



**EFFICIENCY MAINE TRUST
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP) FOR
LENDING PLATFORM
RFP EM-013-2024**

Date Issued: January 24, 2024

Updated April 11, 2024

Proposals Due: March 19, 2024, 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time (US)

Table of Contents

SECTION 1 – RFP INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS 3

1.1 PURPOSE 3

1.2 DESIGNATED CONTACT PERSON FOR THIS RFP 3

1.3 SCHEDULE..... 3

1.4 BIDDERS’ INFORMATIONAL WEBINAR..... 3

1.5 ANTICIPATED CONTRACT TERM 4

1.6 ANTICIPATED CONTRACT BUDGET..... 4

1.7 PROPOSAL SUBMITTAL DEADLINE 4

1.8 SUBMITTING QUESTIONS 4

1.9 PROPOSAL CONFIDENTIALITY 4

1.10 CONTRACT AWARD..... 5

1.11 CONTRACTING PROCESS 5

1.12 RFP PROCESS – RESERVATION OF RIGHTS 5

1.13 CONTRACT AGREEMENT 5

1.14 REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION 6

SECTION 2 – BACKGROUND INFORMATION..... 7

2.1 EFFICIENCY MAINE TRUST..... 7

2.2 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT 7

2.3 ADDITIONAL SOURCES OF INFORMATION..... 10

SECTION 3 – SCOPE OF WORK..... 11

3.1 PROJECT DELIVERABLES 12

SECTION 4 – PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS..... 17

4.1 PROPOSAL SUBMISSION..... 17

4.2 FORMAT REQUIREMENTS 17

4.3 CONTENT AND ORGANIZATION REQUIREMENTS..... 17

SECTION 5 – PROPOSAL EVALUATION CRITERIA 20

5.1 EVALUATION CRITERIA..... 20

Separate attachments:

Attachment A – Project Cost Proposal Form

Attachment B – Agreement

Attachment C – Team Commitment Form

Attachment D – Confidentiality, Non-Disclosure and Protective Agreement

SECTION 1 – RFP INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS

1.1 Purpose

The Efficiency Maine Trust (the Trust or Efficiency Maine) seeks a qualified contractor or team of contractors to provide and operate a lending platform to support the Trust’s expanding finance initiatives through the Efficiency Maine Green Bank (EMGB). This platform may include multiple integrations to meet the needs outlined below.

The Trust has issued a concurrent Request for Proposals (RFP) for Lending Services (EM-014-2024) for additional administrative and logistical support. Bidders may be interested in applying for both RFPs, but are not required to do so.

1.2 Designated Contact Person for this RFP

James Neal
 Senior Program Manager for Finance Initiatives
 Efficiency Maine Trust
 168 Capitol Street, Suite 1
 Augusta, ME 04330-6856
 Phone: (207) 553-3091
 Email: james.neal@efficiencymaine.com

1.3 Schedule

	Milestone	Date/Deadline
1	RFP Issued	01/24/2024
2	Bidders Informational Webinar	02/07/2024, 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
3	Questions Due	02/14/2024
4	Responses to Questions Posted	02/20/2024
5	Proposals Due	03/19/2024, 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time (US)
6	Anticipated Award Date	05/01/2024 (updated)
7	Anticipated Contractor Start	05/15/2024 (updated)

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-013-2024 webpage <https://www.efficiencymaine.com/opportunities/rfp-em-013-2024/>.

1.4 Bidders’ Informational Webinar

For interested bidders, the Trust will offer an informational webinar that will discuss Efficiency Maine’s Green Bank and elements of this RFP. Bidders can sign up using the following link:

February 7, 2024 | 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. – Bidders’ Informational Webinar Registration
https://efficiencymaine.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_LCIlwV8HTAqE5n8BUPy87g#/registration

1.5 Anticipated Contract Term

The Trust anticipates awarding one contract to cover a duration of four years to a single bidder or team of bidders, with an option of extending for another three years. The contract could be fixed cost, time-and-materials with a not-to-exceed maximum, or a hybrid.

1.6 Anticipated Contract Budget

The Trust currently operates a loan portfolio of approximately \$20 million and stands to receive up to an additional \$40 million in federal funds. It anticipates budgeting a combination of general revenue, interest rates and/or transaction fees to cover the costs of this contract.

