



## Request for Proposal

### ISO-NE Consulting Support

RFP Release Date: 10/6/2023  
Bidder Questions Due: 10/20/2023  
Answers Posted: 10/27/2023  
Proposals Due: 11/10/2023

### Summary

Efficiency Vermont, a statewide Energy Efficiency Utility administered by Vermont Energy Investment Corporation (VEIC), is soliciting proposals for consulting services to provide assistance with matters involving the New England wholesale electricity markets and regional planning efforts. The work includes assisting VEIC staff with participation in the ISO-NE Forward Capacity Market (FCM) and/or assisting VEIC staff with reviews of New England Power Pool (NEPOOL) and ISO New England (ISO-NE) meetings and development of strategies that further Efficiency Vermont's goals and interests on behalf of Vermont ratepayers.

Responses to this Request for Proposals (RFP) must be delivered electronically to VEIC by **5:00 p.m. EST on Friday, November 10, 2023**. VEIC will not accept responses submitted after this time. Please submit your response electronically via e-mail to: [dlane@veic.org](mailto:dlane@veic.org) with **RFP Submittal for ISO-NE Consulting Support** in the subject line.

VEIC will respond to individual questions regarding this RFP only as follows: questions regarding requirements and scope of work must be received by **5:00 p.m. EST October 20, 2023**, via e-mail only, to [dlane@veic.org](mailto:dlane@veic.org) with **RFP Questions for ISO-NE Consulting Support** in the subject line. When appropriate, please refer to the RFP page number and Section Heading to inform a helpful response. VEIC will post answers on the VEIC website (<http://www.veic.org/company/requests-for-proposals>) no later than **5:00 p.m. EST, October 27, 2023**. VEIC will not address questions submitted after 5:00 p.m. EST October 20, 2023.

### Background

#### Vermont Energy Investment Corporation

VEIC is a mission-driven, nonprofit organization dedicated to reducing the economic and environmental costs of energy use. It carries out its mission, in part, by designing and implementing innovative energy efficiency and renewable energy programs. Founded in 1986, VEIC is nationally and internationally recognized for advancing energy efficiency, energy conservation, and renewable energy programs and projects across the United States, Canada, and Europe. VEIC employs over 300 professionals and is headquartered in Winooski, Vermont. It also has a presence in several states, including offices in Washington, DC. For additional information, please see the VEIC website: [www.veic.org](http://www.veic.org).



## **Efficiency Vermont**

Launched January 1, 2000, Efficiency Vermont helps ratepayers reduce energy costs, strengthen the local economy, and protect the environment by making homes and businesses energy efficient. Efficiency Vermont provides technical assistance, rebates, and other financial incentives to help Vermont households, businesses, and other institutions—such as K-12 schools—reduce their energy costs with energy-efficient equipment, lighting, and approaches to construction and major renovation. Efficiency Vermont partners extensively with contractors, suppliers, and retailers of efficient products and services throughout the state.

VEIC is the administrator of Efficiency Vermont under an Order of Appointment issued by the Vermont Public Utility Commission. For additional information, please see the Efficiency Vermont website: <https://www.encyvermont.com>.

ISO New England (ISO-NE) is the independent, not-for-profit company authorized by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to operate the power system, administer wholesale electricity markets, and undertake power system planning for the New England region. The Participants Committee is ISO-NE's primary stakeholder advisory body. It is made up of the representatives of the New England Power Pool (NEPOOL) participants and helps ensure a collaborative process in the administration of New England's wholesale electricity markets and power system.

## **Program Overview**

VEIC, as part of its Efficiency Vermont work, became a NEPOOL member and an ISO-NE Demand Resource Market Participant in August of 2006, in order to monitor and provide input on specific issues of interest to VEIC and to Vermont, and to allow VEIC to participate in ISO-NE markets. Since the inception of the Forward Capacity Market (FCM) in 2006, VEIC has participated on behalf of Efficiency Vermont, and other efficiency activities undertaken on behalf of Green Mountain Power, by bidding Energy Efficiency Demand Resources into this market. As of June 2020, the VEIC Energy Efficiency Portfolio provides 114 MW of capacity to the FCM, the largest capacity resource in Vermont. VEIC also participates in other ISO-NE activities related to its mission, including but not limited to the Energy Efficiency Forecast Working Group and the Distributed Generation Forecast Working Group.

