

Energy Trust of Oregon

Request for Proposals:

Process Evaluation of the Production Efficiency Program

RFP Issued: **July 5, 2024**
Intent to Bid Due: **July 19, 2024**
Proposals Due: **August 5, 2024**

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About Energy Trust

Energy Trust is a nonprofit organization selected and overseen by the Oregon Public Utility Commission to help utility customers of Portland General Electric, Pacific Power, NW Natural, Cascade Natural Gas and Avista lower energy costs, increase energy savings and generate renewable energy. Since 2002, our cash incentives, technical support, education, and strategic partnerships have helped customers save billions of dollars on their energy bills and achieve their energy goals.

The cumulative impact of our leadership has been a contributing factor in keeping our state's energy costs as low as possible, adding renewable power to the grid from small and medium-scale projects, and building a sustainable energy future. More information about Energy Trust's background, funding sources, strategic and action plans, policies and programs are available on our website at www.energytrust.org/about.

Some of Energy Trust's requirements in this RFP and in any subsequent negotiating and/or contracting phases are driven by governing law, the provisions of our grant agreement with the OPUC (the OPUC Grant Agreement) and our funding agreements with each utility.

Introduction

Energy Trust of Oregon is seeking proposals to conduct a process evaluation of its Production Efficiency (PE) program ("the program"). The PE program offers financial incentives and technical services to industrial and agricultural businesses to improve the efficiency of their industrial and agricultural equipment, systems and processes in new and existing buildings. The program is market-driven and builds on existing market relationships, working through a variety of outreach channels including a network of trade allies, vendors and distributors, along with implementation staff who identify and deliver energy-saving projects for industrial and agricultural customers.

The PE program began in 2003 and has been implemented by a Program Management Contractor (PMC), Energy 350, since January 1, 2023. Prior to 2023, the program was implemented by Energy Trust staff with support from Program Delivery Contractors (PDCs) for individual tracks. Prior to 2021, Production Efficiency offered lighting measures as part of the program. Beginning in 2021, lighting for all commercial and industrial customers has been offered through Energy Trust's Business Lighting program, delivered by CLEAResult. Starting in 2024, industrial sites in the downstream portion of Business Lighting are managed by the Production Efficiency PMC, Energy 350.

As the prime contractor for Production Efficiency, Energy 350 partners with 14 other subcontractors to implement the Production Efficiency program. Beginning in 2019, the program also changed from hiring Allied Technical Assistance Contractors (ATACs) to conduct Technical Analysis Studies (TAS), to bringing those studies into the responsibilities of the PDCs.

The PE program is comprised of two main program tracks: Standard Industrial and Custom. Eligible customers can participate in one or both tracks. The Standard Industrial track offers prescriptive rebates and calculated incentives with wide-reaching applicability across industrial and agricultural market sectors. This track delivers savings from irrigation, compressed air, greenhouse, HVAC, and other prescriptive and calculated measures. The Standard Industrial track also includes lighting savings from lighting and lighting controls measures, offered through Downstream, Midstream and Direct Install delivery channels. The Midstream and Direct Install

Lighting delivery channels are managed by a PDC, CLEAResult, under Energy Trust’s Business Lighting program for commercial and industrial customers. Starting in 2024, industrial sites in the Downstream portion of Business Lighting are managed by the Production Efficiency PMC, Energy 350. This evaluation will include industrial downstream lighting customers who participated in 2024. Lighting that is managed under the Business Lighting program is not within the scope of this process evaluation.

The Custom track provides comprehensive capital upgrades and operations and maintenance (O&M) improvements delivered via one-on-one customer outreach and technical support. The PMC or its subcontractors performs technical analysis studies for custom projects to support customer and program investment decisions. Savings and incentive payments for Custom capital and O&M projects are calculated in the technical analysis study and verified after installation. In 2023, the program developed an O&M Optimization offering, with the goal of removing barriers to completing discrete O&M projects.

The Custom track also includes industrial Strategic Energy Management (SEM). Energy Trust introduced SEM in 2009 to help industrial facilities of all types and sizes implement a holistic approach to energy management. Through SEM, manufacturers can reduce energy use immediately and establish a strong foundation for future continuous energy improvement. The SEM track is being evaluated separately, and this process evaluation will focus only on how the program integrates SEM with its other services. Otherwise, this evaluation will take a comprehensive view of the program and its processes, and the experiences of its customers, allies, and market actors. Table 1 shows an overview of projects, sites, and savings by program track since 2022.

Table 1. 2022 to Present Projects, Sites and Savings by Program Track and Sub-Track

Year	Track	Sub-Track	Projects	Measures	Sites	Total kWh Savings	Total Therm Savings
2022 ¹	Custom	Custom	88	114	72	40,500,784	259,099
		Custom O&M	23	27	23	2,334,721	0
		SEM ²	49	51	47	24,388,469	383,273
	Standard Industrial	Green Rewind ³	27	27	17	43,153	0
		Small Industrial	376	583	301	17,725,403	644,405
2023	Custom	Custom	82	92	67	31,028,106	546,008
		Custom O&M	28	35	25	17,266,483	111,554
		SEM	42	42	40	17,966,142	502,329
	Standard Industrial	Green Rewind	28	32	15	44,826	0
		Small Industrial	450	583	368	28,058,035	559,998
2024	Custom	Custom	21	23	18	7,580,645	5,121
		Custom O&M	9	17	8	5,932,989	0
		SEM	31	31	29	9,322,238	535,531

¹ 2022 projects are included for context. This process evaluation will focus on 2023 and 2024 participants.

