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1 Background
The Northwest Energy Efficiency Alliance (NEEA) is an alliance of more than 140 utilities and energy efficiency organizations working on behalf of more than 13 million energy consumers. NEEA is dedicated to accelerating both electric and natural gas energy efficiency, leveraging its regional partnerships to advance the adoption of energy-efficient products, services and practices.

Since 1997, NEEA and its partners have saved enough energy to power more than 900,000 homes each year. As the second-largest resource in the Northwest, energy efficiency can offset most of our new demand for energy, saving money and keeping the Northwest a healthy and vibrant place to live. www.neea.org

1.1 Extended Motors Products (XMP) Program
NEEA’s Extended Motor Products (XMP) program aims to accelerate adoption of efficient motor-driven products, including pumps, fans, and compressors, through a defined set of interventions:

- Partnerships with industry groups to increase market awareness and enable product differentiation through the development of energy labeling programs, and
- Partnerships with distributors\(^1\) in which:
  - NEEA provides distributors with mid-stream incentives to motivate them to preferentially stock and sell efficient products, and
  - Distributors supply NEEA with full-category sales data, which both informs XMP program strategy and enables the market progress to be measured.

Currently the program is focused on accelerating adoption of commercial and industrial (C&I) pumps and circulators that are 50 horsepower and below. The program team chose to first test its program model on pumps and circulators because there has been DOE standards activity around these products and because there are industry-led energy ratings and energy rating labels available for pumps and circulators.

NEEA is exploring the possibility of adding stand-alone C&I fans to the XMP program. The Northwest Regional Technical Forum (RTF) recently approved a set of planning measures for fans, and its analysis found significant energy savings potential from fans.

1.2 Pumps Distributor Pilot
Currently, NEEA is piloting its XMP program model with distributors of C&I pumps 50 horsepower and below and circulators 5 horsepower and below. NEEA has long-term Master Service Agreements and 1-year Project Orders in place with pump distributors. Participating distributors receive:

- Per-pump incentives and performance-related bonuses tailored to the distributor’s sales mix,
- Program funding to support efficiency through sales, marketing, inventory, and training efforts (each distributor develops its own activities with input from NEEA),
- A stipend to support data collection and sharing, and

\(^1\) In the commercial and industrial pumps market, manufacturers’ representatives and distributors are one in the same. NEEA refers to these market actors as distributors.
Monthly dashboards that provide information on incentives received, missed incentive opportunities, and anonymized comparisons to other participating distributors’ performance.

In return, NEEA asks distributors to share two years’ worth of historical full-category sales data for all pumps in their sales history as well as monthly full-category sales data for each month that they are participating in the program.

Currently, seven pump and circulator distributors are participating in the pilot. These distributors vary along several dimensions, including the manufacturer(s) they represent and their size, sales mix, geography served, and customer base. In most cases, distributors have an exclusive right to sell certain brands in specific territories.

2 Research Objectives
NEEA will select a qualified contractor to conduct research in three sequential stages to support efforts to refine the XMP program model and understand the degree to which the model is likely to be effective for stand-alone C&I fans. These research stages are:

1. Assess the degree to which the activities occurring as part of the pumps distributor pilot are leading to intended changes in practices/structures and, if supported by the research, recommend changes to the program model.
3. Assess whether the design of the pumps distributor pilot is likely to be effective at driving efficiency gains for stand-alone C&I fans in the Northwest.

NEEA is envisioning a 3-stage process in which the awarded contractor will address each of the above research objectives in sequence. The awarded contractor will deliver an interim memo and conduct a working session with NEEA staff upon completion of each of the first two stages.

2.1 Assess the Effectiveness of Pumps Distributor Pilot Activities
First, the awarded contractor will assess the degree to which the activities occurring as part of the pumps distributor pilot are leading to changes in practices and structures that will, over time, support achievement of the pilot’s intended outcomes. Further, the awarded contractor will recommend any changes to program structure supported by their research that they believe will put the XMP program in a better position to meet its objectives. Recommendations could include, but are not limited to, elements of the program that are worthy of greater investment, elements of the program that should be discontinued, and elements of the program that should be revised.

