



128 Lakeside Avenue, Suite 401
Burlington, VT 05401
Toll-free: (800) 639-6069
veic.org

Electric School and Transit Bus Pilot Program

School Transportation Providers, Request for Qualifications

Project Overview

The Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) is launching an electric school and transit bus pilot program for the State of Vermont, funded by the Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Trust (EMT). The pilot, administered by VEIC with support from the Vermont Energy Education Program (VEEP), will evaluate the feasibility and cost-effectiveness of electric school and transit bus operation in the state over a two-year period.

As described in its [Beneficiary Mitigation Plan](#), Vermont is prioritizing the expenditure of its EMT funds to advance electric vehicle use. The pilot aims to engage partners across the state and maximize the use of available EMT funds in an effective way, while also meeting specific criteria and priorities. These include:

- Testing and evaluating the viability of electric buses in Vermont as replacements for diesel-powered buses, across a range of route conditions, geographical areas, and types of weather.
- Maximizing air quality benefits by considering the engine model year and remaining vehicle life for the buses that are replaced, as well as by prioritizing areas that are disproportionately impacted by air contaminants in the state.
- Exposing Vermonters from different communities, demographic profiles, and geographic regions to electric bus technologies.

School Participation

In this pilot program, the EMT funds will be used to pay for the incremental cost of electric buses, (i.e. the costs above the price of a new comparable conventional bus); the expected trade-in value for the buses being replaced; and the required charging equipment and installation costs. Project Partners will deploy the electric buses in their regular transportation service, with a goal of maximizing eVMT (miles

driven powered by electricity) and commit to fully scrapping each diesel-powered bus replaced. Project Partners may include supervisory unions, school districts, or schools. For school entities utilizing transportation contractors, the school entity may apply on behalf of the school bus contractor(s). VEIC is interested in working with at least two school entities (or school bus service contractors) that will each replace no fewer than two diesel-powered buses with electric buses.

Request for Qualifications

VEIC, under contract with the DEC, is seeking qualifications from prospective Project Partners that will be selected through a competitive two-step application process. This Request for Qualifications (RFQ) is intended to determine basic eligibility and level of commitment. Recognizing that this technology will be new to many potential applicants, VEIC and VEEP are available to support you through this process. If you are interested but unsure of your eligibility, please reach out and we will be happy to help. Successful applicants will be invited to respond to a subsequent Request for Proposals (RFP).

Submission Details

Interested candidates should respond to the following questions under the Request for Qualifications heading below. Please be sure to review all Disclosures at the end of this document.

All responses must be submitted electronically to Kate Cahalane at kcahalane@veic.org by **August 16, 2019 at 5pm**.

Email subject line should read: Electric Bus Pilot_RFQ_School (or Contractor) Name

If you need assistance or have any questions, please contact Kate Cahalane at kcahalane@veic.org or 802-540-7814 or Cara Robeck at cara.robeck@veep.org or 802-552-8674.



Request for Qualifications

1. School District / Supervisory Union / School

School District / Supervisory Union / School:	
School Bus Contractor name (if applicable):	
Contact person, position, contact information:	
Street address:	
City / Town:	
Number of students enrolled as of June 2019:	

2. Existing School Bus Service

What is the maximum number of buses in service each day?	
How many bus routes do you operate daily?	
What is the distance (miles) of your average route?	
What is the distance (miles) of the shortest daily bus route in your network?	
What is the distance (miles) of the longest daily bus route in your network?	
Are your buses used for any purpose other than student transportation to and from school? If yes, please describe.	
Who operates your buses?	
Who owns and maintains your buses?	

Where are buses typically parked overnight? Are they in a covered facility?	
Are buses stored close to electric power access?	

3. The EMT funds can only be used to replace diesel-powered, 2009 *engine* model year (EMY) or older Class 4-8 school buses that have been and continue to be registered, inspected and in regular use in Vermont over the last calendar year prior to responding to this RFQ. It will be required that the diesel-powered buses selected for replacement be scrapped (with scrappage certification submitted) within 90 days of receiving replacement bus.

