Environmental Council of the States
Request for Proposals: 01-EEINV-2017

E-Enterprise Partner Profile Inventory

Released: November 1, 2016
Responses due: December 12, 2016

1. Project Overview and Purpose

E-Enterprise for the Environment (E-Enterprise) is a new model for collaborative leadership among regulatory agencies that protect the environment and human health. Working together, environmental leaders at U.S. EPA, the states and tribes, are using the E-Enterprise model to simplify, streamline and modernize the implementation of our environmental programs.

The purpose of this project is to create an online Inventory of agency profiles for the state, tribal, and territorial partners of E-Enterprise. The profiles will include information on these partner agencies' information technology infrastructure, process improvement efforts, and other program modernizations. The results of this work will allow the E-Enterprise community of co-regulators to have a more complete understanding of their partner agencies' plans, priorities, and constraints. This information will help the collective E-Enterprise community plan and collaborate more strategically. It will help the E-Enterprise governance identify projects that address critical partner needs and offer the greatest opportunity to advance the vision and mission of E-Enterprise. Individual agencies will be able to more readily identify collaboration opportunities and discover best practices employed by other E-Enterprise partners.

The project is guided by a team composed of representatives of several E-Enterprise partner agencies under the leadership of the State of New Hampshire. As a member of the team and the contracting agent for the project, the Environmental Council of the States (ECOS) is seeking bids from contractors to design and implement project plans and produce project deliverables.

2. Background on E-Enterprise

E-Enterprise partners jointly streamline processes and leverage technology to enable the nation's environmental protection enterprise to be more informed, timely and productive. E-Enterprise also helps foster greater trust among the regulated community, the public, and co-regulators by improving data integrity, service delivery, and communication. Together, these enhancements lead to better health and environmental outcomes while supporting local jobs and communities.

E-Enterprise for the Environment strives to help co-regulators increase productivity and simplify the process of environmental protection by jointly identifying opportunities to:

- Collaborate earlier and more meaningfully in project development and ongoing management;
- Improve access to timely, integrated, and high quality information in the decision-making process;
- Save time and money by sharing IT systems and tools;
- Implement innovative, efficient, and complimentary process and technology changes; and
- Apply advanced monitoring technologies to more quickly identify and correct environmental problems.

For more information on E-Enterprise, please visit http://www.e-enterprisefortheenvironment.net/.

3. Project Goals and Objectives

The project team is developing the Inventory of State, Tribal, and Territorial Profiles to help partner agencies more strategically plan and collaborate within the E-Enterprise model. The target audience for the Inventory includes staff from state, tribal, and territorial environmental agencies; staff from U.S. EPA; and members of the various E-Enterprise governance groups.

The project's goals and underlying objectives are as follows:

Goal 1 - Understand state, tribal, and territorial partners' IT infrastructure and constraints, process improvement efforts, and program modernizations to inform the planning and management activities of E-Enterprise governance.

Objectives

- Enable E-Enterprise leadership to identify partner or project clusters that may present opportunities for focus areas in process improvement or joint IT modernization projects.

- Characterize the partner technology landscape to inform more detailed planning and development of an interoperable E-Enterprise architecture and shared services.

- Provide insight that will help EPA develop funding priorities that are aligned with partner needs and areas of opportunity.

Goal 2 – Enable E-Enterprise partners to share knowledge, collaborate, and deploy resources more effectively.

Objectives

- Enable agencies to identify, contact, and partner with other organizations that have similar profiles and needs.

- Enable partners to discover and reuse sharable software, processes, and other tools to reduce duplications of effort.

Goal 3 - Deploy a durable online solution for collecting, sharing, querying, and refreshing the Inventory information.

Objectives

- Collect and promote regular maintenance of agency profile data with an interface and update process that is as simple and usable as possible.