The research should address the following questions and identify meaningful patterns across distributor types (size, sales mix, key customer base, etc.) where possible:

- What motivates distributors to participate the program?
- What key metrics do distributors use to understand and manage their business? How, if at all, does participating in the program impact those metrics?
- What education and awareness activities are distributors conducting as part of their participation in the pilot? Are the intended outcomes of these activities clear and well-documented? Are the activities achieving their intended outcomes?
- Do XMP programs incentives motivate distributors to stock and sell more efficient products and, if so, what steps are they taking to shift stocking/sales practices?
- Beyond education/awareness activities and stocking/sales practices discussed above, has participation in the program influenced distributors’ interactions with their customers? If so, how?
- To what degree and how are distributors using the data provided to them by the XMP program? Which elements of the dashboard, if any, are encouraging them to shift their stocking and sales practices? What changes, if any, have distributors made as a result of the dashboards? Is there any other information distributors would find helpful that could be included in the dashboards?
- Has participation in the program influenced distributors’ interactions with their manufacturers and, if so, how?

2.2 Conduct Fans Market Research
The awarded contractor will also conduct market research on stand-alone C&I fans in the Northwest to support NEEA’s efforts drive greater adoption of efficient fans in the region. The awarded contractor should note differences between the commercial and industrial markets where possible. Research activities will include:

1. Assess whether commercial floor area is an appropriate scaling factor to estimate the size of the market for stand-alone C&I fans in the Northwest using national data, as assumed in the Power Council’s draft 2021 Power Plan. Recommend alternative approaches if commercial floor plan is found not to be an appropriate scaling factor.

2. Profile the market
   a. Provide an estimate of the relative frequency of annual fan purchases for new installations, planned replacement installations, and emergency replacement installations
   b. Map the general distribution flow(s) from manufacturing to end user
   c. Document the ways in which manufacturers differentiate themselves from their competitors, including the degree to which they see energy efficiency as an opportunity to stand apart
   d. To support future research efforts, report whether interviewed/surveyed distributors distribute fans and pumps to the agricultural market
   e. Compile a list of potential data sources that NEEA could use to capture annual fan shipments to the Northwest, and, if possible, note whether the following types of information are included in each source:2
      i. Fan type
      ii. Horsepower, model information, or Fan Electrical Input Power
      iii. Application (sector/end-use)
      iv. If the fan is sold with a motor or motor and drive and, if so, the type of motor/drive
      v. Efficiency level (Fan Energy Index [FEI])
      vi. Geographic identifier (point of sales or place of use) and type (for example, state, zip code, street address)

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2 Bidders can propose asking interview/survey contacts for recommendations for potential data sources, but they should not request data from interview/survey contacts.
3. Identify roles that various market actors (distributors, suppliers, installers, specifiers, project owners, and maintenance/service providers) play in key purchase decision scenarios (such as planned replacement, emergency replacement, and new construction). Document for each decision scenario:
   a. Key market/customer segments, including their key requirements for purchase (for example, price, ease of installation)
   b. The role each market actor plays
   c. How market actors assess fan options
   d. How market actors interact to reach decisions about fans – in particular, the influence they exert in the decision

4. Assess market actors’ current awareness and use of the FEI label, broken down by market actor group to the degree possible. Specific questions include:
   a. What proportion of market actors are aware of the FEI label?
   b. Are market actors using the FEI label in sales/purchasing decisions for stand-alone C&I fans and, if so, what role(s) does the label play in their decision-making processes?
   c. To what degree are market actors interested in using the FEI label in each of the following applications: stand-alone fans, fans sold with motors or motors and drives, and smart fans?
   d. To what degree are market actors using other efficiency labels, such as the FEG label, in sales/purchasing decisions for stand-alone C&I fans? Do market actors understand the difference between the FEI label and the FEG label?

