



NORTHEAST OHIO PUBLIC ENERGY COUNCIL

**REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS
DEMAND-SIDE MARKET ENTRY ADVISORY
SERVICES FOR THE
NORTHEAST OHIO PUBLIC ENERGY
COUNCIL (NOPEC)**

RFQ RELEASE DATE: JANUARY 14, 2012

RFQ DUE DATE: FEBRUARY 10, 2012 AT 4:00 P.M. (E.S.T.)

**Chuck Keiper, Executive Director
Northeast Ohio Public Energy Council
31320 Solon Road, Suite 20
Solon, Ohio 44139
Phone: (440) 248-1992 Fax: (440) 248-1986
ckeiper@nopecinfo.org**

INTRODUCTION

The Northeast Ohio Public Energy Council (NOPEC) is a regional council of governments under Chapter 167 of the Ohio Revised Code formed in 2000 as a result of the 1999 Ohio electric deregulation law (Senate Bill 3). Representing approximately half a million residential and small commercial electric customers, NOPEC is the largest and most successful public retail energy aggregator in the United States and has provided savings to its customers in excess of \$180 million over the past decade. The Wall Street Journal has written that Ohio is the state in which consumers have fared best under electricity deregulation, singling out NOPEC's discounted electricity program for special mention.

NOPEC currently offers both electric and natural gas opt-out aggregation service to 134 communities in 10 northeast Ohio counties and is governed by a General Assembly comprised of representatives from each member community. The operations of the organization are overseen by a Board of Directors (Board) made up of one NOPEC elected representative from each of the counties within the NOPEC footprint. The Board has spent significant time and energy in the study of changes, challenges, and opportunities in the demand-side energy marketplace. As a result of that study, the Board wishes to identify and investigate further specific opportunities to provide NOPEC customers with savings garnered from that marketplace.

As NOPEC moves forward to enter the demand-side energy marketplace and contemplates the very best product offerings that can be designed to obtain additional savings for NOPEC customers and member communities through better management and reduction of energy consumption, it wishes to identify an experienced demand-side market entry advisor.

The purpose of this RFQ is to identify an individual or organization capable of assisting NOPEC with all aspects of a demand-side market entry of this type. Services to be provided would include, but are not limited to opportunity identification, partner identification, program design and evaluation, pilot project identification, grants management, and project reporting.

SCOPE OF SERVICES

NOPEC is requesting qualification statements from qualified individuals and firms to provide Demand-Side Market Entry Advisory Services for its strategic entry into the Demand-Side Energy Marketplace. Qualification statements will be evaluated by the NOPEC Board. Respondents should include a thorough discussion of their experience, background, and qualifications in the following areas:

1. History with similar projects.
2. Team member(s) and individual backgrounds.
3. Familiarity with all requisite components of demand-side energy market entry.
4. Familiarity with program design, implementation, and evaluation.
5. Capability of respondent to work smoothly across a 10 county service area.
6. Financial capability of respondent to manage/track expenditures as appropriate.
7. Respondent familiarity with potential partners for NOPEC's entry into this market.
8. Respondent familiarity with NOPECs service area and member communities.
9. Team building across multiple partners and business groups.

10. Respondent familiarity with financial opportunities which may assist in the reduction of market risk assumption by NOPEC.

NOPEC intends to retain a competent and qualified individual/firm who will be available to assist with the identification, development, design, implementation, and evaluation of market entry opportunities. NOPEC intends to enter into the demand-side energy market place carefully, thoughtfully, and as soon as is reasonably practical and prudent. One or more individuals/firms may be selected to provide such services.

GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. Notice is hereby given that NOPEC will receive sealed requests for qualifications for market entry advisory services. **Requests will be received until 4:00 p.m. (E.S.T.) on February 10, 2012 at the NOPEC offices, 31320 Solon Road, Suite 20, Solon, Ohio 44139.**
2. Proposals must be received in the NOPEC offices no later than the time and date specified. Proposals received after the specified time and date will not be accepted and will be returned unopened to the proposer.
3. All proposals must be signed by a proper official of the proposing firm. Telephone, telegraph, e-mailed, or fax proposals will not be accepted. After all proposals have been received and logged, NOPEC reserves the right to request a digital version of each submission.
4. By submitting this proposal, the proposer certifies under penalty of perjury that he/she has not acted in collusion with any other proposer or potential proposer.
5. Under no circumstances will NOPEC be responsible for any costs incurred by any proposers in responding to this RFQ.
6. Proposers may be required to be interviewed by representatives of NOPEC.
7. Proposers are not to contact, either directly or indirectly, members of the NOPEC Board of Directors relating to this RFQ.

OWNERSHIP OF DOCUMENTS

1. Any and all documents and ideas developed and used in the performance of this project are the sole property of NOPEC for any purpose without additional compensation to the Proposer. This includes, but is not limited to, paper and electronic documents/records as well as any intellectual properties, ideas, or marketable concepts.

