

## **Update 4/9/24:**

**Will the selected firm be required to comply with the Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR) and use the Federal Cost Accounting Standard (CAS)?** Yes.

**Will you grant any extensions?** All firms will be granted an extension from the original due date of 2pm PT Tuesday 4/16/24 to a new due date of 2pm PT Friday 4/19/24. No further extensions will be given.

## **About ARCHES**

### **Question 1:**

**Please provide the following:**

- **FOA Application**
- **List of Affiliated projects list, scopes, and geographic location**
- **Environmental Considerations Summary**
- **Videos or transcripts of public meetings or presentations**

The ARCHES proposal, supplementary materials, list of proposed projects, and preliminary Environmental Considerations Summary are considered confidential information and will not be disclosed at this time. You can view the slides from our public community-level briefing with the DOE Office of Clean Energy Demonstrations upon the DOE H2Hub announcement in October 2023 [here](#).

## **Staffing**

### **Question 2:**

**The RFP states that "this position will officially report to the ARCHES Chief Operating Officer." (pg. 6). Will the ARCHES COO be 100% dedicated to ARCHES and has this individual been named yet? Also, does "this position" in this sentence refer to the successful offeror? We envision proposing a number of staff to support the PMO.**

The acting ARCHES COO is Scott Brandt, who is also the Associate Vice Provost of Research & Innovation at the University of California Office of the President. The PMO will be supported as needed by the Executive Leadership Team. "This position" refers to the entire PMO which we expect will be staffed with multiple people.

### **Question 3:**

**Will any ARCHES staff members be partially or fully dedicated to the PMO? If so, approximately how many staff members will ARCHES allocate to the PMO?**

While we expect that the PMO will collaborate, interact with, and report to ARCHES staff members we do not anticipate that any ARCHES staff will be in the PMO itself to start with.

In the long-term, our intention is to phase out most external PMO support over the course of the eight-year ARCHES DOE funding period and build up in-house PMO functions. The selected firm will be expected to support this transition.

#### **Question 4:**

**What is the expected frequency at which team members should be physically available in Irvine?**

We expect the majority of the PMO team to be present on-site 3-4 days per week as needed by project functions, and that this requirement may change as the program evolves. Any PMO team members working remotely must have the approval of the COO and will be expected to travel to Irvine for a multi-day meeting every 6-8 weeks. Other *ad hoc* travel to project sites throughout California will also likely be required. Travel budget will be capped and subject to the ARCHES travel policy. In general, we expect the PMO to have staff willing to accommodate travel and on-site requirements per program needs.

## **Scope**

#### **Question 5:**

**Safety and Security are not referred to in the RFP. Will the PMO be responsible for the Environment, Safety & Health (ES&H) and Security (including data and cybersecurity) functions? If so, please provide scope details for both.**

The PMO will be initially required to support all necessary functions of ARCHES program management—including these—until ARCHES acquires in-house expertise to do so.

#### **Question 6:**

**Regarding the scope of work, to what extent will the selected firm be involved in managing individual projects versus Hub-level project management activities?**

We anticipate that the PMO will be responsible for managing all levels of ARCHES' program for the individual projects through to cohesive hub-level management and standards. However, we anticipate that the project partners will be managing the actual project day-to-day with the ARCHES PMO serving as a support partner for technical and community aspects as well as the DOE reporting and other ecosystem synergies.

#### **Question 7:**

**Will the selected firm perform any construction project delivery functions such as procurement services, engineering management, supply chain coordination, construction management, inspection, field oversight, and commissioning?**

We anticipate that the majority of this work will be completed by project partners, with support and monitoring from ARCHES as appropriate.

## Operations

### **Question 8:**

The RFP states that "Individuals should have experience collaborating via technologies including, or similar to, Slack and Asana" (pg. 6). Are proposers to assume that ARCHES has already evaluated and selected a PM software tool for implementation of the hub program? Is this PM tool Asana? We understand that UCOP uses Asana but also recognize that it is not Fedramp-compliant. Can proposers offer alternative PM software tools for ARCHES consideration?

