

(Q1) Is this (RFA) reminding institutions that they may RE-submit their previous applications which may have been denied, or are these new monies which are now available?

(A1) This RFA is for the remaining money that was not awarded during the first round. Institutions may re-submit applications, but changes were made to the RFA which means the application would need to be revised. In addition some application were disqualified for being incomplete during the first round, so applicants should be certain that all of the information requested is on their application.

(Q2): On page 5 of the application document there is a category to allocate budget to "Installation of Distribution System". Does this refer to the distribution for the whole heating district including campus distribution and building heating systems, or just distribution to the buildings?

(A2) The budget sheet is to list the cost of everything related to the proposed project. If the proposal will include district heating components, the entire cost should be listed.

(Q3): The building that will house the boilers for our proposed wood to energy system is primarily for maintenance and workshop activities. Do we need to pro-rate allocation for construction of the facility included in this application to cover only the percentage required to accommodate the heating system?

(A3): Funding is only provided for activities necessary to purchase and install the heating system. Improvements to facilities above and beyond that will not be covered.

(Q4): How much money for other engineering / pre-construction services can be included in the cost breakdown for this project? For example can such services as site surveying and wetlands surveys be included? Can we include any engineering associated with site conditions of the distribution system?

(A4) Engineering / pre-construction services are not covered. Ideally they would be underway at the time the application is submitted. If they are not, please explain in the application.

(Q5) I was not awarded a grant in the first round, but I am still interested in an alternative to oil. [Another school] did receive a grant and [our school] was named in there grant. The intent is that a BTU meter would be connected to our system somewhere and we would pay a specified rate for BTU's. I have concerns about that project going forward but if I wait the second round will be over. Please give me your thoughts. Is anyone else in a similar situation?

(A5) If you have concerns with the project that received funding in the first round, and are interested in purchasing a wood or dual fuel heating system for your facility you would be eligible to apply for funding. If your facility is continuing to partner with the other facility, and you are not purchasing a heating system it is unlikely that you would qualify.

(Q6) What is the maximum grant amount that can be requested under this RFP?

(A6) \$750,000 is the maximum award. There is no set minimum.

(Q7) Is there a minimum percentage that you are expected to provide for matching funds or public, non-grant funds?

(A7) Although there is no absolute Minimum Cash match required, higher cash match will result in significantly higher scores.

(Q8) I understand that the jobs test is important to you. If the metrics for created jobs are to specifically exclude jobs created in the fuel value chain then small, automatic, high efficiency, boiler systems which are purposefully configured to be non-intrusive and easy to operate will fail the preliminary test of suitability since they don't require continuous attention. It appears that the superior technological design of the equipment is almost a disqualifier. Ironically, that large, chip systems will require continuous tending beyond that required of their liquid fuel cousins because of the difficulty of handling the fuel seems to place them at advantage. Am I understanding this correctly?

(A8) No. Efficient systems should score well in the job creation / retention category. This category is scored by comparing the number of jobs (direct and indirect) created or retained by the program of work in relation to the amount of the grant request. Jobs created by the work necessary to install the heating system, as well as those retained using estimated fuel savings will be considered, although they should be listed separately on the application. Jobs created in the fuel supply will be considered, are not to be included on the application. These jobs will be calculated by the Forest Service using a standard metric.

(Q9) I am writing to verify that the timelines are less restrictive and that as long as we are ready to HEAT FOR THE 2011 HEATING SEASON

(A9) The goal of the program is to have the heating system operational within one year, but an extension of up to 90 days may be granted due to extenuating circumstances. With the awards being made in the summer of 2010, it is also understood that awardees may not be operating their systems until the fall of 2011.

(Q10) If the site is unable to get matching funds and has to completely rely on the grant for the project to move forward, will their application be considered. A number of facilities I've spoken to are afraid they cannot get matching funds and therefore will not be qualified.

(A10) Although there is no absolute Minimum Cash match required, higher cash match will result in significantly higher scores.

(Q11) Are any types of funding mechanisms disclaimed from providing cash match for project completion? Specifically, are funds derived through a government-backed loan guarantee program eligible to serve as a cash match?

(A11) Loan guarantee programs are eligible to serve as match. Evidence of qualification should be provided with the application.

(Q12) This RFP indicates that it will consider the percentage of public funding in the applicants budget. For the purposes of this RFP what constitutes "public funding?"

(A12) Public funds are those provided by Federal, State, County or Local governments. If an applicants budget is not 100% public only the portion that is will considered when evaluating the proposal.

(Q13) The RFP indicates that projects should intend to deliver a turnkey wood to energy system, does this include funding availability for the facilities energy distribution infrastructure?

(A13) The main goal of the program is to fund the purchase and installation of the heating system. If it is necessary to make upgrades to the distribution system to operate the heating system it is likely those improvements would be eligible. This should be explained thoroughly in the application.

(Q14) The RFP calls for the provision of “documentation” related to the applicant’s fuel budget, what types of documentation should be included. Should this documentation be included in the narrative or as an appendix attachment?

(A14) As much documentation as possible regarding the fuel expenses should be provided. Paid invoices, canceled check or purchase orders would all be accepted as documentation. Other evidence of fuel expenses could also be considered.

(Q15) Should the Q & A from Round 1 still be 100% applicable for Round 2 or should they be disregarded?

(A15) Unless it conflicts with information contained in the RFA or this Q & A, the Round 1 Q & A is still applicable.

(Q16) Can performance contracting be used by the applicant as the source of the funding required above the grant amount?

(A16) Yes. Explain the contract in the application.

(Q17) If an applicant has an existing relationship with a performance contractor for a different project, can that applicant continue to use the same performance contractor for a different project for round 2?

(A17) Yes, if it is consistent with the rules of your institution.

(Q18) If an applicant has an existing relationship with a lending institution for a performance contract for a different project, can that applicant continue to use the same lending institution for a different project for round 2?

(A18) Yes, if it is consistent with the rules of your institution.

(Q19) How much design and engineering work must be completed must be completed at the time of application? Is concept development sufficient for the application, with final to be complete upon successful award?

(A19) Design and engineering work should be as complete as possible at the time of the application. Concept development is acceptable, but the applicant should make clear that it will not be finalized until an award is made.

(Q20) Is there a desired methodology of determining heat load of the facility(s) to be heated? Would Manual N of Air Conditioning Contractors of America or ASHRAE 90.1 be desirable?

(A20) There is not a mandatory method that will be used in the scoring process, but the methodology used should be described in the application.

(Q21) Is there a fuel value comparison of standard to compare oil BTU to wood BTU that we should be using so fuel consumption estimates will be reasonable and consistent?

(A21) The Forest Products Laboratory has a fuel value calculator that may be useful at the following link:

<http://www.fpl.fs.fed.us/documnts/techline/fuel-value-calculator.pdf>

(Q22) Regarding project readiness, what is the intended meaning of “construction will begin within 120 days of award?

- a. Does that mean people and equipment on site making things happen?
- b. Or can it mean engineers designing the project?
- c. Is there a different meaning between construction readiness and “commence the project within 120 days as discussed on page 9 of the application?

(A22) People and equipment should be on site beginning work within 120 days.

(Q23) There appears not be any difference in the application type (custom vs standard) in this second round. Should the project summary be restricted to 1 page or up to 2-3?

(A23) There is only one application type. Project summaries may be as long as needed, as long as the application does not exceed the limit. Applicants will be well served to provide as much detail as possible.