4. Project Scope of Work

The project team seeks to achieve its goals and objectives by creating an online Inventory of state, tribal, and territorial agency profiles that capture information relevant to E-Enterprise. In general terms, the agency profiles may include information on: current and planned process improvement efforts; characteristics of IT architecture, platforms, and applications; program and IT system modernizations; environmental data access and exchange projects; advanced monitoring technology; and contact information. E-Enterprise partners will use the online Inventory tool both to contribute their own agency profile information and to search for information about other agencies in the E-Enterprise community.

The successful bidder (contractor) will be required to work in collaboration with the project team to:

1. Provide overall project management
   - Develop and manage the project plan and schedule
   - Facilitate team calls and meetings and provide logistical support (conference lines, online meeting software)
   - Produce all project deliverables and coordinate team communications to ensure timely review and input
2. Facilitate the process of gathering, evaluating, and defining the requirements for the E-Enterprise Partner Profile Inventory;
3. Design, build, implement and test an online solution for collecting, sharing, querying, and maintaining the Partner Profile Inventory information;
4. Design and implement the elements of an outreach campaign to encourage and train E-Enterprise partners to contribute their agency's information to the Inventory; and
5. Provide maintenance for the tool and targeted assistance to help partners fill data gaps in the Inventory.

All work will be performed under a Fixed-Price contract.

5. Project Approach and Deliverables

The team anticipates approaching the project through four main phases of work. This approach is intended as a high-level guide to provide further details on the project scope. Bidders are free to propose variations on this general approach if they can demonstrate a more efficient way to meet all of the project goals. For example, a bidder may propose a methodology that uses an Agile approach to the development of the online Inventory. Bidders should include in their response a rationale for the proposed project approach and any deviation from the requested deliverables.

Phase 1 - Discovery and Requirements Definition

The Partner Profile Inventory will only be valuable if it offers the E-Enterprise community access to useful and usable information. In this first category of work, the team will gather information that will help shape the content, functionality, and design of the Inventory tool. The Discovery work will gather user input on:

- the types of information that are of most significant interest to E-Enterprise partners;
- possible existing sources of information that could be used to pre-populate the Inventory;
- the manner in which partners wish to use the information;
- desired capabilities for adding, viewing, and querying information in the Inventory tool;
- data security and data access considerations; and
- strategies for maximizing user participation in the Inventory.

The intent of this project is not to compile a complete inventory of all partner systems and processes. The team's goal is to focus on a manageable segment of information that is of highest priority to the members of the E-Enterprise community. The team will seek input on priorities from representatives of several stakeholder types, including 3-4 members of the E-Enterprise Leadership Council (EELC) and other governance groups, representatives from 3-6 E-Enterprise partner agencies (mix of states, tribes, and territories), and the members of the project team itself.

With input from the project team, the contractor will design Discovery questions and an input process that will elicit thoughtful contributions without being overly burdensome. The process may include electronic surveys and/or telephone interviews and should require no more than 20-30 minutes per respondent to complete. The contractor will capture the stakeholder input in a Discovery Document.

- **Deliverable:** A Discovery Document that captures stakeholder input on desired Inventory content and capabilities.

The contractor will work with the project team to evaluate the information in the Discovery Document and use it to create a complete and thorough Requirements Document for the Inventory and the online tool.

- **Deliverable:** A complete and thorough Requirements Document that includes:
    a. A detailed list of the data elements that will be collected, and
    b. Business, functional, and technical requirements for an online Inventory tool.

In developing the project requirements, the team will carefully evaluate the level of effort and the relative benefit of collecting and maintaining each piece of data. If partners feel burdened by the effort to acquire and maintain the Inventory information, it may suffer from low levels of participation and not provide value. Focusing on high value information and functionality will help maximize the growth and sustainability of the Inventory.

Phase 2 – Implement a Solution for Collecting, Sharing, Querying, and Maintaining Inventory Data

In consultation with the project team, the contractor will design, build, implement and test an online solution for collecting, sharing, querying, and maintaining the Partner Profile Inventory information. The solution will include a browser-based user interface for adding, editing, viewing, and querying the Inventory information. The Inventory information will be stored in a database. The data storage and data access components will be designed to be flexible and extensible so that each can accommodate additional data types that may be added in the future. All components of the solution will meet the business, functional, and technical requirements identified in Phase 1. Bidders may either propose a custom solution or the use of an existing Commercial off the Shelf (COTS) product that could be adapted to meet the project requirements.

