



**EFFICIENCY MAINE TRUST
REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ) TO PROVIDE
COMPLIANCE AND REPORTING SUPPORT SERVICES**

RFQ EM-009-2024

Date Issued:

Responses Due: June 20, 2024
11:59 p.m. Eastern Time (US)

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Separate attachments:

Attachment A – Project Cost Proposal Form

Attachment B – Standard Agreement for Prequalified Vendors per RFQ

Attachment C – Limited Scope Services Agreement

Attachment D – Team Commitment Form

Attachment E – Confidentiality, Non-Disclosure and Protective Agreement

1. RFQ INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS

1.1 Purpose

The Efficiency Maine Trust (the Trust) is soliciting services from qualified contractors (including firms, teams of contractors, or individuals) for compliance and reporting support services. These services might include developing site review protocols and checklists, conducting site visits, conducting file reviews, and suggesting process improvements. This RFQ is expected to establish a pool of prequalified professionals to assist the Trust with discrete projects. Bidders may select the services for which to be considered and need not bid on all service categories.

1.2 Designated Contact Person for this RFQ

Joy Adamson
 Grants Administrator
 Efficiency Maine Trust
 Phone: (207) 207-213-4146
 Email: joy.adamson@efficiencymaine.com

1.3 Schedule

	Milestone	Date/Deadline
1	RFQ Issued	05/15/2024
2	Questions Due	05/29/2024
3	Responses to Questions Posted	06/05/2024
4	Responses Due	06/20/2024
5	Anticipated Decision Date	07/10/2024
6	Anticipated Contractor Start	Dependent on the project

Schedule changes: The Trust reserves the right to modify this schedule at its discretion. Any changes or additional information regarding the RFP schedule and pre-bid activities, including responses to questions, will be posted on the RFQ EM-009-2024 webpage at <https://www.efficiencymaine.com/opportunities/rfq-em-009-2024/>.

1.4 Prequalification Term

The Trust will prequalify selected contractors for a duration of up to two years from the date of its execution. The Trust reserves the right to negotiate an additional one-year renewal with the selected contractors.

1.5 Submittal Deadline

All responses must be submitted electronically via the online Submission Form on the RFQ EM-009-2024 webpage (<https://www.efficiencymaine.com/opportunities/rfq-em-009-2024/>). Submissions must be received by the due date and time specified in section 1.3. Bidders will receive a time-stamped confirmation email when their proposals are submitted. (Note: There may be a delay of a few minutes between submission and this confirmation email.) Any proposal received after the deadline will not be considered. Proposals must be complete when submitted; changes or additions will not be accepted after the specified due date and time, except for any clarifications requested of bidders by the Trust. The Trust

encourages bidders to submit their proposals with sufficient time to account for any technological challenges (e.g., Internet disruptions).

1.6 Submitting Questions

It is the responsibility of all bidders and other interested parties to examine the entire RFQ and to seek clarification, in writing, if they do not understand any information or instructions. Questions regarding this RFQ must be submitted by email to the Designated Contact Person listed in section 1.2 prior to the due date for questions noted above in section 1.3. The subject line of the email should be: "Request for Qualifications to Provide Compliance and Reporting Support Services".

Responses to questions will be posted on <http://www.efficiencymaine.com/opportunities/rfq-em-009-2024>, as will all clarifications and amendments released in regard to the RFQ. It is the responsibility of interested parties to check this website periodically to obtain clarifications and amendments. Only those clarifications and amendments posted on this website are considered binding.

1.7 Proposal Confidentiality

Bidders should be aware that information provided to the Trust is subject to the Maine Freedom of Access Act (FOAA), 1 M.R.S. §§ 401 et seq., unless there is a specific confidentiality exemption in the Efficiency Maine Trust Act, 35-A M.R.S. §10106. Bidders should assume that all information submitted in response to this RFQ will be considered public records available for public inspection pursuant to the Maine FOAA following announcement of an award decision.

1.8 Prequalification Decision

The Trust will notify all bidders by email of the contractors that are selected as prequalified providers under this RFQ. The Trust reserves the right to negotiate the final terms and conditions winning bidders whose packages are selected by the Trust, and to reject any winning bidder with whom the Trust cannot agree to terms and conditions meeting the Trust's needs, in the Trust's sole judgment. The Trust reserves the right to reject any response that does not meet these requirements.

1.9 Contracting Process

The selection process is governed by the Efficiency Maine Trust Rule Chapter 1: Contracting Process for Service Providers and Grant Recipients, which can be found on the Trust's website: <http://www.efficiencymaine.com/docs/Chapter-1-Contracting-Process-for-Service-Providers-and-Grant-Recipients.pdf>.

