

Maine Recovery Council

Materials for Special Meeting
November 25, 2025

Document 1

The Maine Recovery Council

Date: 10/9/25 Recorded by: Grayson H.

| Councilmember | Yay | Nay | Abstain | Notes |
|---------------------|-----|-----|---------|--------|
| Amber Pulcifer | | | | absent |
| Betsy Fitzgerald | X | | | |
| Darryl Stewart | X | | | |
| Deb Poulin | X | | | |
| Holly Stover | | | | absent |
| Jamar Williams | X | | | |
| 1 Joe Everett | X | | | |
| Liz Blackwell-Moore | X | | | |
| 2 Maggie McLoughlin | X | | | |
| Melissa Hackett | X | | | |
| Pat Kimball | | X | | |
| Paul Vinsel | | | | absent |
| Raegan LaRochelle | X | | | |
| Tess Parks | X | | | |
| Todd Brackett | X | | | |

Motion: The 5 individual RFP reviewers from the P+G committee will incorporate the new information provided by applicants into their reviews and scores, no later than October 17th. Reviewers will then send their updated scores to the Executive Director to tabulate. The applicant with the highest tabulated score will be awarded the contract, pending successful negotiation.

Document 2

Havens, Grayson

From: Tim Cutler <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, October 9, 2025 10:13 PM
To: Tuell, Chasity
Cc: Havens, Grayson; Fortier, Elizabeth A
Subject: Chasity - Please read at your earliest convenience

Importance: High

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Good evening, Chasity.

I was unable to attend the meeting all the way to the end today due to other project work, however, I believe the decision was to have the 5 members who reviewed all three grants review and rescore, if warranted, their original scores for the "Cost Proposal" section of the RFP. This approach seems reasonable given that the two qualified bidders were asked and permitted to offer additional information related to the "Cost Proposal" section of the submissions. As this was the only area of concern that the P&G team requested information on, I am hoping you can provide me confirmation that the rescoring will only occur for that one section.

I know this has been a difficult process for MRC, and I am not seeking to make it any harder. Though we are a respondent, we are also currently under contract with MRC to provide guidance on compliance and best practices related to MRC's documents, processes, and procedures, which in this case happens to be the RFP process. I am fully aware that this could be seen as attempting to influence the outcome of the process, but that is not my goal in anyway. I am simply trying to provide you guidance and information for you and Grayson to review and consider, to try and help MRC avoid challenges to the outcome which would, as was I believe Brandon noted today, typically takes a significant amount of time and effort to defend thus delaying MRC's start of services. My guidance is being presented only from an informational and supportive perspective for your consideration as it has repeatedly been noted that you and your team need help sooner rather than later. The information below is based merely on clearly documented language from MRC's own RFP that I wanted to make sure you all considered.

Allowing all sections of the submissions to be rescored would highly conflict with your RFP. If any sections other the "Cost Proposal" is rescored, I do not believe that MRC would be able to justify that course of action, and it would provide a strong opportunity for a responded to challenge the vendor selected, due to non-compliance and breach of stated policy. The following is an excerpt from your RFP:

E. PROPOSAL EVALUATION AND SELECTION

Evaluation of the submitted proposals will be accomplished as follows: a. Evaluation Process – General Information

1. An evaluation team, composed of qualified reviewers determined by the MRC, will judge the merits of the proposals received in accordance with the criteria defined in the RFP. The evaluation team will consist of at least four (4) current MRC members and may include additional members, as determined necessary by the MRC.

2. The goals of the evaluation process are to ensure fairness and objectivity in review of the proposals and to ensure that the contract is awarded to the Bidder whose proposal provides the best value to the MRC.

3. *The MRC reserves the right to communicate and/or schedule interviews/presentations with Bidders, if needed, to obtain clarification of information contained in the proposals received. The MRC may revise the scores assigned in the initial evaluation to reflect those communications and/or interviews/presentations.*

4. *Changes to proposals, including updating or adding information, will not be permitted during any portion of the evaluation process. Therefore, Bidders must submit proposals that present their rates and other requested information as clearly and completely as possible.*

As you can see from the RFP excerpt, the RFP specifically notes that scores assigned in the initial evaluation can be changed to reflect the information received through communications and/or interviews/presentations. As the P&G committee did not request any information related to any of the other 3 criteria, to rescore those would very likely not be seen as justified as no additional information related to those sections was requested. Additionally, as you know substantial opinions and in some cases strong advocacy has been shared with the members of the P&G committee, which if the scores on the other sections were significantly changed, would provide another strong challenge as to the fairness and objectivity of the reviewers given the amount of information and advocacy that has occurred and at times the seemingly disparaging opinions by certain members of the P&G team during last week's and this week's meeting of the other submissions.