² SEM projects are shown for context. SEM participants will not be included in this process evaluation.

³ Green Rewind projects are shown for context. Green Rewind was discontinued after 2023, and Green Rewind participants will not be included in this process evaluation.

	Standard Industrial	Downstream Lighting⁴	35	104	34	11,306,465	0
		Small Industrial	203	293	179	13,499,633	172,080

Figure 1. Electric savings over time by major program track⁵

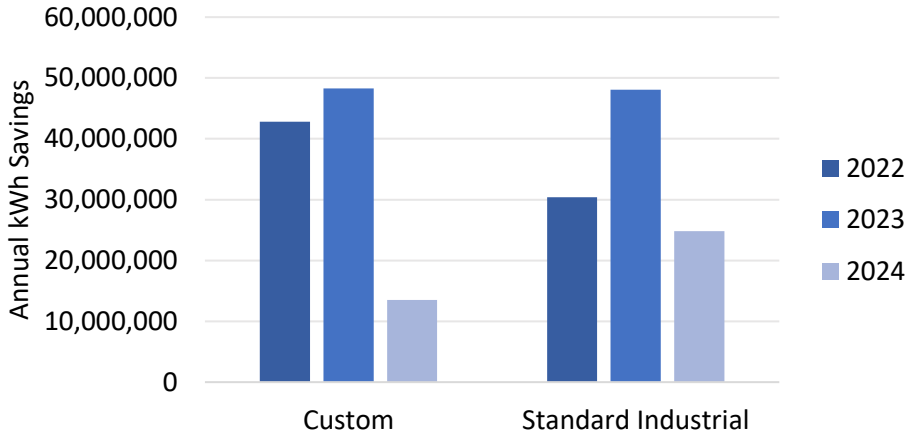
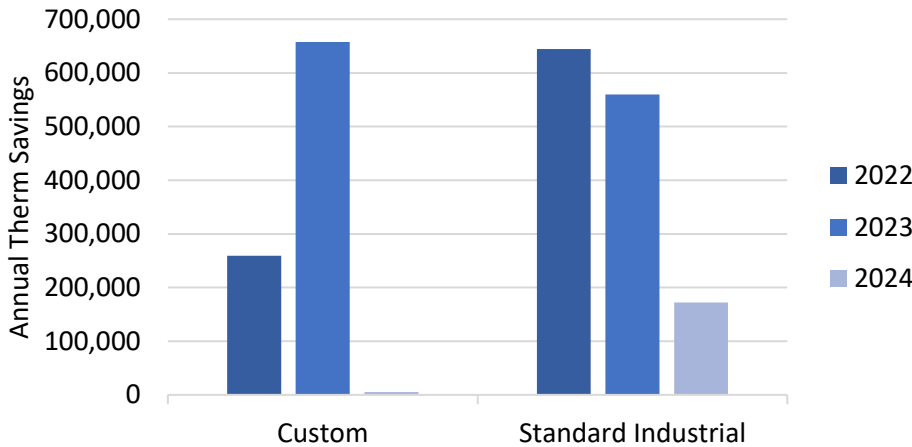


Figure 2. Gas savings over time by major program track⁶



The most recent process evaluation of the Production Efficiency program was completed in 2020, focusing on program years 2017-2018. Energy Trust also completed a process evaluation of the Business Lighting program in 2023, focusing on program year 2022.

For more background on Energy Trust’s Production Efficiency program, see “Industrial and agriculture sector highlights” sections in Energy Trust’s Annual Reports and previous program

⁴ Prior to 2024, downstream lighting projects were managed under the Business Lighting program. Only 2024 downstream lighting projects will be included in this process evaluation.

⁵ SEM savings are included within Custom for context, but are not within the scope of this evaluation.

⁶ 2024 data is through the month of June. Many Custom projects tend to be completed closer to the end of the year.

process evaluations on Energy Trust's website at: <https://www.energytrust.org/about/our-impact/reports-financials/>.

Research Objectives

Energy Trust performs process and impact evaluations on all its programs on a regular basis. The Production Efficiency program has evolved over time, changing from a PDC to a PMC model, changing to a new implementer, and transitioning to having lighting split out in the Business Lighting program in the time since the previous evaluation. This process evaluation will document key program changes since the last process evaluation; give an overview of the program's current structure, delivery and implementation strategy; assess the program's effectiveness in reaching and serving customers; and take a forward-looking approach to understand how the program can evolve and align with key drivers in the industrial and agricultural energy efficiency market, to continue to be successful in the future.

The goal of this process evaluation is to obtain feedback on program design and implementation that can be used by Energy Trust to deliver the Production Efficiency program more effectively and efficiently. The evaluation is anticipated to address the following questions:

Program History

- How has the transition from the PDC model to the PMC model, and to a new PMC, affected the program?
- How has the change to having a separate Business Lighting program affected the program's ability to achieve its goals?
- What recent changes have been made to the program, and what changes are planned for the next three years?
- What offerings, if any, has the program recently decided to discontinue or cease investigating?

Program Operations

- What successes has the program experienced in recent years? What challenges has the program encountered? How did they, or do they, plan to address them?
- Is communication between Energy Trust and the PMC effective and timely? Are the right people included in communications and program planning?
- How is the PMC managing its subcontractors? Are roles and responsibilities clearly defined, and is communication flowing well? How has subcontracting affected current operational processes such as program design, marketing, measure development, and outreach?
- What aspects of Energy Trust's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Operations Plan⁷ are most relevant to the PE program's work? What activities is the program doing to address these parts of the Operations Plan, and how is the program ensuring equity in its program offerings?
- How does the PE program support referrals and customer participation in other Energy Trust programs, such as the Business Lighting, Renewable Energy, and New Buildings programs, to achieve deep savings for customers?

