RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS

RFQ EM-018-2024: VARIOUS ADVERTISING, EDITING, GRAPHIC DESIGN, and WEBSITE SUPPORT SERVICES

Last Revised 03.13.2024, 9:00 a.m.

Website Support Services Questions:

Q1: **I'm a previously qualified vendor. We invested a lot of time to complete our proposal last time but were not asked to do any work for Efficiency Maine. Can Efficiency Maine provide some insight into whether we'd be engaged in any future work before we decide whether to craft a new proposal?**

A1: Efficiency Maine is seeking to develop a list of qualified providers to facilitate entering into agreements with providers if the Trust needs their support on a discreet project. Section 1.9 states that "Prequalified contractors may be asked to assist the Trust on various marketing, reporting, and other communications projects as needs arise. The Trust will request support based on past experience or qualifications for the task, or request quotes for specific Scopes of Work (SOWs), or will notify the list of potential contractors about a project and select a contractor based on availability." However, as the Standard Agreement states in section 1:1: "Provider is prequalified by the Trust as a potential service provider… The Trust is under no obligation to request Services from Provider or to enter into any SOW [Statement of Work] with Provider during the Term."

Q2: **Are bids considered confidential?**

A2: No.

Q3: **How do you manage projects like this on your side? Is there a particular process you need us to support?**

A3: The scope of RFQ is not limited to a specific project. It is an ongoing resource to help support the communications needs of Efficiency Maine programs. Please see **SECTION 3 – POTENTIAL SERVICES AND ASSIGNMENTS** for the type of work we anticipate. Each project will have a designated manager at Efficiency Maine who will provide direction, facilitate collaboration among team members, monitor progress, and review deliverables.

Q4: **How many people (and from which departments) will be involved in managing this project? [Also submitted: How many internal resources have you allocated to this project and what are the areas you want them to contribute to?]**

A4: The scope of RFQ is not limited to a specific project. It is an ongoing resource to help support the communications needs of Efficiency Maine programs. Please see **SECTION 3 – POTENTIAL SERVICES AND ASSIGNMENTS** for the type of work we anticipate. Our requirements are based on past experience that has illustrated the skills and expertise needed to help the Trust market

its programs and report on its activities. For example, in the past, Efficiency Maine has overseen numerous simultaneous projects that support organization-wide needs. These projects have spanned up to five areas of service using up to seven vendors working independently or collaboratively as the needs of the project dictate.

Q5: **Will you want any restrictions on users adding certain content?**

A5: Assuming this question is related to website support services, Efficiency Maine already has established guidelines for the approved users of its website WordPress content management system (CMS).

Q6: **Is there any kind of administrator approval that is needed to be published?**

A6: Assuming this question is related to website support services, efficiencymaine.com uses a number of custom templates and complex functional plug-ins. Certain areas of the website and aspects of its styling are managed by website management staff and other authorized developers. Efficiency Maine has established guidelines for the approved users of its website WordPress content management system (CMS).

Q7: **How do you currently update the data in question?**

A7: Assuming this question is related to website support services, Efficiency Maine website management staff and other authorized developers currently design, manage, and maintain its website.

Q8: **Do you have a current list of features/functions/plugins that are used or are there other functions/features that you would like to see added to the new sites?**

A8: Assuming this question is related to website support services, the most important plug-ins used by the Efficiency Maine website are Gravity Forms, UpdraftPlus, and Envira Gallery. A detailed listing of all technology used on the website can be generated with a browser extension, such as BuiltWith. There is no upcoming project scheduled to expand the website's capabilities. Over the RFQ period, the Trust may add additional resources or functionality, but no specific projects are planned at this time.

Q9: **Can you give us some background on what started the need for this initiative and how to redesign or update your current website? [Also submitted: Is this a marketing initiative or was there something else that drove your team to want to update your website?]**

A9: The scope of RFQ is not limited to a specific project (e.g., redesigning or updating the website). It is an ongoing resource to help support the communications needs of Efficiency Maine and its programs. Please see **SECTION 3 – POTENTIAL SERVICES AND ASSIGNMENTS** for the type of work we anticipate. No upcoming projects are scheduled that would expand the website's

capabilities. Over the RFQ period, the Trust may add additional resources or functionality, but no specific projects are planned at this time.

Q10: **When was the last time you had your website updated and designed?**

A10: Efficiency Maine conducts regular (sometimes daily) updates to its website content, user interface, and architecture.

Q11: **Who currently pushes content for your current website?**

A11: Efficiency Maine website management staff and other authorized developers currently design, manage, and maintain its website.