The Trust anticipates that the annual budget for the platform will depend on the volume of loan activity during the fiscal year (runs July 1 through June 30). The Trust expects that the first year's budget may be larger due to the upfront set-up costs for the platform. Budgets in subsequent years will largely reflect the costs of managing the platform (e.g., periodic flat fees and/or variable fees) as well as costs associated with additional portal configuration to accommodate evolving functionality or offerings. Bidders are encouraged to propose the most cost-effective solution that will meet the requirements laid out below. Proposals that include a base scope and optional tasks priced separately will be considered.

1.7 Proposal Submittal Deadline

All proposals must be submitted electronically via the online Submission Form on the RFP EM-013-2024 webpage (<https://www.efficiencymaine.com/opportunities/rfp-em-013-2024/>). 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).

1.8 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: "Lending Platform". Responses to questions will be posted on <https://www.efficiencymaine.com/opportunities/rfp-em-013-2024/>, 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.

1.9 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. 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.

1.10 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.

1.11 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>.

1.12 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.

1.13 Contract Agreement

A copy of the Efficiency Maine Trust Standard Agreement appropriate to 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.

Funding for the EMGB may derive in whole or in part from federal sources and carry with it certain federally-prescribed terms and conditions that must be included in contracts using such funds (such as Appendix II to 2 CFR Part 200 "Contract Provisions for Non-Federal Entity Contracts Under Federal Awards" and additional requirements). Any contract award will be subject to required federal contract flow-down provisions. The Standard Agreement may be updated prior to execution, and may be amended from time to time with mutual consent of the parties, to reflect any new federal funding requirements associated with the capital under management.

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.

1.14 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 (the 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.

2.2 Background and Context

In 2012, the Trust launched its first suite of loan products helping Mainers to finance clean energy and energy efficiency projects in their homes, followed in subsequent years by the introduction of loans and lease products catering to small businesses, municipalities, schools, and low-income households. In 2021, the Maine Legislature enacted Public Law, Ch. 358 authorizing the establishment of a more comprehensive financing program at the Trust.¹ Collectively, these financing initiatives are administered under the umbrella of the Efficiency Maine Green Bank (EMGB). EMGB initiatives are designed to drive private capital into market gaps for energy efficiency and clean energy equipment and services. Its financing initiatives serve as an important complement to the Trust's \$100 million annual budget to provide other financial incentives (e.g., rebates, instant discounts) and technical assistance to Maine's residents, businesses, and institutions.

In late 2022, Congress passed the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA). An important provision of the IRA authorizes the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to implement the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF), a historic \$27 billion investment that will be used to capitalize green banks to facilitate development of energy efficiency and clean energy projects. EPA will implement the GGRF via three grant competitions to be awarded in 2024: the \$14 billion National Clean Investment Fund, the \$6 billion Clean Communities Investment Accelerator, and the \$7 billion Solar for All competition. The Trust has aligned with certain lead applicants for these funds and stands to receive up to \$40 million through the various channels.

The Trust is actively working to refine and expand its EMGB finance initiatives to deploy this injection of new federal capital into energy efficiency and clean energy projects in 2024 and the following years.² These funds will effectively triple the size of the EMGB's current portfolio, likely leading to new offerings and more complex administrative requirements. In order to support this expansion, the Trust is looking to build out the loan management capacity of its EMGB two separate solicitations. As noted above, in addition to this RFP seeking a lending platform, the Trust has also launched a concurrent RFP for lending

¹ Public Law, Chapter 358, 130th Maine State Legislature, First Special Session, [LD 1659, An Act To Create the Maine Clean Energy and Sustainability Accelerator](#).

² In addition to the GGRF funds, the Trust will receive roughly \$800,000 in federal funds under the Energy Efficiency Revolving Loan Fund Capitalization Grant Program in 2024. In future years, it may receive additional sources of federal or other public or private funding to support its EMGB initiatives.

services sub-contractors as part of this work. Interested parties may also choose to apply for RFP-EM-014-2024 Lending Services (<https://www.energymaine.com/opportunities/rfp-em-014-2024/>).