⁷ Updated August 2023. <https://www.energytrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/2022-DEI-Plan.pdf>

- How does the PE program coordinate its different tracks (Custom, SEM, and Standard) to help customers achieve deep savings? How, if at all, could this coordination be improved?
- How can Energy Trust and/or the PMC improve processes to increase efficiency for the organization and equity and accessibility for customers?

Experience of Customers, Market Actors, and Collaborators

- What strategies is the program using to reach out to priority customers and trade allies, and how effective have those strategies been?
- What are the experiences of different customers (such as individual market segments, business sizes, etc.) when participating in various PE program offerings and services? What do they see as working well and what could be improved?
- What are customers' biggest challenges or barriers to implementing energy efficiency projects with the Production Efficiency Program? How could these be overcome?
- What key drivers exist for customers in their decisions about energy efficiency projects? Are there opportunities for the program to more directly address these?
- What are the current experiences of the various market actors interacting with the program – trade ally and non-trade ally contractors, trade ally and non-trade ally vendors, community-based organizations, etc. – and how might they be improved?
- How is the program working with utilities to promote offerings? What do they see as working well, and what could be improved?
- How is Energy Trust working with rural community-based organizations (CBOs) to promote agriculture and irrigation offerings? Is this collaboration enabling more measures to be completed?

Future Opportunities

- What are the primary market forces driving energy efficiency projects in the industrial and agriculture market segments right now? What additional drivers are anticipated over the next five years?
- What are the biggest opportunities—in terms of market segments, geographic areas, and technologies or measures—for the program over the next five years?
- What energy saving measures or services is the program developing? Does the program have the right mix of measures or offerings to achieve its goals?

Tasks

It is anticipated that the selected evaluator will be required to undertake the following major tasks for the process evaluation and the submitted proposal should address these topics.

Respondent should address each task in their technical proposal and describe their approach. Respondent does not need to belabor minor or administrative tasks like the kick-off meeting, reporting, or project management, but should instead focus their technical proposal on the core research tasks and methodologies and the prompts that are included in bold at the end of key tasks. In addition, proposals should identify any challenges the respondent foresees in implementing these tasks and recommend solutions. Lastly, proposals should indicate which research goals and objectives will be addressed by each evaluation task.

Task 1. Conduct Evaluation Kick-off and Develop Work Plan

The evaluator will meet with Energy Trust and PMC staff to present and discuss the proposed evaluation research plan. Discussion at the meeting will determine the final set of research questions to investigate. The meeting will also provide an opportunity to get acquainted with the program implementation teams and identify key staff responsible for different elements of the PE Program. The selected evaluator will provide a meeting agenda and send out notes to meeting attendees afterwards.

Based on comments and discussion during the kick-off meeting, the evaluator will develop a final work plan that will be the basis for all evaluation activities. The work plan will include:

- Evaluation goals and research questions
- Evaluation methodologies
- Sampling plans for interviews with trade allies, non-trade ally contractors, and participants. *See Tasks 4 and 6 for more details on sampling plans*
- Recruitment and communications plan
- Schedule of tasks and deliverables

The evaluator will provide the draft work plan to the Energy Trust Evaluation Project Manager for review and incorporate feedback before finalization.

Deliverables:

- Kick-off meeting agenda
- Notes from kick-off meeting documenting decisions
- Draft and final work plan

Task 2. Review Program Documents and Activity

Energy Trust will gather, and the evaluator will review, program documents including past evaluation reports, surveys, the program implementation manual, monthly and annual reports, and marketing plans to understand the program background and structure in preparation for interviews and surveys in subsequent tasks. The evaluator will review these documents to gain a detailed understanding of Energy Trust's PE Program services, their background, structure, operations, progress towards goals, challenges, and adaptations.

Energy Trust will also provide the selected evaluator with data from its Project Tracking database to review and summarize. These data will include details of customers who have participated in the PE Program over time, including data about the organizations, sites, incentives paid, and PE savings claimed by Energy Trust. Energy Trust will provide Project Tracking data covering PE Program participation over the period since the last process evaluation. Lastly, Energy Trust will also provide a dataset summarizing trade ally and non-trade ally contractor activity with the program over the same period.

For this task, the selected evaluator will explore and summarize Project Tracking data to better understand PE program participation over time. This will include analyzing participation by different program tracks, measure categories, and facility types in recent years. The selected evaluator will summarize key findings from the document review and data summary in the evaluation report. This task will include securely receiving data, managing and merging datasets, creating new variables, categorizing sites, applying filters, and summarizing and cross-tabulating data. The selected evaluator must ensure the confidentiality and security of all customer data throughout the project.

Deliverables:

- Section in final report summarizing document review and data summary findings

Task 3. Conduct Staff Interviews

The selected evaluator will conduct a mix of individual and small group interviews with PE program and PMC staff, as well as other Energy Trust staff who work regularly or coordinate with the PE program. The interviews will be organized by company, role, and relationship to the program. It is anticipated that the evaluator will conduct interviews with approximately 30 program staff at Energy Trust, its PMC and subcontractors. Staff interviews will be used to understand program history, direction, strategies, anticipated changes, and plans for the future. The evaluator will obtain feedback on their findings from the document and program activity review as well as insights on program operations, successes, challenges, and opportunities. It is anticipated that staff interviews will take between 45 and 60 minutes each, depending on roles.

