State of Vermont

ANR DEC Flood Resiliency Training RFP

Questions and Answers

11/2/2026

1. **Price format (Price Schedule and Bidder Response Form, Part 8):** The RFP Price Schedule asks for hourly rates plus setup, annual, and maintenance fees. The Bidder Response Form asks for one-time implementation costs plus costs for Years 1 through 5. Should bidders complete both forms? Should Years 4 and 5 be priced when the contract term is two years plus one optional renewal year?

   A prospective bidder would provide hourly rates and can provide overall information for the RFP Price Schedule. The Bidder Response Form part 8 can include more specific details on any associated costs for hosting, software or implementation services. However, these can be synchronized in the bidder's submission.

2. **Language access (Attachment F):** Attachment F calls for language access in "Vermont's top used languages" but does not list them. Should bidders assume the six languages in ANR's Language Access Plan (Arabic, Bosnian, French, Nepali, Somali, Spanish)? Which deliverables does the State consider "vital information" requiring translation (full modules, captions or transcripts, toolkit materials)? Where in the price forms should these costs appear?

   The cost of translation should not be included in this contract. If it is determined that any of this content is a "vital document" that would receive translation, this cost would be borne by the Agency of Natural Resources and would not be required to be included in this contract.

   Also, Contractor shall ensure any digital products, services, or content provided under this Agreement meet the State requirements as defined in Attachment C.14.B. IT Accessibility Standards which can be viewed here.

   The terms can be viewed in Attachment F (page 53) of the RFP.

3. **Hosting period and learner volume (Section 2, Project Completion):** Go-live is expected by approximately the end of Q3 2028, and the two-year contract term ends in approximately October 2028. How long does the State expect the contractor to host the training after go-live? Does the State plan to move the content to its own

platform when the contract ends? How many learners does the State anticipate, in total and by audience (municipal officials and the general public)?

The State of Vermont would prefer trainings to be hosted by the contractor for a a 5-year time frame with an option for renewal at the end of that term subject to the agreement of both parties. If the contractor develops a hosting solution that transfers to the State at the completion of the contract/developing the modules, then that hosting term can be shorter to reflect that. Please provide a cost for annual hosting and maintenance in the bidder response form part 8 to reflect these costs.

At the start-up of the trainings, ANR does not anticipate many initial users (e.g. there is no state requirement for people to utilize or access this training). Since these will be voluntary trainings, we're not sure how the use of these trainings may change over time. A contract term for hosting could include a defined number of licenses or access for under 500 users that can be reviewed or renegotiated if use begins to exceed the contracted number of users over the contractor's hosting term.

4. **Project manager allocation (Attachment A, §6.1.1 and §6.1.3)**: The contract template requires the Contractor Project Manager to "devote full time and dedicated efforts" and "be located at State Facilities or such other appropriate location as Contractor and the State may mutually agree," and requires Key Project Staff to work full time. Given the scope of 10 to 15 training modules over two years, will the State accept a part-time project manager allocation sized to the project? Will the State accept a remote project manager who attends meetings virtually and is on site only for the pilot sessions? Will the project management documentation list in §6.1.1 (Project Charter, the eight management plans, test plans, weekly status reports, and a Microsoft Project schedule) be scaled to this training scope?

   Yes, the State of Vermont would accept a part-time project manager that can primarily work remotely (attending meetings with state staff or other more informal collaborations) and only be on-site for attendance at the pilot in-person training sessions. The Attachment A form section §6.1.1 can be revised to reflect this change.

5. **Single sign-on and public access (Bidder Response Form, Part 4.3, S20 and S21; Part 3, Learning Platform 2B and 2C)**: Requirements S20 and S21 call for login through the State's identity provider (Okta for external users) using SAML 2.0 or OIDC. Part 3 calls for free public access with optional registration. Does the State

require Okta single sign-on for registered municipal users, or may the platform use its own optional registration? Can the general public continue to access all public training without creating an account?

If there is a section of the app that allows unauthenticated access, that is acceptable. That portion should be read only/have limited access.
For the portions of the app that require authentication, internal users will use Entra, external users will use Okta. The municipal users may already have state Okta accounts, and their app needs to have a means of adding access for those Okta/myVermont users.
If the app only supports one IdP, then we choose Okta.

