

PURA RFP #2024-01

Request for Proposals to Retain a Consultant to Assist with Integrated Distribution System Planning

Responses to Clarifying Questions

1. **The RFP specifies a preference for consultants with “deep experience and expertise in econometric analysis, load and DER forecasting...” (p. 13 of the RFP) and experience in conducting econometric analysis (p. 7 of the Pre-Proposal Bidders’ Conference presentation dated February 21, 2024). Could you please clarify this qualification and provide examples of the expected work efforts and deliverables that require econometric analysis expertise, as opposed to a broader type of expertise encompassing the entire load and DER forecasting process, including its application in electric system planning?**
 - a. For the purposes of this RFP, the consultant is expected to have the requisite expertise in econometric analysis necessary to accomplish the following tasks: (1) understand and document load and DER forecasting methods currently used by the EDCs; (2) assess and recommend potential modifications to the load and DER forecasting methods currently used by the EDCs; (3) consider potential econometric analysis applications in the EDCs’ selection of traditional and alternative capital investments and multi-year capital planning processes. If the consultants lack relevant experience with or expertise in econometric analysis, the consultants should discuss how they will deliver on the tasks included in the RFP without such experience or expertise.
2. **The role of the Consultant in the actual drafting of the IDSP documents and processes resulting from this docket is described as providing “written comments on Authority staff-proposed IDSP documentation content, format, and process” (p. 9 of the RFP). Could you elaborate on the anticipated involvement of the Consultant in drafting these documents beyond providing written comments?**
 - a. In addition to providing written comments on Authority staff-drafted documents, the Authority may request that the consultant draft select sections of a future Staff Concept Paper and / or the Straw Proposal. The Staff Concept Paper would likely document the EDCs’ existing distribution planning processes. The Straw Proposal would likely document proposed modifications and / or additions to the EDCs’ existing distribution planning processes to ensure alignment with the regulatory goals and priority outcomes.
3. **The RFP outlines the necessity (appropriately) for the Consultant to coordinate with Authority staff throughout the proceeding. Beyond the minimum of twice-monthly meetings with PURA Staff, internal memos, and other submissions described in the RFP, is participation in recurring or ad hoc internal Authority staff meetings anticipated? If so, please provide an estimate of the frequency, average duration, and format (remote or in-person) of these meetings.**
 - a. RFP respondents may include an optional budget for five two-hour staff working sessions that may be necessary to advance specific docket topics. These meetings are not currently scheduled and may not all be necessary but can be included in proposed budgets for planning purposes.

4. **The RFP states “All costs above the final contract amount shall be the responsibility of the selected Consultant...” (p. 15 of the RFP). Could you explain the process for obtaining Authority approval for budget increases due to additional scope recognized and approved by the Authority?**
 - a. Should the Authority require work that falls outside the original scope agreed to in contract, a contract amendment will need to be prepared. The consultant will provide a budget for the incremental work. The PURA Chairman must authorize any increase in scope and resulting changes to the consultant budget. All parties must sign the amended contract.
5. **Does PURA anticipate exceeding the \$200,000 cap defined by Conn. Gen. Stat. § 16-18a(a)?**
 - a. The Authority will consider competitive bids to provide the services and deliverables included in the RFP. Should the budget provided by prospective consultants exceed \$200,000, consultants should identify which work could be completed for \$200,000 and if the consultant is particularly well suited to perform any sub-set of work included in the RFP.
6. **Does PURA prefer to have all support for the proceeding support budgeted in the Proposal, or should less certain scopes such as support during the Evidentiary Hearing be listed on a Time & Materials basis?**
 - a. As stated in the RFP, the Authority will consider the hourly rates when evaluating proposal cost-effectiveness in the case of the proceeding. Applicants should attempt to provide a total cost budget, but should also provide the hourly rates for the Authority to consider. Applicants should note that the limit, however, is \$200,000 per proceeding.
7. **Will the Consultant be asked to create distribution plans as alternatives to EDC plans, or only to evaluate plans put forth by the EDCs against the determined framework?**
 - a. The consultant will not be asked to create distribution plans as alternatives to EDC-proposed distribution plans. As described in the RFP, the consultant will be asked to provide input and feedback on Authority staff-proposed IDSP documents and to produce tools for future Authority evaluation of EDC-proposed distribution plans.