I realize it is very unlikely that you will be able to consider this communication as being unbiased, and I apologize that we are in this situation given you inherited this RFP process, and it has certainly not been smooth. For future reference, as you may be called upon to issue additional RFPs, I would like to point out, however, that while it was within the P&G's purview to request additional information, the RFP contained language that would have allowed the committee to move the process forward without needing to request additional information, though the following language which was contained within the RFP and is standard practice in contracting.

"c. Selection and Award

1. *The final decision regarding the award of the contract will be made by representatives of the MRC, including its Committees, and subject to the approval of the full MRC.*
2. *Notification of conditional award selection or non-selection will be made in writing by the MRC.*
3. *Applicants will be notified via email of funding decisions. The estimated notification date is September 1, 2025.*
4. *Issuance of the RFP in no way constitutes a commitment by the MRC or the Maine Office of the Attorney General (OAG) to award a contract, to pay costs incurred in the preparation of a response to the RFP, or to pay costs incurred in procuring or contracting for services, supplies, physical space, personnel or any other costs incurred by the Bidder.*
5. *The Council and the OAG reserve the right to reject any and all proposals or to make multiple awards.*
6. *The MRC reserves the right to negotiate work plans and budgets with eligible Awardees, which may impact the start date of the contract."*

I would be happy to discuss this with you and Grayson or anyone else at the AG's office, but I realize that would likely be a challenge given we are a respondent to the RFP. I just wanted to make sure I got this information to you as soon as possible given its probative nature to this process so that the P&G committee members, if they have not already been instructed, can receive guidance that will reduce the possibility of any challenges to the process arising. I have pasted the information from the RFP related to the "Cost Proposal" and relevant scoring guidelines below to save you having to look it up.

| | | |
|----------------------|--|-------------------------|
| Cost Proposal | Proposal materials to be evaluated in this section: all elements addressed in Appendix B: Cost Proposal Form. | 10 poi maxim |
|----------------------|--|-------------------------|

Cost Proposal

8-10 points: Detailed and realistic budget with clear justification of proposed expenditures for carrying out proposed activities.
4-7 points: Realistic, itemized budget with some justification of proposed expenses, but not fully clear how funds will be spent to carry out proposed activities.
0-3 points: Confusing and unrealistic budget that lacks justification for proposed expenditures to carry out proposed activities.

Reviewer Comments:

Thank you for all you and your team have done related to this process. I know it has not been a smooth process.

Regards,

Timothy Cutler, PMP, CPM
Senior Manager
 Financial Management Practice Lead- Government Assurance Practice Group
 Berry, Dunn, McNeil & Parker, LLC
 2211 Congress Street, Portland, ME 04102



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Together we commit the best in us to empower the meaningful growth of our people, clients, and communities.

From: Tuell, Chasity <[redacted]>
Sent: Thursday, October 2, 2025 3:39 PM
To: Tim Cutler <[redacted]>; Christina Sheehan <[redacted]>
Subject: Re: Proposal Submission: BerryDunn - Grant Management Services

Hi Tim,
 Thanks for reaching out to ask, I was planning to send an email along later today and [linking that meeting](#) for applicants to be able to refer to, seeing as how you all watched and are aware I will include that here. The

question is fairly broad, and if folks refer to the discussion during the meeting they can choose to include as little or much additional information as they prefer.

In particular, the Council would like to see a greater justification for the number of hours proposed in your application. Specifically how you determined the proposed level of hours to be appropriate and did not include more or less hours in your proposed plan. We kindly ask that you submit your response by 12:00 pm on Wednesday, October 8 so the information can be shared with council members ahead of Thursday's meeting.

On the reporting question, I'll get back to you on that piece.

Thanks,
Chasity

Chasity Tuell
Executive Director
Maine Recovery Council
[REDACTED]

Maine Recovery Council [website](#) | info.RecoveryCouncil@maine.gov

From: Tim Cutler <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, October 2, 2025 2:38 PM
To: Tuell, Chasity <[REDACTED]>; Christina Sheehan <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Re: Proposal Submission: BerryDunn - Grant Management Services

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Good afternoon, Chasity.

I hope you are doing well. Based upon the outcome of the meeting earlier this week, I was wondering if you had an estimate of when you would be sending out the question we will need to respond to as well as the due date for our response. I know the P&G meeting is the 9th, but I am guessing that you will need the response before then so the committee members will have time to review them. I appreciate your assistance and response.

In the meantime, given the extension of our active contract, and the fact some recipients have reporting upcoming very soon, if you would like to schedule a conversation regarding how we can help you develop at least an initial plan for the reporting, we would be able to assist you. We can share some best practices you should incorporate and assist with the actual collection of the data and review of the responses etc. if that would be helpful. Just let me know how we can assist you.