To achieve thorough interviews that make the best use of staff time, the selected evaluator will develop a single interview guide with sections relating to specific topic areas, and flexibility to skip between topics according to the role of the staff being interviewed. These interviews should cover all applicable research questions related to program design, delivery, processes, and plans that can be addressed by program staff. The evaluator will provide a draft interview guide to the Energy Trust Evaluation Project Manager for review and incorporate feedback before finalizing. The selected evaluator will analyze and summarize the interview results to identify common themes and extract important feedback and recommendations.

Proposal should describe respondent's approach to creating flexible interview guides to gain insights from different kinds of staff within a program, and ensuring that interviews are comprehensive in their coverage of applicable research questions through this process.

Deliverables:

- Draft and final staff interview guide
- Section in final report on methods and findings from staff interviews

Task 4. Conduct Interviews with Trade Allies and Non-Trade Ally Contractors and Vendors

The selected evaluator will conduct interviews with trade ally and non-trade ally contractors and vendors who work with the Production Efficiency program. There are currently over 60 trade allies and 200 non-trade allies of various types and specialties working with the PE program on non-lighting projects. The PE program's trade ally network includes not only electricians and other kinds of contractors, but also many vendors and distributors who help market the program's standard industrial offerings and connect customers with program incentives. A breakdown of PE program trade ally and non-trade ally market actor activity from 2022 to today is included in **Appendix C**.

Trade ally and non-trade ally interviews will provide important insight into experiences of working with the program, as well as anything that has changed since the structure and implementation of the program have shifted. These interviews also provide a valuable view of the industrial and agricultural energy efficiency market more broadly, and may be an important source for learning how the program is positioned to continue serving this market in the coming years.

The evaluator will use the sampling plan developed in Task 1 to conduct the interviews. It is anticipated that the selected evaluator will design the sampling plan to gain insights from both contractors and vendors who are trade allies and non-trade allies.

The evaluator will develop a draft interview guide to collect input from separate samples of trade allies and non-trade allies (including contractors and vendors) who have recently worked with the PE program on non-lighting projects. It is anticipated that these interviews will take approximately 30 minutes each. The interview guide should be developed as a modular guide with logic to skip between sections and tailor the conversation depending on whether the interviewee is a contractor or a vendor, and a trade ally or not a trade ally. The draft trade ally and non-trade ally interview guide will be provided to the Energy Trust Evaluation Project Manager for review and comment before finalization. The selected evaluator will analyze and summarize the interview results to identify common themes and extract important feedback and recommendations. All trade allies and non-trade allies will be provided \$75 incentives for their time. Incentives must be clearly provided by the selected evaluator, not Energy Trust, and the evaluator will be solely responsible for any required tax reporting.

Proposals should specify estimated sample sizes for contractors and vendors who are trade allies and non-trade allies. These sample sizes should be sufficient to achieve 10% relative precision at a 90% confidence level for trade ally and non-trade ally segments, with representation of both contractors and vendors within the sample. Proposals should also specify a plan for recruiting trade allies and non-trade allies for interviews.

Deliverables:

- Draft and final interview guides for trade allies and non-trade ally contractors
- Chapter in final report on methodology and findings of interviews

Task 5. Conduct Interviews with Key Program Collaborators

The PE program collaborates with three rural community-based organizations (CBOs) on outreach to agricultural customers. The program is interested in documenting these collaboration efforts and processes, identifying ways to improve collaboration going forward, and learning whether additional opportunities may exist in working with these collaborators. The program is also interested in how collaboration with CBOs helps the program achieve its goals, and how the collaboration is working from the perspective of these CBOs.

The evaluator will develop a draft interview guide for CBO representatives, and provide it to the Energy Trust Evaluation Project Manager for review, incorporating any feedback before finalization. Energy Trust will assist the evaluator with scheduling interviews with representatives from the three CBOs.

This task will include 3 individual or small group interviews, one for each CBO, lasting approximately 30 to 45 minutes each. CBO representatives will be offered \$100 incentives for their time. Incentives must be clearly provided by the selected evaluator, not Energy Trust, and the evaluator will be solely responsible for any required tax reporting.

Deliverables:

- Draft and final interview guides for CBO interviews
- Chapter in final report on methodology and findings of CBO interviews

Task 6. Conduct Interviews with Program Participants

The PE program serves over 450 customers per year through its Custom and Standard Industrial tracks.⁸ The selected evaluator will develop interview guides to interview a sample of program participants from 2023 and 2024. It is anticipated that these interviews will last roughly 20 minutes each. The draft interview guide will be provided to the Energy Trust Evaluation Project Manager for review and comment before being finalized. The interview guide will be designed to be flexible according to the participant's level of engagement with the program. For example, there may be a set of questions specifically for custom participants that probe more deeply about their experience working with program representatives, whereas a standard industrial participant may not have worked with program representatives at all. Participants will be offered \$50 interview incentives for their time. Incentives must be clearly provided by the selected evaluator, not Energy Trust, and the evaluator will be solely responsible for any required tax reporting.

The selected evaluator will use the sampling plan developed in Task 1, and the data provided in Task 2, to design a representative sample of participants. Stratified, random sampling will be used, where participants will be stratified by program track. Additional factors for stratification may be considered during the kick-off meeting and early planning stages. A breakdown of participants included within the scope of this process evaluation is included in **Appendix D**.