6. **Required attachments (Bidder Response Form, Vendor Instructions)**: The form states that eight additional artifacts are required, but Attachments #1 through #7 are the only ones labeled. What is the eighth required artifact?

   Confirming there are only seven (7) artifacts, not eight (8). The reference to eight is a typographical error.

7. **Budget (Section 1, Overview)**: Can the State share an estimated budget or funding range for this contract, including hosting?

   Up to $200,000 is available for this contract work and covers all project costs, including any costs associated with hosting the content over a 5-year period.

8. **Hosting security terms (Attachment D, §5.4 and §5.5; Bidder Response Form, Part 4.2, A5):** The RFP notes that Attachment D terms may be modified based on the solution proposed. Given that the platform will hold publicly available training and limited user information (username, municipal affiliation, and role), will the State accept security documentation scaled to that data, in place of an annual SSAE 18 SOC 2 Type 2 audit and a fully redundant, geographically separate backup data center? Is the data dictionary in requirement A5 required for this solution?

   Assuming this is hosted in a commercial cloud environment the cloud hosting provider should have the necessary SOC 2 type 2 certification available and would be accepted as meeting the redundance backup requirements.

   ***Regarding the data dictionary question,* indicate if your proposed solution complies in the "Comply" column.**

Yes = the solution complies with the stated requirement.
No = the solution does not comply with the stated requirement.
N/A = Not applicable to this offering.

Describe how the requirement is met in the "Vendor Description of Compliance" column.

9. **References (Section 4, References; Bidder Response Form, Part 1, Item 6):** The RFP asks for three references from the last 12 months. The Bidder Response Form asks for three references who implemented the solution within the past 48 months. Which timeframe applies?

   A prospective bidder can submit three references from within the past 48 months.

10. The RFP indicates the contract will be for 2-years with an optional 1-year. The required bid form indicates pricing is required for a 5-year term. What is the anticipated duration of this project

    The contract term will be for 2 years for implementation with an optional 1-year extension if necessary. The required bid form be revised to be consistent with the requirements of this project.

11. Similarly, the RFP indicates we should have the finished training deliverables at the end of 2-year period. Is this when we are required to start hosting the online training? How long is the hosting period expected to last?

    As mentioned above in question 3, the term of contractor hosting of the online modules would be for a 5-year term unless otherwise negotiated. The contractor can begin hosting the online training as soon as final online training modules are completed or can be launched at one time once all training modules are complete. While the State would prefer the modules are rolled out as completed (in more of a soft-launch format) to troubleshoot any issues with the hosting platform, public hosting of the content could be launched at one time if preferred by the contractor.

12. There is a mention of the Clean Water Outreach Form as a required deliverable. Is this application to this project?
    State agencies are required to report to the Legislature on the extent of clean water activities statewide, including outreach, under the Vermont Clean Water Act (2015 Act 64). Outreach events are categorized as trainings, workshops, and public/stakeholder input meetings.

The scope/requirements of the RFP include providing in-person/virtual trainings to municipal officials and the general public. These training events should be submitted using the Clean Water Outreach Form. The remaining scope to develop online training modules for public use should not be submitted to the Clean Water Outreach Form because they do not meet the definition for clean water outreach.

13. In the RFP there is a substantial amount of highlighted text that "may be applicable". How much of the highlighted text is required for this project? Example - (pg 16 of the RFP pdf) Is a full Project Management Plan required?

    The highlighted text is not required for this project. The State anticipates using the Form Standard-Contract for Services-SSCERT for the contract award instead of RFP Attachment E. Bidders should respond to Section 2. DETAILED REQUIREMENTS/DESIRED OUTCOMES and do not need to respond to RFP Attachment E.

14. Do any project subcontractors need to be identified ahead of time and included in the proposal submitted, or can they be identified after-the-fact (if applicable)?

    Subcontractors will need to be vetted by the State of Vermont. The State recommends that potential subcontractors be identified in the RFP response but can be approved by the State after the contract is awarded.

