

SECTION 1: SCOPE OF WORK FOR HOME ENERGY REBATE PROGRAMS

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The Montana Department of Environmental Quality’s Energy Bureau (“DEQ” and “State”) is the federally recognized state energy office for Montana. DEQ’s mission is to champion a healthy environment for a thriving Montana. The Energy Bureau develops and implements innovative energy solutions to meet Montana’s energy needs, including management of federally funded residential energy efficiency programs authorized in the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) and outlined in this Request for Proposals (RFP).

In August of 2022, the IRA was signed into law creating Section 50121, the Home Efficiency Rebate Programs and Section 50122, the Home Electrification and Appliance Rebate Programs. The combined programs are referenced throughout this RFP as “Home Energy Rebate Programs” or “Rebate Programs”. Table 1 lists Rebate Programs funding the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) has allocated by formula to the State as well as Early Administrative Funds dedicated to Rebate Programs design, early-phase workforce development planning/coordination, and the development of an Implementation Blueprint and associated application materials to DOE for Rebate Programs implementation funding. While the two Rebate Program sections contained in the IRA are distinct and contracted services for development and implementation of the programs will be managed as separate grant funds, the State views the programs as complementary and demanding of coordinated planning and implementation. Given the close alignment in DOE requirements and desired outcomes for the two rebate program sections, this RFP and the scope of work outlined below refers to the Rebate Programs collectively.

TABLE 1

Program	Allocated by DOE	Awarded To-date
Section 50121 Home Efficiency Rebate Programs		
Administrative Funds (maximum)	\$7,138,512	\$824,751
Rebate Funds	\$28,554,048	\$0
TOTAL	\$35,692,560	\$824,751
Section 50122 Home Electrification and Appliance Rebate Programs		
Administrative Funds (maximum)	\$7,096,966	\$824,758
Rebate Funds	\$28,387,864	\$0
TOTAL	\$35,484,830	\$824,758
Combined Home Energy Rebate Programs		
TOTAL	\$71,177,390	\$1,649,509

The State intends to administer the Rebate Programs in a manner that meets the energy needs of Montana residents and complies with Federal guidance and requirements. Montana seeks to achieve the following overarching outcomes for Home Efficiency Rebates and Home Electrification and Appliance Rebates:

- Provide well established, exemplary, and innovative efficiency and electrification programs.
- Promote sustained private sector investment that delivers energy bill savings, energy sector emissions reductions, and home energy performance improvements.
- Provide for widespread access to, and uptake of, energy measures for disadvantaged communities.
- Minimize waste, fraud, and abuse of program funds by utilizing protections that are thorough and

verifiable but not prohibitive to participation.

To assist in realizing these outcomes, the State is seeking a single lead contractor to design and implement the Rebate Programs in consultation with the DEQ Energy Bureau and in a manner that is reflective of the unique housing market, energy services, labor, demographic and climatic characteristics of Montana. The State will consider offers for:

- A single contractor that is capable of completing both the design and implementation work in-house.
- A lead contractor that includes qualified subcontractors to complete the design and implementation.
- A partnership developed specifically for this project with a single RFP submittal from multiple entities.

The State reserves the right to negotiate, request a best and final offer, and award the solicitation to the Offeror best able to provide the required work. The contractor will:

1.1.1 Aid in the research and development of rebate programs that:

1.1.1.1 Comply with requirements contained in IRA Section 50121 (Home Efficiency Rebates) and IRA Section 50122 (Home Electrification and Appliance Rebates)

1.1.1.2 Comply with the current or amended Home Energy Rebate Programs Requirements and Application Instructions and associated documents, Early Administrative Funds Administrative and Legal Requirements Document (ALRD), as well as the timeline and budget identified in Table 2. Integral to the program research and development work for both programs (50121 and 50122), will be early phase workforce development planning/coordination, as well as identification and incorporation of elective program paths (e.g., measured, modeled or hybrid path to proving the percentage of energy savings realized, methods of and technologies used in income verification and documentation, etc.) that will result in the most beneficial programmatic structure for market conditions in Montana.

Links to reference documents that are incorporated by reference in this RFP can be found in Section 1.3 and in the “Buyer Attachments” in eMACS.

1.1.2 Assume a lead role in the drafting of a completed Home Energy Rebate Programs State Application and Implementation Blueprint to DOE in the format identified in the current or amended Application Instructions and associated documents and on the timeline and budget identified in Table 2.

1.1.3 Seamlessly transition from program designer to program implementation while remaining within the allowable administrative expenditure cap of 20% of grant expenditures for the duration of Rebate Programs implementation, as specified by DOE. The role of lead implementor of the rebate programs will require management and tracking of all required program data and reporting matrices separately by program (50121 and 50122), as well as completion of program specific documentation (plans, checklists, and assessments) as identified in the Program Requirements and Application Instructions (or as modified by DOE).