Program participants, especially large organizations or those completing custom projects, can be difficult to schedule interviews with. In addition, the program has important, long-term relationships with its participants that are critical to its ongoing success. After participants are sampled for interviews, the selected evaluator will meet with the PMC's account managers, who hold relationships with many of the program's custom participants. This meeting will be an opportunity to ensure the selected evaluator has the most relevant contact information for each site, and is aware of any relevant details that may impact how they should reach out to or engage with a particular site.

Proposals should describe the respondent's sampling plan and include estimated sample targets for program participants. These sample sizes should be sufficient to achieve 10% relative precision at a 90% confidence level at the track level (Custom and Standard Industrial).

From prior experience conducting research with these customers, Energy Trust has found phone recruitment to be particularly helpful. The proposal should include a recruitment plan that leverages both email and phone, to balance project costs and timeline in achieving the necessary responses.

Deliverables:

- Draft and final interview guide for participants
- Chapter in the final report on methodology and findings of participant interviews

Task 7. Reporting

The evaluator will provide the Energy Trust Evaluation Project Manager with an evaluation report in draft form. All evaluation reports must include, at a minimum, executive summary, methodologies, findings, and recommendations sections. Findings and conclusions shall be

⁸ Excludes all Lighting and SEM.

based on the information collected by the evaluator and referenced in the report. The use of tables and graphs is recommended for material that does not lend itself well to narrative form, as well as for important findings. Where applicable, non-confidential data, phone conversations, sources, publications, and other media used in the report must be referenced and cited. It is anticipated that respondents or sources can be promised confidentiality in terms of attribution of responses. The draft will be reviewed and commented on by Energy Trust and other parties deemed appropriate by Energy Trust. Based upon these comments, the evaluator shall make revisions and deliver to Energy Trust a final version of the report. Achieving an acceptable final report may take more than one iteration between the evaluator and Energy Trust.

In addition to these reports, the evaluator will also prepare slides and present a summary of the evaluation findings at a public webinar hosted by Energy Trust. The evaluator will prepare the slides in advance of the webinar and provide to Energy Trust for review. The evaluator should plan for the presentation to take approximately 20 minutes with another 10 minutes allotted to answer questions from attendees.

Deliverables:

- Draft and final evaluation report
- Draft and final presentation slides
- Delivery of presentation at Energy Trust webinar

Task 8. Project Management and Invoicing

The evaluator will manage all aspects of the project and ensure that it stays on schedule and within budget. They will host regular virtual meetings throughout the evaluation project to keep the Energy Trust Evaluation Project Manager informed of progress, upcoming research activities, and requests for assistance or data. In addition to these regular meetings, the evaluator will provide frequent project updates by email, especially if any issues arise. The evaluator will proactively advise on ways to maximize the quality of the evaluation and interview response rates prior to, during, and post data collection.

The evaluator will be required to submit monthly status reports presenting:

1. Current and total amounts invoiced to date compared to the approved budget
2. A summary of accomplishments during the previous month
3. Current month's activities and plans
4. Variances in the project schedule or budget, including any necessary explanations
5. If applicable, any issues or concerns to be addressed, with proposed solutions
6. Current and total amounts invoiced to date for COBID-certified subcontractors relative to total contract spending (if applicable)

These reports are due by the 10th of every month and must accompany the invoice, starting the first month after work begins.

Deliverables:

- Regular project update meetings
- Monthly status reports

Schedule

The draft report will be delivered to Energy Trust by March 31st, 2025. A final report will be delivered within three weeks of having received all comments and edits on the submitted draft. The evaluator will be required to provide a monthly evaluation update to Energy Trust by the 10th of every month.

Budget

It is anticipated that the budget for the evaluation work as described in this RFP will be approximately \$120,000; however, Energy Trust reserves the right to revise budget assumptions at any time.

Proposal Requirements

Proposals must be clear, complete and concise. Pages must be numbered, sections must be clearly titled, and fonts must not be smaller than 11 point. Respondent's proposal must contain the following elements; failure to include any required elements may result in the rejection of respondent's proposal. Please note that the 25-page limit for the proposal does not include the supplemental information requested – work product examples, resumes of key staff and subcontractor team members, conflict of interest disclosure, insurance coverage information, and representations page. These should be included in attached appendices.

1. Proposal Information

Firm qualifications.

Proposals should provide an overview of the lead firm and any subcontractors. We encourage respondents to create a team of firms with specialized expertise to fill different project roles where applicable. Proposals should describe the respondent team's qualifications and experience doing similar work and identify specific aspects of the study where the respondent team's experience will be particularly relevant or important. **Not to exceed five (5) pages.**

Staffing and subcontracting plan.

Describe the project team structure, role of each key team member, subcontractor roles, COBID numbers for COBID certified subcontractors (see *Supplier diversity requirements section below*) and the management plan. **Not to exceed two (2) pages.**

Technical proposal:

A project proposal for the process evaluation, including proposed approach to the specific tasks identified in the "Tasks" section above as well as the firm's proposed approach to the evaluation overall, and a management plan, **not to exceed ten (10) pages.**

Supplier diversity requirements:

Proposals should indicate if respondent's firm or subcontractors are certified with the Certification Office for Business Inclusion and Diversity (COBID) of Oregon or US Small

Business Administration (SBA) as one or more of the following certifications that qualify under Energy Trust's Supplier Diversity Program (SDP).

