# FAQ for the ‘Invitation to Qualify for the Procurement Process for Energy System Operational Data’

The FAQ will be updated as additional questions are submitted.

## 1. Checklist for Complete Submission:

A checklist has been provided to help respondents ensure that a complete and eligible submission has been provided.

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| ☐ | A response has been provided for each of the sections in Annex A – Response Submission Form. |
| ☐ | Each of the eight (8) mandatory responses in Annex B – Qualification Requirements has a written response describing how the requirement is met. |
| ☐ | The authorized representative has initialed Mandatory Requirement 1 to indicate terms and conditions have been read and accepted. |
| ☐ | Mandatory Requirement 3’s response includes information on each of the three items requested. If the system provides or has the ability to provide network services, this should be stated here as well as on *line 210 - Network services offered* of the Excel file "requested data.xlsx" (for example: frequency control, tension). This information is also used for evaluation criterion E5. |
| ☐ | Mandatory Requirement 5’s response indicates the technology(ies) for which the data will be provided |
| ☐ | The respondent has filled in the Requested data.xlsx and included the Excel file with the submission as part of Mandatory Requirement 6. |
| ☐ | Mandatory Requirement 8’s response includes the capacity of the technology(ies) composing the system. |
| ☐ | All five (5) of the criteria in Annex C – Point Rated Evaluation Criteria have been reviewed and the response to the Mandatory Requirement 6 include information which can be used to score the submission (e.g., in order to evaluate the criterion E1, include the number of years of data available prior to the start of the data transfer to NRC, as well as the number of year of future data that could be transferred from the start date of the data transfer to NRC). |

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| ☐ | Annex D – Standard Costing has been filled in as required to the best ability of the respondent. Only hourly rates are required at this stage. If selected as a result of the ITQ solicitation phase, respondents will be asked to provide a detailed costing proposal. |

# 2. Eligibility Questions:

## 2.1. Who is eligible to apply?

*Companies, agencies, and individuals owning or operating energy systems which contain technologies from the applicable list with capacities above the specified minimums. The systems can be connected to the bulk grid or to localized grids in remote communities. The capability to provide grid services is not mandatory, but systems with this capability will score higher in the ITQ process. Eligible systems must be located in Canada. There are also specific data availability requirements listed in detail in the ITQ document Annex C. Exceptions to specific requirements are possible provided other criteria are met and justifications can be provided.*

## 2.2. Why should the operator of a system apply?

*Canada will use the data collected to support research, inform programs and policies, build and validate energy system models, publish aggregated results in government reports and publicly available literature, and conduct and publish case studies.*

*For the applicant, submitting data has considerable value over the short term and long term. In addition to monetary compensation, participants may join the advisory committee and inform the analysis process. Over the long term, performance data can better inform collaboration between government, utilities, and proponents. Performance data can inform investment decisions, better integrate renewable generators into the power grid as well as enable the design of revenue streams such as grid services.*

*Maximum payments to qualified proponents is limited by the Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC) regulations for sole source contracts. If available budget is a constraint, Canada will select among qualified proponents based on cost and value.*

## 2.3. What technologies are applicable to apply?

*The list of applicable technologies is listed in section 1.1 of the ITQ.*

## 2.4. What is the minimum system capacity for the data to be considered?

*The energy system must meet the capacity limits defined in Mandatory Requirement 8 of the ITQ document. The capacity minimums refer to the applicable technologies listed in section 1.1 and do not include other equipment (i.e., technologies not listed in section 1.1) that may be part of a larger system. The limits in Mandatory Requirement 8 can refer to combinations of qualifying technologies noted in the ITQ.*

- *Example of a system that qualifies – 45 kW demand response capacity combined with a 495 kW solar PV array. The individual systems do not qualify but the combination qualifies.*
- *Example of a system that does not qualify – A remote community using a 5 kW solar PV array and a 100 kW diesel generator. Diesel generation is not a qualifying technology.*

### 2.5. What is the minimum number of performance data parameters and the duration of available data required to be eligible?