## **Scope of Work**

This RFP includes options for multiple scopes of work (Options A, B, or C) to support Efficiency Vermont's programmatic needs. Respondents must select one scope of work and respond to that scope of work in their RFP response. In submitting a response to this RFP, the Respondent should identify the scope of work option on which they wish to bid.

## Option A

The selected Contractor will provide consulting services related to VEIC's status as a NEPOOL member and Demand Resources (DR) Market Participant in ISO New England (ISO-NE). In summary, the selected Contractor is expected to track and report on NEPOOL and ISO-NE meetings, alert VEIC to specific issues related to participation in the FCM and other ISO-NE activities of interest to Vermont, and work with VEIC to develop strategies to advance policy interests. Identification of the type of issues that warrant specific attention will be discussed at the beginning of the contract period, and the beginning of each calendar year thereafter, and then updated on an as-needed basis.

Specific services include, but are not limited to, the tasks outlined below.

- 1) Routinely advising Efficiency Vermont about relevant ISO New England Committee agenda topics for the Participants Committee, Markets Committee, Reliability Committee, Transmission Committee, Planning Advisory Committee, Emerging Technologies Working Group, Energy Efficiency Forecast Working Group, and Distributed Generation Forecast Working Group, as necessary, through regular communications (see Deliverables below).
- 2) Serving as VEIC Proxy vote on the Participants Committee, Markets Committee, Reliability Committee, and Transmission Committee, as directed by VEIC. In such instances, the contractor will vote on VEIC's behalf in the interest of Vermont ratepayers and to offer VEIC the opportunity to discuss voting strategy when necessary.
- 3) Assisting Efficiency Vermont staff in interpreting ISO New England Tariff, Market Rules, manuals, and other policy and operational determinations. The contractor will identify new initiatives related to the New England power system and discuss with VEIC their potential impact on VEIC's goals and interests.
- 4) Representing Efficiency Vermont's interests in NEPOOL Officers meetings, ISO Board Nominating Committee meetings, and other periodic meetings.
- 5) Other advice and consultation, as requested by Efficiency Vermont, within the limits set forth in the scope of work.

## **Deliverables**

- Annual list of major topics for each contract year that is updated monthly as part of the NPC agenda summary. This list will be reviewed with Efficiency Vermont at the beginning of the year. The monthly update will identify upcoming issue and meetings, including NEPOOL and other committee meetings, as appropriate to cover issues of interest to Efficiency Vermont. For those issues or meetings that are of interest to Efficiency Vermont, the Contractor will suggest participation and voting strategies consistent with the monthly budget. Efficiency Vermont will request calls to discuss issues and / or voting if deemed necessary.
- Follow-up communications with results of relevant committee votes or other ISO-NE actions.

- Timely responses to emails or telephone calls requesting further information regarding NEPOOL or ISO-NE meetings, potential strategies for advancing the interests identified by VEIC, and general questions regarding NEPOOL and ISO-NE issues.
- Other items as agreed upon by the parties.

#### Scope of Work Option B

Option B includes the following services:

Specific services include, but are not limited to, support, assistance, guidance, recommendations, strategies, and optionally tools, for the administration and operations of Efficiency Vermont's resources in the ISO-NE FCM, including tasks outlined below.

- 1) Efficient management of an increasing number of resources, through existing capacity qualification, show of interest, new capacity qualification, auctions, and asset creation.
- 2) Forecasting and bidding strategies across the Forward Capacity Auction (FCA) process and the annual and monthly reconfiguration auctions to balance revenue and limit risk.
- 3) Reporting performance through the Energy Efficiency Measure Database, measure assignment to assets, Financial Assurance, CPS Reports and Monitoring, getting data from the Market Information System (MIS).

Option B includes the following deliverables:

- Proactive suggestion to increase efficiency or reduce opportunity for errors in the processes within Scope Option B.
  - Review existing system for forecasting and tracking capacity obligations and performance by resource.
  - Suggest at least one alternative used by another market participant in ISO-NE or PJM or similar forward capacity markets that include efficiency, or other substantially similar situations.
- Advanced notice of upcoming changes to these processes, anticipation of how ISO will implement rule changes, and suggestions for how to deal with them.
- Timely responses to emails or telephone calls requesting further information regarding operational, administrative, and technical issues as part of participation in FCM.

#### Scope of Work Option C

Option C scope of work includes all services and deliverables in both Option A and Option B listed above.