Qualifying COBID certifications:

- Minority Business Enterprise
- Women Business Enterprise
- Veteran Business Enterprise
- Service-Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise
- Emerging Small Business,

Qualifying SBA certifications:

- Small Disadvantaged Business
- Women Owned Small Business
- Economically Disadvantaged Women Owned Small Business
- Business Development Program (8a)
- Veteran Owned Small Business
- Service-Disabled Veteran Owned Small Business
- Historically Underutilized Business Zone Certification (HUBZone)

It is not required for a minimum value of any resulting contract to be directed towards SDP qualifying firms. However, Energy Trust still encourages interested firms to create teams that include SDP qualifying firms. As such, proposals which direct at least 15% of the value of a resulting contract may receive up to a 5% bonus during scoring. Any teaming should be reflected in the staffing and subcontracting plan and budget proposal. **Not to exceed one (1) page.**

Proposed schedule of deliverables:

Provide a schedule of major activities and deliverables listed in the Tasks section above, with approximate dates. The schedule should assume that a project kick-off meeting will be scheduled within three weeks of awarding the contract. Energy Trust anticipates launching this project in September 2024. The draft report should be delivered by March 31st, 2025. A final report will be delivered within three weeks of having received all comments and edits on the submitted draft. These schedule assumptions may be reassessed once the project begins. **Not to exceed two (2) pages.**

Detailed budget proposal:

A detailed budget proposal broken out by task and by individual performing the work. Key staff should be identified by name, with billing rates for each. Assume that billing will be on a time and materials basis, up to a "not-to-exceed" cap. Proposals should describe the underlying budget assumptions and any drivers of cost that can be modified without compromising the integrity of the evaluation.

It is anticipated that the budget for the scope described in this RFP will be approximately \$120,000; however, Energy Trust reserves the right to revise its budget assumptions at any time. We ask bidders to propose as competitive a budget for the project as they can, while being realistic about the scope that they can complete within that budget. If the proposed budget will exceed the \$120,000 threshold listed here, we will consider it, but ask that bidders provide a rationale for why it is necessary. In addition, we ask bidders proposing to exceed the budget threshold listed here to provide alternative budget scenarios where they could stay within the budget by making certain trade-offs – either by

dropping tasks, reducing complexity in places, or reducing sample sizes and precision for the evaluation.

Proposals should summarize the budget in a table, breaking out the estimated hours and costs by task and staff member. Please use the following budget template. Staff and subcontractors listed in the budget should be identified by name, with billing rates for each. **Not to exceed two (2) pages.**

Budget Template

Staff Name	Firm	Hourly Rate	Hours Per Task			Total Hours	Total Cost
			Task 1	Task 2	Task...		
Staff Member 1							
Staff Member 2							
Staff Member...							
Subcontractor 1							
Subcontractor...							
Total Hours Per Task							
Direct Costs							
Total Cost Per Task							

Diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) experience:

Proposals should describe respondent’s efforts and experiences in integrating diversity, equity, and inclusion into their business operations, both internally and externally, and their experience conducting culturally responsive research and evaluation work. Energy Trust seeks to contract with organizations that share its commitment to building a diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplace and business environment, and that apply a diversity and equity perspective to their work. Respondents must provide responses to each of the questions listed in **Appendix B. Not to exceed two (2) pages.**

Data security and confidentiality:

Proposals should provide any data security certifications (e.g., ISO-27001 or SOC 2) that are held and maintained by the respondent **and** any subcontractors engaged in the project. Energy Trust recognizes that these certifications can present significant barriers for some firms. If your organization or subcontractor does not hold any relevant data security certifications, please provide a brief description of the **systems, policies, and procedures** used to ensure that Energy Trust provided data and data collected throughout the evaluation are kept secure and confidential during fielding, data transfers, storage, and analysis. **Not to exceed one (1) page.**

2. Work Product Example

Proposals should include **one past report** that showcases the respondent team’s work on a similar project, as well as their data presentation and reporting capabilities. If needed, the names of people and organizations may be redacted from the report to allow sharing it. The work product example should be included as either a link to a publicly available

document or attached as an appendix to the proposal. **No page limit, but please keep materials to a minimum.**

3. Resumés

Proposals should include resumés of all key team members, from the lead firm and any subcontractors who will be performing work. These should be included in an appendix to the proposal. **No page limit.**

4. Insurance coverage information.

Energy Trust requires its contractors to maintain, at a minimum, workers compensation insurance, adequate commercial general liability insurance coverage, and automobile liability insurance. Cyber liability coverage may also be required. Provide a description of the insurance coverage provided by respondent for performing the impact evaluation work, including:

- Whether such coverage is on a “comprehensive” or “commercial” form
- Whether such coverage is on a “claims made” or “occurrence” basis
- All endorsements excluding coverage of any nature, if any
- All limits, including aggregate limits and the current remaining coverage amounts under those limits
- Effective date

This information should be provided in an appendix to the proposal. **No page limit.**

5. Conflict of Interest Disclosure

Respondent must disclose any direct or indirect, actual or potential conflicts of interest respondent or its subcontractors may have with Energy Trust in its proposal. A “direct or indirect conflict” is defined as any situation in which an individual or a member of their family or close business or personal acquaintance, is employed by Energy Trust or the OPUC, or may be reasonably construed to have a direct or indirect personal or financial interest in any business affairs of Energy Trust, whether because of a proposed contract or transaction to which Energy Trust may be a party or may be interested or is under consideration, or whether such conflict is purely conceptual, because of similarity of business interests or affairs.