Regards,

Timothy Cutler, PMP, CPM

Senior Manager

Financial Management Practice Lead, GAPG

Berry, Dunn, McNeil & Parker, LLC

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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From: Tim Cutler <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 9:11:49 PM
To: Tuell, Chasity <[REDACTED]>; Christina Sheehan <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Re: Proposal Submission: BerryDunn - Grant Management Services

Thank you, Chasity, for the update. If there is any support, we can provide you in the interim please let us know how we can be of assistance.

Regards,

Timothy Cutler, PMP, CPM

Senior Manager

Financial Management Practice Lead, GAPG

Berry, Dunn, McNeil & Parker, LLC

[REDACTED]

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From: Tuell, Chasity <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 9:03:43 PM

To: Christina Sheehan <[REDACTED]>; Tim Cutler <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Re: Proposal Submission: BerryDunn - Grant Management Services

Good afternoon,
Apologies for the delayed process update.
The updated process following the last council meeting is:

- all applications have been rescored by a new group of council members.
- These scores will be reviewed at today's Program and Grants meeting (3:00-4:00 pm), you can view via [Zoom](#) live, or the recording will be uploaded to the MRC YouTube channel in the next couple of days.
- The P&G committee will make their recommendation to the full council at their October 9th meeting.

If you have any questions between now and then, please let us know.

Thanks,
Chasity

Chasity Tuell
Executive Director
Maine Recovery Council
[REDACTED]

Maine Recovery Council [website](#) | info.RecoveryCouncil@maine.gov

From: Tuell, Chasity
Sent: Wednesday, September 10, 2025 12:03 PM
To: INFO Recovery Council <INFORecoveryCouncil@maine.gov>; Christina Sheehan <[REDACTED]>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>
Subject: RE: Proposal Submission: BerryDunn - Grant Management Services

Good afternoon Christina and Tim,

I want to provide you with an update on the Maine Recovery Council's (MRC) recent RFP process for Grant Management Services. We recently discovered that one of the submitted proposals had been inadvertently overlooked during our initial scoring and deliberations with the Executive Committee. We are working to correct this error and sincerely apologize for any concern this may have caused.

To ensure fairness and integrity in the process, the Council will be discussing this at our upcoming public MRC meeting on Thursday, September 11, 1:30-4:30pm. I anticipate the discussion will include options for next steps, which I am hopeful will allow for a final recommendation to be presented to the full council to vote on at the Thursday, October 9 MRC Meeting.

We appreciate your patience and understanding as we correct this oversight. If you would like to follow the discussion, details on how to access each public meeting can be found on our [website](#) with recordings of the meeting uploaded to the Maine Recovery Council [YouTube channel](#) following the

meeting. I will also follow up with you directly with the results of the MRC's discussion. You can find the link to observe the September MRC council meeting [here](#).

Thank you again for your interest in working with the Maine Recovery Council.

Regards,
Chasity

Chasity Tuell

Executive Director
Maine Recovery Council
[REDACTED]

Maine Recovery Council [website](#) | info.RecoveryCouncil@maine.gov

From: INFO Recovery Council <INFORecoveryCouncil@maine.gov>
Sent: Thursday, July 31, 2025 1:57 PM
To: Christina Sheehan <[REDACTED]>
Cc: INFO Recovery Council <INFORecoveryCouncil@maine.gov>
Subject: RE: Proposal Submission: BerryDunn - Grant Management Services

Good afternoon, Christina,

I apologize for the delay in responding. Your proposal materials have been received. A member of the review committee will be in contact with you once the review process has been completed.

Best,
Elizabeth

From: Christina Sheehan <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, July 30, 2025 2:58 PM
To: INFO Recovery Council <INFORecoveryCouncil@maine.gov>
Subject: Proposal Submission: BerryDunn - Grant Management Services

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Dear Chasity Tuell,




I am writing on behalf of Berry, Dunn, McNeil & Parker, LLC (BerryDunn). In the attached PDFs, please find our response to the Maine Recovery Council's request for proposals for Grant Management Services.

We appreciate this opportunity to propose. At your convenience, could you please confirm receipt?