Please detail the buses you intend to replace. We are happy to help if you have any questions about how to determine engine model year (rather than vehicle model year) or any other fields here.

	Bus 1	Bus 2	Bus 3 (if applicable)
Bus Make, Model, and Age			
Bus Type / Class			
Engine Model Year			
Annual Miles Driven			
Originally Planned Replacement Date (if not for this pilot)			

Commitment to Scrap? (Yes / No)			
------------------------------------	--	--	--

4. To ensure electric buses are deployed within the timeframe of the pilot program, Project Partners will be required to purchase the new buses within twelve months of being selected.

Please indicate if you will be able to meet this deadline.

5. For the electric bus pilot program to be successful, it will be critical that Project Partners have adequate fleet / transportation staff for bus operation and maintenance to support the deployment of a new technology, incorporate the necessary protocols, and support data collection through the pilot period. VEIC will be supporting Project Partners through this transition, helping to facilitate the process and providing technical assistance.

Please describe your readiness to work with VEIC to manage a transition to electric buses in terms of availability and interest among staff.

6. Deploying electric school buses will require support and buy-in from Project Partner personnel, including management.

Please describe the extent to which various stakeholders have been engaged to date and their level of support. Stakeholders can include bus drivers, maintenance staff, transportation coordinating staff, parents, teachers, school board, etc. If you haven't begun this process yet, please describe your plan for communication and coordination to secure the support needed for this project.

7. In addition to the importance of having support within the school community, a transition to electric buses will also require coordination with the local electric utility to determine feasibility from an electric infrastructure, supply, and cost perspective and to understand the implications of managed (or unmanaged) charging.

Please describe the extent to which you have engaged with your utility. If you haven't begun this process yet, please describe your plan for communication and coordination or indicate if you will need assistance to engage your utility.

8. To ensure the EMT funds are used efficiently and have the biggest impact possible, Project Partners will be expected to contribute matching funds equal to the cost of a new conventional bus (less the expected trade-in value for the buses being replaced).

Please describe the level of matching funds you will be able to contribute and indicate the sources of these funds. If you are currently unsure if you will be able to contribute the full cost of a new conventional bus, please describe the efforts you will take in attempts to secure this funding.

9. Please share any other information that you would like us to consider as we evaluate your eligibility for and level of commitment to the electric bus pilot program.

Disclosures

1. The State will make no attempt to contact interested parties with updated information. It is the responsibility of each interested party to periodically check <http://www.vermontbidsystem.com> for any and all notifications, releases and amendments associated with the RFQ.
2. This RFQ does not constitute a Request for Proposal (RFP) or a promise to issue an RFP in the future. This RFQ does not commit the State to contract for any materials or service whatsoever. Further, the State is not at this time seeking proposals and will not accept unsolicited proposals.
3. Responders are advised that the State will not pay for any information or administrative costs incurred in response to this RFQ; all costs associated with responding to this RFQ will be solely at the interested party's expense.
4. After conclusion of the contracting/granting process, Proposals are a matter of public record. If an application includes material considered by the applicant to be proprietary and confidential under 1 V.S.A., Chapter 5, the application shall clearly designate the material as such and explain why such material should be considered confidential. The Vendor must identify each page or section of the Proposal that it believes is proprietary and confidential with sufficient grounds to justify each exemption from release, including the prospective harm to the competitive position of the applicant if the identified material were to be released.
5. Under no circumstances shall the entire Proposal be designated as proprietary or confidential. If the Vendor marks portions of the Proposal confidential, the Vendor shall provide a redacted version of the Proposal for release to the public. Notwithstanding the above, the Secretary has an independent obligation under Vermont law to determine whether any proposal material is subject to public inspection and copying upon request, which may include material that has otherwise been designated as proprietary and confidential by the Vendor. The Vendor's designation of material as proprietary and confidential, and submission of a redacted Proposal, are provided to the Secretary for informational purposes in the event the Agency receives a public records request and will not result in withholding of materials by the Secretary unless expressly supported by Vermont law.