Respondent’s disclosure must specifically address any existing contracts between Energy Trust and the respondent, its staff, or any of its proposed subcontractors. If a potential conflict of interest is identified by the respondent, then the respondent should propose strategies to mitigate the conflict. If no conflict is identified by respondent, the respondent will explicitly provide such a statement in their RFP response. The determination of whether a conflict of interest exists and whether the proposed mitigation plan adequately addresses the conflict is left to the sole discretion of Energy Trust. This information should be provided in an appendix to the proposal. **No page limit.**

6. Representations and Signatures Page

Respondent’s proposal must contain the signature of a duly authorized officer or agent of the respondent company submitting the proposal. Respondent’s duly authorized officer or agent shall sign **Appendix A** certifying to the representations stated on **Appendix A**. The signed page should be provided as an appendix to the proposal.

Proposal Selection Criteria

Proposals will be judged on the criteria listed below. As noted above, failure to meet the proposal requirements may result in the rejection of a proposal without scoring.

- Technical proposal
- Qualifications of proposed team and staffing plan, including subcontractors (if applicable)
- Proposed budget
- Supplier Diversity Program eligibility (bonus to score only)
- Diversity, equity, and inclusion responses
- Data security and confidentiality
- Work product example

Schedule & Administration of Proposal Selection Process

RFP Schedule:

- | | |
|-------------------------|---|
| • July 5, 2024 | RFP issued |
| • July 19, 2024 | Intent to bid due |
| • July 19, 2024 | Questions/request for additional information due |
| • July 24, 2024 | Clarifications/question responses posted to website |
| • August 5, 2024 | Proposals due |

Requests for Additional Information and Proposal Submission

Any questions and/or requests for clarification regarding this RFP, as well as stating intent to bid on the project, must be submitted via email to the contact named below by **July 19, 2024**. Responses to questions and requests for additional information will be posted on Energy Trust's website no later than **July 24, 2024**. Energy Trust cannot accommodate individual phone, mail, or fax inquiries about the RFP. All questions must be submitted via email.

Stating intent to bid does not obligate a respondent to submit a proposal. Only electronically submitted proposals (in PDF form) will be accepted; faxed or print proposals will not. A signed letter of transmittal (cover letter) is required and should be scanned and submitted along with the proposal. All proposals must be received by 5pm Pacific Time on **August 5, 2024**. Energy Trust will not be obligated to consider information received outside this time interval for the purposes of this RFP. Please submit proposal to:

Leila Shokat
Project Manager – Evaluation
Energy Trust of Oregon
Email: leila.shokat@energytrust.org

Revisions to RFP

If it becomes necessary to revise any part of this RFP, an addendum will be issued by Energy Trust and will be posted on the website. Respondent should contact Energy Trust if they find any inconsistencies or ambiguities to the RFP. Clarification given by Energy Trust may become an addendum to the RFP.

Withdrawal and Modification of Proposals

Respondents may withdraw their proposal and submit a revised proposal prior to the response deadline. After the response deadline, respondent-initiated changes will not be accepted. Respondents may withdraw their proposal from consideration at any time.

Proposal Evaluation and Notification for Negotiations

Energy Trust will review the proposals as received and may initiate negotiations with the leading respondent(s).

RFP GOVERNING PROVISIONS

All submitted proposals are subject to the following additional provisions.

Right to Accept or Reject Proposals, Multiple Awards

Energy Trust reserves the right to make multiple awards, reject any and all proposals and to waive any nonconformity in proposals received, to accept or reject any or all of the items in the proposal, and award the contract in whole or in part as it is deemed in Energy Trust's best interest. Energy Trust may also choose to negotiate any of the details of proposals prior to contracting.

Confidentiality

Respondents shall clearly identify only those portions of their proposals that they do not want revealed to third parties and label such portions as "Confidential Information". Except as required under law or for regulatory purposes Energy Trust will maintain confidentiality of such information. Energy Trust will not accept proposals or other documents that are marked to indicate the entire document is the confidential or proprietary information of the sender or that restricted handling is required. Normal business practices will be observed in handling proposal materials.

Ownership and Return of Proposals

All materials submitted in response to this RFP shall become the property of Energy Trust and shall not be returned to the respondent.

No Verbal Addendums

No verbal agreement or conversation made or had at any time with any officer, agent, or employee of Energy Trust, nor any oral representation by such party shall add to, detract from, affect or modify the terms of the RFP, unless specifically included in a written addendum issued by Energy Trust.

Proposal Costs

Each proposal prepared in response to this RFP will be prepared at the sole cost and expense of the respondent and with the express understanding that there will be no claims whatsoever for reimbursement from Energy Trust.

Waiver of Claims

Respondent waives any right it may have to bring any claim, whether in damages or equity, against Energy Trust or its officers, directors, employees, or agents, with respect to any matter arising out of any process associated with this RFP.

Energy Trust Rights Reserved

Energy Trust reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to reject any or all proposals in whole or in part, to waive any minor irregularities or informalities in a proposal, and to enter into any agreement deemed to be in its best interests. In addition to any other enumerated reserved rights and/or options as stated in this RFP, Energy Trust may in its sole discretion do any one or more of the following:

- Determine which proposals are eligible for consideration in response to this RFP.
- Disqualify proposals that do not meet the requirements of this RFP, in the sole determination of Energy Trust.
- Negotiate with any respondent to amend any proposal.
- Select and negotiate and/or enter into agreements with respondent(s) who, in Energy Trust's sole judgment, are most responsive to the RFP and whose proposals best satisfy the interests of Energy Trust, in its sole discretion, and not necessarily on the basis of price alone or any other single factor.
- Issue additional subsequent solicitations for proposals, including withdrawing this RFP at any time and/or issuing a new RFP that would supersede and replace this one.
- Vary any timetable or schedule, add or change any provisions discussed herein.
- Conduct any briefing session or further RFP process on any terms and conditions.
- Suspend or modify the RFP process at any time.
- Enter into relationships with more than one respondent.