Thank you,
Christina Sheehan

Christina Sheehan
Senior Proposal Writer
New Business Development

Berry, Dunn, McNeil & Parker, LLC

berrydunn.com |   | [Secure emails and files](#) 

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Document 3

MRC 2025 Proposal – Maine Recovery Council Spring 2025 – Monitoring and Reporting Support Services

Proposed Deliverables

BerryDunn proposes to provide support to the MRC to assist with contract monitoring and reporting support activities, including the following:

1. Contract Monitoring Support
 - a. Develop and implement a process to track all expenditure and performance data required for quarterly reports by the MRC.
 - b. Establish policies and procedures for appropriate document retention and reporting to comply with MRC funding and programmatic requirements.
 - c. Support development of expenditure reporting tools, as requested by MRC executive Director and/or staff
 - d. Support collection of financial and reporting data from grantees.
2. Contract Compliance Support
 - a. Support development of processes to identify, report, and remediate potential fraud, waste and/or abuse of MRC funds.
 - b. Track grant compliance with MRC programmatic and accounting requirements
 - c. Provide expert guidance and advisory services regarding all applicable legislation, regulations, and policies related to grant funding, including identification of best practices, as requested by MRC Executive Director.
3. Technical Assistance Support
 - a. Support development of training materials on MRC funding and programmatic requirements
 - b. Provide technical assistance support directly to grantees, as requested by MRC Executive Director or staff.
 - c. Work collaboratively with the MRC, OAG and grantees to ensure accurate and timely submission of reporting.
 - d. Support development of internal MRC guidelines, processes, and template documents, as requested.

Billing details: BerryDunn will invoice MRC for services provided during the Agreement. Proposed deliverable activities with descriptions are as follows:

- Contract Monitoring Support
- Contract Compliance Support
- Technical Assistance Services
- Best Practice Guidance and Consultation Support

List of deliverables - Maine Recovery Council – Grant Program and Application Development Support - Scope of Work

BerryDunn proposes to provide support to the Maine Recovery Council (MRC) to assist with the development of a grant funded program, including best practices guidance, program requirements and application development support for MRC. Support activities to be provided include the following

1. Initial Grant Program Planning and Guidance

As requested, general support and consultation on best practices for grant program development and application process management, to include specific guidance on grant program evaluation and planning activities. Initial work to include consultation with MRC designated representatives, committees, and the overall Council, as requested.

2. Grant Application Planning and Implementation Support.

- Grant Application Planning
 - Best practices for equitable grant program development
 - Grant application narrative and formatting, to include:
- Eligibility
 - Eligible Applicants
 - Funding Priorities
 - Grant Limits
- Grant Activities
 - Restrictions on Grants
 - Program Narratives
 - Eligible Costs and Budget Guidelines
- Application
 - Application Components and Process Overview Components
 - Reporting Requirements
- Application Review and Award Determination Support
 - Application Review Process
 - Application Components
 - Program Thresholds and Scoring Criteria
 - Application Cycle Timelines
 - Final Selection of Applications

Billing details: BerryDunn will invoice MRC for services provided during the period of performance at the blended hourly rate noted below. The invoice will provide cumulative hours worked by each staff member, for each of the six primary project activities performed to date, as well as the planned final deliverable. Proposed deliverable activities with descriptions, are as follows:

- Initial Grant Documentation Review and Planning Guidance
- Letter of Intent Evaluation Planning and Best Practices Support Services
- Direct MRC Committee Consultation and Training Sessions -- Evaluation/Equity
- MRC Initial Application Planning and Support Services
- Direct MRC Committee Consultation and Training Sessions – Program Application Development
- MRC Application Development and Implementation Support

MRC contracted grant support start date: June 1, 2024 ~ December 31, 2024

**List of New Deliverables – Maine Recovery Council Amendment – Grant Contract
Development and Support Services**

BerryDunn proposes to provide support to the MRC to assist with contract drafting and negotiation services. Support activities to be provided include the following:

1. Contract Drafting Services
 - a. Translate project services and scope of work into contract deliverables based on MRC instructions and provided templates.
 - b. Draft amendments, modifications, or revisions to existing contracts, as requested.
 - c. Draft supporting documentation (e.g., schedules, exhibits, statements of work) as requested by the MRC
2. Contract Negotiation Support
 - a. Advise on negotiation strategy and tactics, as requested by the MRC Executive Director
 - b. Assist drafting and responding to counteroffers during contract negotiations.
 - c. Support preparations for contract negotiation meetings, as requested by the MRC Executive Director.
3. Contract Consultation Services
 - a. Support MRC staff to obtain applicable information, data, and reports to assist in the development of contracts, as requested
 - b. Work collaboratively with the MRC, OAG and grantees to ensure accurate and timely implementation of contracts.
 - c. Support development of internal MRC contract guidelines, processes, and template documents, as requested.