Current Finance Offerings

- **Home Energy Loans:** The EMGB offers loans that help homeowners pay for energy upgrades, all without borrower fees and with relatively low interest rates. The loan types comprise primarily unsecured Home Energy Loans and, less commonly, loans secured by a subordinate lien on a property. Over the course of fiscal year (FY) 2023, the EMGB loaned nearly \$9 million to residential customers who took advantage of rebates through Efficiency Maine's programs serving homeowners. These loans facilitated 1,264 projects, most of which involved the installation of heat pumps. Six of these projects were secured loans and 1,258 were unsecured.
- **Small Business Energy Loans:** The EMGB offers loans to businesses participating in the Small Business Initiative, which provides enhanced incentives for heat pumps and lighting upgrades to Maine's smallest commercial customers. In FY2023, the lingering effects of the pandemic continued to weigh on participation, as the EMGB loaned \$14,404 for three projects to small business customers.
- **Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (C-PACE):** C-PACE is a financing model that enables a commercial property owner to place a special assessment on their property to finance energy efficiency upgrades and renewable energy installations. This assessment is collected through the municipal property tax bill. The EMGB administers a C-PACE Program in Maine, facilitating these financing arrangements between customers and private, third-party lenders.³ The program launched in FY2023 and received its first application in December 2023. Municipalities are continuing to opt into the program by passing local ordinances.
- **Municipal Lease:** A municipal lease, sometimes referred to as a tax-exempt lease purchase, is a contract that allows an entity to obtain the use of equipment without incurring debt. This arrangement enables public entities, such as municipalities, to use utility bill savings to help pay for the financing costs on the lease. This mechanism lowers the upfront cost of a project (typically to \$0), spreads the costs of the project over several years, and leverages tax-exempt interest rates. The EMGB launched a municipal lease offering near the end of FY2023 and did not facilitate any leases before the end of the fiscal year. Through this finance initiative, the EMGB pairs eligible Efficiency Maine program participants with private, Maine-based lenders that provide this type of financing. Eligible participants include Maine municipalities or public PreK-12 schools (or school districts) under the Maine Department of Education.
- **Manufactured Home Heat Pump Lease:** The Trust provides rebates for whole-home heat pump systems replacing fossil fuel-fired furnaces in manufactured homes. Participants can cover their 20% share of upfront project costs (~\$2,000) through an equipment lease. After the payment obligations have been completed, the participant has the option to purchase the equipment for \$1. Additionally, the Trust fully warrants the working operation of the heat pump during this

³ The EMGB does not currently distribute or collect any of its own funds in the C-PACE Program or the Municipal Lease offering. These initiatives will therefore *not* be administered through the lending platform. They are included in this list of current offerings to provide general background on EMGB activity.

lease period. Over the course of FY2023, 18 participants enrolled in the pilot phase of this offering. The offering became more broadly available in FY2024, and activity is increasing.

For additional detail on the current offerings, visit the EMGB webpage (<https://www.energymaine.com/green-bank/>) and review the EMGB section of the Trust's FY2023 Annual Report (www.energymaine.com/docs/EMT_FY2023-Annual-Report_11.21.2023.pdf).

Future Finance Offerings

EMGB's future pipeline will deploy funds from the GGRF to significantly expand access to loans and leases as a complement to the Trust's existing suite of rebate programs. These programs are successfully driving customer demand (and contractor services) for energy efficiency and decarbonization through the increased access to heat pumps, heat pump water heaters, electric vehicles, and weatherization in particular. The Trust's aim is to provide a simple, one-stop shop for financing these projects, leveraging its substantial marketing and rebate budgets, and existing relationships with customers and vendors, to further streamline the investment process.

First, the Trust intends to offer an expanded suite of loan and lease products for residential borrowers. Loan products are generally intended to be unsecured while lease products will likely utilize a Uniform Commercial Code (UCC) lien on the equipment. The Trust anticipates a rise in demand for its finance products in 2024 and that the term lengths of most products will average 10 years. With GGRF funds, the Trust will expand EMGB to include a broader set of eligible measures (e.g., rooftop solar PV, EV charging, energy storage), increase the available borrowing amounts to allow for more comprehensive projects and whole-home solutions, and extend support to a wider range of eligible borrowers and property types (multi-family, non-owner occupied, etc.).

The Trust will also seek to expand the EMGB's capacity to deploy financing for energy projects in commercial and institutional facilities through both existing and new initiatives. The Trust intends to implement commercial lending products that may be unsecured or secured through personal guarantees, property collateral, or C-PACE. The Trust may also implement lease products. The demand, size, scope, and terms of these products will be widely varied.