After approval of the Home Energy Rebate Programs application and Implementation Blueprint by DOE, the State will undertake a phased approach to rebate programs implementation based on programmatic milestones and funding tranches identified by DOE and laid out in Table 2. The satisfaction of each milestone and associated deliverables will trigger a contract and budget review/modification process for the subsequent funding tranche. This process will allow for the contractual and budgetary incorporation of actual expenditures and program design aspects identified in the previous funding tranche, as well as allow for modifications based on program performance or observed deficiencies. The State may, at its will and as allowed in the contract, elect to terminate the contract rather than modify it at each funding tranche due to

failure(s) of the contractor to satisfy DOE requirements and/or meet the needs of the State. As also provided for in the contract, funding for Contract Phase 2 (as outlined in Table 2 below) has not yet been awarded by DOE. Performance of the Scope of Work outlined below is contingent upon the award of program funding and will comply with the full Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 Home Energy Rebates ALRD, or as amended.

TABLE 2 – PHASES/MILESTONES/BUDGET/TIMELINE

Contract Phase:	Milestone Description:	Budget*:	Expenditure Target**:	Anticipated Completion Date:
Phase 1A; Rebate Programs Contractor Procurement	Early Administrative Funds Application submittal and Home Energy Rebate Programs contractor RFP	2.5% funds, early admin funds awarded 10/1/2023 with spend down deadline of 09/30/2025.	NA	Original contracts negotiated and awarded to selected contractor tentatively by: 06/07/2024
Phase 1B; Rebate Programs Contractor Award Through Application Approval	Program planning and stakeholder engagement through DOE approval of Rebate Programs grant application and Implementation Blueprint	Same as above; 2.5% funds, awarded 10/1/2023 with spend down deadline of 09/30/2025	NA	Final DOE approval of Rebate Programs Application and Implementation Blueprint tentatively scheduled for: 11/15/2024 Implementation Blueprint submittal required 60 days prior to program rollout
Phase 2A; Contracts Modification #1 Through Continuation Application Approval	Tranche #1: Negotiated and approved state grant application and Implementation Blueprint in place, initial public facing programmatic communications and workforce engagement rollout.	25% funds (27.5% total), award tentatively scheduled for: 01/01/2025	NA	Expenditure of tranche #1 funds (27.5% of total award) anticipated by: 12/31/2025. Continuation Application submitted to DOE 90 days prior to tranche #2 release.
2B; Contracts Modification #2 Through Continuation Application	Tranche #2: Continuation of rebate programs and workforce engagement	30% funds (57.5% total), award tentatively scheduled for:	10-15% LI 0-5% LIMF	Expenditure of tranche #2 funds (57.5% total) anticipated by: 06/30/2027. Continuation Application

Approval	rollout	01/01/2026		submitted to DOE 90 days prior to tranche #3 release.
Phase 2C; Contracts Modification #3 Through Continuation Application Approval	Tranche #3: Continuation of rebate programs and workforce engagement	25% funds (82.5% total), award tentatively scheduled for: 07/01/2027	50-60% LI 25% LIMF	Expenditure of tranche #3 funds (82.5% total) anticipated by: 12/31/2028 Continuation Application submitted to DOE 90 days prior to tranche #4 release.
Phase 2D; Contracts Modification #4 Through Program Spend Down	Tranche #4: Approved Independent Privacy and Security Review, QA Plan2, and review of incentive implementation by DOE	17.5% Funds (100% total), tentatively scheduled for: 01/01/2029	80% LI 70% LIMF	Expenditure of Tranche #4 funds (100% total) anticipated by: 09/30/2030. Final expenditure deadline is 09/30/2031.

*Percentage of total grant funding and award date.

**Low-income (LI) and Low-income Multi-family (LIMF) expenditure targets for funding release, expressed as percentage of LI and LIMF allocations (40.1% and 10% respectfully, of rebate funds excluding Admin).

1.2 DEFINITIONS

The following definitions are provided for understanding of the terms as used throughout this document:

1. **Administrative Costs:** Costs related to planning, administration, and technical assistance of Home Energy Rebate programs. Allowable costs include the following types of activities: Program planning and design; State program staff wages; Development of tools and systems, including websites, applications, rebate processing, and reporting; Program evaluation and consumer satisfaction surveys; Program monitoring and audits; Consumer protection functions including resolution procedures, data review, contractor management, installation standards, continuous improvement; Marketing, education, and outreach, including the funding of local governments and place-based organizations to assist with these activities; Implementation contract costs not including rebates and costs for activities directly related to delivery of rebates; Contractor training; Activities to improve access to rebates, facilitating leverage of private funds and financing mechanisms (e.g., loan loss reserves, interest rate reductions) where beneficial to efficiency and/or electrification projects; Technical assistance
2. **Aggregator:** An entity that engages with multiple single-family homes and/or multifamily buildings for the purpose of combining or streamlining projects as allowed by the State.
3. **Contract Phase:** Rebates Program segments 1A-2D as identified in Table 2.
4. **Contractor:** The successful offeror who is the signor of the contract for the work requirements specified in this document.
5. **Disadvantaged Community:** A low-income household located within an area identified by the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST).