The contractor will be tasked with performing all work necessary to design, build (or adapt if proposing a COTS tool), implement, and deploy the solution. The contractor will be required to perform user acceptance testing on the tool to verify that it functions properly and meets all of the defined requirements. The project team will work with the contractor to identify a small number of pilot users (6-8) to perform the testing and seed the Inventory with content. If the team is able to identify existing sources of information (e.g. a recent ECOS survey of state LEAN projects) from which to pre-populate the Inventory, the contractor will be tasked with entering that information. The contractor will also provide technical documentation for the solution as well as an online Quick Start Guide.

- ➢ **Deliverable:** A tested and operational Inventory tool that is free of errors and meets the specifications outlined in the requirements document.
- ➢ **Deliverable:** Complete technical documentation for all components of the online Inventory solution.
- ➢ **Deliverable:** An online Quick Start Guide that provides step-by-step instructions for the Inventory tool for users of all permission levels.

Note: The project team is also exploring options for using existing government-owned tools for the online Inventory solution. If the team feels that an existing tool can be sufficiently adapted to suit the needs of the project, it may opt to adjust or eliminate deliverables from this scope of work during final contract negotiations.

Phase 3 – Identify and Train a Community of Users to Populate the Inventory

The Inventory will only meet its full potential if the team works to cultivate an informed and active user community to populate and maintain it. In cooperation with the project team, the contractor will design, develop, and execute an outreach campaign that markets the benefits of the Inventory and provides training materials to the E-Enterprise community on how to use the online tool. The campaign will include work to develop and deliver promotional materials such as videos, brochures, website and social media content, and presentation slides. It will also include training resources including how-to-videos and instructional webinars. In their response, bidders should propose a set of activities and key deliverables to include as part of the outreach campaign.

- **Deliverable:** Development and delivery of outreach and training materials/videos/webinars.

The contractor will also work with the team to create a plan that identifies strategies for soliciting regular user feedback on the Inventory and for keeping users engaged over the long-term. This will help to ensure that the Inventory becomes an active and durable resource that is maintained well into the future. Examples may include strategies for regular user surveys, engagement through social media tools, or plans for regular webinars for Inventory users.

- **Deliverable:** A detailed plan for keeping users engaged with the Inventory to ensure it is maintained over the long term.

Phase 4 – Providing User Support, Filling Data Gaps, and Ongoing Maintenance

Following the initial rollout of the Inventory tool, the team anticipates a 30- to 60-day period during which partner agencies will be gathering and entering data. During this time, the contractor will provide support to help answer questions and provide general user support to the E-Enterprise community.

Should the need arise, the contractor will reach out and directly assist partners with filling gaps in their Inventory data. This will help to ensure that the initial set of Inventory information is as complete as possible.

- **Deliverable:** An Inventory that is reasonably complete and free of data gaps.

Bidders should also propose costs for a 2-year retainer agreement. This will support necessary maintenance for the tool and ad hoc requests for user support.

6. Project Requirements

This list of high-level project requirements will be supplemented by much more detailed requirements gathered during the Discovery work and during the effort to define comprehensive business, functional, and technical requirements for the Inventory solution.

- The content of the inventory will be based on input gathered during the Discovery process. It will emphasize information that is most valuable to the E-Enterprise community and it will be of a scope and scale that is not burdensome to maintain.
- Discovery interviews or surveys should require no more than 20-30 minutes to complete and will include 3-4 members of the EELC and other governance groups, 3-6 representatives of partner agencies (mix of states, tribes, territories), and the members of the project Steering Committee.
- The user interface for the solution will be browser-based. It must be compatible with all major web browsers and incorporate responsive design principles to allow for use on both mobile and desktop devices.
- At this point, the project team does not have specific requirements for the solution’s database

platform or for hosting arrangements. In response to this RFP, bidders should provide recommendations for database platforms and hosting arrangements along with a rationale for the choices. Bidders are welcome to propose the use of a COTS solution that could be adapted to suit the requirements for the online Inventory.