## Schedule / Milestones

Efficiency Vermont intends to follow the below schedule with regard to this RFP and the work described herein, but reserves the right to adjust the schedule as necessary.

RFP release	Friday, 10/6/2023
OPTIONAL-Notice of Intent to Respond	Friday, 10/20/2023
Bidders Questions Due	Friday, 10/20/2023
Answers distributed no later than	Friday, 10/27/2023
Proposals due to Efficiency Vermont	Wednesday, 11/10/2023
Selection review and potential interviews	11/10 – 11/29
Selection and contract negotiations	Tuesday, 11/29/2023
Performance period begins	1/1/2024
Performance period ends	12/31/2026

## Proposal Requirements

Proposals should be limited to 10 pages in length. Cover letters, Table of Contents, and a completed Certificate of Agreement and Compliance (Attachment A) are not included in this page limit. Resumes, sample documents, and other exhibits may be presented as Appendices and are not included in this total.

All proposals must be signed by a duly authorized representative of the party (or parties) submitting the proposal. Include the names and phone numbers of personnel authorized to negotiate the proposed contract with VEIC.

Proposals must include at minimum the following information:

Identification of Organization - State the full name and address of the organization and, if applicable, other subcontractors that will perform, or assist in performing, the work. Include a brief description of the organization’s history, structure, and size.

Implementation of the Scope of Work – Identify the respondent’s selected Scope of Work option (Option A, B, or C). Discuss the respondent’s proposed implementation of the selected Scope of Work described above. Give particular attention to describing the methods and resources the respondent will use and how the respondent will accomplish the tasks involved. Be sure to provide enough detail to illustrate an in-depth understanding of the ISO-NE committee structure and market function, and the activities that will be emphasized in order to meet the objectives of this RFP. If subcontractors are involved, clearly identify the work each will perform.

Prior Experience - List recent work performed, especially that which is similar to the Scope of Work. To the extent that the bidder has previously prepared summaries of NEPOOL or ISO-NE meetings, please provide a sample of such a document. Please discuss any past, current, and anticipated relationships

that might facilitate the industry and market intelligence that will help VEIC accomplish its mission in this context. Please provide the name and telephone number of a reference person familiar with the applicant's work.

Personnel - Each respondent submitting a proposal under this RFP must have demonstrable knowledge, skills, and experience as it relates to the required work. The proposal must identify all persons that will be employed in the proposed work by skill and qualifications, and identify the roles they each will play in delivering the services. Identify key personnel by name and title and provide a resume for each. Subcontractors must be listed, including the firm name and address, contact person, and complete description of work to be subcontracted. Include descriptive information concerning subcontractor's organization and abilities.

Potential Conflicts of Interest - Respondents must disclose any known or potential conflicts in representing VEIC or Efficiency Vermont or otherwise performing the Scope of Work. As part of this disclosure, **all respondents must identify any third parties they actively represent in any ISO-NE or NEPOOL committee or other meetings, or in any voting capacity, or for whom they are listed as a registered lobbyist, agent, or other legal representative.**

Summary of Proposal Exceptions – Respondent must submit a summary of any exceptions to any section of this RFP or of the VEIC standard contract terms and conditions (Exhibit A). Failure to note any exceptions will be deemed to be acceptance of the terms of this RFP and VEIC's standard contract terms and conditions. VEIC will take any noted exceptions into consideration when evaluating responses. If exceptions are not noted in respondent's proposal but raised during contract negotiations, VEIC reserves the right to cancel the negotiations and award projects to other respondents. If the respondent would like to propose their own contract template, a copy of the template should be attached as an appendix to the proposal.

Disclosures –

- (a) Bidders must disclose any pertinent litigation, defined as any past or pending judgments, lawsuits, demands, claims, actions, bankruptcies or regulatory decisions that may adversely affect the respondent's ability to meet any requirements of this RFP, the respondent's proposal, or a contract for the scope of work. Respondents must provide a detailed description of any of the above events and any applicable case number(s) in its proposal.
- (b) This disclosure obligation is an ongoing material obligation that applies from the date of proposal submission through the expiration of any resulting contract award. Failure to disclose any pertinent litigation or other information may result in the disqualification of a respondent's proposal.

Certificate of Agreement and Compliance - This form, provided below as Attachment A, must be completed in its entirety and submitted along with the Bidder's response to the RFP.