Resulting Contract(s)

The selected respondent will be required to execute a written contract(s) with Energy Trust to perform the evaluation work. No award will be considered a commitment, and no obligations or legal relations shall exist between Energy Trust and the selected respondent until a final and binding contract has been executed by and between Energy Trust and the contractor. Time is of the essence with regard to this program evaluation, and prolonged contract negotiations will not be undertaken. In general, Energy Trust strongly prefers contracts that are consistent with Energy Trust's standard terms and conditions; negotiations for such contracts can generally be completed quickly. In some cases, a few terms and conditions may need to be substituted or waived, in accordance with contract negotiations. Any party involved in these contract discussions can terminate negotiations at any time and for any reason. If it appears that contract negotiations are not proceeding in a timely manner, Energy Trust may opt to terminate the discussions and select another respondent.

The selected respondent will be required to sign Energy Trust's Utility Customer Information (UCI) confidentiality agreements to gain access to customers' energy consumption data. There is a contractor version and individual version of the UCI confidentiality agreement, which can both be found in **Appendix D**, for reference.

Appendix A: Representations and Signature page

I, the undersigned declare that;

1. I am an authorized agent of the respondent and have authority to submit this proposal on behalf of the respondent.
2. The information provided in this proposal is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.
3. I have read this Request for Proposals in its entirety and agree unconditionally to all of its conditions and requirements.
4. The respondent has not directly or indirectly induced or solicited any other respondent to submit a false or sham proposal.
5. The respondent has not solicited or induced any other person, firm, or corporation to refrain from proposing.
6. The respondent has not sought by collusion to obtain for itself any advantage over any other respondent or Energy Trust.
7. The respondent's proposal is genuine; not made in the interest of, or on behalf of, any undisclosed person, firm, or corporation; and is not submitted in conformity with an agreement of rules of any group, association, organization, or corporation.
8. I understand and accept that the approval or rejection of respondent's request is within the sole discretion of Energy Trust and that there is no legal commitment until all due diligence has been performed and a properly authorized contract has been duly and properly executed.
9. I authorize the representatives of Energy Trust to investigate the business financial credit history of respondent, its affiliates, and all associated partners, principals and management and authorize the release of all said information.
10. I agree that I will report immediately in writing to Energy Trust any changes to the information contained herein at any time while I am under consideration for funding.

The information contained in this proposal and any part thereof, including its exhibits, schedules, and other documents and instruments delivered or to be delivered to Energy Trust is true, accurate, and complete. This proposal includes all information necessary to ensure that the statements therein do not in whole or in part mislead Energy Trust as to any material fact.

Date: _____

Authorized Signature: _____

Name and Title: _____

(please print)

Appendix B – Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Experience

Diversity, equity, and inclusion experience

1. Provide specific recent examples of activities, policies or investments that demonstrate how respondent promotes diversity, equity, and inclusion within respondent's company in the areas of
 - a. recruitment, hiring, retention and promotion;
 - b. training and professional development;
 - c. industry workforce development and support.

Cultural competence in evaluation

Culture shapes each step of the evaluation process—from the conceptualization of a study and its research questions; to decisions on what data to collect, how to collect it, and how to analyze it; to the interpretation and presentation of results. Culturally competent evaluation requires researchers to recognize their own cultural assumptions about a research project, continually consider cultural and contextual factors in their research design, and implement methodological adjustments to account for diverse research contexts.

2. Provide your plan to apply culturally competent research practices in this project.
3. Provide a specific example of your team's experience applying culturally competent research practices when working with diverse customer and stakeholder groups similar to this evaluation; how did the research project's goals, methods, or outcomes change?

Appendix C – Trade Ally and Non-Trade Ally Program Activity, 2022 to Present

Market Actor Type	Is Trade Ally?	Number	Projects	Total kWh Savings	Total Therm Savings
Electrical Contractor	Yes	3	5	1,972,425	4,160
	No	9	10	3,185,740	0
General Contractor	Yes	1	1	3,974	0
	No	1	1	3,582	0
HVAC Contractor	No	1	1	0	19,699
Vendor⁹	Yes	65	536	38,747,439	732,539
	No	249	657	74,156,027	1,314,853

⁹ Because of an ongoing research effort involving vendor outreach, about 10 trade ally and 30 non-trade ally vendors will not be included in this research effort. The “Number” column here shows totals before removing those vendors who will need to be removed.

Appendix D – Participants in Scope of 2024 Process Evaluation

Year	Track	Sub-Track	Projects	Measures	Sites	Total kWh Savings	Total Therm Savings
2023	Custom	Custom	82	92	67	31,028,106	546,008
		Custom O&M	28	35	25	17,266,483	111,554
	Standard Industrial	Small Industrial	450	583	368	28,058,035	559,998
2024	Custom	Custom	21	23	18	7,580,645	5,121
		Custom O&M	9	17	8	5,932,989	0
	Standard Industrial	Downstream Lighting	35	104	34	11,306,465	0
		Small Industrial	203	293	179	13,499,633	172,080