6. DOE: United States Department of Energy.
7. Funding Tranche: Predefined portion of total rebate funds to be released upon satisfaction of minimum expenditure targets or minimums as defined in the Rebates Program ALRD.
8. Implementation Blueprint: Part of the Rebate Programs application that includes the following components: Community Benefits Plan, Education and Outreach Strategy, Consumer Protection Plan, Utility Data Access Plan, Privacy and Security Risk Assessment, Market Transformation Plan.
9. Offeror: An entity submitting proposals for this solicitation. Used when referring to the solicitation phase and requirements for proposal content and submittals.
10. Rebate Programs: Collective reference to the IRA Section 50121 - Home Efficiency Rebates State Programs and IRA Section 50122 - Home Electrification and Appliance Rebates State Programs.
11. SOW: Scope of Work
12. State or DEQ: State of Montana Department of Environmental Quality Energy Bureau.

1.3 REFERENCED DOCUMENTS

The following documents are referenced throughout this SOW and are to be used in both the solicitation and contract execution phase. They are provided here for convenience and represent the current versions as of the posting of this RFP. The program materials linked here or as updated by DOE, will be used in developing Offeror's proposed approach to planning, developing, applying for and implementing the Rebate Programs.

- [Home Energy Rebate Programs Requirements & Application Instructions](#)
- [Home Energy Rebate Programs – Administrative and Legal Requirements \(Early Administrative Funds\)](#)
- [Home Energy Rebate Programs - Administrative and Legal Requirements](#)
- [Federal Programs Approved for Categorical Eligibility](#)
- [Data Access Guidelines](#)
- [Data & Tools Requirements Guide](#)
- [Application Checklist](#)
- [Narrative Document Template – Section 50121](#)
- [Narrative Document Template – Section 50122](#)

1.4 SCOPE OF WORK

Offerors must provide their approach and ability to execute the Scope of Work and meet deliverables as defined below in the Method/Work Plan for Providing Services (see Section 2). The Method/Work Plan for Providing Services will be the means of scoring RFP responses to deliverables defined below. Please note that in order to retain a contractor relationship as defined in 2 CFR 200 Subpart D, the successful awardee will not submit program documents to DOE on behalf of the State, or serve as the Prime Applicant:

1.4.1 Strategic Planning (Contract Phase 1B in Table 2)

- 1.4.1.1** Conduct and present to the State research and analysis that will inform and guide the Rebate

Programs design and implementation in Montana. Research will include home energy efficiency market research, industry engagement meetings, Utility/Coop meetings, community engagement meetings, analysis, and other activities necessary to assist the State in determining its priorities and goals for rebate program funds, as well as Montana specific challenges that will need to be addressed. This research and analysis must be structured in the format of and in preparation for completion of the Narrative Document Template and Implementation Blueprint as identified in the Program Requirements and Application Instructions/Application Checklist.

1.4.1.2 Identify Rebate Programs design priorities and delivery mechanisms that best address Montana’s needs, and areas of emphasis identified in the Application Instructions (e.g., emphasis of specific energy efficiency technologies and technology packages, targeted housing stock/communities, etc.)

1.4.1.3 Develop a **Market Transformation Plan** that identifies strategies to spur long-term residential energy efficiency market transformation during and beyond the Rebate Programs performance period. Strategies may include workforce development programs, efficiency upgrade financing, improved supply chain/delivery mechanisms, coordinated utility and public incentive structures, voluntary model building/zero energy codes implementation. While it is understood that the Market Transformation Plan is not required for program rollout, the State would like to initiate the planning and drafting process for it in Contract Phase 1.

1.4.1.4 Identify National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA), Historic Preservation, Davis Bacon Act, Build America/Buy America, Prevailing Wage and/or other relevant regulatory aspects of program design that will need to be addressed in the Rebate Programs application.

1.4.1.5 Develop a **Community Benefits Plan** to address federal requirements for equity and environmental justice in the Rebate Programs. Include discussion surrounding the goal of the Justice40 initiative, that 40 percent of the overall benefits of certain Federal investments flow to disadvantaged communities and/or low-income households.

1.4.1.6 Strategic Planning Deliverables:

- A. Draft and present to the State an Engagement Plan for industry, community and Utility/Coop engagement that incorporates State feedback and that addresses elements identified in 1.4.1.1 through 1.4.1.5 above;
- B. Implementation of engagement plan, including coordination and management of virtual and in-person stakeholder meetings;
- C. Draft Strategic Planning Report summarizing outcomes from stakeholder engagement, applicable federal regulatory requirements and planning elements identified in 1.4.1.1 through 1.4.1.5 above;
- D. Draft Market Transformation Plan;
- E. Draft Community Benefits Plan;
- F. Presentation(s) to the State summarizing the findings in Deliverables C-E; and
- G. Finalize versions of Deliverables C-E, after incorporating feedback and guidance from the State.

1.4.2 Workforce Development Planning (Contract Phase 1B in Table 2)

1.4.2.1 Identify existing workforce programs, certifications, training entities and gaps as they relate to

the capacity to deliver rebate program offerings in the state and sustain market transformation goals; identify job categories with shortages; develop strategy for recruiting and filling these gaps (e.g., vocational schools, MT Department of Labor and Industry registered apprenticeship programs, Office of Public Instruction (OPI) Career and Technical Education, Accelerate Montana Rapid Training Programs, Tribal/community and other colleges, local labor organizations, high schools).