## Budget

It is VEIC’s preference that this contract be structured as a fixed-fee contract, with equal payments to be made monthly. Please provide an annual fixed fee budget proposal for each of the three years of the performance period (2024, 2025, and 2026).

In order to assure that the respondent has the resources to commit to fulfilling the project for the proposed fixed budget amount, respondents must submit a fee schedule and narrative explanations of estimates of time and costs to undertake the scope of work (including estimates of number of meetings attended, estimated costs to attend, etc.). The following cost elements should be fully covered in the fixed-fee budget and will not be paid for separately:

- Personnel (position, rate, hours)
- Travel (mileage rate, lodging, etc.)
- Supplies & Material charges
- Any indirect or overhead costs
- Other costs

In order to provide these services in the most cost-effective manner, the respondent may propose to participate in meetings and undertake other activities on a cost-share basis with other clients to realize “economies of scale”. If this is the mechanism proposed, the respondent should fully describe how VEIC’s interests will be protected and served under this model.

## Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated on the following criteria:

• Responsiveness to RFP	25
• Key personnel qualifications for type of work	25
• Experience in type of work	25
• Cost proposal	25
<b>Total points available</b>	<b>(100)</b>

Definition of scoring criteria:

- *Responsiveness to RFP* – A proposal’s responsiveness to all elements listed in ‘Proposal Requirements’ section of this document, and demonstration of understanding of scope of work, VEIC and Efficiency Vermont regulatory contexts, and purpose of contract.
- *Key personnel qualifications for type of work* – A proposal’s demonstration of staff technical qualifications to perform the work stated in identified scope of work.
- *Experience in type of work* – A proposal’s demonstration of experience with example(s) of projects of a similar, scale, scope, and rigor.
- *Cost proposal* – A proposal’s costs for services to carryout scope of work defined in proposal.

### Other Information

VEIC reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids and to select no respondents, one respondent, or multiple respondents as a result of this RFP. The proposals will be evaluated by VEIC and, if one or more respondents are selected, they will be invited to negotiate a contract.

### Limitation

This RFP does not commit VEIC to award a contract or to pay any costs incurred in the preparation or submission of proposals. VEIC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received in response to this RFP, to negotiate with any qualified respondent including negotiation of scope of work, or to cancel in part or in its entirety the RFP, if any of these actions is deemed by VEIC in its sole discretion to be in VEIC’s best interest.

### Insurance Requirements

Each respondent must supply with the proposal a current Certificate of Insurance showing evidence of General Liability coverage. If awarded a contract, the respondent will also be required to provide a final certificate of insurance to show compliance with the minimum insurance requirements outlined in the successful Respondent’s contract. VEIC anticipates the minimum requirements to be as outlined below but will confirm final insurance requirements prior to issuance of a contract. Respondent must raise any questions about the insurance requirements by the deadline set forth above and must identify any exceptions to the anticipated minimum requirements in its response.

Insurance Policies	Limits
Commercial General Liability	\$1m per occurrence/\$2m aggregate
Automotive Liability	\$1m per occurrence single limit for bodily injuries and property damage
Crime Insurance	\$1m per occurrence for dishonest acts of Contractor’s employees which result in a loss to VEIC.
Environmental Liability	\$1m per occurrence/\$2m aggregate
Workers’ Compensation	Statutory mandates
Employer’s Liability	\$500k per accident; \$500k per disease; \$500k policy disease limit
Professional Liability Insurance (Errors & Omissions)	\$1m per occurrence/\$2m aggregate
Cyber Liability Insurance	\$1m per occurrence/\$1m aggregate
Sexual/Physical Abuse & Molestation	\$1m per occurrence/ \$1m aggregate
Umbrella or Excess Liability Insurance	\$3m per occurrence/\$3m aggregate (subcontracts under \$100k will only be required to have \$1m/\$1m)





EXHIBIT A

[VEIC Standard Contract Example]



## CERTIFICATE OF AGREEMENT AND COMPLIANCE

**This form must be completed in its entirety and submitted along with the Respondent's response to the RFP.**

**INSURANCE:** Respondent certifies that the company / individual is in compliance with, or is prepared to comply with, the insurance requirements as detailed in this RFP. Certificates of Insurance must be provided prior to issuance of a contract.

Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

City, State, ZIP Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Authorized Representative

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date