

**NEW YORK STATE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND MARKETS**

**CONSULTING SERVICES FOR
FARMLAND PROTECTION PROJECT REVIEW – EASTERN REGION**

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. Q: Regarding “Scope of Services” Task 6, how many work group meetings do you anticipate per year? How long does a work group meeting typically last?

A: The number of work group meetings varies from year to year, but typically a meeting occurs every 2 to 3 months throughout the year; each meeting typically lasts 3 hours.

2. Q: For work group meetings, is there a preference for the contractor’s personal attendance versus teleconferences or participation by speakerphone?

A: The contractor’s participation is expected for each work group meeting. It is acceptable for the contractor to participate in most of these meetings via speakerphone.

3. Q: For purposes of establishing travel status per the OSC Travel Manual, where is the “official station” for this project? Or, can a consultant choose some other official station for this project?

A: The contractor’s “official station” location will be wherever that contractor’s office is located.

4. Q: Regarding “Scope of Services” Task 5, is there a preference for having in-person meetings over teleconferences? The note emphasizes the possibility of extensive travel, but if that is so are teleconferences truly a viable option?

A: Meetings with local project managers are typically conducted via telephone. If deemed necessary, some meetings may be conducted via teleconference with the Department’s Program Manager and local project manager. Occasionally, a personal meeting (whether or not such meeting may involve the Department’s Program Manager) may be necessary with the local project manager to address certain issues associated with a particular project.

5. Q: In addition to the review of project matters listed in the Request For Proposals, will it be necessary for the consultant to conduct personal site visits to each of the parcels of land anticipated to be conserved?

A: It is very unlikely that a site visit to a particular farm involving the contractor would be deemed necessary.

6. Q: Do all or most awardees have sufficient training and capacity to bring a FPIG project to completion? Is the contractor expected to assist them with training in document drafting, how to do a baseline documentation report, additional fundraising, etc.?

A: Most, but not all, local project managers (who may or may not be employed by or otherwise directly associated with the FPIG awardee) have the necessary training, experience, or capability to complete the required tasks associated with each FPIG contract. However, as needed and as directed by the Department Program Manager, the contractor will provide sample documents to local project managers to help expedite the completion of the required tasks associated with each FPIG contract. The contractor shall not provide any training or other technical assistance to any local project manager.

7. Q: Are the Department's written requirements clear and complete as far as the program's expectations for site plans, conservation easements, and project file contents? Are some program policies and standards still being decided?

A: The Department has prepared some written guidance materials now available on the Department's web site and more guidance documents will be forthcoming over the duration of this consulting contract. The intent of all such written guidance is to provide clear written assistance regarding the completion of certain tasks and procedural steps in the overall process of completing a Purchase of Development Rights conservation easement transaction associated with each FPIG contract.

8. Q: New York State contract standard clause #10 states that a contractor shall keep records for at least the year served and another six years thereafter. Does this mean that the contractor is expected to archive all the FPIG awardees' project file contents for the additional six years?

A: The contractor is only expected to keep records pertaining to the actual hours worked and travel expenses incurred according to the timeframes specified in Appendix A. The contractor will not retain any documents associated with the individual FPIG projects. All project materials are to be sent to the Department Program Manager for archiving.

9. Q: After a contract is awarded, does the state pay the contractor on an invoice based on the number of actual hours the contractor works for a given month, not-to-exceed the contract price in one year? Or does the state pay the contractor on an invoice that is essentially 1/12th of the hours originally estimated in the Price Offer Proposal Form, Attachment 3 (and resulting contract) each month?

A: The Department will pay the contractor for the actual hours worked for a given month, not to exceed the contract price in one year upon submission of the required documentation and a Standard Voucher on a monthly basis as stipulated on page 7 of the RFP and pages 1-2 of Appendix D (attachment 2 to the Request For Proposals).

10. Q: The bidding process would be fairer if the Department estimated the number of hours (as well as the extent of travel) that it anticipated would be necessary for a competent consultant to do the necessary work and let us know. Will the Department provide such estimations?

A: No, because the estimations in one's application are an indication of the applicant's knowledge and experience with the activities outlined in the scope of services as well as the subject matter associated with the documents required in each project file that will be reviewed by the contractor.

11. Q: On the Price Offer Proposal Form the travel status is based on hours and the composite rate. When calculating the composite rate, should we take into account mileage and accommodations per the OSC's travel manual, or does the state reimburse mileage and accommodations separately from the Proposal?

A: As stated on the Price Offer Proposal Form, travel expenses are not to be included in the bidder's hourly rate. These costs will be reimbursed separately.