- 1.4.2.2** Identify workforce development scope(s) of work and opportunities for coordination using Rebate Programs administrative funds, forthcoming Training for Residential Energy Contractors (TREC) Grants (IRA section 50123), State Energy Program Plus (SEP Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act), a combination of all existing and/or other viable funding opportunities.
- 1.4.2.3** Engage local trades groups, unions, home contractor organizations, retailers, distributor-based manufacturer training programs and credentialing organizations, to determine what types of additional training is needed to develop contractor capacity or augment the existing residential workforce in support of Rebate Programs rollout and market transformation goals.
- 1.4.2.4** Research existing training providers, certification tracks, and tools to support workforce development efforts and the development of “Qualified Contractor” lists.
- 1.4.2.5** Establish tracking tools and/or protocols for the reporting of Rebate Program workforce development impacts that align with the Financial Assistance Reporting Checklist (FARC).
- 1.4.2.6** Develop a plan for addressing federal requirements for equity and environmental justice as part of a workforce development strategy, including strategies that support good-paying jobs with a free and fair choice to join a union.
- 1.4.2.7** Workforce Development Planning Deliverables:
 - A. Draft and present to the State a plan for stakeholder engagement that incorporates feedback from the State as well as elements identified in 1.3.2.1 through 1.3.2.6 above;
 - B. Implement stakeholder engagement plan, including coordination and management of virtual and in-person meetings where appropriate;
 - C. Draft Workforce Development Report summarizing outcomes of stakeholder engagement, applicable federal regulatory requirements and elements identified in 1.3.2.1 through 1.3.2.6 above;
 - D. Presentation(s) to the State on findings in Deliverable C; and
 - E. Finalize Deliverable C, after incorporating feedback and guidance from the State.

1.4.3 Coordinated Program Delivery Planning (Contract Phase 1B in Table 2)

- 1.4.3.1** Engage relevant stakeholders such as local government, Montana Weatherization Assistance Program (MT WAP) administrators and training entities, community-based organizations (HRDC network, low-income advocacy groups, public interest organizations etc.), utilities, financiers, HVAC and building products distributors, program implementers and/or aggregators, existing and other federal programs in the pipeline, to evaluate and provide recommendations for how and when braiding or other co-delivery of resources would be most effective. The capacity to provide coordinated measures that maximize cost savings, comfort benefits, and energy savings is of particular interest to the State.

- 1.4.3.2** Identify protocols, partnerships, and funding opportunities for the mitigation of structural or contaminant related issues in low to moderate income housing that is beyond the scope of direct Rebate Programs funding. Planning will address at a minimum the presence of asbestos, lead, mold, deferred roofing and/or other structural repairs in homes where their presence is prohibitive to building shell and other energy conservation work.
- 1.4.3.3** Identify roles of investor-owned utilities and rural electric cooperatives in Rebate Program implementation, as well as the mechanisms for pre-and-post-retrofit usage data conveyance in compliance with the **Data Access Guidelines** and as expressed in the **Utility Data Access Plan**.
- 1.4.3.4** Begin initial conversations with Tribal entities that may receive separate allocations of Section 50122 rebate funds (more detail available in the Home Electrification and Appliance Rebate Programs portion of the Rebate Programs application instructions) and provide recommendations for coordinated delivery with Tribal programs.
- 1.4.3.5** Identify quality assurance protocols and resources to guide and ensure effective, high-quality installation work and customer satisfaction (e.g., NREL Standard Work Specifications, in-person or remote final inspections by certified third party inspectors, etc.). This information will inform development of the **Consumer Protection Plan** that will be submitted as part of the Implementation Blueprint and will identify at a minimum, the means of collecting and responding to consumer feedback, conflict resolution protocols and mechanisms for enforcement (i.e., removal from qualified contractor list).
- 1.4.3.6** Identify tracking mechanisms for reporting and eligibility determination as outlined in the **Data and Tools Requirements Guide**, including but not limited to methods of interacting with and utilizing DOE's Application Program Interface (API), categorical eligibility programs, mobile applications, vendor interface software, etc. Identify data privacy and security risks as required for the **Privacy and Security Risk Assessment**, to be submitted as part of the Implementation Blueprint.
- 1.4.3.7** Manage any required IT data security reviews with State IT Services Division and outline measures necessary to ensure compliance with State and/or DOE data security protocols.
- 1.4.3.8** Conduct research on standards, energy modeling platforms, and best practices of standing up energy efficiency rebate programs. Of particular interest to the State is the capacity to address the house as a system, including indoor air quality and comfort improvements, as well as guard against scopes of work that result in unintended operational cost consequences for the building occupants.
- 1.4.3.9** Coordinated Program Delivery Planning Deliverables:
- A. Draft and present to the State a plan for stakeholder engagement that incorporates feedback from the State as well as elements identified in 1.4.3.1 through 1.4.3.7 above;
 - B. Implement stakeholder engagement plan, including coordination and management of virtual and in-person meetings where appropriate;
 - C. Draft Coordinated Program Delivery Report summarizing outcomes of stakeholder engagement, applicable federal regulatory requirements and elements identified in 1.4.3.1 through 1.4.3.7 above;
 - D. Draft responses for "Pre-Launch Data Details" and data points that will be collected and reported on for each rebate transaction as identified in the