15. With regard to availability, we may not be able to guarantee an "uptime" of 99.9%, not necessarily because we expect the product(s) to be offline more than that (though occasional, brief outages do occur), but rather because we have no way of tracking and reporting uptime to the minute. Moreover, it is frequently difficult to distinguish whether systems are truly offline, or if there are technical issues isolated to a single user, or even a group of users with a particular technical issue on their end (firewall settings, for instance). Would the state of Vermont be willing to provide an example "uptime report" they've received from a contractor in the past so that we can definitively ascertain whether we can provide those metrics?

    Vendor may provide alternate SLA based on reporting from their own systems.

16. Will the proposal submission deadline be extended to allow for time to review the answers to our questions and incorporate them into our proposal?

    Yes – we have extended the deadline to 11/20/2026 @ 4:30pm EST

17. Budget: Can the State share an estimated budget, funding ceiling, or anticipated contract maximum for this project?

    Up to $200,000 is available for this contract work and covers all project costs, including any costs associated with hosting the content over a 5-year period.

18. Split/partial awards: The RFP notes the State may contract with one or more companies. Will the State consider proposals for only part of the scope (for example, training content development only, or hosting only), or teaming arrangements in which a subcontractor provides the hosting platform?

    Yes. The State may consider proposals for only part of the scope or for teaming arrangements with a subcontractor to host the materials. Proposals for only completing a portion of the scope will be considered in context of all other received proposals, and preference will be given to a solution that will allow for a completed project with content and hosting solution at the end of the contract term.

19. Hosting after contract end: How long must the online modules remain hosted after the contract term ends, and does the State expect to take over hosting, receive exported content files (video/SCORM), or continue paying the contractor's platform fees?

    Please see the answer to question 3 & 6.

20. Accessibility: Please confirm the accessibility standard that applies to the modules and hosting platform (e.g., WCAG 2.1 AA / Section 508). Please also confirm whether translations are expected for all modules or on request, and which languages the State considers Vermont's top used languages under the Language Access Services attachment.

    Please see question 2 for language access and digital accessibility requirements.

21. Format: Will modules delivered in video format, with learning checks built in the hosting platform's native quiz tools, fully meet the requirement, or does the State prefer SCORM packages?

    The format of transferred module content may depend on the online on-demand hosting solution proposed by the bidder. The State would prefer SCORM packages for receiving final content.

22. Pilot sessions: For the 1-2 in-person pilot trainings, will State staff deliver the training with contractor support, and may the contractor's support be provided remotely, with in-person attendance optional?

    For the Pilot training sessions, State staff will deliver the training with contractor attendance. In-person attendance is expected for these pilot sessions. Remote participation could be considered under extenuating circumstances if needed.

23. AI-generated content: Under Attachment G, would the State consider approving limited, human-reviewed use of generative AI for supporting visuals (e.g., illustrations or animated diagrams) and production tasks such as captioning, with scripts written and narration recorded by people? Are AI-generated voices or presenters acceptable or not acceptable for this project?

    We would be open to this potential depending on the quality of the AI-generated voices or presenters. AI-generated content would need to conform to the AI terms found in the State of Vermont's AI usage disclosure form found here and in Attachment D, section 15 (attachment G page 55 of the RFP). Federal funding: Which federal program or award funds this project (e.g., FEMA or EPA), and which federal flow-down terms (including Attachment E) and registrations (e.g., SAM.gov UEI) will apply to the contractor and subcontractors?

    Funding for this project is provided by US EPA grants through the FFY24 Lake Champlain Basin Program (LCBP) and VT DEC. The Federal Terms Supplement (page 47 of the RFP), and Attachment E (page 52 of the RFP) identify the federal funding requirements for contractors.

24. Bidder Response Form: Is the IT Bidder Response Form, including its requested artifacts such as the financial statement, required in addition to the items on the RFP's submission checklist? If a financial statement is required, will the State accept alternatives for a small business that does not have a D&B report or three years of tax returns?

    Please provide what is available for a financial statement for consideration in Part 1 of the Bidder Response Form.

25. What is the budget for this project?

    Please see the answer to question 7 &17.