Q12: **Is there an internal team currently monitoring the performance of your current website or is it through an external vendor that you are working with?**

A12: Efficiency Maine website management staff and other authorized developers currently monitor and report on the performance of its website.

Q13: **How often do you push new content through your website? What are the types of content you publish (educational, updates for community, etc.)**

A13: Efficiency Maine refreshes the content on its website regularly (sometimes daily). Those activities could include updates to program webpages that describe program eligibility and incentives, posting educational and informative video content, and refining the functionality of various calculators on the site.

Q14: **Do you have any current vendors that you have worked with previously for this initiative?**

A14: Yes. You can find a list of previous awardees on our website -- https://www.efficiencymaine.com/docs/RFQ_EM_011_2021_NOTIFICATION_OF_QUALIFICATION.pdf

Q15: **Do you have SMEs that we can work with on the content that will be on the website?**

A15: Yes.

Q16: **Are you open to us making suggestions not only on overall design and aesthetics but the content?**

A16: The Trust appreciates contractors that can act as a trusted consultant and that understand the goals of the organization well enough to recommend value-added solutions and/or strategic input. In many cases, the Trust already has a specific project that simply needs a contractor to execute as directed. We value partners that can execute projects efficiently and recognize that they may not be asked for input on all tasks. Our content is rigorously developed and vetted and, therefore, not open to input from a website development team.

Q17: **How many staff members do you need us to train during the initial launch?**

A17: Assuming this question is about website support services, we do not anticipate any changes to the website that would warrant any specific training for our in-house developers and users. Please see **SECTION 3 – POTENTIAL SERVICES AND ASSIGNMENTS** for additional information. Proposed personnel should have demonstrated experience, expertise, and capacity in the service area or areas included in the bid. For the website category, proposed personnel must demonstrate experience in website and website tool development, including a proficiency in HTML 5, CSS 3, PHP, WordPress, jQuery, and JavaScript.

Q18: **Do you currently have a change management process or any coaching that you provide internally?**

A18: We do not anticipate that the scope of work requested will require any formal change management process or coaching.

Q19: **What are key things that are important for you in an organization that you partner with?**

A19: The Trust appreciates contractors that can act as a trusted consultant and that understand the goals of the organization well enough to recommend value-added solutions and/or strategic input. In many cases, the Trust already has a specific project that simply needs a contractor to execute as directed. We value partners that can execute projects efficiently and recognize that they may not be asked for input on all tasks. Our content is rigorously developed and vetted and, therefore, not open to input from a website development team.

Q20: **Do you need us to migrate all of your current content?**

A20: No.

Q21: **Are you open to an off-the-shelf intranet or are you more interested in something custom built? What are the top 3 areas you are struggling with in your current intranet that you are hoping to create a better experience around? What date are you planning on going live?**

A21: The scope of RFQ is not limited to a specific project (e.g., intranet development and management). It is an ongoing resource to help support the communications needs of Efficiency

Maine programs. Please see **SECTION 3 – POTENTIAL SERVICES AND ASSIGNMENTS** for the types of work we anticipate. No upcoming projects are scheduled that relate to intranet capabilities.

Q22:   How many total webpages do you have?

A22:   330

Q23:   Do you have a preference for contractor location? Onshore, offshore, and if offshore workers are allowed are there any special conditions?

A23:   Any qualified vendor is eligible for this RFQ.

Q24:   Can you share where the current sites are hosted? Would it be appropriate to provide recommendations?

A24:   The sites are all currently hosted at GoDaddy. We are not looking for hosting recommendations through this RFQ.

Q25:   Will the site need to be bi/multi-lingual?

A13:   No.

Q26:   Do you have 1-3 examples of different websites you like and list what you like about them? (Help us get a better, more tangible idea of the direction they want to go, and what features/tech needed to make that happen.)

A26:   The Trust does not seek to emulate other agencies, but we do appreciate seeing how other efficiency programs (like Efficiency Vermont, Mass Save®, NYSERDA, and Energy Trust of Oregon) conduct outreach and communication efforts.

Q27:   Do you want to create newsletters from within the website and send them to members or is this just pushing email addresses to a list?

A27:   At this time, the Trust has no plans to create and send newsletters through its website.

Q28:   Which Email Campaign system are you using or are wanting to connect to?

A28:   The Trust's email campaigns and contact management is through InfusionSoft/Keap.

Q29: **Can you clarify what you mean by "document production services?"**

A29: Document production services refers to editing activities, such as verifying that hyperlinks work, ensuring that figure and table numbering is correct, and ensuring that active hyperlinks in tables of contents link to the correct section of a document.