**STATE OF MAINE**

**Department of Energy Resources**



**RFP# 202505073**

**Stakeholder and Facilitation to Support Maine’s Electric Transmission Infrastructure Strategies**

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| **RFP Coordinator** | **NAME:** | Lindsay Gilton |
| **TITLE:** | Energy Policy Coordinator  |
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| *All communication regarding the RFP must be made through the RFP Coordinator.* |

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| --- | --- |
| **Submitted Questions Due Date** | October 8, 2025, no later than 11:59 p.m., local time |
| *All questions must be received by the RFP Coordinator by the date and time listed above.*  |

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| **Proposal Submission Deadline** | **DATE:** | October 20, 2025, no later than 11:59 p.m., local time. |
| **TO:** | Proposals@maine.gov |
| *Proposals must be received electronically by the Office of State Procurement Services by the date and time listed above.* |

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PUBLIC NOTICE

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**State of Maine**

**Department of Energy Resources**

**RFP# 202505073**

**Stakeholder and Facilitation to Support Maine’s Electric Transmission Infrastructure Strategies**

The Maine Department of Energy Resources is seeking proposals for consulting services for facilitation and stakeholder engagement to inform matters related to the State’s electric transmission infrastructure needs.

A copy of the RFP and all related documents can be obtained at: <https://www.maine.gov/dafs/bbm/procurementservices/vendors/rfps>

Proposals must be submitted to the Office of State Procurement Services, via e-mail, at: Proposals@maine.gov. Proposal submissions must be received no later than 11:59 p.m., local time, on October 20, 2025. Proposals will be opened the following business day.

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**RFP TERMS/ACRONYMS with DEFINITIONS**

The following terms and acronyms, as referenced in the RFP, have the meanings indicated below:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Term/Acronym** | **Definition** |
| **Department** | Maine Department of Energy Resources |
| **DER** | Distributed Energy Resources |
| **DOER** | Department of Energy Resources  |
| **RFP** | Request for Proposals |
| **State** | State of Maine |
| **Strategy** | Maine Transmission Strategy |

**State of Maine**

**Department of Energy Resources**

**RFP# 202505073**

**Stakeholder and Facilitation to Support Maine’s Electric Transmission Infrastructure Strategies**

**PART I INTRODUCTION**

1. **Purpose and Background**

The Maine Department of Energy Resources (referred within as the Department) is seeking consulting services for facilitation and stakeholder engagement in Maine to inform efforts related to Maine electricity transmission strategies, as defined in this Request for Proposals (RFP) document. This document provides for submitting proposals, the procedures and criteria by which the awarded Bidder will be selected, and the contractual terms which will govern the relationship between the State of Maine (State) and the awarded Bidder.

DOER, in coordination with other relevant state and regional entities, and with support from a competitively selected energy consultant (RFP #202509133: *Understanding the Landscape and Cost-Effective Strategies for Meeting Maine’s Electric Transmission Infrastructure Needs*)will develop coordinated and cost-effective strategies for designing, planning and developing transmission infrastructure. This RFP seeks consulting services for facilitation and stakeholder engagement to help inform the effort. As such, the Awarded Bidder for this RFP will work closely with the energy consultant selected through RFP # 202509133.

Maine law requires the achievement of 100% clean energy by 2040, including 90% of Maine’s electricity consumption served by renewable sources. Today, with over half of households in Maine still reliant on fossil fuels for heating, and the New England electricity grid over-reliant on imported natural gas to generate electricity, Maine remains distinctly vulnerable to price shocks from volatile global energy markets which contribute to elevated electricity prices for Maine consumers.

DOER recently completed a technical and stakeholder-driven planning effort to inform an updated State Energy Plan to ensure the state has access to affordable, reliable, and clean energy that supports the growth of Maine’s economy while also meeting the state’s statutory greenhouse gas emissions reduction requirements.[[1]](#footnote-2) In modeling future electricity demand and supply trends in Maine and the other New England states, the technical analysis noted that to meet increasing loads across the region, Maine will need to take a multi-pronged approach: “expand[ing] its transmission system, bolstering capacity on existing transmission lines, utilizing grid enhancing technologies, and adding new lines to connect new resources.”

