

Submitted Questions and Answers Regarding the

RFP FOR THE STUDY OF DECARBONIZATION METHODS IN VERMONT

Issued July 2, 2018

Response to submitted questions – In order of Receipt

Questions Submitted July 12, 2018

1st set of submitted questions

1. *The available funding does not seem enough for what is requested. Will there be more funds in the future?*

There are no additional funds. The legislature may choose to fund more work in the future. Please respond to the RFP by explaining what you can do for the available funds.

If you choose not to submit a proposal, feel free to send us a letter by July 20, 2018 explaining the reasons for your decision.

2. *Would you allow an extension for submission of a proposal?*

No. The due date is Friday, July 20, 2018. In the event that JFO does not accept a proposal, we will consider options for moving forward.

Due to the late ending of the session, the proposal, its review and acceptance, and the time for the report generation are all tight.

Again, if you choose not to submit a proposal, feel free to send us a letter by July 20, 2018 explaining the reasons for your decision.

Questions Submitted July 13, 2018

2nd set of submitted questions

3. *Can you provide further guidance and clarification on the specific deliverables desired for this project? Including, the desired structure of the final report?*

The final report shall include an executive summary, a full report and the delivery of a model or other work products as defined in the contract. Because the legislative audience is largely nontechnical, proposals should design a report that meets these needs as well as providing the more technical nature of this analysis. We expect bidders to offer suggestions on the report and its structure.

4. *Can you provide further details on the desired frequency and format of: (a) stakeholder engagement, and (b) JFO updates? Including:*
- a. *How frequently would you like JFO updates, and in what format (written, in-person, phone, some combination thereof, etc.)?*
 - b. *Would you like stakeholder engagement to take place prior to completion of the study, after, or both?*
 - c. *Would you like such engagement to be public and on-site in Vermont? If so, do you require a minimum number of such meetings?*
 - d. *Would you anticipate that the State or any other entities would partner in the convening of stakeholders? If so, which agencies or entities?*
 - e. *Is there anything else we should know about your desired stakeholder engagement or JFO update procedure?*

JFO will be managing the contract. We anticipate status reports that could be a combination of written, in-person, or phone. Specifics will be worked out with the contractor.

Stakeholders: We are asking the proposals to suggest how to engage stakeholders. JFO will work with the contractor to define a list of key stakeholders and to implement and assist with the convening process.

5. *Can you please describe the relevant Vermont-specific data that the State would be able to provide access to for the purpose of completing this study, including:*
- a. *Employment data: wages, job numbers, etc. (ideally disaggregated to some extent by sector and region of the state); and*
 - b. *Household income and expenditure/consumption data, especially household and business energy consumption data (similar to the CEX; and again, ideally disaggregated by region of the state).*

We have data on employment and wages from the VT Department of Labor. We also have data on income at the state and regional level using the Five Year American Community Survey estimates. We use REMI and rely on Executive Departments for other publicly available data. Some State data sets are not public due to issues of confidentiality. JFO will work with the vendor to assist in seeking necessary data. While we will work with the contractor to achieve a quality product, we expect that the proposer will be responsible for the data collection and compilation. We are interested in the vendors' understanding of data availability and the ability to work within the anticipated data environment.

6. *The legislation allocates \$120,000 to be shared among the project contractor, evaluators of the project report, and other contractors. Is there a target budget for evaluators of the project report, and other contractors? If so, can you share that number with us? Fundamentally, we are wondering whether we have the full \$120,000 to work with, or whether you will be looking for proposals that are a given amount less than that.*

The allocation of the funding depends on the proposal chosen and the specific needs identified by JFO given the proposal. The State has not hired additional evaluators at this point but that will be in the State's area of responsibility

7. *Will the project contractor have sole discretion to include "other contractors" in this project? Or will the State retain such discretion? If yes to the latter, does the State currently anticipate hiring other contractors to support this work?*

We expect that the contractor will submit a proposal to meet the needs of the RFP including any subcontractors it thinks are needed within its overall proposal cost.

The State will retain the option to hire other contractors. The decision to do so will depend on the accepted proposal.

