A4: The Trust can access utility meter interval data. Presently, real-time data is not available.

**Q5: Will there be a cost to the KYZ pulse data? Some utilities charge while other provide it for free.**

A5: Utility meter interval data is free of charge.

**Q6: Would Efficiency Maine want pricing for an "Efficiency Maine" branded DERMS portal? We provide it to some of our other customers.**

A6: The Trust considers an "Efficiency Maine" branded portal desirable. Bidders can provide this additional cost (if any) as an optional extra under "Other Direct Costs" within Attachment A.

**Q7: What is the expectation of the bidder around the end use devices?**

- a. **Are we working with the local utility?**
- b. **Are we providing battery or other systems/assets?**
- c. **Would you want us to help finance them?**
- d. **Are we expected to identify and acquire the end users (not our thing)?**

A7: The winning bidder is not expected to work with the local utility. The winning bidder is not expected to install devices. The winning bidder is not expected to finance devices. The Trust considers the ability to identify and acquire end users desirable, although lack of this ability does not disqualify a bidder from being selected.

**Q8: We can be flexible in how we charge. Do you have a preference?**

- a. **Flat overall fee with small additional fees per user.**
- b. **Percentage of savings (those revenue streams would need to be identified in advance).**
- c. **Mix of flat fee and lower percentage of savings.**

A8: The demand-side management initiatives run by the Trust will grow over time. Therefore, the Trust prefers competitive pricing structures with low upfront costs that can expand along with the demand-side management initiatives. The Trust will not accept pricing structures based on percentage of savings. Electric bill savings will be owned solely by the participants with enrolled devices. No percentage of these savings will be passed to the vendor.

**Q9: Our system can “talk” to pretty much any battery/asset controller. Do you know if there will be a limit on vendors allowed to participate?**

A9: Demand-side management initiatives run by the Trust will be subject to devices meeting specifications as defined by the Trust. As long as all specifications are met, there are no device brand restrictions.

**Q10: Do you want other CSPs to be able to dispatch assets with the DERMS software?**

A10: The Trust considers CSP dispatching functionality desirable, however the lack of compatibility with CSP dispatch does not disqualify a bidder from being selected.

**Q11: Efficiency Maine has included multiple customer classes, device types, and use cases in the RFP. Please elaborate on the prioritization of these use cases for 2023-2025.**

A11: The Trust does not have prioritization of customer class, device types or use cases.

**Q12: Is the intent of this RFP to be a multi-phase approach over the three-year term? Is the intent to have many small pilots over the requested use cases in the RFP?**

A12: Yes, the intent is a multi-phase approach that includes small pilots and larger programs.

**Q13: Are there mandates / tariffs driving the RFP?**

A13: The Trust has identified cost-effective targets but does not consider them mandates. The Trust is not a utility and as such does not have control over a tariff.

**Q14: What methods and channels does Efficiency Maine plan to use for customer recruitment?**

A14: The Trust relies on a broad range of channels and methods for customer acquisition and does not anticipate relying on the DERMS provider for these services.

**Q15: Can you describe the relationship between Efficiency Maine and ISO-NE and utilities within the assigned territory? How will the DERMS integration be coordinated with the aforementioned parties?**

A15: In general, the Trust is acting independently of the both the utilities and ISO-NE. There may be instances where the Trust would like to integrate data feeds from the utilities and/or ISO-NE, but that would be discretionary.

**Q16: What involvement and collaboration does Efficiency Maine envision the State of Maine utilities providing as part of this RFP?**

A16: The Trust does not require the involvement or collaboration of the utilities in the state to execute the scope of work required in this RFP. There may be instances where the Trust would like to integrate data feeds but that would be discretionary. To the extent that the Trust requires data from the utilities to plan or execute its programs, the utilities are required to provide that information assuming the Trust follows certain confidential information management standards.

**Q17: Does this RFP's intent align with Central Maine Power's (CMP) IRP?**

A17: CMP does not currently have an IRP.

**Q18: Smart thermostats are not listed in the target device types. Can Efficiency Maine elaborate on why this technology is not included in this RFP given its market prevalence and LSI + DRI potential?**

A18: Heat pumps work most efficiently when set to a constant indoor temperature. A connected thermostat program would discourage constant setpoints, resulting in energy efficiency losses. Additionally, the potential for peak demand reduction from heat pumps, especially for cooling, is likely too small to capture the costs of managing the load. A connected thermostat measure is not ruled out, however the Trust sees greater opportunity for peak load reduction in other measures at this time.