The State Energy Plan includes key objectives, strategies, and actions for improving transmission to unlock affordable, reliable, and resilient energy for Maine and the region. The plan includes, but is not limited to, the following objectives, strategies and actions:

* Advance regional collaboration through implementation of the New England States’ Vision for a Clean, Affordable, and Reliable 21st Century Regional Electric Grid[[2]](#footnote-3) to enable proactive, cost-effective, and efficient transmission planning to meet policy goals and enable coordinated action to address long-standing grid constraints in Maine.
* Plan for and implement responsible grid infrastructure investments in Maine that are designed to achieve policy goals, drive economic development, and prepare for electric load growth while maximizing benefits and protecting ratepayers. This work includes proactive planning and building a more resilient grid while recognizing impacts from federally required transmission upgrades, storm recovery costs, and other bill impacts.
* Strengthen planning and engagement with and by utilities to identify and address climate and resilience threats cost-effectively.
* Encourage stakeholder engagement and community input to ensure solutions are affordable and in the public interest.
* Modernize Maine’s infrastructure, including through the use of grid-enhancing technologies to enhance transmission capacity and utilization.

The regional grid operator, ISO-New England (ISO-NE), is responsible for managing the bulk of the Maine transmission system. Through its analysis, it has identified numerous concerns throughout the Northeast regional grid. One of the key concerns is related to congestion in Maine. Specifically, the ISO-NE 2050 Transmission Study found the transmission system along the Maine-New Hampshire and North-South interfaces have known congestion areas that are high likelihood concerns due to a variety of thermal overloads.[[3]](#footnote-4) Other ISO studies such as the Future Grid Reliability Study and the Market Efficiency Needs Scenario (MENS) have also identified bottlenecks in Maine and between Maine and southern New England. As highlighted by ISO-NE, solutions to transmission needs in Maine and throughout the region will require a variety of tools to ensure that the grid is reliable and able to effectively interconnect new resources to meet growing energy demand.

Recognizing both the need for new and upgraded transmission infrastructure in Maine in the near term and the multifaceted challenges of planning and building infrastructure of that scale in Maine and New England, the Maine Legislature enacted Resolves 2025, Chapter 57, “*Resolve, to Direct the Governor’s Energy Office to Conduct a Study Regarding the Future of Electric Transmission Infrastructure in the State”* (L.D. 197 or “the Resolve”).[[4]](#footnote-5) L.D. 197 further required the DOER to convene a stakeholder group of state agencies and other parties involved in or interested in the siting, permitting, and regulation of electric transmission infrastructure.

DOER is committed to open, transparent processes throughout these efforts. The awarded Bidder will play an important role in helping the state understanding the current landscape of transmission planning and technology and assist the state with crafting the state’s strategies associated with transmission infrastructure, ensure opportunities for robust input from the identified stakeholder group, and work cooperatively with other consultants who may be brought on to support engagement with stakeholders.

1. **General Provisions**
	1. From the time the RFP is issued until award notification is made, all contact with the State regarding the RFP must be made through the RFP Coordinator. No other person/ State employee is empowered to make binding statements regarding the RFP. Violation of this provision may lead to disqualification from the bidding process, at the State’s discretion.
	2. Issuance of the RFP does not commit the Department 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 (such as the Summary of Questions and Answers), issued by the Department. Proposals are to follow the format and respond to all questions and instructions specified below in the “Proposal Submission Requirements” section of the RFP.
	4. Bidders will take careful note that in evaluating a proposal submitted in response to the RFP, the Department will consider materials provided in the proposal, information obtained through interviews/presentations (if any), and internal Departmental information of previous contract history with the Bidder (if any). The Department 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 Department.
	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 State of Maine Freedom of Access Act (FOAA) ([1 M.R.S. § 401](http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/statutes/1/title1sec401.html) et seq.). State contracts and information related to contracts, including bid submissions, are generally public records per FOAA.
	8. In the event that a Bidder believes any information that it submits in response to this RFP is confidential, it must mark that information accordingly, and include citation to legal authority in support of the Bidder’s claim of confidentiality. In the event that the Department receives a FOAA request that includes submissions marked as confidential, the Department shall evaluate the information and any legal authority from the Bidder to determine whether the information is an exception to FOAA’s definition of public record. If the Department determines to release information that a Bidder has marked confidential, it shall provide advance notice to the Bidder to allow for them to seek legal relief.
	9. The Department, at its sole discretion, reserves the right to recognize and waive minor informalities and irregularities found in proposals received in response to the RFP.
	10. If awarded a contract resulting from this RFP, vendors shall be required to disclose, in writing and in accordance with applicable Maine law, any actual or potential conflicts of interest. Such disclosure must include any financial, professional, or personal relationships. Failure to disclose a known conflict may result in disqualification, contract termination, or other remedies as provided by law.
	11. 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.
2. **Contract Term**

The Department 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 Department may opt to renew the contract for (1) one renewal period, as shown in the table below, and subject to continued availability of funding and satisfactory performance.