Billing details: BerryDunn will invoice MRC for services provided during the Extension Term in accordance with the terms of the Original Agreement. Proposed deliverable activities with descriptions are as follows:

- Contract Drafting and Development Services
- Contract Review Services and Support
- Contract Negotiation Support Services
- Best Practice Guidance and Consultation Support

Document 4

Maine Recovery Council Grant Management Services RFP

| | | |
|---|---------------|--|
| MRC Executive Director | Name: | Chasity Tuell |
| | Email: | info@recoverycouncil@maine.gov |
| <i>All communication regarding the RFP must be made through the MRC Executive Director.</i> | | |
| Proposal Submission Deadline | Date: | July 31, 2025 , no later than 11:59 p.m. EST |
| | To: | info@recoverycouncil@maine.gov |

A. INTRODUCTION

a. Purpose and Background

The Maine Recovery Council (MRC) is seeking grant management services from qualified firms or individuals to support the MRC's current and ongoing grant-making, reporting as defined in this Request for Proposals (RFP) document. The selected Provider shall provide concurrent grants management, reporting oversight, and contract monitoring, including data collection, while working to meet the needs of the community-based grantees and the MRC. This document provides instructions for submitting proposals, the procedure and criteria by which the awarded Bidder will be selected, and the contractual terms that will govern the relationship between the MRC and the awarded Bidder.

b. General Provisions

1. From the time the RFP is issued until award notification is made, all contact with the MRC regarding the RFP must be made through the Executive Director.
2. Issuance of the RFP does not commit the MRC to issue an award or to pay expenses incurred by a Bidder in the preparation of a response to the RFP. This includes attendance at personal interviews or other meetings and software or system demonstrations, where applicable.
3. All proposals must adhere to the instructions and format requirements outlined in the RFP and all written supplements and amendments issued by the MRC. Proposals are to follow the format and respond to all questions and instructions specified below in Part C (Proposal Submission Requirements) of the RFP.
4. Bidders will take careful note that in evaluating a proposal submitted in response to the RFP, the MRC will consider materials provided in the proposal, information obtained through interviews/presentations (if any), and internal MRC information of previous contract history with the Bidder (if any). The MRC also reserves the right to consider other reliable references and publicly available information in evaluating a Bidder's experience and capabilities.

5. The proposal must be signed by a person authorized to legally bind the Bidder and must contain a statement that the proposal and the pricing contained therein will remain valid and binding for a period of 180 days from the date and time of the bid opening.
6. The RFP and the awarded Bidder's proposal, including all appendices or attachments, will be the basis for the final contract, as determined by the MRC.
7. Following announcement of an award decision, all submissions in response to this RFP will be public records, available for public inspection pursuant to the Freedom of Access Act (FOAA) (1 M.R.S. § 401 et seq.). All MRC contracts and information related to contracts, including bid submissions, are generally public records per FOAA.
8. The MRC, at its sole discretion, reserves the right to recognize and waive minor informalities and irregularities found in proposals received in response to the RFP.
9. All applicable laws, whether or not herein contained, are included by this reference. It is the Bidder's responsibility to determine the applicability and requirements of any such laws and to abide by them.

c. Contract Term

The MRC is seeking cost-efficient proposals to provide services, as defined in this RFP, for the anticipated contract period defined in the table below. The dates below are estimated and may be adjusted, as necessary, in order to comply with all procedural requirements associated with the RFP and the contracting process. The actual contract start date will be established by a completed and approved contract.

Contract Renewal: Following the initial term of the contract, the MRC may opt to renew the contract for up to two renewal periods, as shown in the table below, and subject to continued availability of funding and satisfactory performance. The term of the anticipated contract, resulting from the RFP, is defined as follows:

| Period | Start Date | End Date |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Initial Period of Performance | October 1, 2025 | December 30, 2026 |
| Renewal Period #1 | January 1, 2027 | August 31, 2027 |
| Renewal Period #2 | September 1, 2027 | March 31, 2028 |

d. Number of Awards

The MRC anticipates making one award as a result of this RFP process.

B. SCOPE OF SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED

a. Contract Management, Monitoring, and Compliance Services

1. Develop an overall schedule that includes the implementation of individual project/program components.

2. Support and assist the MRC Executive Director with grant oversight and management of funding distributed through the Maine Recovery Fund to ensure that subawards and/or grants follow applicable funding requirements and State policies and procedures as required.
3. Ensure all contracts remain in compliance with MRC's policies and regulations.
4. *Identify and address non-compliance issues in collaboration with the Executive Director and OAG staff, if necessary.*
5. Provide resources for implementing proper accounting and reporting internal control mechanisms to track and disperse grants and comply with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles, as requested by the Executive Director.
6. Work closely with the Executive Director to develop and establish requirements to evaluate each subrecipient's risk of noncompliance to determine the appropriate level of monitoring to apply to each subrecipient. This should include providing a checklist for subrecipient review and monitoring required public records systems.
7. Work closely with the Executive Director to develop a process to identify, report, and remediate potential fraud, waste, and/or abuse *within current MRC parameters and guidelines.* The Provider may also assist the Executive Director with verification of audit results, as requested.
8. Provide or suggest relevant supplemental tools, such as schedules, tracking logs, and task management support, as needed or requested by the Executive Director and/or MRC.