5. Assess the nature and tenacity of market barriers for stand-alone C&I fans in the Northwest and do so by market actor group where appropriate. Assess whether each of the market barriers included in the XMP logic model apply to the fans market and identify any barriers for fans that are not included in the logic model.

2.3 **Assess the Applicability of the Pumps Distributor Pilot to the Fans Market**
Drawing from knowledge gained in responding to the first two research objectives, the awarded contractor will assess whether the design of the pumps distributor pilot is appropriate for stand-alone C&I fans in the Northwest. Specifically, the awarded contractor will:

1. Assess whether the key barriers to adoption of more efficient stand-alone C&I fans in the Northwest are likely to be addressed by the program model used in the pumps distributor pilot,
2. Assess whether the design of the pumps distributor pilot is appropriate given the roles market actors play in and the influence they have on sales of stand-alone C&I fans in the Northwest, and
3. Make recommendations for how program offerings could be tailored to fans distributors based on what is learned about 1) which activities are most effective, and 2) whether the effectiveness of program activities vary as a function of distributor characteristics (size, sales mix, etc.).
3 Parameters/Considerations

3.1 Sample Population
The awarded contractor will select a sample from among key market actors and program staff to support their research approach. NEEA encourages bidders to consider the best way to use contact groups in the research – adding, excluding, or combining groups based on the bidder’s view of how to best achieve NEEA’s study objectives.

NEEA recommends bidders consider including the following market actor groups when evaluating the pumps distributor pilot:

- NEEA and implementer staff
- Participating distributors
- Manufacturers represented by participating distributors

NEEA recommends bidders consider including the following market actor groups when conducting fans market research:

- Building/facility managers
- Maintenance/service providers
- Specifiers, such as designers, engineers, architects
- Contractors/installers
- Distributors
- Manufacturers’ representatives
- Original equipment manufacturers (OEMs)

3.2 Respondent Recruiting
NEEA will provide the awarded contractor with contact information gathered as part of the 2019 XMP pumps market characterization research and provide introductions to key market actors and industry partners who may recommend additional contacts. Bidders should include a detailed description of their approach to accessing additional contact information and recruiting respondents, and their budgets and timelines should reflect the fact that some respondent groups may be hard to reach. Bidders are encouraged to consider whether any research tasks could be addressed with national samples. Further, bidders should build in time for NEEA funders to review contact lists and recruitment language if deemed appropriate by NEEA.

3.3 Sources of information
NEEA recommends that bidders consider the following sources of information in its work and encourages bidders to address the use of other sources in their proposals. Some of the following sources contain confidential information and will be shared with the awarded contractor once a non-disclosure agreement has been signed.

- XMP program market transformation theory
- XMP program logic model
- XMP Pilot Program: 2019 Year in Review report
- Pumps distributor pilot program materials
- American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE) standards for the FEI
3.4 Research Design (Approach and Methodology)
NEEA expects bidders to recommend an approach that best meets the research objectives laid out above. NEEA is open to well-thought-out and designed research approaches of both qualitative and quantitative nature.

As stated above, NEEA envisions a 3-stage process in which the awarded contractor delivers an interim memo and working session upon completing each the first two research stages.

3.5 COVID-19
NEEA assumes that the COVID-19 pandemic is affecting both internal program operations and the Northwest pumps and fans markets. Further, NEEA assumes that the effects of COVID-19 on internal program operations and broader markets are not yet well understood. While NEEA does not expect the contractor to conduct research specifically on the effects of COVID-19 on the fans market or functioning of the pumps distributor pilot, the awarded contractor is encouraged to share relevant information gleaned during the data collection process.

3.6 Deliverables
At a minimum, NEEA expects the following deliverables will be produced by the contractor.

3.6.1 Kickoff Meeting and Work Plan
The awarded contractor will plan and set the agenda for a kickoff meeting to discuss project administration and expectations, research plans, and rough timelines. Prior to the kickoff meeting, the contractor will submit a draft work plan to the NEEA Market Research and Evaluation (MRE) project manager. The work plan will describe data collection, analysis, and other proposed activities; deliverables; and timelines.