Prequalified contractors may be asked to assist the Trust on compliance and reporting support projects as needs arise. The Trust will request support based on past experience or qualifications for the task, or request quotes for specific Scopes of Work (SOWs), or will notify the list of potential contractors about a project and select a contractor based on availability. All work assignments will be in the form of a Scope of Work (SOW) issued by the Trust. For a given SOW, the Trust shall have the right to request the services of specific individuals within the contractor's firm and shall have the right to seek services of other contractors if the requested individual is not available. Selected contractors have no guarantee of receiving any SOWs during the term of the contract; there is no obligation of the Trust to provide any equitable distribution of work.

1.10 Anticipated Contract Budget

Budgets will depend on the nature and duration of the tasks required to complete assigned projects. Contractor compensation will be based upon the bid hourly rates of the individual service provider(s) within the firm, plus approved expenses – i.e., Time and Materials. Each project will be executed through a specific SOW on a time-and-materials basis with a not-to-exceed maximum value for each individual SOW. Where appropriate, fixed-price contracts may be negotiated. Larger projects may be sent to all or a subset of the prequalified list of consultants for estimates and assigned based on experience, expertise, capacity, concept, availability, and cost.

1.11 RFQ Process – Reservation of Rights

The Trust reserves the right to cancel or extend the RFQ process at any time, and to issue clarifications and amendments to the RFQ. The Trust also reserves the right to reject noncompliant submissions in response to this RFQ. The Trust, in its sole discretion, reserves the right to recognize and waive minor informalities and irregularities found in proposals received in response to this RFQ. Issuance of this RFQ does not commit the Trust to make an award. The Trust will not pay any costs or expenses incurred by a bidder in connection with the preparation of a response to this RFQ.

1.12 Contract Agreement

A copy of the Efficiency Maine Trust Standard Agreement appropriate to this RFQ is provided as **Attachment B – Standard Agreement for Prequalified Vendors per RFQ**. A copy of a simplified contract that might be used for limited duration tasks, lower value contracts, and certain types of projects with sole proprietors is provided as **Attachment C – Limited Scope Services Agreement**. One of these documents will complete the agreement for services between a prequalified contractor and the Trust. The prequalified contractor and its agents and subcontractors will be required to execute a nondisclosure agreement (provided as **Attachment E – Confidentiality, Non-Disclosure and Protective Agreement**). Certain information regarding a customer that has participated or that may participate in a Trust program is deemed confidential by the Efficiency Maine Trust Act. See <http://legislature.maine.gov/statutes/35-A/title35-Asec10106.html> for additional information on related confidentiality restrictions.

1.13 Request for Reconsideration

An aggrieved person may request a hearing for reconsideration of a contract award decision by filing a written petition with the Executive Director of the Trust within 14 calendar days of the notification of the contract award. Each petition to reconsider must meet the requirements specified in Efficiency Maine Trust Rule Chapter 1, Contracting Process for Service Providers and Grant Recipients, Section 5(B), which can be found on the Trust's website under Documents and Services: <http://www.efficiencymaine.com/docs/Chapter-1-Contracting-Process-for-Service-Providers-and-Grant-Recipients.pdf>

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2.1 Efficiency Maine Trust

The Efficiency Maine Trust (the Trust) is the independent, quasi-state agency established to plan and implement energy efficiency programs in Maine. Through its suite of nationally recognized programs, The Trust provides consumer information, marketing support, demonstration pilots, discounts, rebates, loans, and other initiatives to promote high-efficiency equipment and operations that help Maine’s homes, businesses, and institutions reduce their energy costs and lower their greenhouse gas emissions. The result is job growth, better grid reliability, improved energy independence, a stronger local economy, and critical progress toward meeting the State’s climate change goals. The Trust is governed by a Board of Trustees with oversight from the Maine Public Utilities Commission.