b. Data Collection Tools and Services

1. Assist with the collection of quantitative and qualitative data. The Provider shall be prepared to interact with this information in multiple ways, depending on the preference of individual grantees, including, but not limited to, written reports, electronic surveys, and interviews.
2. Provide consultation to the MRC Executive Director to determine the most appropriate reporting methods and protocols for MRC grantees, which may include both quantitative and qualitative methods for evaluation and analysis of MRC grant dollars. Provider will also support the determination of appropriate sampling methods for data collection, as requested by the MRC Executive Director.
3. Develop policies and procedures for appropriate document retention and reporting to comply with MRC funding requirements.
4. The Provider shall regularly communicate and collaborate with the Executive Director to ensure data collection methods align with MRC guidelines and decisions.
5. The Provider will not be required to utilize a pre-identified software system. The Provider shall use their preferred software to establish procedures for organizing and storing collected data securely and systematically, in collaboration with the MRC Executive Director.

c. Organization Technical Assistance and Other Support

1. Provide an average of 12-15 hours per month of technical assistance, including 1:1 meeting(s), email communication response, and materials developed in response to needs around reporting requirements, including financial and programmatic, audit requirements, or other needs, to the MRC and/or Executive Director for grant management support.
2. Provide at least four (4) TA webinar sessions for grantees, with topics developed based on topics determined by the Executive Director and MRC in collaboration with MRC staff, regarding reporting requirements, grant compliance, and/or audit requirements.
3. Support development of training materials, as requested by the MRC Executive Director or MRC Coordinator, to enhance grantees' understanding of reporting requirements and best practices.

d. Project Management Support Services

1. Convene regular bi-weekly status meetings with Executive Director to review project progress, milestones achieved, issues/risks, and next step
2. Communicate regularly with Executive Director and MRC Coordinator regarding project progress, outcomes, and areas of current or potential concern. The majority of the work will be done remotely, leveraging virtual meeting options like Microsoft Teams or Zoom. Occasional in-person meetings may occur with advance notice and agreement by all parties.
3. Maintain a proactive approach to identifying and overcoming risks and obstacles to completing the project successfully and on time. Work related to contract and grants management will be done in conjunction with the MRC and Executive Director. Some tasks such as coordinating meetings with MRC staff and stakeholders will be completed in conjunction with other MRC contractors and/or OAG staff.

C. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

a. Proposal Contents and Format

This section contains instructions for Bidders to use in preparing their proposals. The MRC seeks detailed yet succinct responses that demonstrate the Bidder's qualifications, experience, and ability to perform the requirements specified throughout the RFP.

Bidders' proposals must follow the outline used below. Failure to use the outline specified here in Part C, or failure to respond to all questions and instructions throughout the RFP, may result in the proposal being disqualified as non-responsive or receiving a reduced score. The MRC, and its determined evaluation team, has sole discretion to determine whether a variance from the RFP specifications will result either in disqualification or

reduction in scoring of a proposal. Rephrasing of the content provided in the RFP will, at best, be considered minimally responsive. The MRC will not offer an appeals process at any point during this RFP application process.

Bidders are not to provide additional attachments beyond those specified in the RFP for the purpose of extending their response. Additional materials not requested will not be considered part of the proposal and will not be evaluated. Bidders must include any forms provided in the submission package or reproduce those forms as closely as possible. All information must be presented in the same order and format as described in the RFP.

Bidders should use 12-point Arial font, single-spaced. It is not necessary to repeat the text of the questions.

b. Proposed Services (File #1)

i. General Instructions

1. Bidders must discuss the Scope of Services referenced above in Part B of the RFP and what the Bidder will offer, including a description of the methods and resources the Bidder will use and how each task involved will be accomplished. Bidders must also describe how the expectations and/or desired outcomes as a result of these services will be achieved. If subcontractors are involved, Bidders must clearly identify the work each will perform.

c. Cost Proposal (File #2)

i. General Instructions

1. Bidders must submit a cost proposal that covers the period starting on October 1, 2025, and ending on December 30, 2026.
2. The cost proposal must include the costs necessary for the Bidder to fully comply with the contract terms, conditions, and RFP requirements.
3. Bidders must fill out **Appendix A** (Cost Proposal Form), following the instructions detailed here and in the form. Failure to provide the requested information, and to follow the required cost proposal format provided, may result in disqualification or reduction in scoring of the cost proposal, at the discretion of the MRC.

