

Standard Bid Request for Proposals for:
ESSER and GEER Annual Performance Reporting

Issued by:

Vermont Agency of Education

For issuance on:

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Proposals due: November 3, 2023

Contact person for this RFP:

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Overview

All recipients and subrecipients of Education Stabilization Funds (ESF) including the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) and Governor Emergency Education Relief (GEER) funds, and received under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act; the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations (CRRSA) Act; and the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act are required to submit annual reports to the US Department of Education. Grantees must submit annual performance reports (APR) for each fund (GEER I, GEER II, ESSER I, ESSER II and ARP ESSER) describing how the State and subrecipients used the awarded funds during the reporting period (state fiscal year) that includes expenditure and programmatic data ([Education Stabilization Fund](#)).

For the first three years of the APR (FY20-22), the Vermont Agency of Education (AOE) has managed this data collection, but as the collection has become more complex, the AOE has identified that additional resources will be necessary to complete collections for Years 4-6 (FY 23-25). Reporting and data requirements are available on the [Education Stabilization Fund Grantee Help](#) webpage (please note: the AOE will manage data reporting for the EANS programs and is not responsible for HEERF and ESF-SEA reporting).

The AOE is seeking the services of a contractor to manage the APR for GEER and ESSER funds through March 2026. This will include managing the Vermont Local Education Agency (LEA) data collection and providing technical assistance and support for all LEAs and recipients of state-level ESSER funds. This will also include data cleanup and quality assurance to meet US Department of Education requirements for reporting. The expected time periods for collection are not yet determined, but are likely to occur in the Spring of each year, with additional required correction periods likely to occur in the summer of each year.

Contract period: The proposed period is December 29, 2023 through March 29, 2026. The definite period will be stated in the executed contract upon agreement with the State and the Contractor.

RFP Timetable

RFP posted	10/12/2023
Deadline for questions about RFP	10/20/2023
Proposal submission deadline	11/3/2023
Selection notification	Upon Review Committee's Decision
Anticipated commencement of contract	12/15/2023

Proposal Guidelines and Requirements

Bidder Qualifications

For a proposal to be considered, a bidder must demonstrate:

1. The ability to complete the entire scope of work in the period of performance.
2. Familiarity with Vermont's federal funding and reporting requirements.
3. Familiarity with the Uniform Chart of Accounts used by school districts.
4. The ability to deliver technically accurate data in a timely manner to meet federal deadlines and to work collaboratively with the AOE during the submission process and correction periods.

Scope of Work

The Vermont Agency of Education seeks proposals for the management of the Education Stabilization Fund (ESSER and GEER Funds) Annual Performance Report.

Specific responsibilities include:

1. Assume all responsibility for the overall management and coordination of the ESSER and GEER APR.
2. Establish a streamlined process for data collection, including data templates for the collection, preparation of the data submission to the US Department of Education, and validation of the data.
3. Manage and facilitate all communication with LEAs and recipients of state-level ESSER funds relevant to ESSER and GEER APR.
4. Serve as main point of contact for all ESSER and GEER related inquiries from all LEAs and other subrecipients.
5. During the reporting cycles, perform data audits and checks to identify and rectify any discrepancies or errors.
6. Establish protocols for ongoing data quality maintenance throughout the reporting periods.
7. Maintain accurate and complete records of all LEA/SEA data corrections for auditing purposes to be submitted to AOE via Shared Drive.
8. Provide regular status reports to the AOE, including progress updates, issues encountered, and resolutions.
9. Maintain detailed documentation of all data-related activities, program management efforts, and quality assurance procedures, as well as maintain a comprehensive record of all data corrections and cleanup activities.
10. Adhere to all federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and policies relevant to the federal program and data management.

The successful proposal will describe in detail the bidder's:

1. Ability to complete the entire scope of work in the period of performance.
2. Understanding of federal requirements for Annual Performance Reporting required by the US Department of Education.
3. Ability to support LEAs and other subrecipients during data collection periods.
4. Ability to manage a complex data collection and retain appropriate records and documentation for future audit.

General Requirements

Single Point of Contact: All communications regarding this RFP shall be in writing and addressed to the Contact Person indicated on page one of this RFP.

Questions: Any vendor requiring clarification of any section of this proposal or wishing to comment or take exception to any requirements or other portion of the RFP must submit specific questions in writing no later than October 20, 2023. Questions should be e-mailed to jill.briggscampbell@vermont.gov. Any objection to the RFP, or to any provision of the RFP, that is not raised in writing on or before the last day of the question period is waived. At the close of the question period a copy of all questions or comments and the State's responses will be posted on the [State of Vermont Business Registry](#). Every effort will be made to have these available as soon after the question period ends, contingent on the number and complexity of the questions.

Confidentiality: Bidders should be aware that all materials submitted will become part of the contract file and will be considered public records under the Vermont Public Records Act, 1 VSA Sections 315-320. The Agency of Education prefers that vendors *not* file proprietary information with their bids. If the bidder finds it necessary to include material that the bidder considers to be proprietary, a trade secret or otherwise confidential, the bidder must: (1) clearly designate any information in the response the bidder believes is proprietary as "confidential"; (2) provide a written explanation sufficient to justify each exemption from release under the Vermont Public Records Act, including the prospective harm to the competitive position of the bidder if the identified material were to be released; and (3) include a redacted copy of the response for any portions of the bid that the vendor designates confidential. Under no circumstances can the entire response or price information be marked confidential. Responses so marked will not be considered and will be returned to the vendor. Vendors filing submissions agree that final discretion to release or exempt all material so identified as confidential rests with the Agency.