2.2 RFQ Background

- The Trust’s compliance support services fall into three broad categories and complements current, ongoing work to deliver efficiency programs:
 - **Site visits** – Developing checklists and site visit protocols, visiting projects to review technical best practices, conformity with original agreement, compliance with applicable federal guidelines, etc.
 - **Invoice and documentation review** – Reviewing submitted invoices and regular reports for compliance with required standards, documentation of required metrics, required federal paperwork, etc.
 - **Process design and improvements** – Work with the Trust and subgrantees/project leads on any process improvements or team education that might be required for the best possible project outcomes and compliance with requirements.
- This RFQ is inclusive of diverse projects, including, but not limited to, electric vehicle charging stations, insulation, and efficient heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems. Applicants will be asked to demonstrate sufficient technical experience to support reviews of project sites for compliance with applicable requirements.
- The Trust anticipates that contractors selected through this RFQ will complement ongoing work to deliver the Trust’s efficiency programs.
- The Trust recognizes that this RFQ covers a variety of tasks and diverse skills. Bidders may partner to provide a full range of services and/or submit a proposal for a subset of the tasks listed. For example, an insulation professional might only propose to conduct site visits and file reviews for insulation projects; an energy efficiency service provider might propose to conduct site visits and file reviews for all project types listed.

2.3 Additional Sources of Information

Following are links to additional information that bidders may find helpful in preparing a response to this RFQ:

TITLE	LOCATION (link)
Efficiency Maine Trust website	www.energymaine.com
Efficiency Maine Trust Annual Reports	https://www.energymaine.com/about/library/reports/
Efficiency Maine Trust – Triennial Plan	https://www.energymaine.com/about/library/policies/

TITLE	LOCATION (link)
Efficiency Maine Trust – Federal Funding	https://www.efficiencymaine.com/federal-funding/

3. POTENTIAL SERVICES AND ASSIGNMENTS

The Trust is seeking contractors to provide services across the following areas:

3.1 Site Visits

- Collaborate with the Trust on developing site review protocols and checklists;
- Conduct on-site reviews to evaluate compliance with federal or state requirements that are not otherwise evaluated through ongoing program inspections. Examples include:
 - Electric Vehicle Charging Station site reviews to ensure subgrantees meet federal National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) requirements (see Appendix A);
 - Insulation and HVAC projects site reviews to ensure projects meet Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) requirements (see Appendix B); and
 - Residential and commercial HVAC project site reviews, as well as select electric vehicle charging station site reviews, to ensure projects meet Maine Jobs and Recovery Plan/American Rescue Plan Act Compliance and Reporting Tasks (see Appendix C); and
- Support activities to address issues that are discovered from project site visits, including notifying the Trust of findings for follow-up by program or administrative staff or for follow-up by the contractor (as directed by the Trust).

3.2 Invoice and Documentation Review

- Review files for accuracy and compliance with the requirements of Efficiency Maine Trust's various programs;
- Review files for allowable and/or eligible activities and costs;
- Review files for compliance with any requirements that stem from funding sources, in particular federal funding. This may include cross-checking against federal requirements such as Davis-Bacon and Buy American. See Appendices A, B, and C;
- Review files for complete and sufficient documentation;
- Coordinate with the site visit team to address issues and foster continuous improvement; and
- Ensure that required data is collected and submitted. Support activities to ensure that required data is collected and submitted by relevant parties, including notifying the Trust of findings for follow-up by program or administrative staff or for follow-up by the contractor (as directed by the Trust).

3.3 Process Design and Improvements

- In collaboration with the Trust, recommend possible approaches for collecting required information, including, but not limited to, craft site visit and documentation checklists;
- If documentation is deemed incomplete or insufficient, follow up with project owners/subgrantees on missing data, clarifying reporting needs, etc., as directed by the Trust;
- Make recommendations to the Trust on an as-needed basis for improvements to procedures and to the evidence of compliance to improve clarity and reporting; and
- Provide training to subrecipients on compliance best practices, as needed and as directed by the Trust.

4. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

4.1 Proposal Submission

Proposals must be submitted electronically via the online Submission Form on the RFQ EM-009-2024 webpage (<https://www.efficiencymaine.com/opportunities/rfq-em-009-2024/>.) All proposals must adhere to the instructions and format requirements outlined in this RFQ, in the online Submission Form instructions, and in the written supplements and amendments issued by the Trust.

The online Submission Form will request the following documents:

- RFQ response
 - PDF format file named "Proposal_Bidder_Name_RFQ_009_2024"
- Attachment A - Project Cost Proposal Form
 - Excel format file named "Project_Cost_Bidder_Name_RFQ_009_2024"
- Suggested redlines to Attachment B – Standard Agreement for Prequalified Vendors per RFQ [if applicable]
 - Word format file named "Standard_Agreement_for_Prequalified_Vendors_per_RFQ_Bidder_Name_RFQ_009_2024"
- Suggested redlines to Attachment C – Limited Scope Services Agreement [if applicable]
 - Word format file named "Limited_Scope_Services_Agreement_Bidder_Name_RFQ_009_2024"
- Attachment D – Team Commitment Form [if proposal involves any subcontractors]
 - PDF format file named "Team_Commitment_Bidder_Name_RFQ_009_2024"
- Any additional relevant documents (Word, PDF, or Excel format, as appropriate) [if applicable]

4.2 Format Requirements

Submissions will be evaluated for adherence to the following format requirements:

- Qualifications package must be typewritten.
- Pages must be numbered.
- Unnecessary attachments (e.g., any attachments beyond those sufficient to present a complete, comprehensive, and effective qualifications package) will not be considered in the evaluation of the submission.
- Qualifications package must adhere to prescribed page limits specified in this RFQ. The Trust values concise proposals.