EEOC COMPLIANCE

1. All parties to this proposal shall assure that no person shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or otherwise discriminated against, in connection with the award and performance of this RFQ on the grounds of race, creed, color, disability, national origin or sex. Such language will be included in any agreements associated with this RFQ.

RIGHT TO ACCEPT AND REJECT

In connection with this Request for Qualifications, NOPEC reserves the right to:

1. Cancel this solicitation;
2. Reject any and all Proposals;
3. Request an oral interview with, or request additional information from, individuals or firms prior to final selection of the demand-side market advisor;
4. Select any firm or combination of firms for contract negotiations which, in the NOPEC's judgment, will best meet NOPEC's needs, regardless of any differences in estimated costs between the firm's and all others' proposals;
5. Negotiate a contract that covers selected parts of a Proposal, or a contract that will be interrupted for a period, or terminated;
6. Waive any technicalities and make any award(s) that is determined to be in the NOPEC's best interests.

AWARD/AGREEMENT REQUIREMENTS

1. If NOPEC selects a successful Proposal, the Proposer will be required to enter into a contract with NOPEC based upon the materials submitted and any mutually agreeable negotiations completed by the parties.
2. NOPEC intends to enter an agreement with the successful Proposer, but is not obligated to do so.
3. The Proposer who is awarded the agreement is prohibited from subcontracting, assigning, transferring or otherwise disposing of the resulting agreement or its rights, title or interest therein to any other party without the prior written consent of NOPEC.

SUBMITTALS

1. A letter of interest.
2. History and fields of specialization of the Proposer.
3. Description of the size of the firm, the size of the firm's governmental and not-for-profit staff, the location of the office from which the work on this undertaking is to be performed and the number and qualifications of the professional staff to be employed in the work.
4. Provide the name, address, telephone and fax numbers of the firm and indicate the location of your firm's Ohio headquarters or office.
5. Provide the names, resumes and professional experience of individuals within your organization who will serve NOPEC as manager of the program. State the number of consecutive years the individuals have been employed by your organization as well as their employment history including title, position, business, affiliation and responsibilities.

6. Provide the name of individual who will represent the firm as the primary contact person on matters relating to the Proposal(s), including address, telephone and fax numbers, if different than 4(b).
7. Submit references of relevant Ohio governmental agencies which your company has served within the last five (5) years. The references should include the district's or agency's name and location, and the contact names, addresses and telephone numbers of the governmental agency which you have served.
8. Please provide a copy of your firm's most recent audited financial statement, if your firm is a publicly-held company. If your firm is a non-publicly held company, NOPEC may request a copy of your firm's most recent audited financial statement during the evaluation process.
9. Please provide information relating to any court finding or documentation, or federal or state regulatory agency finding from January 1, 2007 to date, concerning the violation of any federal or state law or regulation by the firm or any officer, member, partner or principal of your company.
10. Include any additional information concerning the Proposer which NOPEC should take into account in making its selection.
11. Project history, including energy demand-side projects or agency services provided of similar nature completed within the last five years.
12. Scope of services to be delivered.
13. Non-Collusion Affidavit.
14. An original and 1 copy of the proposal shall be submitted. The original and copy shall be submitted in a sealed envelope marked:

“RFQ FOR DEMAND-SIDE MARKET ENTRY ADVISORY SERVICES”

and shall be addressed to the attention of:

Mr. Chuck Keiper, Executive Director
Northeast Ohio Public Energy Council
31320 Solon Road, Suite 20
Solon, Ohio 44139

NON-COLLUSION AFFIDAVIT

STATE OF _____)

) SS:

COUNTY OF _____)

Proposal Identification _____

Vendor _____, being first duly sworn, deposes

and says he is _____ (sole owner, partner, president, secretary,
etc. of _____,

the party making the foregoing Proposal; that such Proposal is not made in the interest of or on behalf of any undisclosed person, partnership, company, association, organization or corporation; that such Proposal is genuine and not collusive or sham; that said Proposer has not directly or indirectly induced or solicited any other Proposer to put in a false or sham Proposal, and has not directly or indirectly colluded, conspired, connived, or agreed with any Proposer or anyone else to put in a sham Proposal, or that any one shall refrain from submitting a Proposal; that said Proposer has not in any manner directly or indirectly, sought by agreement, communication, or conference with anyone to fix the Proposal price of said Proposal or of any other Proposal, or to fix any overhead, profit, or cost element of such Proposal price, or of that of any other Proposal, or to secure any advantage against the public body awarding the Contract or anyone interested in the proposed Contract; that all statements contained in such Proposal are true; and further, that said Proposer has not directly or indirectly, submitted his Proposal price or any breakdown thereof, or the contents thereof, or divulged information or data relative thereto, or paid and will not pay a fee in connection therewith, to any corporation, partnership, company, association, organization, Proposer depository, or to any member or agent thereof, or to any other individual except to such person or persons as have a partnership or other financial interest with said Proposer in this general business.

SIGNED _____

TITLE _____

Sworn to and subscribed before me this _____ day of _____, 2012.

Notary Public

(SEAL)