QUESTIONS FOR SUMMARIES – ORGANIZATION

Name _____

Date _____

Title _____

Organization _____

Phone _____

Email _____

The Energy Trust of Oregon is the result of 1999 electric utility restructuring legislation in Oregon. The Trust was formally established in 2000 and is responsible for spending the 3% public benefit fund that results from the legislation. Approximately $40 million a year is available for energy efficiency, with another $30 million for use for renewable energy, low-income weatherization and housing and conservation in schools. The Trust is a nonprofit organization that is independent of the State of Oregon but also fully and regularly accountable to the Public Utility Commission of Oregon and ultimately the legislature.

Administrative Processes (Only for orgs with this best practice)

1. What is the underlying philosophy of this organization and reason for existence (only pertains to non utilities)

2. Is this organization focused on market transformation, resource acquisition, pollution prevention, securing cost savings for customers, or some other objective—or combination of objectives? .(How is this orientation manifested in their structure or processes? (Otherwise, what difference does it make?)

3. What is the origin of funding (only ask non utilities)

4. To whom is this organization accountable? What procedures are used to assure these entities that the organization is meeting its objectives?

What has been the experience with these procedures? (E.g., annual reports; annual meetings; quarterly board meetings; legislative audits, etc.? Form, frequency, type of folks involved?)

5. What is the decision-making or governing group for the energy efficiency effort? (Probe: How are board (governing group) members selected (i.e. funding representatives, appointed, internally developed, etc)?)

   Briefly describe the structure/composition/constituencies and how decisions are made?

   What is the role of staff versus the governing body in making decisions about planning and implementing programs (Probe:. How does the board approve individual projects, overall budget, budget by sector, etc)?

6. What is the staff size of the energy efficiency effort? (If more than just resource acquisition, define different areas of staff and numbers in each area?)

   Briefly describe the structure of staffing. (Categories include Support staff, project managers, program managers, skip executive staff.

   Are there any policies that your organization uses to attract, keep staff, ensure staff are effective?

7. What is your policy to conducting projects with staff vs. outsourcing? What program-related activities do you outsource? What is the role of contractors for the projects that you outsource? (Probe: planning/design, implementation, evaluation)

8. What were the key lessons learned in first six to twelve months of operation and how were they addressed.

9. What is your annual budget for energy efficiency: (probe: sectors, administrative versus program, evaluation, etc. (Focus on RA Also try and learn about other constraints they work under.)

10. What is the funding source for your RA energy efficiency efforts? (Probe: how has this changed over the course of the organizations efforts? What have been the key issues that led to the changes? What do you think has ensured that your funding continued?)

* Not sure this is important. What organizations do you look to for best practices on organizational structure?

Contracting and Financial Management (only for those orgs with this best practice)

11. What are the key internal financial controls you use? (probe: accounting and management auditing, data base of program expenses, savings values, etc.)

12. What has been your experience with vendors of program services, evaluation, marketing, public relations? (Have any of these been less effective than using internal staff?) (Real question is whether any have been **more** effective. ☺)Probe for the reasons behind the judgments offered—instances, data, etc., not just the judgments themselves. Also want to know whether they felt they paid market price or above/below to get those results. And how long they had to work with those vendors and how much they had to invest in oversight.)

13. What type of contracting mechanisms do you use, why do you use it, are there optimum approaches? (T&M, fixed price, T&M not to exceed, Sole Source, Short list of qualified contractors, Request for qualifications, Project negotiations) Multiple contracts. Staged contracts. Length of contracts and/or use of retainers.

    * Opinions of best practices in other organizations for financial matters

QUESTIONS FOR SUMMARIES – PROGRAMS

Name _____

Date _____

Title _____

Organization _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Program _____

Use a different sheet for each program in a given organization.

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Program Administration/Structure

1. How many staff, and how many contractors and how many of each contractors staff work on program X? (Has this changed over time?)

2. What is the annual participation rate? (Probe for specific definition of participation. Probe Has this changed over time?)

3. What is the annual budget? (Probe for allocation to administration, program incentives, evaluation, etc.?) (Probe: Has this changed over time?)

4. What are the key program components? (Make sure to get all of the following the delivery mechanisms, the incentives (if any), use of application forms or other mechanism, contractors, role of trade allies, etc.) (How have these changed over time?)

5. What are the criteria for funding a participant's project? (Screening for cost effectiveness? Prioritization? In-kind contributions? Other?)

   How do you balance among different market segments, actors, technologies, and strategies etc.

6. What has been you experience with different strategies to reduce the cost of implementing the program/conducting program activities? (Including the cost of reaching participants, evaluating the program, enhancing the program design, etc.)

7. What is the programs penetration? Estimated savings? Realization rate?

   (Need to be clear about what the base is. Probably need to have them tell us the target population and the estimated size of that population. Annual savings, savings to date, or lifetime savings? Basis for the realization rate?)

8. How is the program marketed, to whom, what is the amount spent on media buys, printing, etc? (How has that changed over time?)

9. What type of customer service do you provide in this program? (800 number, field rep visits, technical assistance, etc.)

10. Have you tracked customer satisfaction, what has been the response? (When, how, based on how many? (Need to distinguish survey data from anecdotal responses.)

11. What have been the primary tools you have used to control or reduce administrative costs in this program? (Have they been effective, if not why not?)

    What costs do you include in the category of admin costs for this program?

12. What would you say are the reasons that this program is successful?

13. Any reasons it would or would not transfer well to Oregon—Trust specifically?

    * Opinion of best program-related practices in other organizations

Evaluation

14. What type of program tracking, evaluation , verification, quality assurance procedures do you use for this program? (What is the frequency of using them? What type of process is involved?..etc) Is this done strictly by internal staff or is some part of this outsourced? With appropriate follow-up probing.)

    * Opinion of best tracking and evaluation practices in other organizations