4.3 Team Organization and Staffing Requirements

Qualification packages that include teaming arrangements must designate one party as the lead bidder. Personnel who are proposed shall be the actual project performers. Bidders may not substitute personnel without prior written approval of the Trust. Other participating team members or sub-contractors must complete Attachment D – Team Commitment Form.

4.4 Content and Organization Requirements

Bidders may submit qualifications for one or more service areas outlined in section 3 and must clearly indicate which service areas apply. The qualifications package must include the following contents, which should be presented in the following order:

- **Cover Sheet:** Bidders must indicate which service area(s) are included in the RFQ submission by including this table and service areas included in the bid.

Topics	Service Areas		
	Site Visits	File Review	Process Design and Improvements
	On-Site Visits	Protocols and Checklists	
Federal Compliance Requirements			
Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure			
Efficient HVAC Systems			
Insulation			
Energy Storage			
Photovoltaic Solar			
Other Energy Efficiency Improvements (describe under qualifications)			

- **Company Profile:** Provide an overview of the company including location, number of staff, services provided focusing on company, company experience, and company qualifications. (2 pages maximum per company on the team)
- **Individual Experience/Qualifications:** Identify the proposed personnel and their qualifications and capabilities to provide services within the relevant areas identified in section 3 of this RFQ. (1 page per person maximum)
- **For Site Visit Service Area Only:** Describe your approach to conducting on-site reviews without incurring out-of-state travel costs.
- **Project Examples:** Provide 3 or ongoing or completed projects relevant to each service area included in the bid. Examples may be reports, case studies, weblinks, or attachments that highlight relevant experience.
- **Hourly Rates:** Provide hourly rates and costs for all personnel, including any subcontractors, in an Excel-compatible format using the **Project Cost Proposal Form** template provided as Attachment A to this RFQ. Travel expenses and mileage need not be included in the cost form as they will be reimbursed according to United States General Services Administrations guidelines shown on the following web pages at the time services are rendered:
<https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates>

<https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/transportation-airfare-pov-etc/privately-owned-vehicle-pov-mileage-reimbursement-rates>

Mileage and travel expenses incurred outside of the state of Maine are not considered allowable expenses. If not located in Maine but including site visits in the service areas offered, please also include in your bid how you will meet travel and logistical requirements.

Provide separate rates for each of the program years (FY2025 and FY2026).

- **References:** Provide names, email addresses, and telephone numbers of representatives of three current or recent clients for whom the firm has provided services related to those in this RFQ (3 references per company on the team). Trust staff will check references and consult with prior clients on the performance of the bidder or of particular persons proposed for this bid as part of the proposal review process.

5. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Submissions that meet the requirements established in the RFQ will be evaluated by a review team. The Trust reserves the right to decide whether a proposal is acceptable in terms of meeting the requirements of this RFQ and to accept or reject any or all submissions received.

The review team will evaluate the following aspects of the proposals when reviewing and ranking the submittals:

Scoring Category	Maximum Points
1. Qualifications and Expertise of the Firm and Proposed Personnel	45
a. Is the proposed project staffing clear, well-defined, appropriate and realistic for the services requested?	
b. How qualified are the proposed personnel in terms of skills, expertise and experience relevant to the RFQ?	
c. How pertinent are the examples and projects listed for this scope of work?	
2. Hourly Rates	30
3. Feedback from References	15
4. Responsiveness of Submission	10
Total	100

In evaluating qualification packages, the Trust reserves the right to take any of the following steps, with respect to either all of the submissions received or to a subset of submissions selected as superior to the others: (1) schedule presentations or interviews with representatives of the bidder or persons proposed for the project; (2) conduct a review of past performance, including a review of reports, analyses, or other materials that would reflect the bidder's performance; and (3) request additional data or supporting material.