The terms of the anticipated contract, resulting from the RFP, is defined as follows:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Period** | **Start Date** | **End Date** |
| Initial Period of Performance | November 24, 2025  | November 23, 2026 |
| Renewal Period #1 | November 24, 2026 | November 23, 2027 |

1. **Number of Awards**

The Department anticipates making (1) one award as a result of the RFP process.

**PART II** **SCOPE OF SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED**

DOER seeks consulting services to inform the development of strategies related to Maine transmission through facilitation of public meetings of the L.D. 197 Stakeholder Group and meetings and engagement, as needed, in the overall development of a stakeholder strategy to inform future transmission efforts in Maine. The awarded Bidder will lead facilitation and stakeholder engagement support as the DOER and its energy consultant (selected through RFP #202509133: *Understanding the Landscape and Cost-Effective Strategies for Meeting Maine’s Electric Transmission Infrastructure Needs)* study matters related to the State’s future electric transmission infrastructure needs as outlined by recently enacted Resolve, and in developing strategies to assist state and regional entities involved in the siting, permitting and regulation of electric transmission infrastructure in planning, designing, and developing potential future transmission needs in a manner that will increase affordability for Maine ratepayers; materially improve system efficiency, resiliency, stability, and reliability, reduce or mitigate congestion; improve efficient access to low-cost resources; and ensure consistency with the Maine Energy Plan and related state energy and climate laws and policies.

**Objectives for Engagement and Outreach:**

1. Understand perspectives, opportunities, concerns, questions and issues of interested participants.
2. Educate and share information about various issues, including state energy and economic development goals, opportunities to coordinate with regional transmission activities, state, regional, federal processes associated with transmission, and high-level understanding of transmission technologies;
3. Solicit input, including leveraging existing resources, assets, and perspectives, to support the development of strategies for Maine transmission and future needs related to the Maine Energy Plan; and
4. Develop long-term relationships with stakeholders to help implement the strategies.

This RFP seeks consulting services for facilitation and stakeholder engagement to help inform the development of coordinated and cost-effective transmission strategies for the State.

All tasks will be completed in consultation with DOER and the energy consultant(s), as appropriate. Some tasks may be concurrent.

**Task 1. Project Management**

* Objective: Manage stakeholder engagement efforts associated with the transmission strategies effort at the DOER. At a minimum, that includes planning regular communications with DOER and supporting future work with the LD 197 Stakeholder Group, including meeting planning, scheduling, facilitation, note-taking, and related activities. Project management will also include consideration of the overall stakeholder engagement plan and working with the DOER to ensure the objectives of the plan are met and done so on time.
* Deliverables: kickoff meeting, biweekly check-ins, deliverable drafts for review by DOER.

**Task 2. Identify Additional Key Stakeholders**

* Objective: DOER is committed to robust stakeholder engagement associated with the development of the transmission strategies. This includes working closely with the L.D. 197 Stakeholder Group and additionally, considering other stakeholders to include in the process. Included in the task are elements associated with engagement including: develop and track stakeholder engagement, facilitate opportunities for dialog, and help ensure feedback is included in work products as a result.
* Deliverable: Stakeholder list; organize and manage stakeholder meetings, as directed; at least three summaries associated with stakeholder engagement efforts and content.

**Task 3. Conduct a Literature Review of Best Practices for Stakeholder Engagement with Respect to Transmission Planning**

* Objective: To identify and improve upon best practices for stakeholder engagement on transmission planning and development.
* Deliverable: Summary Report of Literature Review with Recommendations, and proposed actions to incorporate short-term recommendations.

**Task 4. Develop a Stakeholder Engagement Plan**, incorporating findings from Tasks 1-3

* Objective: To develop a targeted stakeholder engagement plan for Maine on transmission strategy development.
* Deliverable: Stakeholder Engagement Plan

**Task 5. Develop Public Communications Materials**

* Objective: To explain transmission and value to stakeholders through digestible materials.
* Deliverable: website materials, fact sheets.