After the kickoff meeting, the contractor will submit a final work plan within one week from the date of the kickoff meeting that incorporates any feedback received in writing and/or during the kickoff meeting.

3.6.2 Interview/Survey Instruments and Contact Lists
The awarded contractor will submit all interview/survey instruments, including recruitment scripts, to the MRE project manager for review and final approval. To ensure that all research objectives are met, all instruments must include a table showing how each question corresponds with the research objectives. The MRE project manager must approve all final instruments before fieldwork begins.

The awarded contractor will also provide NEEA with:
- A list of all individuals contacted, their contact information, and whether the individual participated in a research activity (if known), and
- Any updates made to a NEEA-provided contact list.
3.6.3 Interim Memos, Working Sessions, Final Report, and Raw Data

NEEA anticipates that the contractor will submit two interim memos and hold two working sessions with the NEEA team, one after each of the first two research stages is complete. These sessions will be conducted so that the contractor can share findings from the completed stage and discuss how these findings may influence the next stage.

The interim findings memos should include a high-level synthesis of key findings and do not need to include detailed results unless the contractor believes such information should be discussed with NEEA prior to the commencement of the next stage. Detailed findings can be reserved for the final report.

When the final stage of the research is nearing completion, the awarded contractor will meet with the MRE project manager to discuss the report outline and presentation style. The awarded contractor will then create a draft report that synthesizes findings across the three research stages. The draft report will be submitted to NEEA for review and comment. The awarded contractor will then incorporate comments and submit the final report. NEEA may request more than one round of review on all or portions of the report depending on the degree to which the initial draft meets the program’s needs.

Upon completion of the project, the contractor will provide NEEA with de-identified raw data for all research activities (interview notes, survey data, etc.), unless the awarded contractor and NEEA agree upon a different approach.

4 Budget

Proposals should be provided on a time and materials basis. Bidders should provide a competitive budget estimate that is sufficient to cover their proposed work. A reasonable budget range for this effort is $160,000-$180,000. However, budget should not be considered a limiting factor, and bidders are invited to submit optional tasks. NEEA’s MRE project manager will work with finalists to negotiate the specifics of the proposed research activities to meet resource constraints. Proposal estimates should reflect that the contractor is responsible and accountable for the following:

- All logistics associated with executing the research tasks
- Preparing identified deliverables
- All subcontractors used on this project
- Contractors’ allocation of resources to tasks
- Invoicing and expense reporting per contract terms
- Distribution of incentives for research participation

5 Proposal Format

Bidders’ proposals should include the following sections and should not exceed 15 pages (excluding appendices).

5.1 Executive Summary of Research Design

Describe your understanding of the XMP program objectives and the key areas of learning for this project. Include the key strategies and approach for the scope of the work, proposed costs, and the reasons NEEA should select your team.
5.2 Tasks and Deliverables
Provide a detailed description of the specific methodologies and approaches to be undertaken to complete the scope. Be sure to include project management activities. Identify all major phases and milestones for the project and the associated deliverables.

For each research activity, include the activity’s objective, the target population, what will be done, and when it will be done. Include the analysis steps they plan to take for each research activity (qualitative coding and theme development, descriptive statistics disaggregated by market actor group, etc.).

5.3 Project Timeline & Cost Estimate
Provide the proposed timeline for all major phases and milestones of the project broken out by proposed task and associated deliverables. Include the cost estimate for each task. A breakout of any direct costs and an hourly rate sheet for the project period may be included here or in the Proposal Appendix section.