*A minimum of one year of historical data is required to qualify. A minimum of 20 unique performance data parameters are required with a frequency of at least hourly (sub-hourly is ideal). A performance data parameter is a single measurement point, or combination of several measurement points (e.g., voltage at a specific point, flow rate, temperature, power, frequency, etc.).*

### 2.6. Are projects that are not already in-service are eligible for this ITQ stage/procurement?

*Projects are not required to be in service for this first phase of the procurement process.*

## 3. Process Questions:

### 3.1. Where to send any questions about the ITQ?

*See section 2.2. of the Invitation to Qualify (ITQ): "[…] questions and other communications regarding this ITQ must be directed only to the Contracting Authority identified in the ITQ at: Johnathon.Gillis@nrc-cnrc.gc.ca. Failure to comply with this requirement may result in the response being disqualified from further consideration. […]"*

### 3.2. Where and how to apply?

*See section 2.3. of the Invitation to Qualify (ITQ): "[…] responses must be submitted to the National Research Council Canada contracting Authority, Johnathon Gillis, by electronic mail by the date and time indicated on section 1.4 of the ITQ. […]"*

### 3.3. How will a qualified respondent be determined?

*See section 4 of the Invitation to Qualify (ITQ): Each response will be reviewed to determine whether it meets the mandatory requirements described in "Annex B – Qualification Requirements" and will be evaluated individually on a simple pass/fail basis.*
*Then each response meeting the mandatory criteria will be assessed in accordance with the technical evaluation criteria described in "Annex C - Point Rated Evaluation criteria".*
*Responses that do not comply with the minimum requirement specified in the evaluation criteria will be declared non-responsive and be disqualified.*

### 3.4. What happens after a respondent is qualified from the ITQ (i.e., what are the next steps following the ITQ)?

*See section 1.4.a. of the Invitation to Qualify (ITQ): "[…] Canada will release RSOs to those Qualified Suppliers who remain qualified at the time RSOs are released. Canada does not guarantee that a Standing Offer will be issued as a result of the pre-qualification process. A Standing Offer will only come into effect with the issuance of a valid call up to the Standing Offer. Canada reserves the right to negotiate directly with a pre-qualified supplier should only one Energy System Operator be capable of providing the services. […]"*

3.5. Will there be subsequent requests for data, or opportunities to submit data at a later date if not submitting to this ITQ?

*See section 4.5. of the Invitation to Qualify (ITQ):" […] Canada reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to conduct a second qualification round among the unsuccessful Respondents if, in Canada's opinion, the first qualification round results in an insufficient number of Qualified Respondents. […]"*

3.6. Please explain the difference between sections a) Initial Requirement, b) Potential additional "call-up" years, and c) Option Years (4-7) Maintenance under Annex D. What is the definition of "call-up years"?

*In general terms, when a standing offer is issued to your company, you are offering to provide services at specified prices over a specified period of time. If and when the government issues a call-up against your standing offer, only then do you have a contract for the amount indicated in the call-up.  For this project (a) The initial requirement is estimated to be three to six years of gathering data and four to seven to years of maintaining the data. These are estimates and will vary each respondent.  (b) Additional call ups may be considered by the NRC should the supplier have data that NRC wishes to procure. (c) Data maintenance refers ongoing process of running regular checks to identify and correct data if improvements or additional data is available from suppliers. Suppliers will be requested to provide a detailed proposal at the time of the request.*

3.7. Are the two certifications listed in Section 3.2 d) required at this stage? If yes, where is the respondent to provide this information under Annex A?