Acceptance of the Proposal: The State reserves the right to waive minor irregularities in a bidder's proposal, providing such action is in the best interest of the State. Where the State may waive minor irregularities, such waiver shall in no way modify the RFP requirements or excuse the bidder from full compliance with the RFP specifications. The State reserves the right to request clarification or correction of the proposal, reject any or all proposals received, or cancel the procurement at any time prior to an award. A proposal may be rejected for: (1) the failure of the bidder to adhere to one or more provisions established in this RFP; (2) the failure of the bidder to submit required information in the format specified in this RFP; (3) the failure of the bidder to adhere to generally accepted ethical and professional principles during the RFP process; or (4) for any other reason deemed to be in the best interest of the State. In the event that the State is not successful in negotiating a contract with the selected bidder, the State reserves the option of negotiating with another bidder.

Form of Contract: The contract between AOE and the winning bidder will be required to be in

the form of the Standard Vermont State Contract, including but not limited to standard provisions, which can be found at:

[State of Vermont Standard Contract Template 12-12-18](#)

All contracts of the State of Vermont have standard provisions, which are included with this RFP as "Attachment C" and can also be found at:

[Attachment C Standard State Provisions for Contracts and Grants 12-15-17](#)

Exclusive Ownership: Any and all data, surveys analysis, reports, studies and other complete or incomplete work product prepared or developed by the contractor in connection with the contract shall become the exclusive property of the State and will not be copyrighted or resold by the contractor.

Costs of Preparing Proposals: All costs incurred by the bidder during the preparation of the proposal will be the sole responsibility of the bidder. Unless explicitly stated, the State will not reimburse the bidder for any costs associated with submission of a proposal.

Use of Subcontractors: Bidder is required to provide a list of subcontractors that bidder anticipates using on the job along with lists of subcontractors' subcontractors and the names of insurers by whom those subcontractors are insured for workers' compensation purposes. Include additional pages if necessary. This is not a requirement for subcontractor's providing supplies only and no labor to the overall contract or project.

Submission and Evaluation of Proposals

Proposal Delivery: The method of delivery shall be via email.

[Jill Briggs Campbell \(jill.briggscampbell@vermont.gov\)](mailto:jill.briggscampbell@vermont.gov)

E-mail: Proposals shall be delivered via e-mail attachment (Microsoft Word or PDF document) and shall arrive in the e-mail in-box of the above Contact Person no later than ***November 3, 2023 by 10:00 pm*** and should include the project title in the subject line of the e-mail.

Late responses will not be accepted and shall automatically be disqualified from further consideration. Delivery shall be at bidder's sole risk. The Agency is not responsible for technical problems that may delay receipt of the email attachment. Bidder should plan accordingly.

Proposal Format: Use standard 8.5" x 11" document format, single-spaced and use not less than a twelve point font. Write the program proposal in the order given in the below criteria for scoring chart. Address the proposal specifications in the same manner as the criteria for scoring chart, title and number each item.

Proposals responding to the RFP are expected to cover the content listed below.

1. Complete description of the bidder's qualifications, background and experience, including resumes for key staff; description of previous work similar to that described in the Scope of Work performed for similar organizations; and evaluation data and samples of that work.
 - a. Briefly describe or list previous contracts/agreements for similar services performed in the past three years, with a brief narrative describing the nature of services and to whom. Provide a contact person for reference purposes for each contract/agreement.
2. The bidder's understanding of the RFP requirements, including:
 - a. A detailed outline of the plan for addressing each area of work including a detailed description of deliverables for each part; and
 - b. Strengths, skills, and approaches that the bidder brings to each deliverable; and
 - c. A description of any perceived difficulties in this project, together with potential and recommended approaches for their solutions.
3. The attached price quotation form includes costs associated with each major scope of work and associated deliverables.
 - a. Include a description of the number of "person days" required to fulfill each deliverable.
 - b. Include a description of the number of "person days" required to fulfill the management/oversight needed to produce each deliverable.
 - c. Include a description of other costs to produce each deliverable.

Proposal Evaluation: Proposals will be evaluated by one or more knowledgeable individuals from the Agency of Education. Evaluation will be based upon the bidder's responses to the sections outlined in the below scoring criteria chart.

Scoring is intended to clarify strengths and weaknesses of proposals relative to one another and to provide guidance to decision-makers. The sum of the scores of the members will become the proposal's final score.

Award Announcement: The winning proposal will not be announced until a contract is signed and finalized.

CRITERIA FOR SCORING	Total possible points	Applicant Score
1. Quality of Bidder's Experience and Capacity to Perform	40	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Describe the bidder's understanding, experience and knowledge for the project. b. Describe the bidder's experience with conducting similar projects. c. Describe licensures or accreditations of the individual or organization or other indicators of quality review that attest to the quality of the bidder or bidder programs. 		
2. Responsiveness to Specifications	40	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Provide a description of how bidder will respond to program goals and how the bidder will report its performance and quality. b. Describe how the bidder ensures projects remain on track for proposed period. c. Describe how the bidder will work with AOE program staff to ensure appropriate, timely and accurate completion of project. 		
3. Program Cost	20	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Lowest bid received by the State of Vermont. 		
OVERALL TOTAL SCORE	100	

Price Quotation Form
Submit this form at the end of the proposal.

Provide a brief description of each item and the price associated. Only complete the sections and items that apply to your proposal. This form can be expanded as needed (not limited to one page).

Goal area	Price Quotation	Justification/Details
Professional Development	Management: Personnel: Materials/Supplies: Contracts: Other:	
Technical Assistance	Management: Personnel: Materials/Supplies: Contracts: Other:	
Evaluation and Assessment	Management: Personnel: Materials/Supplies: Contracts: Other:	
Overall	Other (itemized):	
TOTAL QUOTE		