5.4 Proposal Appendix
- Hourly rate sheet for all project team members with estimated hours by task
- Company background and qualifications
- Project team with team bios, team structure, past team efforts on similar work, years of experience, and other relevant qualifications
- Documentation reflecting your organization’s good financial standing, such as a Dun & Bradstreet report (required for new vendors)

6 RFP Schedule, Point of Contact, and Intent to Respond
Bidder shall submit (1) electronic copy of the proposal by the end of business day listed in the RFP schedule below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 18, 2020</td>
<td>RFP released</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 27, 2020</td>
<td>Intent to Respond forms due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 27, 2020</td>
<td>Bidder questions for clarification submitted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 2, 2020</td>
<td>Answers to questions returned to bidders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 10, 2020</td>
<td>Written proposals due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 22, 2020</td>
<td>Anticipated contract award date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week of October 5, 2020</td>
<td>Anticipated project kickoff</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All correspondence shall be directed via email to:

Meghan Bean
Senior Project Manager, Market Research and Evaluation
mbean@neea.org

All Intent to Respond forms (see Appendix A) must be received no later than 5pm on August 27, 2020. NEEA will only provide RFP updates to, consider questions from, and review the proposals of bidders who submit and Intent to Respond form.

7 Selection and Proposal Scoring
Bidding firms will be rated among others in terms of the overall responsiveness to the RFP including, but not limited to:
1) Demonstrated understanding of project objectives, nuances, and potential roadblocks to meeting objectives
2) The thoughtfulness and appropriateness of the proposed design
3) Thoughtfulness and appropriateness of respondent recruitment approach and ability to address potential issues
4) Reasonableness of work plan – timing, tasks and deliverables
5) How well deliverable examples and descriptions meet the stated needs and intended use
6) Overall value for expenditure
7) Evidence of innovation in overall design, recruitment, and deliverables
8) Evidence of flexibility throughout the project lifecycle
9) Ability to communicate complex ideas/concepts clearly and succinctly
10) The balance of the complexity of design with the succinctness of communication of the design
11) Ability to make clear, actionable recommendations

In addition, the following factors will play a key role in the selection process:

1) The experience and qualifications of the individuals specifically proposed to execute and manage the project. (Note: Proposed staffing is a significant factor in bidder selection. As such, no changes in key staff/substitutions or changes in roles/responsibilities can be made without the written agreement of the MRE project manager once the RFP has been awarded.)
2) The experience of the firm or team of firms making the proposal.
3) The capability to execute the plan, including past experience and aptitude for collaboration.

Proposals will be evaluated by the MRE project manager and other NEEA staff that have the perspective needed to make this important decision. NEEA is under no obligation to provide work to any vendors responding to this solicitation, nor is there any obligation or intent implied to reimburse any party for the cost of preparing a proposal in response to this RFP.

8 Preferred Insurance
Firms interested in working with NEEA should be aware of the following insurance requirements for all NEEA vendors.

Vendors must maintain adequate and reasonable insurance covering their performance under any offered contract, including, but not limited to Commercial General Liability insurance of at least $1,000,000/occurrence, Business Automobile Liability insurance, and any workers’ compensation and unemployment insurance required by law. Professional Liability and Cyber Liability insurance may also be required. NEEA may request a copy of such insurance policies prior to awarding work.

See sample terms and conditions for additional information about minimum insurance requirements: [https://neea.org/img/documents/sample-neea-contract-terms-and-conditions.pdf](https://neea.org/img/documents/sample-neea-contract-terms-and-conditions.pdf)
Appendix A - Intent to Respond Form

RFP #: 51665

Project Title: XMP Pumps Distributor Pilot Assessment and Fans Market Research

NEEA Point of Contact: Meghan Bean, mbean@neea.org

Refer to section RFP Schedule, Point of Contact, and Intent to Respond for more details

PLEASE PRINT:

Company
Address
City, State, Zip
Contact Name
Contact Title
Phone #
Fax #
E-mail

The company named above intends to submit a proposal in response to NEEA’s request for proposal listed above. Deadline for submitting the “Intent to Respond” form is end of business day of date listed in the RFP schedule.

Signature of authorized representative:________________________

Print Name ________________________________

Title ________________________________

Date _________________