*No procurement certifications are required with this ITQ solicitation. Respondents should note that certain certifications that are not required at the ITQ stage may be required at a later stage of the procurement process.*

3.8. Are applications expected per project or per corporate entity?

*The preference is to receive applications grouped by project or site. One application could be used for the Annex "D" however, if a respondent responding to multiple data points, they must address each site independent of each other.*

## 4. Data Request Questions:

4.1. What information and data are required at this stage (i.e., the ITQ level)?

*The detailed time series and system information is not required at this stage. This stage requires more basic system definition/description information and lists of available detailed information and time series data.*

## 4.2. What information and performance data are being asked for?

*A detailed list of the contextual and performance data based on the system/technologies in question is contained in an attachment to the ITQ.*

## 4.3. How will data be submitted to NRC in the event respondent is selected and a contract is established?

*The data will be transferred to NRC servers using a secure internet-based file transfer protocol. Details can be found in the "Data Provision Guidelines" document attached to the ITQ. Specific details relating to transferring data, frequency of transfers, duration of transfers, etc. will be determined individually with selected proponents if data procurement contracts are completed.*

## 4.4. If providing data from a photovoltaic generation station, are hourly rates to be provided under line item 3 - "Photovoltaic module" or line item 2 - "generator"? Additionally, what would be the definition of requirements under line item 1 - "Point of Common Coupling"?

*Respondents should focus their efforts on qualifying technically through the ITQ process and not on the finances. If selected for a Standing Offer, respondents will have an opportunity to provide a detailed costing proposal when NRC requires data services.*

## 4.5. For evaluation criterion E1, the maximum score is 10 (1 point per year) while the requested range of data is between 1 and 7 years. How will the respondent aim to achieve the full 10 points associated with this evaluation criterion?

*The evaluation criterion E1 indicates a temporal range of performance data from 1 year up to 7 years. This can be a combination of up to 5 years in the past and up to 7 years in the future from the start of the data transfer. A maximum of 10 points will be obtained if the respondent provides a time range of at least 10 years.*

## 4.6. For the response to Annex B's Mandatory Requirement 6, is the Respondent expected to provide a list of all the different parameters of data that will be provided per the "Requested Data" spreadsheet?

*Respondents shall fill in the worksheet "Data to be provided" of the Excel document "Requested Data". Respondents shall add or remove the "x" for the corresponding data provided (row) for each component (column) of their systems. They shall choose the sampling period at which the data will be recorded, the periodicity of which the data will be sent to NRC, and the expected completeness of the data.*

4.7. Regarding the cost estimation for the service, does the cost include the labor cost, material, and equipment depreciation?

*Details will be worked out in the standing offer stage when a more detailed proposal is required where a fee schedule can be developed.*

4.8. If an applicant has data that is not the expected format, is reformatting required?

*Data must be submitted in the format specified in the ITQ documents. NRC will assist the applicant in meeting the formatting requirements.*

4.9. Will data be accepted where the time resolution of data changes? For example, equipment is upgraded to a faster sampling rate in the future but historical data is at a lower frequency.

*In general, this is acceptable. Historical data will count towards scoring as described in "Annex C - Point Rated Evaluation criteria". Differing data rates for the same data points are generally acceptable as long as the minimum requirements are met.*

4.10. Is continuous data transfer to NRC's server required or are batched file transfers acceptable?

*Periodic file transfer of time-series data in batches is currently the only acceptable method for security reason.*

## 5. Other Questions:

5.1. What will the data be used for?

*The data collected during the ITQ phase will only be used to determine if further data procurement will be made. If candidates are successful and the detailed data is procured by Canada, the data collected will be used to support research, inform programs and policies, build and validate energy system models, publish aggregated results in government reports and publicly available literature, and conduct and publish case studies.*

5.2. Which Federal Government departments have access to accepted data?

*Data are accessible by any government department or agency on a need-to-know basis as evaluated by the project governance committee. In general, data will not be shared unless specifically requested and approved.*

5.3. What is the composition of the advisory committee?

*This is a work in progress. The working proposal is to include members from NRC and NRCan in addition to all qualified project owners. It will inform the decision-making process and may* *consider analytical approaches, research questions, publication support, etc. There will also be an internal advisory committee composed of federal researchers.*

## 5.4. Who will the data be shared with?

*The data received from the respondents will be accessible by the project proponents at NRC and NRCan. Aggregated data and analysis results will be included in reports that will be released to the public.*

## 5.5. What is the definition of a remote community?

*A remote community is a permanent settlement with at least 10 dwellings, that is not connected to the provincial or territorial electricity grid. This is not intended as a precise definition and Canada will exercise some discretion.*