Across its suite of offerings, the Trust anticipates processing between 50 to 250 applications per month under the EMGB, with an average funding amount between \$550,000 and \$2.7 million per month. Given the priority for rapid deployment of GGRF funds and longer recycling timelines, the Trust intends to position EMGB loan and lease assets to be attractive to the private market.⁴ It also intends to aggregate or warehouse assets and attract private capital through the use of credit enhancements. The Trust will design these finance initiatives to ensure that 40% of investment benefits flow to "low-income and disadvantaged communities" (LIDACs), per federal requirements.⁵ It also intends to focus on finance

⁴ If the Trust sells assets to an investor, it may either (1) continue to service those assets itself (or through its sub-contractor), or (2) transfer those assets in their entirety, shifting servicing responsibilities to said investor or another entity.

⁵ The Justice40 Initiative is a government-wide initiative with a goal of having 40% of the benefits of certain Federal investments flow to disadvantaged communities that are marginalized, underserved, and overburdened by pollution. The census tracts that meet these criteria are highlighted on the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool map at <https://screeningtool.geoplatform.gov/en/#3/33.47/-97.5>

initiative designs that pay contractors (or “trade allies”⁶) directly, thereby reducing transactional friction and streamlining project implementation. The goal is to improve the program experience for customers and trade allies alike.

2.3 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.energymaine.com
Efficiency Maine Trust Annual Reports	https://www.energymaine.com/about/library/reports/
Efficiency Maine Trust – Triennial Plan	https://www.energymaine.com/about/library/policies/
Efficiency Maine Green Bank	https://www.energymaine.com/green-bank/

⁶ “Trade ally” is the term the Trust uses for the contractors (e.g., plumbers, electricians, HVAC technicians, insulation installers, builders and vendors) that facilitate Maine consumers purchasing, installing and operating high-efficiency products and systems. Residential Registered Vendors (RRVs) serve the residential sector and Qualified Partners (QPs) serve the commercial sector. The Trust’s trade ally network consists of over 1,000 participating contractors.

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.

3.1 Scope of Work Tasks

Task 1: Project Kickoff Meeting

The winning bidder, in consultation with the Trust, will organize and facilitate a project kickoff meeting. The purpose of the meeting is for the Trust and the contractor to establish a common understanding of the deliverables, the overall platform development schedule, 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.

Task 2: Initial Platform Set Up

The winning bidder must configure the platform, including any necessary integrations and application programming interfaces (APIs) within three to four months of contract award. The Trust anticipates receiving a large infusion of capital on or about July 2024 and seeks to have the platform available at that time or shortly thereafter.

Task 3: Ongoing Platform Hosting, Management, Support, and Enhancements

The winning bidder must host the platform, manage its functionality and the functionality of integrations, provide technical support for any issues that may arise, and propose and develop enhancements, as needed and approved by the Trust. Throughout the contract period, the platform team will work with the Trust's staff to thoroughly understand how the platform is used by staff and/or Trust sub-contractors, to assess needs for the platform, and to propose appropriate enhancements. The contractor will also provide ongoing technical support for use of the platform, integrations, and its reporting functions by staff and contractors.

Task 4: Training

The winning bidder must train Trust staff and its sub-contractors, as requested, on the platform, including reporting functionality. The winning bidder will be required to present a clear training plan that will accompany the platform support function.

Task 5: Customer Service

The winning bidder must provide technical support and execute prompt fixes as technical issues arise. The winning bidder must be available during regular business hours, fixing technical issues within one business day, and responding to Trust staff or contractors with service questions within two hours.

Proposals must include the bidder’s approach to customer service and service level agreements in the RFP response.