**Task 6. Host and Facilitate at least 3 Virtual Public Meetings or Webinars** to inform the Strategy sharing best practice findings from Task 2 and progress on strategy development (e.g. Kickoff, Mid-Point, Final)

* Objective: To provide inclusive and productive stakeholder engagement opportunities.
* Deliverables: schedule, agendas, invitations and notifications, coordinating speakers, recordings, summary reports, follow ups with participants.

**Task 7. Implement Additional Methods to Solicit Feedback**

* Objective: To expand reach of stakeholder engagement beyond public meetings or webinars.
* Deliverables: summary of methods deployed, and feedback received.

**Task 8. Track and Report on Stakeholder Engagement Activities**

* Objective: To monitor and summarize stakeholder engagement activities for the Strategy.
* Deliverable: Stakeholder registry with status of engagements, Final Report summarizing stakeholder feedback for the Transmission Strategies Report.

Bidders must propose a workplan for completion of each task that accomplishes the milestones in Table 1 below.

**Table 1. Anticipated timeline of tasks and deliverables**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Q4 2025** | **Q1 2026** | **Q2 2026** | **Q3 2026** | **Q4 2026** |
| *Task 1* | X (kickoff) | X (ongoing) | X | X | X |
| *Task 2* | X |  |  |  |  |
| *Task 3* | X | X |  |  |  |
| *Task 4* | X | X |  |  |  |
| *Task 5* | X | X |  |  |  |
| *Task 6* | X | X | X | X | X |
| *Task 7* | X | X | X | X | X |
| *Task 8* |  |  |  |  | X |

**PART III KEY RFP EVENTS**

1. **Questions**
	1. **General Instructions:** 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.
		1. Bidders and other interested parties should use **Appendix E** (Submitted Questions Form) for submission of questions. If used, the form is to be submitted as a WORD document.
		2. Questions must be submitted, by e-mail, and received by the RFP Coordinator identified on the cover page of the RFP as soon as possible but no later than the date and time specified on the RFP cover page.
		3. The RFP Number and Title must be included in the subject line of the e-mail containing the submitted questions. The Department assumes no liability for assuring accurate/complete/on time e-mail transmission and receipt.
	2. **Question & Answer Summary:** Responses to all questions will be compiled in writing and posted on the following website no later than seven (7) calendar days prior to the proposal due date: [Office of State Procurement Services RFP Page](https://www.maine.gov/dafs/bbm/procurementservices/vendors/rfps). It is the responsibility of all interested parties to go to this website to obtain a copy of the Question & Answer Summary. Only those answers issued in writing on this website will be considered binding.
2. **Amendments**

All amendments released in regard to the RFP will also be posted on the following website: [Office of State Procurement Services RFP Page](https://www.maine.gov/dafs/bbm/procurementservices/vendors/rfps). It is the responsibility of all interested parties to go to this website to obtain amendments. Only those amendments posted on this website are considered binding.

1. **Proposal Submission**
	1. **Proposals Due:** Proposals must be received no later than 11:59 p.m. local time, on the date listed on the cover page of the RFP.
		1. Any e-mails containing original proposal submissions or any additional or revised proposal files, received after the 11:59 p.m. deadline, will be rejected without exception.
	2. **Delivery Instructions:** E-mail proposal submissions must be submitted to the Office of State Procurement Services at Proposals@maine.gov.
		1. Only proposal submissions received by e-mail will be considered. The Department assumes no liability for assuring accurate/complete e-mail transmission and receipt.
			1. Proposal submission e-mails that are successfully received by the proposals@maine.gov inbox will receive an automatic reply stating as such.
		2. E-mails containing links to file sharing sites or online file repositories will not be accepted as submissions. Only e-mail proposal submissions that have the actual requested files attached will be accepted.
		3. Encrypted e-mails received which require opening attachments and logging into a proprietary system will not be accepted as submissions. Bidders should work with their Information Technology team to ensure that the proposal submission will not be encrypted due to any security settings.
		4. File size limits are 25MB per e-mail. Bidders may submit files separately across multiple e-mails, as necessary, due to file size concerns. All e-mails and files must be received by the due date and time listed above.
	3. **Submission Format:**
		1. Bidders are to insert the following into the subject line of their e-mail proposal submission: **“RFP# 202505073 Proposal Submission – [Bidder’s Name]”**
		2. Bidder’s proposal submissions are to be broken down into multiple files, with each file named as it is titled in bold below, and include:
* **File 1 [Bidder’s Name] – Preliminary Information:**

*PDF format preferred*

**Appendix A** (Proposal Cover Page)

**Appendix B** (Responsible Bidder Certification)

* **File 2 [Bidder’s Name] – Organization Qualifications and Experience:**

*PDF format preferred*

**Appendix C** (Organization Qualifications and Experience Form) and all required information and attachments stated in PART IV, Section II.