- Data and Tools Requirements Guide;
- E. Draft the Utility Data Access Plan;
- F. Draft Consumer Protection Plan;
- G. Draft Privacy and Security Risk Assessment;
- H. Presentation(s) to the State summarizing the findings in Deliverables C-G; and
- I. Finalized versions of Deliverables C-F, after incorporating feedback and guidance from the State.

1.4.4 Consumer Outreach and Education Planning (Contract Phase 1B in Table 2)

1.4.4.1 Determine most effective educational and marketing strategies and materials to successfully implement the Rebate Programs, as well as the most effective mechanisms of dissemination across demographic types, with a focus on disadvantaged and low-income households and communities as identified in the Climate and Environmental Justice Screening Tool (CEJST) map overlay. This information will be conveyed in Rebate Program application materials via the **Education and Outreach Strategy**.

1.4.4.2 Develop internet-based savings calculators or other public-facing resources that allow the public and industry stakeholders to quantify the cost effectiveness, operational cost implications and carbon reduction impacts of electrification and other rebate measures using Montana-specific data.

1.4.4.3 Identify and/or develop eligible equipment efficiency ratings and references that are easily understood and applicable across federal tax-credit and rebate program requirements.

1.4.4.4 Engage multi-family property owners and managers to identify optimal Rebate Programs structure to encourage participation. Of emphasis are low-income multifamily owners/operators and low to moderate income multifamily owners/operators and the incorporation of “aggregator” organizations or businesses as appropriate.

1.4.4.5 Identify outreach opportunities to facilitate the inclusion of categorically eligible households in Rebate Programs participation.

1.4.4.6 Evaluate options for call centers, mobile applications, or other centralized rebate information, application resources, and/or eligibility tracking mechanisms.

1.4.4.7 Consumer Outreach and Education Planning Deliverables:

- A. Draft and present to the State a stakeholder engagement plan that incorporates feedback from the State as well as elements identified in 1.4.4.1 through 1.4.4.6 above;
- B. Implement stakeholder engagement plan, including coordination and management of virtual and in-person meetings where appropriate;
- C. Draft Consumer Outreach and Education Report summarizing outcomes of stakeholder engagement, applicable federal regulatory requirements and elements identified in 1.4.4.1 through 1.4.4.6 above;
- D. Draft Education and Outreach Strategy;
- E. Presentation(s) to the State summarizing the findings in Deliverables C-D; and

- F. Finalize versions of Deliverables C-D, after incorporating feedback and guidance from the State

1.4.5 Rebate Programs Application Management (Contract Phase 1B in Table 2)

- 1.4.5.1** Draft and assemble all required application materials in alignment with requirements identified in the Home Energy Rebate Programs Requirements and Application Instructions, including the Narrative Document Template and Implementation Blueprint.
- 1.4.5.2** Seek and incorporate from the State input in decision making, reviewing drafts, and final conveyance of program design aspects.
- 1.4.5.3** In coordination with the State, develop responses to DOE questions, revisions, and request(s) for re-submittals of the application and associated documents.
- 1.4.5.4** Rebate Programs Application Management Deliverables:
 - A. Draft and present to the State a complete Rebate Programs Application; and
 - B. Finalize Rebate Programs Application, after incorporating feedback and guidance from the State and addressing any DOE based questions or objections.

1.4.6 Implementation and Program Administration (Contract Phases 2A through 2D in Table 2)

The capacity for program implementation and administration by the Offeror(s) selected under this RFP, including any sub-contractors, is a key consideration in the RFP. Integration between the design and delivery aspects of these programs is a necessary outcome with respect to program continuity.

After approval of the Home Energy Rebate Programs application and Implementation Blueprint by DOE, the State will undertake a phased approach to rebate programs implementation and administration based on programmatic milestones and funding tranches identified by DOE and laid out in Table 2. The satisfaction of budgetary and programmatic milestone for each contract phase will trigger a contract and budget review/modification process for the subsequent funding tranche. This process will allow for the contractual and budgetary incorporation of expenditures and program design aspects from the previous contract phase, as well as allow for modifications based on program performance and/or observed deficiencies. The State may, at its will and as allowed in the contract, elect to terminate the contract rather than modify it at each funding tranche due to failure(s) of the contractor to satisfy DOE requirements and/or meet the needs of the State.

The State seeks to work collaboratively with the Offeror(s) in the design phase of the programs (through contract phase 1B) in order build a program that will best meet the needs of the state and achieve the overarching program outcomes identified in Section 1.1. Because of the inherent difficulties in developing a cost proposal and holistic set of deliverables for programs that have yet to be fully developed, the Implementation and Program Administration portion of this RFP will be scored with an emphasis on the level of thought and sophistication evident in the Method/Workplan for Providing Services that address the deliverables in 4.6.6.6, as well as a more specific set of program related questions (please see section 2.1.3 for additional Implementation and Administration questions).