D. KEY RFP EVENTS

- a. **Proposals Due:** Proposals must be received electronically no later than 11:59 p.m. EST on the date listed on the cover page of the RFP. Any e-mails containing original proposal submissions or any additional or revised proposal files received after the 11:59 p.m. (EST) deadline will be rejected without exception.

- b. **Delivery Instructions:** E-mail proposal submissions must be submitted to the Maine Recovery Council at inforecoverycouncil@maine.gov. Applicants will receive confirmation of receipt of application by email within 72 business hours.

E. PROPOSAL EVALUATION AND SELECTION

Evaluation of the submitted proposals will be accomplished as follows:

a. Evaluation Process – General Information

1. An evaluation team, composed of qualified reviewers determined by the MRC, will judge the merits of the proposals received in accordance with the criteria defined in the RFP. The evaluation team will consist of at least four (4) current MRC members and may include additional members, as determined necessary by the MRC.
2. The goals of the evaluation process are to ensure fairness and objectivity in review of the proposals and to ensure that the contract is awarded to the Bidder whose proposal provides the best value to the MRC.
3. The MRC reserves the right to communicate and/or schedule interviews/presentations with Bidders, if needed, to obtain clarification of information contained in the proposals received. The MRC may revise the scores assigned in the initial evaluation to reflect those communications and/or interviews/presentations.
4. Changes to proposals, including updating or adding information, will not be permitted during any portion of the evaluation process. Therefore, Bidders must submit proposals that present their rates and other requested information as clearly and completely as possible.

b. Scoring Weights and Process

- i. **Scoring Weights:** Proposal scores will be based on a 50-point scale and will measure the degree to which each proposal meets the following criteria:

| | | |
|---|--|--------------------------|
| Organization Qualifications and Experience | Proposal materials to be evaluated in this section: all elements addressed above in Appendix A: Qualifications and Experience Form . | 15 points maximum |
| Proposed Services | Proposal materials to be evaluated in this section: all elements addressed above in Part B (Scope of Services to be Provided) of the RFP. | 22 points maximum |
| Cost Proposal | Proposal materials to be evaluated in this section: all elements addressed in Appendix B: Cost Proposal Form . | 10 points maximum |
| Overall Quality | Proposal elements to be evaluated: organization, writing quality, and alignment with proposal requirements. | 3 points maximum |

- ii. **Scoring Process:** Members of the evaluation team will use a consensus approach to evaluate and score the Proposed Services section. The Proposed Services section will be scored as outlined below in **Appendix C: Proposed Services Scoring Rubric**.
- iii. **Scoring the Cost Proposal:** The total cost proposed for conducting all the functions specified in the RFP will be assigned an average total score based on evaluation scores by at least three (3) members of the evaluation team. The cost proposal will be scored as described below in **Appendix C**.

c. Selection and Award

1. The final decision regarding the award of the contract will be made by representatives of the MRC, including its Committees, and subject to the approval of the full MRC.
2. Notification of conditional award selection or non-selection will be made in writing by the MRC.
3. Applicants will be notified via email of funding decisions. The estimated notification date is **September 1, 2025**.
4. Issuance of the RFP in no way constitutes a commitment by the MRC or the Maine Office of the Attorney General (OAG) to award a contract, to pay costs incurred in the preparation of a response to the RFP, or to pay costs incurred in procuring or contracting for services, supplies, physical space, personnel or any other costs incurred by the Bidder.
5. The Council and the OAG reserve the right to reject any and all proposals or to make multiple awards.
6. The MRC reserves the right to negotiate work plans and budgets with eligible Awardees, which may impact the start date of the contract.

F. CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION AND CONDITIONS

a. Contract Document

1. The awarded Bidder will be required to execute a Maine Recovery Council Contract, in partnership with the Maine Office of the Attorney General, with appropriate riders as determined by the MRC and OAG.
2. In providing services and performing under the contract, the awarded Bidder must act as an independent contractor and not as an agent of the State of Maine or any other private or public entity and/or organization.

G. STANDARD STATE CONTRACT PROVISIONS

a. Contract Administration

Following the award, the MRC Executive Director will assist with the development and administration of the contract and act as administrator during the entire contract period. The MRC Executive Director and/or MRC Coordinator will be available after the award to consult with the awarded

Bidder in the finalization of the contract

b. Payments and Other Provisions

An invoice will be considered accurate and acceptable if it contains a reference to the OAG contract number, contains correct pricing information relative to the contract, and provides any required supporting documents, as applicable, and any other specific and agreed-upon requirements listed within the contract that results from the RFP.