* **File 3 [Bidder’s Name] – Proposed Services:**

*PDF format preferred*

All required information and attachments stated in PART IV, Section III.

* **File 4 [Bidder’s Name] – Cost Proposal:**

*Excel format preferred*

**Appendix D** (Cost Proposal Form) and all required information and attachments stated in PART IV, Section IV.

**PART IV PROPOSAL SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

This section contains instructions for Bidders to use in preparing their proposals. The Department 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, including the numbering, section, and sub-section headings. Failure to use the outline specified in PART IV, 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 Department, and its 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.

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.

**Proposal Format and Contents**

**Section I Preliminary Information** (File #1)

* 1. **Proposal Cover Page**

Bidders must complete **Appendix A** (Proposal Cover Page). It is critical that the cover page show the specific information requested, including Bidder address(es) and other details listed. The Proposal Cover Page must be dated and signed by a person authorized to enter into contracts on behalf of the Bidder.

* 1. **Responsible Bidder Certification**

Bidders must complete **Appendix B** (Responsible Bidder Certification). The Responsible Bidder Certification must be dated and signed by a person authorized to enter into contracts on behalf of the Bidder.

**Section II Organization Qualifications and Experience** (File #2)

* 1. **Overview of the Organization**

Bidders must complete **Appendix C** (Qualifications and Experience Form) describing their qualifications and skills to provide the requested services in the RFP. Bidders must include three (3) examples of projects which demonstrate their experience and expertise in performing these services, as well as highlighting the Bidder’s stated qualifications and skills.

* 1. **Subcontractors**

If subcontractors are to be used, Bidders must provide a list that specifies the name, address, phone number, contact person, and a brief description of the subcontractors’ organizational capacity and qualifications.

* 1. **Organizational Chart**

Bidders must provide an organizational chart.  The organizational chart must include the project being proposed.  Each position must be identified by position title and corresponding to the personnel job descriptions.

* 1. **Litigation**

Bidders must attach a list of all current litigation in which the Bidder is named and a list of all closed cases that have closed within the past five (5) years in which the Bidder paid the claimant either as part of a settlement or by decree.  For each, list the entity bringing suit, the complaint, the accusation, amount, and outcome.

* 1. **Licensure/Certification**

Bidders may provide documentation of any applicable licensure/certification or specific credentials that are related to providing the proposed services of the RFP.

* 1. **Certificate of Insurance**

Bidders must provide a certificate of insurance on a standard ACORD form (or the equivalent) evidencing the Bidder’s general liability, professional liability and any other relevant liability insurance policies that might be associated with the proposed services.

**Section III Proposed Services** (File #3)

* 1. **Services to be Provided**

Bidders must discuss the Scope of Services referenced above in Part II 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.

* 1. **Implementation - Work Plan**

Bidders must provide a realistic work plan for the implementation of the program through the first contract period. The work plan must be displayed in a timeline chart, and concisely describe each program development and implementation task, the month it will be carried out, and the person or position responsible for each task. Please refer to Table 1 in Part II: Scope of Services To Be Provided. If applicable, Bidders must identify all tasks to be delegated to subcontractors.

**Section IV Cost Proposal** (File #4)

* 1. **General Instructions**
		1. Bidders must submit a cost proposal that covers the period starting November 24, 2025, and ending on November 23, 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. No costs related to the preparation of the proposal for the RFP, or to the negotiation of the contract with the Department, may be included in the proposal. Only costs to be incurred after the contract effective date that are specifically related to the implementation or operation of contracted services may be included.
	2. **Cost Proposal Form Instructions**

Bidders must fill out **Appendix D** (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 Department.