- 1.4.6.1** Implement the Rebate Programs on behalf of and in coordination with the State in accordance with the Rebate Programs Application developed under Section 1.4.5, and as approved by DOE.

- 1.4.6.2** Ensure Rebate Programs alignment with low-income and low-income multi-family expenditure targets set forth in the Administrative and Legal Requirements Document.
- 1.4.6.3** Conduct annual reviews of the Workforce Development Report, Implementation Blueprint and/or Narrative Application Document to adjust implementation systems as necessary to maximize program success.
- 1.4.6.4** Conduct ongoing internal and program-wide assessments to ensure that best practices surrounding mitigation of waste, fraud and abuse of Rebate Programs funds are in place and functioning as intended.
- 1.4.6.5** Manage any required IT related data security reviews with the State IT Services Division and ensure compliance with State and/or DOE data security protocols.
- 1.4.6.6** Draft and assemble all required programmatic compliance and reporting documents as identified by DOE, including but not limited to:
- A. Independent or DOE-led impact and process evaluations in alignment with section 4.1.7.3 of the Application Instructions (or as modified).
 - B. Ongoing program performance reporting in accordance with and via the Federal Assistance Reporting Checklist (FARC) and as outlined in the Data and Tools Requirements portion of the Rebate Programs application.
 - C. Comply with data security protocols and safeguards that protect participant information from unwanted, malicious, or fraudulent use as identified in the Privacy and Security Risk Assessment.
 - D. Comply with and monitor internal controls that are in place to protect against fraud and abuse from within the proposer's organization/business, as well as their interaction with State controls.
- 1.4.6.7** Implementation and Program Administration Deliverables:
- A. Management of the Rebate Programs implementation and administration as outlined in the original or amended application and associated documents and in alignment with elements identified in 1.4.6.1 through 1.4.6.6 above.
 - B. Ensure that administrative expenditures, as defined in section 1.2 above, do not exceed, and are not projected to exceed, the 20% cap of total expenditures for the duration of the Rebate Programs.
 - C. Provide quarterly updates to the State for the duration of the Rebate Programs that cover at a minimum: progress made within the last quarter, budget to actual expenditures, planning updates (if any) for the upcoming quarter, projected budget modifications (if any), coverage of potential risks and realized issues. Quarterly updates may require a review and update of the Strategic Planning Report, Workforce Development Report, Coordinated Program Delivery Report and Consumer Outreach and Education Report.

SECTION 2: OFFEROR QUALIFICATIONS

2.1 OFFEROR QUALIFICATIONS

To enable the State to determine the capabilities of an Offeror to perform the services specified in the Limited Solicitation, Offeror shall respond to the following regarding its ability to meet the State's requirements. **THE RESPONSE, "(OFFEROR'S NAME) UNDERSTANDS AND WILL COMPLY," IS NOT APPROPRIATE FOR THIS SECTION.**

NOTE: Each item must be thoroughly addressed. Offerors taking exception to any requirements listed in this section may be found nonresponsive or be subject to point deductions.

2.1.1 Company Profile and Relevant Past Projects. Offeror shall provide documentation establishing that the company(s) submitting the proposal has/have the qualifications to provide the services specified in this RFP. Offeror shall provide a general description of the firm(s) including the primary source of business, organizational structure, and size. Offeror shall provide a brief description of past projects that are relevant to this Solicitation and that collectively demonstrate the organization(s) capacity.

2.1.2 References. Offeror shall provide three references that are currently using or have previously used services of the type proposed in this Solicitation. The references may include state, federal, or other government entities, private businesses, or universities for whom the offeror, preferably within the last 5 years, has successfully provided services similar to those covered under this RFP. At a minimum, the offeror shall provide the company/entity name, location where the services were provided, contact person(s), contact telephone number, e-mail address, and a complete description of the services provided, and dates of service. These references may be contacted to verify the offeror's ability to fulfil the contract. The State reserves the right to use any information or additional references deemed necessary to establish the ability of the offeror to fulfil the contract. Negative references and/or unreachable references may be grounds for proposal disqualification.

2.1.3 Method/Work Plan for Providing Services. **PLEASE LIMIT YOUR METHOD.WORK PLAN RESPONSE TO 25 PAGES OR LESS.** Offeror shall provide a work plan and the methods to be used that will convincingly demonstrate to the State what the offeror intends to do; the timeframes necessary to accomplish the work; and how the work will be accomplished to meet the contract requirements detailed in Section 1. Offeror must specifically address each of the deliverables as defined in this RFP and establish the extent of collaboration with DEQ staff and which tasks and work products would fall exclusively to the offeror. Additionally, for the Implementation and Program Administration section (1.4.6), please address the more specific set of program design questions below in your response. The intent of this additional questioning is to establish the level of relevant experience and forethought present in the Offeror's organization(s) in order to better inform the State's selection and ensure a seamless transition from design to implementation and administration of the programs.