APPENDIX A: List of Potential National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) Requirements Review Tasks

Provisional list of site visit and documentation requirements

- Compliance with the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) Formula Program Guidance found here:
 - [National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Formula Guidance Memo](#)
 - [Required Contract Provisions Federal-Aid Construction Contracts](#)
- Site Visits may include the following items:
 - Meets charging equipment requirements
 - Payment methods and accessible
 - Communication of price
 - Traffic control devices or on-premises signs acquired, installed or operated;
 - Requirements for accessibility and availability (24/7 availability, at least one parking space is ADA compliant, dusk to dawn lighting, safety instructions for drivers, etc);
- Project files will require review to ensure the items, such as the following, are complete:
 - Contract Milestones:
 - Secure Host Site agreement, site development and utility upgrades (Documentation);
 - Acquisition, installation and commissioning of all equipment and connection of utility and communication services at EV Charging Site (Documentation, Invoices and photos, site visits);
 - Provide operations, maintenance, and customer service for a five-year term (Attestation, site visits).
 - File submissions, including:
 - Contract Work Hours and Safety Standards Act (check records retention of payroll and contracts/subcontracts);
 - Debarment and suspension;
 - Installation and workforce certifications;
 - Certificate of insurance;
 - Buy American Requirements, if applicable
 - Davis Bacon wages, if applicable
 - Meets charging equipment requirements including:
 - Interoperability of electric vehicle charging infrastructure, charging network connectivity to EV charging infrastructure,
 - Data capture requirements;
 - Payment methods;
 - Customer Data Privacy;
 - iTraffic control devices or on-premises signs acquired, installed or operated
 - Third-party data sharing;
 - Operations and Maintenance for 5-years, including:
 - Customer support services;
 - Manage Host Site Relationship;
 - Reporting (construction updates, ad hoc operations reports, periodic status reports, operational reports: quarterly data submittals, annual data submittal, and one-time data submittal; and notable downtime issues

APPENDIX B: List of Potential Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) Review Tasks

Partial list of applicable guidelines in the Inflation Reduction Act [Administrative and Legal Requirements Document](#), including:

- National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Compliance
- Historic preservation programmatic agreement compliance
- Compliance with the Administrative requirements for DOE grant awards are contained in:
 - 2 CFR Part 200 as amended by 2 CFR Part 910
 - 2 CFR Part 25 – Universal Identifier and Central Contractor Registration
 - 2 CFR Part 170 – Reporting Subaward and Executive Compensation Information to comply with the Federal Funding and Transparency Act of 2006 (FFATA). Additional information regarding FFATA is found at <https://www.fsrc.gov>. The Electronic Code of Federal Regulations is found at www.ecfr.gov.
- National Policy Requirements – The National Policy Assurances to be incorporated as Award Terms are located at <https://www.energy.gov/management/financial-assistance-forms-and-informationapplicants-and-recipients>. Intellectual Property Provisions. The standard DOE financial assistance intellectual property provisions applicable to the various types of recipients are located at <http://energy.gov/gc/standard-intellectual-property-ip-provisions-financial-assistanceawards>.
- Data requirements described in the Federal Assistance Reporting Checklist (FARC) (LINK to CHECKLIST preferred)
- Review of data collection as described in IRA Home Energy Rebates [Data and Tools Requirements Guide](#)

APPENDIX C: List of Potential Maine Jobs and Recovery Plan/American Rescue Plan Act Compliance and Reporting Tasks

Provisional list of site visit and documentation requirements:

- Applicable compliance and reporting guidance from:
 - [Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds Program Guidance](#)
 - DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY 31 CFR Part 35 RIN 1505–AC77 Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds, [Final Rule](#)
- These may include file reviews for:
 - Eligible and permitted uses and costs incurred:
 - Sufficient invoice documentation; and
 - Prohibition on certain telecommunications and video surveillance services or equipment.
 - Debarment and suspension
 - Certificate of insurance
- Some file reviews may also include:
 - Disbursement milestones
 - Record retention and inspections
 - Energy data
 - Removal of existing equipment
- EV charger project reviews may also include:
 - Detailed invoices for the allowable costs of the project(s), including itemized amounts for charging equipment, installation and commissioning of charging equipment, networking subscription costs, electrical service upgrades, mounting hardware and bollards, and construction costs, as listed in the FON application.
 - At least one photo of the completed project, including verification that all appropriate signage has been installed at the site of the chargers, as specified in the FON application.
 - Verification that each of the EV chargers is operational and able to deliver power. A note from your electrician is adequate.
 - Verification that you have listed the completed project as “public” on the “Plugshare” website in the form of a screenshot from <https://www.plugshare.com/>.
 - Projection completion form
 - W-9