**PART V PROPOSAL EVALUATION AND SELECTION**

Evaluation of the submitted proposals will be accomplished as follows:

1. **Evaluation Process – General Information**
	1. An evaluation team, composed of qualified reviewers, will judge the merits of the proposals received in accordance with the criteria defined in the RFP.
	2. Officials responsible for making decisions on the award selection will ensure that the selection process accords equal opportunity and appropriate consideration to all who are capable of meeting the specifications. 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 State of Maine.
	3. The Department 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 Department 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.
2. **Scoring Weights and Process**
	1. **Scoring Weights:** Proposal scores will be based on a 100-point scale and will measure the degree to which each proposal meets the following criteria:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Section I.** | **Preliminary Information**Proposal materials to be evaluated in this section: all elements addressed in Part IV, Section I of the RFP. | **(No Points)** |
| **Section II.** | **Organization Qualifications and Experience** Proposal materials to be evaluated in this section: all elements addressed above in Part IV, Section II of the RFP. | **(35 points)** |
| **Section III.** | **Proposed Services** Proposal materials to be evaluated in this section: all elements addressed above in Part IV, Section III of the RFP. | **(40 points)** |
| **Section IV.** | **Cost Proposal** Proposal materials to be evaluated in this section:all elements addressed above in Part IV, Section IV of the RFP. | **(25 points)**  |

* 1. **Scoring Process:** For proposals that demonstrate meeting the eligibility requirements in Section I, if applicable, the evaluation team will use a consensus approach to evaluate and score Sections II & III above. Members of the evaluation team will not score those sections individually but, instead, will arrive at a consensus as to assignment of points for each of those sections. Section IV, the Cost Proposal, will be scored as described below.
	2. **Scoring the Cost Proposal:** The total cost proposed for conducting all the functions specified in the RFP will be assigned a score according to a mathematical formula. The lowest bid will be awarded 25 points. Proposals with higher bid values will be awarded proportionately fewer points calculated in comparison with the lowest bid.

The scoring formula is:

(Lowest submitted cost proposal / Cost of proposal being scored) x (25) = pro-rated score

No Best and Final Offers: The State of Maine will not seek or accept a best and final offer (BAFO) from any Bidder in this procurement process.  All Bidders are expected to provide their best value pricing with the submission of their proposal.

* 1. **Negotiations:** The Department reserves the right to negotiate with the awarded Bidder to finalize a contract. Such negotiations may not significantly vary the content, nature or requirements of the proposal or the Department’s Request for Proposal to an extent that may affect the price of goods or services requested. The Department reserves the right to terminate contract negotiations with an awarded Bidder who submits a proposed contract significantly different from the proposal they submitted in response to the advertised RFP. In the event that an acceptable contract cannot be negotiated with the highest ranked Bidder, the Department may withdraw its award and negotiate with the next-highest ranked Bidder, and so on, until an acceptable contract has been finalized. Alternatively, the Department may cancel the RFP, at its sole discretion.
1. **Selection and Award**
	1. The final decision regarding the award of the contract will be made by representatives of the Department subject to approval by the State Procurement Review Committee.
	2. Notification of conditional award selection or non-selection will be made in writing by the Department.
	3. Issuance of the RFP in no way constitutes a commitment by the State of Maine 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.
	4. The Department reserves the right to reject any and all proposals or to make multiple awards.
2. **Appeal of Contract Awards**

Any person aggrieved by the award decision that results from the RFP may appeal the decision to the Director of the Bureau of General Services in the manner prescribed in [5 M.R.S.A. § 1825-E](http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/statutes/5/title5sec1825-E.html) and [18-554 Code of Maine Rules Chapter 120](https://www.maine.gov/dafs/bbm/procurementservices/policies-procedures/chapter-120).  The appeal must be in writing and filed with the Director of the Bureau of General Services, 9 State House Station, Augusta, Maine, 04333-0009 within 15 calendar days of receipt of notification of conditional contract award.

**PART VI CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION AND CONDITIONS**

1. **Contract Document**
	1. The awarded Bidder will be required to execute a State of Maine Service Contract with appropriate riders as determined by the issuing department.

The complete set of standard State of Maine Service Contract documents, along with other forms and contract documents commonly used by the State, may be found on the Office of State Procurement Services’ website at the following link: [Office of State Procurement Services Forms Page](https://www.maine.gov/dafs/bbm/procurementservices/forms)

* 1. Allocation of funds is final upon successful negotiation and execution of the contract, subject to the review and approval of the State Procurement Review Committee. Contracts are not considered fully executed and valid until approved by the State Procurement Review Committee and funds are encumbered. No contract will be approved based on an RFP which has an effective date less than fourteen (14) calendar days after award notification to Bidders. (Referenced in the regulations of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services, [Chapter 110, § 3(B)(i)](https://www.maine.gov/dafs/bbm/procurementservices/policies-procedures/chapter-110).)