2.1.3.1 Please describe the general approach you would recommend for streamlining Quality Assurance processes for scopes of work in the Home Electrification and Appliance Rebate Programs.

2.1.3.2 Do you recommend increasing the maximum rebate amount available for each low-income household below 80% AMI? If so, what increase would you recommend and how would you ensure that more than 100% of the project cost is not covered?

2.1.3.3 Understanding that the measured approach to energy savings under the Home Efficiency

Programs are a means to increase accountability as well as validate anticipated cost savings and carbon use intensity reductions, please outline the steps you envision for a timely rollout of measured savings rebates in Montana.

2.1.3.4 Please describe tenant protections you would recommend employing to ensure that rebate program benefits accrue to low-income renters.

2.1.3.5 How will your program measure, report, and verify that, for multifamily building installations, at least 50% of households have incomes <80% AMI, or between 80-150% AMI?

2.1.3.6 How would you incorporate contractor standards for:

- Cultural competency;
- Using energy modeling software to avoid energy bill increases; and,
- Consumer education on using new equipment.

2.1.4 Staff Qualifications and Experience. Offeror shall provide a summary of qualifications, work experience, education, and skills for all personnel that will be directly involved to complete the work under this RFP. Of particular interest to the State is the capacity of the offeror to work collaboratively with State staff on key programmatic decision making and in the development of operational protocols that work well within existing state IT, fiscal and other administrative functions.

2.1.5 Project Schedule. The Offeror must submit a schedule for project completion identifying all activities and interim deliverables with a completion date no later than 9/30/2031. Please note that time is of the essence when transitioning from program design and application submittal to implementation of the program as approved by DOE. Offeror shall also demonstrate their ability to maintain quality under tight timeframes.

SECTION 3: COST PROPOSAL/PAYMENT SCHEDULE

3.1 COST PROPOSAL

The maximum budgets allocated to Phase 1 is \$824,751 for the Home Efficiency Rebate Program and \$824,758 for the Home Electrification and Appliance Rebate Program. Due to the number of potential variables in scope and approach of each proposer, cost information must be presented on a Task Order Basis (hourly rates) with an estimated total amount for the completion of each task (1.4.1-1.4.6). The Implementation and Program Administration cost proposal will include a ratio method scoring component based on the amount entered in Table 3, as well as qualitative scoring component. Table 3 below represents the minimum required cost information. Because assumptions made in the development of cost estimates are informative of the level of experience and sophistication of thought present in the proposer's organization, Montana DEQ would encourage proposers to outline the program design assumptions used in developing cost proposals and include this as support documentation to Table 3. This support documentation will be scored based on qualitative criteria outlined in the Basis of Evaluation document (superior response, 90-100% of points; Good response, 75-80% of points, etc). Cost estimates for the performance of each task are a mandatory component of an RFP response and would be cause for disqualification if they, in aggregate, exceed budgeted amounts for

each program. Because the Rebate Programs are to be managed and invoiced as distinct programs, please present cost proposals for each task by program.

The State requires that invoices for work performed are submitted on a quarterly basis and that a brief status report is provided in support of the charges contained in it. It is the responsibility of the proposer to maintain documentation in support of charges submitted for payment that are in-line with accepted accounting best practices and applicable OMB guidance (including but not limited to 2 CFR 200 as amended by 2 CFR Part 910). Cost proposals may include contingency funds.

Offeror’s cost proposal must be by task and include all costs associated with completion of the work, to include staff wages, benefits, overhead costs, and any direct costs. The State will not be monitoring or maintaining costs at a detailed level.

TABLE 3 – MINIMUM REQUIRED COST PROPOSAL INFORMATION

	Task Description	Anticipated Due Date	Section 50121 Cost Proposal	Section 50122 Cost Proposal
A	Program Design			
1	1.4.1: Detailed plan for initial Rebate Programs strategic planning, timeline, and budget.		\$	\$
2	1.4.2: Detailed plan for Rebates Program workforce development planning, timeline, and budget.		\$	\$
3	1.4.3: Detailed plan for coordinated program delivery, with timeline and budget.		\$	\$
4	1.4.4: Detailed plan for consumer outreach and education activities, timeline, and budget.		\$	\$
5	1.4.5: Detailed plan for application management and submittal, with timeline, and budget.		\$	\$
6				
7		Total Program Design Cost Proposal	\$	\$
8		Combined Program Design Cost Proposal, (for scoring purposes)	\$	
B	Program Implementation			
9	1.4.6 Implementation and Program Administration		\$	\$
10		Total Program Implementation Cost Proposal	\$	\$
11		Combined Program Implementation Cost Proposal, (for scoring purposes)	\$	

3.2 PAYMENT SCHEDULE

The State shall pay Contractor upon approval of quarterly invoices submitted with supporting documentation that is in-line with accepted accounting best practices and applicable OMB guidance. Contractor will include a brief status report with each quarterly invoice that outlines activities and progress made toward the completion of milestones and deliverables. Contractor invoices, along with attachments for the quarter must be received no later than the 5th day of the month after the end of the preceding quarter.