- To the maximum extent practicable, the team would like the look and feel of the solution's user interface to be consistent with the design and branding of the E-Enterprise website located at http://e-enterprisefortheenvironment.net/.
- The tool will be required to accommodate role-based security to ensure that only authorized users can add/edit/delete profile data. Responsibility for data stewardship will rest with the individual partner agencies. As of the publication of this RFP, the team anticipates that the Inventory data will be open to the public for viewing. However, the tool should be flexible enough to allow partners to restrict access to their profile information if they deem it to contain potentially sensitive information.
- The tool will be extensible to accommodate the addition of new data types or modules that may be identified in the future.
- The tool will be designed so that the team can perform basic administration of the tool without contract support.
- The tool will include complete technical documentation and an online Quick Start Guide

7. Other Project Information

- ECOS is seeking Fixed-Price bids for the work described in this RFP
- The team's target completion date for the project is August 31, 2017.
- Bidders should budget for travel for key staff to up to 2 in-person meetings of the project team. Other team meetings will be conducted via conference call.
- The members of the project team are all volunteering their limited time to help guide and advance the project. With many competing priorities, the team members will rely on the support contractor to proactively manage the project to keep it focused and on schedule.

8. Required Proposal Content

The proposal should be as streamlined and concise as possible. Complete responses will include the following information:

A. A description of the proposed technical approach to the scope of work. Please be sure to include recommendations for technology platforms and hosting arrangements and tell the project team why you would make those recommendations.

B. A high-level project plan that describes the project management approach and includes a schedule with key milestones and deliverables.

C. Information on corporate and staff qualifications. Bidders should demonstrate a familiarity with the principles and foundations of E-Enterprise for the Environment. Responses should address the vendor's skills and abilities in the following areas:
   - Facilitating, managing, and gathering requirements for collaborative projects with input from multiple groups of stakeholders
   - Familiarity with the general business and technical architectures of environmental protection agencies
   - Designing, developing, and implementing web applications with intuitive user interfaces
   - Designing, developing, and implementing web applications that support the collection, display, and querying of information
   - Deploying and supporting hosted web applications
   - Creating clear and concise software documentation and User Guides
   - Leading the development and delivery of outreach materials and training to grow and support user communities

   Please include brief bios or resumes for proposed staff that demonstrate their experience in these areas.

D. Information on Corporate Financial Strength
   Please provide one of the following documents to provide an indication of the company's ability to operate long term and through unexpected problems:
   - The current Dunn & Bradstreet report on the firm
   - The firm's two most recent audited financial statements
   - The firm's most recent income tax return

E. Project budget that includes an itemized breakdown of expenses.

F. Three client references (name, address, phone number, email address) for whom similar work was performed.

G. Bidders should disclose in detail any prior knowledge of, or involvement in, this project on their part or that of their staff.

9. Submittal Instructions

Responses should be as concise as possible. Please limit your responses for items A, B, and C in section 8 to no more than a total of 30 pages. Submission of additional materials not specifically requested in this Request for Proposals will not be reviewed.

Responses to this Request for Proposals are **due to ECOS by 5:00 PM ET on December 12, 2016**. Responses must be e-mailed as one (1) PDF file to:

Owen McAleer
Environmental Council of the States
omcaleer [at] ecos.org

In the Subject Line of the e-mail, enter "RFP 01-EEINV-2017." Do not include any additional information in the Subject Line.

Receipt of Proposals will be acknowledged by return e-mail from Owen McAleer within three business days (not counting Federal Holidays).

Hard copy submittals will not be accepted or acknowledged.