This provision means that a contract cannot be effective until at least 14 calendar days after award notification.

* 1. The State recognizes that the actual contract effective date depends upon completion of the RFP process, date of formal award notification, length of contract negotiation, and preparation and approval by the State Procurement Review Committee. Any appeals to the Department’s award decision(s) may further postpone the actual contract effective date, depending upon the outcome. The contract effective date listed in the RFP may need to be adjusted, if necessary, to comply with mandated requirements.
	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.
1. **Standard State Contract Provisions**
	1. Contract Administration

Following the award, a Contract Administrator from the Department will be appointed to assist with the development and administration of the contract and to act as administrator during the entire contract period. Department staff will be available after the award to consult with the awarded Bidder in the finalization of the contract.

* 1. Payments and Other Provisions

The State anticipates paying the Contractor on the basis of net 30 payment terms, upon the receipt of an accurate and acceptable invoice. An invoice will be considered accurate and acceptable if it contains a reference to the State of Maine contract number, contains the correct address for payments which matches the address on the vendor form on file, contains correct pricing information relative to the contract, lists costs per task, 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.

**PART VII** **LIST OF RFP APPENDICES AND RELATED DOCUMENTS**

**Appendix A** – Proposal Cover Page

**Appendix B** – Responsible Bidder Certification

**Appendix C** – Qualifications and Experience Form

**Appendix D** – Cost Proposal Form

**Appendix E** – Submitted Questions Form

**APPENDIX A**

**State of Maine**

**Department of Energy Resources**

**PROPOSAL COVER PAGE**

**RFP# 202505073**

**Stakeholder and Facilitation to Support Maine’s Electric Transmission Infrastructure Strategies**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Bidder’s Organization Name:** |  |
| **Chief Executive - Name/Title:** |  |
| **Tel:** |  | **E-mail:** |  |
| **Headquarters Street Address:** |  |
| **Headquarters City/State/Zip:** |  |
| *(Provide information requested below if* ***different*** *from above)* |
| **Lead Point of Contact for Proposal - Name/Title:** |  |
| **Tel:** |  | **E-mail:** |  |
| **Headquarters Street Address:** |  |
| **Headquarters City/State/Zip:** |  |

* This proposal and the pricing structure contained herein will remain firm for a period of 180 days from the date and time of the bid opening.
* No personnel currently employed by the Department either directly or indirectly, in any activities relating to the preparation of the Bidder’s proposal.
* No attempt has been made, or will be made, by the Bidder to induce any other person or firm to submit or not to submit a proposal.
* The above-named organization is the legal entity entering into the resulting contract with the Department if they are awarded the contract.
* The undersigned is authorized to enter contractual obligations on behalf of the above-named organization.

*To the best of my knowledge, all information provided in the enclosed proposal, both programmatic and financial, is complete and accurate at the time of submission.*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name (Print):** | **Title:** |
| **Authorized Signature:** | **Date:** |

**APPENDIX B**

**State of Maine**

**Department of Energy Resources**

**RESPONSIBLE BIDDER CERTIFICATION**

**RFP# 202505073**

**Stakeholder and Facilitation to Support Maine’s Electric Transmission Infrastructure Strategies**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Bidder’s Organization Name:** |  |

*By signing this document, I certify to the best of my knowledge and belief that the aforementioned organization, its principals and any subcontractors named in this proposal:*