3.2 Project Deliverables

The winning bidder must complete all requirements specified in the Scope of Work in a timely manner. The platform must include or integrate with a number of other software tools to meet the requirements outlined below. Such software tools may include those that instantly verify income; allow for the signing/completion of documents; make a determination of LIDAC eligibility/status (e.g., CEJEST)⁷; push data to the Trust’s project reporting and tracking database; as well as payment gateways or processors that facilitate loan disbursement to customers/contractors and payments to third-party investors, and the collection of payments from customers. Specific deliverables may include, but are not limited to, the following specifications and features:

1. Decisioning Capabilities

#	Description
1a	Input Requirements – Trust Staff (or its sub-contractors), customer, or trade ally, can open a new loan ⁸ application and populate the defined intake information criteria. (The intake information will be defined by the Trust.)
1b	Instant Decisioning Capabilities – For most residential customers ⁹ and for some commercial projects, the Trust seeks the ability to reach an instant decision (approval/denial) after an online loan application is completed. The goal is for a trade ally discussing a project at the “kitchen table” with a customer to be able to move all the way through the documentation process with the customer without any direct involvement from the Trust or its sub-contracted personnel. This functionality may require additional integrations and criteria such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income verification • Credit pull • Proof of property ownership • Verification of LIDAC status (e.g., based on location or prior Efficiency Maine verification of income eligibility)
1c	Manual Review – For commercial projects (that have more complex underwriting requirements) and for a subset of residential projects, Trust Staff (or its sub-contractors) must have the ability to manually review a project.
1d	Variable Underwriting Criteria – The platform must have the ability to change or modify Efficiency Maine underwriting criteria for different products over time.
1e	Customer consent – As may be required by any consumer protection laws or related regulations, the customer must be able/required to provide consent before submitting their information.
1f	Offer Presentation – Based on intake information provided by the customer, the platform must utilize defined logic to determine which finance products to offer. This logic must be editable

⁷ [Climate & Economic Justice Screening Tool \(geoplatform.gov\)](https://www.geoplatform.gov/)

⁸ Throughout this RFP where the Trust notes “loan” it means any financing product, including leases.

⁹ The Trust anticipates that 90%+ residential customers will follow a fully automated application process.

	over time. The platform should display a brief overview of each offer to the customer. The platform must allow for multiple offers in some instances and give the customer the opportunity to choose.
1g	Offer Selection – The customer must be able to select an offer and complete the necessary documentation to accept it. The platform must provide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adverse action letters and preapprovals, when necessary • Loan documents for signature

2. Offers and Funding Source Management

#	Description
2a	Each offer must be associated with a specific set of documentation that is required for review/signature by the customer.
2b	Each offer must be associated with a specific funding source account of the Trust that must be capable of being modified on an ongoing basis.
2c	The terms and conditions of each offer must be modifiable on an ongoing basis (e.g., term length, interest rates, and details of the offer), and also the logic associated with a specific product offering.

3. Servicing

#	Description
3a	Automatic Payments – All customers and associated finance products must be set up to make automatic payments (through Automated Clearing House or ACH). The platform must collect such payments on an ongoing basis for the entire term.
3b	Bank Account Management – The collected payments must be assigned to the appropriate bank account of the Trust. In most cases, the source of funds assigned by the Trust to finance a particular customer segment or project type will dictate the relevant bank account into which payments will be deposited. These funding sources for customers/projects must be editable. For instance, if a tranche of the portfolio was sold, the associated bank account may need to be adjusted.
3c	Unscheduled Payments – In the case that customers make unscheduled payments, where that is allowed, this must appropriately update the future payments to be collected by the platform.
3d	Automated Delinquency Management – The platform must have a workflow for helping customers self-solve delinquency issues based on a predetermined protocol. This workflow must include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notifications of late or failed payments • Notifications and information on how to cure delinquencies
3e	Manual Adjustments – If an account is delinquent or in default, the platform must enable manual adjustments so that the Trust (or its sub-contractor) are able to address issues. The platform must also expect to flag or trigger action when accounts need manual intervention.

3f	Reporting – The platform must be capable of generating various reports to enable the Trust (or its sub-contractors) to review and understand performance, key performance indicators (KPIs), areas of prioritization, etc.
3g	Restructuring – The platform must enable manual overrides or the restructuring of existing assets. Customers/projects must be modifiable at the discretion of the Trust. The Trust (or its sub-contractors) must be able to trigger execution of the relevant documentation. (For example, if a customer is having difficulty making payments, the Trust could adjust their associated terms in the system and get the customer to sign the relevant documents memorializing that change.)
3h	Logging Changes – The platform must be capable of logging changes at the asset level or at the program level.