3rd set of submitted questions

8. *The RFP states \$120,000 will be allocated for this project, to be shared with evaluators of the project report and other contractors. Can you clarify how much will be allocated to the awardee of this RFP? Also, what will the "other contractors" be doing?*

See Response #6

9. *Can you clarify who the contractor will be reporting to, and how frequently the contractor will be meeting with them?*

See Response #4

10. *For costing purposes, will any data be provided to the contractor to support the analysis, and if so what type/source?*

See Response #5

11. *Will the evaluators of the project report be limited to staff from the Joint Fiscal Office or should we anticipate receipt of comments on the draft from others? If so, who will be commenting on the draft report and how much time will commenters be given to review the report?*

The key commenters will include but not be limited to JFO, its contractors and possibly other Legislative and Executive staff. The review process for the draft report will be developed as part of discussions with the chosen vendor.

12. *Given that there is only one week of time between the time for submission of questions and the proposal due date, we would like to request an extension of the due date to allow sufficient time to review responses to questions and incorporate this information into our proposal. Thank you for consideration of this request and for the opportunity to submit questions.*

See Response #2

4th set of submitted questions

13. *Does JFO expect the project consultant to model one (or more) of the pricing approaches identified at the bottom of page 2/top of page 3 in its detailed legislative form, or can the project consultant expect to work with JFO to determine an approach that draws upon the various proposals but may not exactly match any of them?*

We are interested in the consultant's proposals in this area. We recognize that the legislative requirements are extensive and will be reviewing the contractor's response in light of how best to achieve them.

14. *The RFP indicates a combined allocation of \$120,000 for "the project contractor, evaluators of the project report, and other contractors." Could you describe the roles of the evaluators and the other contractors? Have these other parties been identified? Have their scopes of work been determined? What budget would they require?*

See Response #6

15. *We would like to develop tools or models that will be useful to JFO for future analysis (see near the bottom of page 3, section 2.1). Could you please describe the tools and models (such as Excel or REMI) and expertise that JFO would have at its disposal to be able to continue to use the output and models developed for this project?*

JFO uses Excel extensively. We have access to REMI and some staff use SPSS and SAS. JFO is open to suggestions as to how modeling could be cost effectively done and produce useful results.

5th set of submitted questions

16. *Where should electronic proposal submissions be sent to? Is it the same email address as for these questions (JFORFP@leg.state.vt.us)?*

Yes

17. *What is the anticipated contract type? Does the State expect a Time and Materials (T&M) or Firm Fixed Price (FFP) contract as a result of this procurement?*

It could be either, but the funding for the project is capped and limited as discussed in the RFP.

18. *Would the State of Vermont prefer separate Technical and Cost/Pricing volumes?*

No

19. *Does the State of Vermont have a desired duration of validity for a submitted proposal?*

We expect to identify a bidder as soon as practical. If the vendor chooses this approach we will take that into account in reviewing bids

20. *In Section 2.1 titled "Scope of Work," the RFP specifies that the \$120,000 allocated by the Vermont legislature is to be shared among the project contractor, evaluators of the project report, and other contractors. Can the State provide any more information on who the prospective evaluators could be and how the budget is to be shared with those evaluators and/or other contractors? Is the decision on allocation of funds between these parties to be made by the project contractor or the State of Vermont?*

See Response # 6

21. *In the same section, the RFP states that the State has research needs that will include an economic model and that JFO has an interest in obtaining ownership of or access to the models. Can the State of Vermont elaborate whether there is any preference on the type of economic model to be used for this study? Or does the State prefer the contractors provide recommendations in their proposals?*

See Response #15

22. *Is there a preferred list of stakeholders that the State of Vermont wants to engage during this process? Also, what is the relationship, if any, between the stakeholders and the project evaluators?*

There is not a preferred list of stakeholders. Also see Response #11.

23. *Given the extremely tight timeline for prospective bidders to incorporate the responses to these questions in their bids, is the State amenable to extend the proposal deadline by a week to ensure that prospective bidders can provide their best possible responses to this RFP?*

See Response #2