

Questions and Answers for RFP for Technical Assistance Providers for Alaska Small Cities EECBG

Answers Provided on 7/20/10

Question 1: Reporting is a huge component of this RFP. Is there any way to simply something like the request for reimbursement report so that we don't have to track each job component and can just bill based on % of job completed, for the grant funds only?

Answer 1: If a provider can meet all the ARRA and Grant reporting requirements of the city they may propose an alternative billing or project tracking methodology. However the city is required to report cost in accordance with the ARRA requirements. The provider is required to assist the each city in meeting those reporting requirements and document costs against their budget and plan for each community. Billings are on a reimbursable basis and must document direct and allowable indirect costs for each city against their grant.

Question 2: On the provider budget form section B requests that estimated hours for each labor category. Any value entered here will not be accurate and could potentially be misleading because the final scope of work for each city is unknown. Can this requirement be deleted to allow more flexibility in the future when developing each project?

Answer 2: The Authority is aware that there are a number of unknowns in this process. However, the intent of the funding is to use as much of each cities grant funds to make improvements. Providers are expected to have some knowledge of public buildings in rural Alaska, logistics, and costs of providing Materials and Labor to rural Alaska. If not all employees or contractors are known at the time of application, we require each applicant to estimate the rate and hours based upon past projects in order for them to demonstrate their understanding of what it takes to do this type of work in the regions they are interested in assisting. It is expected that a more detailed budget will be worked out between the city and the provider once an initial assessment is completed by the selected provider.

Question 3: Are performance & payment bonds required?

Answer 3: Payment and performance bonds would be required for any individual construction contract that would be in excess of \$100,000.

Question 4: Does AEA prefer respondents to this proposal be U.S. Dept. of Energy approved Energy Service Companies (ESCO)?

Answer 4: No.

Question 5: Can a bidders list be posted on the AEA EECBG website?

Answer 5: A copy of who has indicated an interest in this solicitation as of 7/20/2010 is provided below.

The Energy Saver, LLC
Siemens Industry, Inc
Alaska Building Science Network
Ameresco, Inc
The Boutet Company, Inc
Control Contractors, Inc

Question 6: Can we get an extension on the deadline for questions until 7/23/10?

Answer 6: Yes, the deadline for questions has been extended until 4:30 PM Thursday July 29, 2010.

Question 7: Can you better define the relationship and flow of the grant money from DOE, to AHFC, then AEA, and finally the Provider as assigned by the city? Specially interested in this flow of funds as it relates to related programs such as the upcoming ESPC and VEEP programs.

Answer 7: AEA is or will be seeking energy efficiency service providers for three separate programs, all of which are ARRA funded. The flow of funding for all is USDOE to AHFC to AEA. From there, the current program (AK Small Cities EECBG) is required under ARRA to grant the funds to the cities, some of whom opted for technical assistance and will transfer their rights to receive funds to the selected service provider. Under the VEEP program, AEA will grant the funds to the service provider to provide services to the communities. And in the third program, which is currently in design phase, AEA will be seeking service providers to conduct commercial energy audits on behalf of businesses.

Question 8: Can you be more specific about the statements related to the VEEP program? The potential for waste and duplicative effort seems quite high if the Authority doesn't select the same provider for the same geographic regions. Will there be another separate proposal for the VEEP program. When will that be issued?

Answer 8: We anticipate selecting the same service provider in the geographic regions under both the VEEP and the EECBG programs. That said, prior to viewing the proposals and applications for these programs, we are allowing the flexibility to allocate regions in any manner that will best serve the communities. The VEEP RFA will be announced and emailed to all respondents to the EECBG RFP this week. We anticipate extending the EECBG RFP deadline to match the VEEP deadline, which is anticipated to be August 11, 2010. If this occurs, an addendum will be issued.

Question 9: Section 1.12 Program funding Constraints states the Authority currently has \$2,704,800 available for this project. Will that number likely remain the same, or could it go up or down?

Answer 9: The number should remain the same unless unforeseen circumstances arise.

Question 10: Are the 10 points described as “Understanding the Problem” going to be earned from Section 3.1 Letter of Transmittal or from a general combination of all the sections?

Answer 10: All points will be earned from a combination of all sections of the proposal, including the letter of transmittal.

Question 11: Please provide additional detail on contractor energy related reporting to meet ARRA requirements

Answer 11: All the detail required is listed on the quarterly reporting forms found at <http://www.akenergyauthority.org/eecbg.html>. Please be aware that the metrics form and financial progress reports have multiple tabs, which may not be readily apparent. When opened, the tabs may not appear within the Excel window. Click on the “maximize button” or otherwise scroll to the bottom of the window to view the tabs. We are attempting to improve the visibility of the tabs.

Question 12: A number of the awardees have what looks like an actual energy study attached with their application – is the contractor to accept the cost / saving analysis and provide only construction guidance? Is it the contractor’s responsibility to ensure that the audit is correct? Is it the contractor’s responsibility to report on actual savings under this scenario?

Answer 12: The service provider’s responsibility is to provide sound advice and guidance to the Cities in selecting energy efficiency and conservation improvements. Many Cities have an idea of what they are interested in performing. Others may even have existing energy audits. The service provider may take existing recommendations into account when making decisions, but they are not required to accept the cost / savings analysis, nor to ensure that prior audits are correct. Their responsibility is simply to provide sound guidance to the city, with or without prior audits. Whatever actions are taken, the service provider must report on the energy savings.

Question 13: The dollar value awards listed in RFP section 1.12 do not always match the amount requested on the individual city’s grant application form . Are the cities “in-kind” contributions part of the total funds listing in section 1.12? If so, the EECBG Service Provider Budget Form regional totals will need to be adjusted upward to account for this additional resources.

Answer 13: The grant amount in section 1.12 is what each grantee will be allowed to expend. Those numbers do not match the city's application form. In-kind and match are not part of the total funds listed. Local contributions are fluid and not required, so they should not be accounted for in the Service Provider budget form. AEA would like local contributions tracked to show the full value of the program.

Question 14: The ARRA EECBG grant requires that no more than 50% of the award be used for energy audits. Energy audits a line item on the EECBG form, but there are other line items like travel, G&A, profit etc. that will be necessary to perform the audits. Are these support cost part of the 50% allowed or are they in addition to the 50% limit?

Answer 14: The support costs must remain within the 50% limit.

Question 15: Some cities list buildings on their grant application forms without an approx. sqf area. Would it be possible for AEA to supply a list of these unknown areas to facilitate the Provider's energy audit budget pricing for these buildings?

Answer 15: No.