4. User Management and Portals

#	Description
4a	<p>User Roles – The platform must allow use by various entities, with different levels of access and different user interfaces. These entities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trust Staff • Trust sub-contractors • Trade allies • Customers • Investors (or purchasers of assets)
4b	<p>User Access – The platform must allow the Trust (or its sub-contractors) to control who has access to the platform and their level of access. Some access privileges should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • View only – in which user can view specific assets • Editing – in which users can edit subsets of information to be defined. (e.g., a Trust sub-contractor might only be allowed to address specific functions associated with manual triggers relating to Decisioning or Servicing.) • Platform Design – in which users can adjust platform modules such as decisioning logic, offers, or servicing bank accounts. • User Management – in which users have the ability edit other users • Administration – the ability to perform all functions within the tool
4c	<p>Trade Ally Portal –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trade allies should have a separate set of functionalities in which they can view all the customers associated with their projects and the status of those projects. Note that Trade Ally access is limited to the period of loan application and project construction; once the loan is paid out, they do not have access to customer payment information. • Trade allies must also have the capability of managing users within their portal. Some users might include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ “sales reps” who interact more with the decisioning platform ○ “operations” or “management” users who will interact more with the other functions associated with the portal (e.g. verifying work-scope / project completion, receiving payouts)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Trade allies will need to have the ability to upload documentation during the construction/implementation stage of a project. Trade allies will also need to be able to receive payments from the Trust (or its sub-contractors) through the platform and potentially adjust their account information. ● The functions of the platform required to work effectively with trade allies include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pay out project funds; ○ Reporting; ○ 1099 generation (if applicable); ○ Insight into the status of project loan applications; ○ Notice to Proceed deployment; ○ Project completion certificates; and ○ Project Work scope verification. ● An advanced version of a Trade Ally Portal must allow for trade allies to complete required documentation within the portal, including project completion certificates and project work scopes. The platform must also be capable of deploying Notice to Proceed.
4d	<p>Customer Portal – Customers must have access to the platform to view their specific assets. Customers may have multiple active projects through the platform, so they must be able to see all projects through the same platform view (or portal). Customers must be able to view transaction history, view statements, inquire about specific issues, make unscheduled payments (where allowed), update payment information, update contact information, and other related functions.</p>

5. Reporting and Data Management

#	Description
5a	<p>Database Management – The platform must allow for additional data fields or properties that all for more advanced filtering and management. For example, if hypothetically future fund sources are available but can only be administered for customers that have a red house, the Trust would want to add and capture house color as a data field.</p>
5b	<p>Reporting – The platform must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Meet organizational audit requirements ● Provide and satisfy budgeting and accounting criteria ● Provide required reporting as required by fund sources, particularly federal fund sources ● Report by data fields in the portfolio (e.g., fund, loan type, dollars leveraged, customer type)
5c	<p>Financials – The platform must provide financial insights and projections including assisting in the valuation of assets. This data may be used by the Trust to value tranches or the portfolio or to provide insights on the financial stability of EMGB.</p>
5d	<p>1099 Int – The platform must generate 1099 Int forms for all applicable loans in the portfolio.</p>

6. Investor Management

#	Description
6a	Investment funds – The platform should enable the Trust to request or receive funds from investors (or asset purchasers).
6b	Remit Returns – The platform must enable the Trust to remit returns to investors (or asset purchasers). In the case that the Trust (or its sub-contractors) continue to manage the servicing of assets, the ability to remit returns to the underlying asset owner is important. The platform might assign a bank account for payment collections from the specific assets or make periodic direct payments to the investor.
6c	Investor reports and insights – The platform must enable for reporting to investors or asset purchasers on the performance of their assets. (Could be done either through a portal or produced reports.)
6d	<p>The platform must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assignment or Portfolio Management – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reporting requirements to provide valuation ○ Ability to segment the portfolio ○ Ability to present portfolio to third parties (securely) ○ Assignment or sale of portfolio segments • Optionality to service sold or assigned portfolio segments

The winning bidder must commit to completing all tasks within the time frames established in the proposal and as 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-013-2024 webpage (<https://www.efficiencymaine.com/opportunities/rfp-em-013-2024/>). 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)
 - PDF format file named “Proposal_Bidder_Name_RFP_013_2024”
- Attachment A - Project Cost Proposal Form
 - Excel format file named “Project_Cost_Bidder_Name_RFP_013_2024”
- Suggested redlines to Attachment B - Standard Agreement [if applicable]
 - Word format file named “Standard_Agreement_Bidder_Name_RFP_013_2024”
- Attachment C – Team Commitment Form [if proposal involves any subcontractors]
 - PDF format file named “Team_Commitment_Bidder_Name_RFP_013_2024”
- 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. Introduction (2 pages maximum)