Yes, we are open to use of different PMO tools.

## Proposal Process

### **Question 9:**

The RFP states that "Any agreement that ARCHES may choose to enter as a result of the responses to this RFP will be subject to various terms and conditions, including requirements that may be imposed by the US Department of Energy, the State of California, and/or any other entity that funds ARCHES' activities." (pg. 6) Will the successful offeror be considered a vendor to ARCHES or a subrecipient with responsibility to manage the PMO budget? If the latter, what is the anticipated PMO budget per year? Does ARCHES anticipate any work starting on the resultant PMO support contract prior to DOE award to ARCHES? When does ARCHES anticipate award?

The successful awardee of this RFP is expected to be a contractor to ARCHES, not a sub-recipient of the ARCHES DOE H2Hub. It is anticipated that this contract would be timed to start with the award from the DOE, expected in Summer 2024.

### **Question 10:**

The ARCHES Community Benefits Plan (a summary of which is posted on the ARCHES website) states that ARCHES "Require(s) equitable and local subcontracting from DAC- or URM-owned businesses: This is an ARCHES requirement, a part of the RFP process, and typically accomplished through proposal scoring." For purposes of this RFP response, does ARCHES have any preference for a large or small business? Will these subcontracting preferences be flowed down to this procurement?

ARCHES expects to contract with entities that have experience successfully delivering complex projects on the scale of the ARCHES DOE H2Hub and ecosystem. DAC and URM attributes are always a plus.

### **Question 11:**

Reference RFP Page 5 of 7, Proposal Submission Location & Date: The instruction is to "submit in PDF," but should we submit the "PMO-RFP-Fee-Schedule-Template" Excel file in its native format? Does a table of contents or glossary count towards the page limit?

The completed fee schedule may be returned as a PDF or Excel document. If in PDF it may or may not be combined with the main proposal document. Table of contents, glossary, bios, and fee schedule do not count towards the page limit.

### **Question 12:**

**Please elaborate on the structure and expectations of the conduct of the interview process. Can additional questions be submitted to ARCHES after March 29th?**

We do not intend to answer any questions following the official question submission period which ended March 29th; if selected for an interview, further information will be provided at that point if needed. A brief summary of the RFP timeline is provided in the RFP section V.E. Following review of the initial proposals, finalists will be notified of the interview details.

## **Fee Structure**

### **Question 13:**

**On page 3 of 7 of the RFP under “Proposal Content and Guidelines”, Item No. 5 indicates the proposers are to “Include a proposed budget according to the fee schedule provided for this RFP”. To clarify, are we to submit a proposed budget for the entire, initial 2-year contracting period?**

The included excel file is primarily to capture hourly rates. We recognize that the staffing levels within the PMO will change drastically within the time-frame of the contract as operations ramp up from award to full-capacity. For the PMO section of the fee schedule document (rows 2-6+) we ask that you provide the total estimated monthly hours for all employees for a month at the maximum level of staffing (example: 10 employees working 40 hours/week = 1600 hours). If you anticipate starting with 2 employees at that level but ramping up to 30, please put the hours for 30. Please do not provide the entire budget breakdown for a 2-year contract, just essentially a snapshot at maximum level. As stated in section IV.4 we anticipate that proposers will describe their overall approach to staffing (and sizing) the PMO in the narrative section of their proposal. If you have any other budget information ARCHES should be aware of, such as your starting staffing budget and budget ramp-up schedule etc. please let us know at the bottom of the fee schedule.

### **Question 14:**

**What is ARCHES’s estimated budget for this scope of work? What is ARCHES’s preferred payment schedule?**

ARCHES will not provide an estimated budget for this scope of work. Please describe your approach to staffing and structuring the PMO along with your best price to match the scope of your proposal. ARCHES anticipates monthly invoicing and payments.