APPENDIX A

**State of Maine
Maine Recovery Council
QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE FORM
Grant Management Services RFP**

| | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Bidder's Organization Name: | |
|------------------------------------|--|

| |
|--|
| Present a brief statement of qualifications. Describe the history of the Bidder's organization, especially regarding skills pertinent to the specific work required by the RFP and any special or unique characteristics of the organization that would make it especially qualified to perform the required work activities. |
| |

| |
|---|
| Provide a description of projects that occurred within the past five (5) years which reflect experience and expertise needed in performing the functions described in Part B: Scope of Services to be Provided of the RFP. Contract history with the State of Maine, whether positive or negative, may be considered in evaluating proposals even if not provided by the Bidder. |
| <i>If the Bidder has not provided similar services, note this, and describe experience with projects that highlight the Bidder's general capabilities.</i> |
| |

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Project One | |
| Project Name: | |
| Brief Description of Project | |
| | |

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Project Two | |
| Project Name: | |
| Brief Description of Project | |
| | |

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Project Three | |
| Project Name: | |
| Brief Description of Project | |
| | |

APPENDIX B

**State of Maine
Maine Recovery Council
COST PROPOSAL FORM
Grant Management Services RFP**

Bidders must submit a cost proposal that includes the costs necessary for the Bidder to fully comply with the contract terms, conditions, and RFP requirements. The proposed cost must be presented as a fixed amount for the Initial Performance Period. The cost proposal must include all costs required to perform the work as described, including but not limited to travel costs, labor, overhead, etc. Both the hourly rate and the estimated number of hours must be completed for your proposal to be responsive.

The fixed amount will be used to score the cost proposal as defined in Part E, Section b of the RFP.

Instructions:

1. **Hourly Rate:** Enter the proposed hourly rate.
2. **Estimated Number of Hours:** Enter the number of hours estimated to be necessary to perform the work.
3. **Total Cost:** Multiply the proposed hourly rate by the estimated number of hours to calculate the proposed total cost.

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|---|----------------------------------|---|
| Bidder's Organization Name: | | | |
| Hourly Rate | | Estimated Number of Hours | |
| \$ | X | | = |
| Total Cost: | | | |

4. **Project Description:** In the space below, enter a brief description of the proposed project activities.
5. **Cost Elements:** In the space below, briefly explain how the proposed costs are necessary for the success of the project.

APPENDIX C

**Maine Recovery Council
PROPOSED SERVICES SCORING RUBRIC
Grant Management Services RFP**

Reviewer Instructions: *Please give a separate score for each section below, and please provide comprehensive, detailed comments about strengths/weaknesses. The comments you provide are a key part of the review process. Please reference the scoring justification of points section for definitions for the criterion and scoring.*

| Section Scoring Criteria | Section Score |
|---|---------------|
| Organization Qualifications and Experience | |
| <p><u>11-15 points:</u> Detailed description of organizational and staff qualifications and capacity to implement project.</p> <p><u>6-10 points:</u> Vague description of the organization with fair justification of organization's and staff's qualifications and capacity to implement project.</p> <p><u>0-5 points:</u> Lacks detailed description of organizational and staff qualifications and insufficient description of capacity to implement project.</p> | /15 |
| <i>Reviewer Comments:</i> | |
| Proposed Services | |
| <p><u>16-22 points:</u> Detailed description of priority strategies with specific and realistic steps for ensuring desired project outcomes are achieved.</p> <p><u>8-15 points:</u> Vague description of priority strategies with general information regarding steps for ensuring desired project outcomes are achieved.</p> <p><u>0-7 points:</u> Lacks detailed description of priority strategies with insufficient description of steps for ensuring desired project outcomes are achieved.</p> | /22 |
| <i>Reviewer Comments:</i> | |
| Cost Proposal | |
| <p><u>8-10 points:</u> Detailed and realistic budget with clear justification of proposed expenditures for carrying out proposed activities.</p> <p><u>4-7 points:</u> Realistic, itemized budget with some justification of proposed expenses, but not fully clear how funds will be spent to carry out proposed activities.</p> <p><u>0-3 points:</u> Confusing and unrealistic budget that lacks justification for proposed expenditures to carry out proposed activities.</p> | /10 |
| <i>Reviewer Comments:</i> | |
| Overall Quality of Proposal | |
| <p><u>3 points:</u> Proposal is exceptionally well-organized, clearly written, and thoroughly addresses all required components. Demonstrates</p> | /3 |

| | |
|---|------------|
| <p>strong understanding of the opportunity and presents a compelling and actionable plan.</p> <p><u>1-2 points:</u> Proposal is generally well-structured and addresses most required components. Shows adequate understanding of the opportunity with a plausible approach.</p> <p><u>0 points:</u> Proposal is poorly organized, vague, or incomplete. Demonstrates limited understanding of the opportunity or fails to present a convincing plan for achieving proposed objectives.</p> | |
| <i>Reviewer Comments:</i> | |
| Total Score: | /50 |