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

2. Platform and Integrations Description (15 pages maximum)

Provide an overview of the proposed platform and how it will meet the needs of the Trust as outlined in “project deliverables” above. Speak to the platform’s potential for customization to accommodate formatting preferences and/or integrations. Clarify whether the platform is a “one-stop shop” for all functions, or a hybrid model that combines different systems (e.g., one system for origination, one for servicing). Consider including a link to a demo, trial log-in, sample screenshots, and/or a workflow diagram. Bidders may be asked to provide a brief demo or virtual tour as part of the review process.

Describe any anticipated or recommended integrations (e.g., for e-signatures, payment processing/fund transfers, credit pulls, income verification, LIDAC status checks), noting specific provider names (and alternative options) where applicable. Describe whether the platform is currently configured to support these integrations and/or the process for configuring new integrations. Note the names of any existing integration experience/provider relationships where applicable.

3. Statement of Work (10 pages maximum)

Please describe your approach to the tasks outlined in the scope of work, in particular your approach to customer service.

4. Qualifications, Staffing and Management (6 pages maximum)

a. Corporate Qualifications

Describe the bidding team's qualifications, including brief descriptions of past experience on similar projects. If applicable, describe past experience with green bank clients and/or management of federal funds. Please include the size and capacity of your organization.

b. 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.

c. 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 breakdown between upfront set-up costs, fixed costs, and per loan or transaction costs. To the extent possible, provide relevant explanations of any integration costs.

b. Cost Form

Provide a completed Project Cost Proposal Form (Attachment A) detailing the breakout of costs in sufficient detail to allow assessment of their reasonableness of the basis. Detail any costs charged at an hourly rate, any fixed costs, and/or any other variable costs. Reflect total costs under a hypothetical "Costing Scenario" that uses the assumptions provided on the "Assumptions" tab of

Attachment A. Where any additional assumptions are made, please indicate clearly with a comment. 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 contract year (on separate tabs).

The Trust recognizes that the categories and format displayed in the Project Cost Proposal Form may not conform to the way that the bidder traditionally expresses its pricing. Nonetheless, the Trust will use this form to facilitate a clear and consistent bid comparison and we appreciate bidders doing their best to accurately and comprehensively reflect their pricing and costs according to the form's categories and format. Bidders may also add a supplementary tab to Attachment A detailing their preferred pricing structure for the Trust's consideration.

Bidders responding to *both* this RFP and the RFP for a lending platform (RFP EM-013-2014) will need to provide a separate Project Cost Proposal Form for each response. The Trust recognizes that some bidders may not parse out platform-related costs from servicing-related costs. In these cases, the Trust anticipates that the Project Cost Proposal Form for the lending services RFP (RFP EM-014-2024) may reflect some or all embedded costs associated with the platform, and the Project Cost Proposal Form for the platform RFP (RFP EM-013-2024) may either be empty or reflect only a subset of clearly identifiable platform-related costs (e.g., initial build-out costs). Bidders who elect to respond to both RFPs may reflect their costs across these spreadsheets as they see fit, using the narrative (section 5(a)) to clearly explain their rationale/process. Bidders should understand that the Trust will consider the sum of the totals on each Project Cost Proposal Form to reflect the full cost of the combined bids, so they should take care to avoid any duplication.

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. Platform and Integrations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Does the proposed platform meet the requirements set forth in this RFP? b. Is the on-line application “user friendly”? c. How easy / difficult will it be to customize the proposed platform to accommodate future formatting preferences and/or integrations? d. Is the proposed platform a “one-stop shop” for all service functions, or does the proposal envision a hybrid model? e. How easy / difficult would it be to transfer use of the platform to different Trust sub-contractors providing lending services? 	40
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 organizations (lead bidder and subcontractors) in terms of demonstrated experience and capacity to execute this type of platform? 	20
3. Project Cost/Budget <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. How does the total bid cost compare to other comparable proposals? b. Is the proposed budget consistent with the requested Statement of Work? 	30
4. 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 Scope of Work and the Trust’s expectations? 	5
5. Overall Quality and Responsiveness	5

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?	
Total	100