**Q19: Is Efficiency Maine open to exploring additional device types and DSI/LRI strategies for this RFP that support the goals of cost-effectiveness and/or provide energy or GHG savings?**

A19: Yes.

**Q20: How will Efficiency Maine determine the cost-effectiveness and value of these DERMS initiatives?**

A20: Efficiency Maine runs the Primary Benefit-Cost Test to determine the cost-effectiveness of a measure. This includes measure cost, avoided energy supply costs, the embedded cost of carbon, and, if applicable, operation and maintenance costs/benefits. At the program level, program delivery costs are also taken into account.

**Q21: Has Efficiency Maine done any potential studies to understand the total addressable market for the identified measures (i.e., the population that can be recruited for this program)? If so, please provide these numbers by measure.**

A21: Yes. Trust goals for the Demand Management Program are located in [Appendix L](#) of [Triennial Plan V](#).

**Q22: Has Efficiency Maine considered all of these to be a Bring-Your-Own-Device type enrollment (i.e., the measure already exists), or will recruitment and incentives also be focused on technology adoption?**

A22: While innovation pilots primarily focus on technology adoption and viability as a cost-effective measure, measures in the DRI and LSI have already proven to be cost-effective and market ready.

**Q23: This is for the Services Agreement portion only, how do we address the SWL Agreement?**

A23: This is a program design consideration that will be negotiated with the winning bidder.

**Q24: If a PO is utilized, are there any T&Cs on the PO that we need to be aware of?**

A24: This is a program design consideration that will be negotiated with the winning bidder.

**Q25: Section 16, Public Funds – How will the reporting and operational requirements that govern funds be flowed down to us?**

A25: Please refer to the standard agreement attached to this RFP.

**Q26: Will the successful bidder need to support the three innovation pilots? If so, could you please provide more detail on the requirements of the DERMS platform to meet the needs of these pilots.**

A26: The Trust prefers that the winning bidder can support the three innovation pilots, although the Trust realizes this may not be possible. The inability to support all three listed pilots will not disqualify a bid from being selected.

**Q27: What types of DERs and what vendors of DERs will the DERMs platform need to support?**

A27: There is no minimum nor maximum of device types and vendors that would disqualify a bid from being evaluated. The Trust will select the platform that aligns best with Trust goals and objectives outlined in Triennial Plan V [Appendix L](#).

**Q28: Do you have a preference for the communication protocol that the DERMs platform will use? Can this be a proprietary protocol or do you require an open protocol, such as OpenADR?**

A28: The Trust prefers an open-source protocol.

**Q29: How will the Trust communicate with the DERMS platform? Does the platform need to support an API? If so, what information should be communicated via this API? For example, does the Trust require that the Trust can address each individual DER via the DERMs platform or only all of the DERs in aggregate? If the Trust requires that the DERMs platform address each individual DER, what is the required latency and frequency of communication? What information does the Trust require that the DERMs platform provide back from each DER via the API?**

A29: The Trust will weigh the benefits of API functionalities against their costs when reviewing bids. At minimum, the Trust requires basic device and customer data and device performance data. This information is necessary for both performance incentive payments and for device savings claims. Additionally, the Trust requires at least one method of communication with participants to notify participants of events.

**Q30: Does the DERMS platform need to support multiple Trust programs at the same time? In other words, will DERs be enrolled in the LSI, DRI, NWA and Innovation pilots at the same time? If so, does the DERMs platform need to support switching between these programs? At what frequency will this switch occur? hourly? daily? monthly?**

A30: Yes, the DERMS platform will support multiple Trust initiatives, allowing the dispatch of multiple measures simultaneously, if needed.

**Q31: To what extent is the DERMS platform expected to offer revenue grade metering of load reductions?**

A31: While not an explicit requirement, this functionality is viewed as a benefit and should be outlined in vendor's bid and Attachment A should they offer this service.

**Q32: Is it a requirement for the platform to make automated dispatches utilizing ISO-NE day ahead hourly pricing forecasts?**

A32: While not an explicit requirement, this functionality is viewed as a benefit and should be outlined in vendor's bid and Attachment A should they offer this service.

**Q33: We would like to submit with a mutual NDA as opposed to the one-way NDA provided. Would this be possible?**

A33: No. Please refer to section 1.7 in the RFP about confidential information as part of the proposal process. In terms of the awarded contract, Maine statute dictates what the Trust may consider confidential, which is captured in a Confidential Information Management System policy and associated agreements. The Trust cannot agree to additional terms without approval from the Board of Trustees, which is bound by Maine statute (see Maine Title 35-A, Part 8, Chapter 97, §10106).