1. *Are not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, and declared ineligible or voluntarily excluded from bidding or working on contracts issued by any governmental agency.*
2. *Have not within three years of submitting the proposal for this contract been convicted of or had a civil judgment rendered against them for:*
	1. *Fraud or a criminal offense in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a federal, state, or local government transaction or contract.*
	2. *Violating Federal or State antitrust statutes or committing embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, or receiving stolen property.*
3. *Are not presently indicted for or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a governmental entity (Federal, State or Local) with commission of any of the offenses enumerated in paragraph (b) of this certification.*
4. *Have not within a three (3) year period preceding this proposal had one or more federal, state, or local government transactions terminated for cause or default*.
5. *Have not entered into a prior understanding, agreement, or connection with any corporation, firm, or person submitting a response for the same materials, supplies, equipment, or services and this proposal is in all respects fair and without collusion or fraud. The above-mentioned entities understand and agree that collusive bidding is a violation of state and federal law and can result in fines, prison sentences, and civil damage awards.*
6. *Is not a foreign adversary business entity (*[*https://www.maine.gov/oit/prohibited-technologies*](https://www.maine.gov/oit/prohibited-technologies)*).*
7. *Is not on the list of prohibited companies (*[*https://www.maine.gov/oit/prohibited-technologies*](https://www.maine.gov/oit/prohibited-technologies)*) or does not obtain or purchase any information or communications technology or services included on the list of prohibited information and communications technology and services* [*https://www.maine.gov/oit/prohibited-technologies*](https://www.maine.gov/oit/prohibited-technologies) *(Title 5 §2030-B).*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name (Print):** | **Title:** |
| **Authorized Signature:** | **Date:** |

**APPENDIX C**

**State of Maine**

**Department of Energy Resources**

## QUALIFICATIONS and EXPERIENCE FORM

**RFP# 202505073**

**Stakeholder and Facilitation to Support Maine’s Electric Transmission Infrastructure Strategies**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **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 which would make it especially qualified to perform the required work activities. You may expand this form and use additional pages to provide this information.** |
|  |

|  |
| --- |
| **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 II – 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.** |

|  |
| --- |
| **Project One** |
| **Client Name:** |  |
| **Client Contact Person:** |  |
| **Telephone:** |  |
| **E-Mail:** |  |
| **Brief Description of Project** |
|  |

|  |
| --- |
| **Project Two** |
| **Client Name:** |  |
| **Client Contact Person:** |  |
| **Telephone:** |  |
| **E-Mail:** |  |
| **Brief Description of Project** |
|  |

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| --- |
| **Project Three** |
| **Client Name:** |  |
| **Client Contact Person:** |  |
| **Telephone:** |  |
| **E-Mail:** |  |
| **Brief Description of Project** |
|  |

**APPENDIX D**

**State of Maine**

**Department of Energy Resources**

**COST PROPOSAL FORM**

**RFP# 202505073**

**Stakeholder and Facilitation to Support Maine’s Electric Transmission Infrastructure Strategies**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Bidder’s Organization Name:** |  |
| **Proposed Cost:** | **$**  |

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 an hourly rate per task and total proposed cost.

The total proposed cost will be used to score the cost proposal as defined Part V, B, 3 of the RFP.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Task Number** | **Task Description** | **Estimated Hours** | **Hourly Rate ($)** | **Total Cost ($)** |
| Task 1 | Project Management |  |  |  |
| Task 2 | Identify Additional Key Stakeholders |  |  |  |
| Task 3 | Conduct Literature Review |  |  |  |
| Task 4 | Stakeholder Engagement Plan |  |  |  |
| Task 5 | Public Communications Materials |  |  |  |
| Task 6 | Public Meetings/Webinars |  |  |  |
| Task 7 | Additional Methods to Solicit Feedback |  |  |  |
| Task 8 | Track and Report on Activities |  |  |  |
| **Proposed Cost ($)** |  |

 **APPENDIX E**

**State of Maine**

**Department of Energy Resources**

**SUBMITTED QUESTIONS FORM**

**RFP# 202505073**

**Stakeholder and Facilitation to Support Maine’s Electric Transmission Infrastructure Strategies**

This form should be used by Bidders when submitting written questions to the RFP Coordinator as defined in Part III of the RFP.

If a question is not related to any section of the RFP, enter “N/A” under the RFP Section & Page Number. Add additional rows as necessary.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Organization Name:** |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
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1. [Maine Energy Plan January 2025](https://www.maine.gov/energy/sites/maine.gov.energy/files/2025-01/Maine%20Energy%20Plan%20January%202025.pdf) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. [New England States Vision Statement | NESCOE](https://nescoe.com/resource-center/vision-stmt-oct2020/) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. [ISO-NE 2050 Transmission Study](https://www.iso-ne.com/static-assets/documents/100008/2024_02_14_pac_2050_transmission_study_final.pdf) [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. [Resolves 2025, Chapter 57, “*Resolve, to Direct the Governor’s Energy Office to Conduct a Study Regarding the Future of Electric Transmission Infrastructure in the State*.”](https://legislature.maine.gov/bills/getPDF.asp?paper=SP0084&item=5&snum=132) [↑](#footnote-ref-5)