SECTION 4: EVALUATION PROCESS

5.1 BASIS OF EVALUATION

The Company Profile and Relevant Past Projects, Method/Work Plan of Providing Services, and Staff Qualifications and Experience and Schedule portions of the proposal will be evaluated based on the following Scoring Guide and Evaluation Criteria. The References shall be pass or fail and the Cost Proposal will be evaluated based on the formula set forth below. Any offeror receiving a "fail" for portions of the proposal evaluated on a pass/fail basis will be eliminated from further consideration. The total available points for this RFP are 3000 with an additional 150 points awarded for agreeing to comply with Equal Pay for Montana Women.

SCORING GUIDE

In awarding points to the evaluation criteria, the evaluator/evaluation committee will consider the following guidelines:

Superior Response (90-100%): A superior response is an exceptional reply that completely and comprehensively addresses all the requirements of the RFP. The response may include additional information and/or recommendations not required by the RFP that are relevant to DEQ's assessment of the ability of the Offeror to provide the services outlined in the RFP.

Good Response (75-89%): A good response clearly meets all the requirements of the RFP and demonstrates in an unambiguous and concise manner a thorough knowledge and understanding of the project, with no deficiencies noted.

Fair Response (60-74%): A fair response minimally meets most requirements set forth in the RFP. The Offeror demonstrates some ability to comply with guidelines and requirements of the project, but knowledge of the subject matter is limited.

Failed Response (59% or less): A failed response does not meet the requirements set forth in the RFP. The offeror has not demonstrated sufficient knowledge of the subject matter.

COST PROPOSAL RATIO METHOD

Cost proposals will be scored based on a combination of separate cost proposals for Program Design (Sections 1.4.1 to 1.4.5) and cost proposals for Program Implementation (Section 1.4.6). Because of the inherent difficulties in developing a cost proposal for programs that have yet to be fully developed, the Program Implementation portion (Section 1.4.6) will include a ratio method scoring component, as well as a qualitative component as outlined in the Scoring Guide section above and in section 3.1 of the Cost Proposal document. For each cost proposal, the lowest overall cost receives the maximum allocated points. All other proposals receive a percentage of the points available based on their cost relationship to the lowest. Example: Total possible points for cost is 350. Offeror A's cost is \$20,000. Offeror B's cost is \$30,000. Offeror A would receive 350 points. Offeror B would receive 233 points ($\$20,000/\$30,000 = 66.6\%$) x 350 available points = 233 awarded points).

$$\frac{\text{Lowest Responsive Offer Total Cost}}{\text{This Offeror's Total Cost}} \times \text{number of available points} = \text{award points}$$

5.2 EVALUATION CRITERIA

The evaluation committee will review and evaluate the proposals according to the following criteria.

CRITERION	SCOPE OF WORK SECTION	TOTAL POINTS
References- Pass/Fail		
Complete contact information provided.	2.1.2	P/F
Non-Discrimination Against Firearms Entities- Pass/Fail		
	4	P/F
Company Profile and Relevant Past Projects- 15% of points for a possible 450 points		
Years in Business 6-10 = 30 additional points 1-5 = 20 points	2.1.1	50
Relevant Past Projects	2.1.1	400
Method/Work Plan for Providing Services- 45% of points for a possible 1,350 points		
Strategic Planning	1.4.1/2.1.3	130
Workforce Development Planning	1.4.2/2.1.3	130
Coordinated Program Delivery Planning	1.4.3/2.1.3	130
Consumer Outreach and Education Planning	1.4.4/2.1.3	130
Rebate Programs Application Management	1.4.5/2.1.3	130
Implementation and Program Administration	1.4.6/2.1.3	130
Implementation and Program Administration, Additional Questions	2.1.3.1- 2.1.3.6	210
Clarity of Proposals	2.1.3	120
Scope of Proposals – addressing all components	2.1.3	120
Thoroughness of Proposals – detail on each component	2.1.3	120
Staff Qualifications and Experience- 10% of points for a possible 300 points		
Relevant Qualifications & Education	2.1.4	150
Relevant Experience	2.1.4	150
Schedule- 10% of points for a possible 300 points		
On-time completion of Tasks	2.1.5	200
Demonstration of ability to maintain quality under tight timeframes	2.1.5	100
Cost Proposal- 20% of points for a possible 600 points		
Cost Proposal for Scope of Work Sections 1.4.1 to 1.4.5 (per Ratio Method)	1.4.1 to 1.4.5	500
Cost Proposal for Scope of Work Section 1.4.6 (per Ratio Method)	1.4.6	50
Cost Proposal for Scope of Work Section 1.4.6 (per qualitative criteria outlined in the Scoring Guide section above and included as support documentation to the Cost Proposal)	1.4.6	50
TOTAL AVAILABLE POINTS		3,000

Executive Order, Equal Pay for Montana Women- Bonus Points for a possible 150 points		
Compliance with EO		150
TOTAL AVAILABLE POINTS INCLUDING BONUS		3,150