10. Evaluation Process

ECOS plans to use the following process in evaluating proposals:

- Initial screening
    - Verify that the Proposal is received before the deadline published in the RFP.
    - Confirm that the Proposal is complete and includes the items requested in section 8 of this RFP.
- Preliminary Evaluation of the Proposals
    - Proposals will be evaluated and scored based on the following criteria:
        - Overall understanding of the project – 10%
        - Technical approach – 30%
        - Project management approach – 15%
        - Corporate and staff qualifications – 20%
        - Cost – 25%
- Conduct oral interviews if necessary (see below)
- Check References
- Request Best and Final Offers (BAFO)
- Final evaluation of Proposals
- Contract negotiation with winning bidder

Oral Interviews

ECOS reserves the right to invite Vendors to make oral presentations of their Proposals and/or to make available for oral presentations/interviews the IT consultants proposed to implement the solution. ECOS may use preliminary scores from the initial evaluation of the Proposals to select Vendors to invite to oral interviews and product demonstrations.

The purpose of oral interviews is to clarify and expound upon information provided in the written Proposals. Vendors are prohibited from altering the basic substance of their Proposals during the oral interviews.

For each invited Vendor, the oral interview will be scheduled for January 11, 2017 at ECOS' office in Washington, DC. Vendors will receive their invitations no later than December 22, 2016. ECOS will use a highly structured agenda for oral interviews to ensure standard coverage of each invited Vendor. Information gained from oral interviews will be used to refine scores assigned from the initial review of the Proposals.

All costs associated with oral presentations/interviews shall be borne entirely by the Vendor. Vendors may be requested to provide demonstrations of any recommended COTS tools as part of their presentations.

11. Questions and Answers

All questions regarding this Request for Proposals must be submitted by e-mail to Owen McAleer at omcaleer [at] ecos.org by 5:00 PM ET on November 28, 2016. Receipt of questions will be acknowledged by return e-mail from Owen McAleer within three business days (not counting Federal Holidays). Questions and corresponding answers will be posted periodically to: http://www.ecos.org/news-and-updates/rfp-e-enterprise-inventory/. All questions and answers will be posted by 5:00 PM ET on December 2, 2016.

Hard copy questions and phone inquiries will not be accepted or acknowledged.

12. Waiver and Acknowledgments

By submitting a response to this Request for Proposals, "Responder" expressly waives any and all claims against ECOS, its officers, directors, employees, subcontractors, and agents, and assumes full responsibility for any and all damages, claims, losses, costs, and expenses that the Responder may incur arising from or relating to this Request for Proposals or its response to this Request for Proposals. This waiver does not apply to damage or loss resulting from the sole negligence, gross negligence, or willful misconduct of ECOS, its directors, officers, employees, or agents.

Responder expressly acknowledges that its response to this Request for Proposals does not create a contract between Responder and ECOS.

Responder expressly acknowledges that ECOS is under no obligation to provide one-on-one feedback to any Responder concerning its response, ECOS' methodology and deliberations for evaluating responses, or ECOS' selection of a Contractor.

ECOS reserves the right to contact individual Responders for any reason and at any point in its decision-making process. ECOS is under no obligation to disclose any contact with any Responder(s).

Responder expressly acknowledges that the decision to select or not select a Contractor in response to this Request for Proposals is:
1. made at ECOS' sole discretion,
2. may be based on any factors ECOS chooses to consider, and
3. may or may not be based solely on cost considerations.

13. Confidentiality and Disclosure

By submitting a response to this Request for Proposals, Responder agrees to keep confidential and not use or disclose any information acquired during the review process concerning ECOS, its business, finances, or operations. The provisions of this Section shall not prevent the Responder from disclosing information to the extent required by a judicial order or other legal obligation, provided that, in such event, the Responder shall promptly notify ECOS in writing, and shall cooperate with ECOS to contest or minimize the scope of the disclosure (including application for a protective order).

Responder expressly acknowledges that ECOS may be required to disclose the contents of any response received. Further, Responder expressly acknowledges that ECOS may distribute some or all responses, via e-mail, to members of the project team, who may be bound by Federal or State requirements to disclose information sent to their organization's e-mail system. Consequently, neither ECOS nor members of the project team are under any obligation to keep any response confidential.