

Request for Proposal Guidance

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Guidance in Procurement of Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment

This Guidance provides a description of the types of requirements to be included in an employer's workplace charging request for proposal (RFP). This Guidance is not intended to be a sample or manual for acquiring electric vehicle supply equipment (EVSE), but rather to serve as a reference for an employer to consider when acquiring EVSE as part of a workplace charging program. Contact the Workplace Charging Challenge at WorkplaceCharging@ee.doe.gov for additional assistance.

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Organizational Profile

Provide background information on your organization, including details about the locations where you are seeking EVSE installation and whether the installation is for workplace use, public use, or both. Explain why your organization wants to install charging stations, as this may shape the proposals.

Summary

You may include a summary of the types of EVSE for which your organization is requesting proposals (e.g., Level 2 AC charging), the quantity and locations of these items, and other general requirements. It may be desirable to include an overall site plan, consisting of a map, construction drawings, and/or photos of the proposed EVSE installation site and electrical diagram. You may also wish to issue separate requests for proposals (RFPs) for the equipment and installation and allow bidding on one or both RFPs. You may receive responses from suppliers of EVSE units, installers of EVSE, or turnkey installers/operators.

General Instructions for Submittal

Acknowledgment of Receipt/Notice of Intent to Submit Information

Some organizations provide instructions for potential suppliers to acknowledge receipt of an RFP, and the preferred method to acknowledge it (e.g., email response, letter of intent). Organizations may also advise potential suppliers that they will not receive further communication concerning the RFP, nor will any submitted proposal be considered if the potential supplier does not send an acknowledgment of receipt.

Contractual and Technical Issues

You may provide your organization's contact information to potential suppliers in case they have questions about the content of the RFP.

Submittal Instructions

Your organization may list your specific requirements that must be met before your organization considers a proposal. Topics to consider might include:

- The date and time when the proposal is due
- Whether a cover letter is required
- Specific subject lines to be used for emails
- The name of the person from the potential supplier whom your organization may contact concerning the supplier's proposal
- The time frame for which the proposal is valid and the format in which the proposal should be submitted (e.g., electronic or printed copy).



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Timeline and Due Dates

Some organizations include a full proposal timeline and additional due dates, such as a deadline for submitting questions and the date of pre-bid meetings and site inspections.

RFP Question and Answer Requirements

To preserve a level playing field, many organizations consider it a best practice to publish all questions submitted by potential EVSE suppliers with the responses from the organization. These questions and answers may be shared with the general public, or only with all interested parties. You may specify how you wish questions to be submitted, how the answers will be made available to interested parties, and the procedure for gaining access to the answers.

Exceptions

You may specify any exceptions to the terms and conditions for the RFP that will be considered and how a supplier would indicate the nature of the exception, including warranty and liability exceptions. You may indicate if the terms and conditions in the

RFP will constitute the conditions of the contract with the successful supplier after the award. Additionally, some organizations request that the supplier include certification that its proposal has been reviewed by its legal counsel and submit that certification as a separate attachment. You may wish to include this as part of your RFP as well.

Proposal Preparation Costs

Some organizations state that any costs incurred in the preparation of a response to an RFP are the responsibility of the supplier.

Evaluation Factors and Award

You may provide a list of criteria for evaluating the proposal, and the percentage weight of each category. Many companies break down how scored percentages for each section count toward the overall score, as well as how each section will be scored. Factors affecting each score may include references, history of installations, cost, timing and schedule, availability of EVSE, selection of EVSE, warranty of work, completeness of bid, and compliance with bid format.

Scope of Work

Typically, the requesting organization should strongly consider requiring that the installation meet all applicable requirements. These may include, but are not limited to, the Americans with Disabilities Act requirements, complying with codes and standards such as SAE J1772, National Electric Code Article 625, Underwriters Laboratories 2594, International Electrochemical Commission 61851, state and local codes or their equivalents, and other requirements your organization may have.

Additionally, some companies instruct the supplier to provide a detailed explanation for each item about how its units meet or exceed the specification and to detail any areas where the specification is not met and how this is beneficial. You may also request that the company provide information on why it recommends a certain unit and how it will respond to your organization's needs. Contact the Workplace Charging Challenge to learn about common EVSE unit specifications. Specifications to consider may include, but are not limited to, the list below.

Keep in mind that the distance from an electricity source is a major installation factor that can significantly affect price. Therefore, it is a good idea to include a map, construction drawings, and/or photos of the proposed EVSE installation site as an appendix to the RFP. This may require you to engage an electrical contractor or engineering firm. These details will allow the responding organization to more accurately price the installation.

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Common EVSE Specifications

- Availability
- Exterior dimensions
- Level I or Level II charging, or a combination of the two
- Number of units
- Wall-mounted or pedestal-mounted EVSE
- Enclosure rating
- Operational sequence
- Pilot
- Standards and certifications
- Temperature rating
- Cable length
- Connector/Cable
- Frequency
- Networked or stand alone
- Panel and electrical system upgrades
- Amp rating
- Breaker size
- Input current
- Input phase
- Input voltage
- Maximum energy Output (kW)
- Output phase
- Output voltage
- Additional site upgrades, such as lighting or landscaping
- Permits
- Restoration of site
- Signage and markings for the units and parking spaces

Technical Support and Maintenance

You may specify how your organization prefers technical and maintenance issues to be resolved and who will be responsible for resolving them. An example of this would be to require that EVSE units be equipped with two-way communications to a dedicated network to allow over-the-air firmware updates, or you may prefer to specify another update method. The method used to update the firmware may have an impact on the cost of the equipment and installation. You may also wish to request that the bidder provide a quote for cost of maintenance over a period of years. These items likely will increase the cost of the equipment and installation, so it may be beneficial for the organization requesting bids to determine what is necessary for a successful charging program.

Fee Collection

You may wish to consider whether to collect user fees and how, such as requiring that the EVSE units accept major credit cards or another method.

Network

If your organization wishes to monitor data usage, prefers online updates, or plans to require payment, you may ask suppliers to detail the options available for accessing data and energy monitoring information. You may also list the type of data you wish to track and what type of user interface is required (e.g., Web access). The cost of services, such as network access or administration of employee billing, should be included in the bid.

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Examples of common data and metrics to track include:

- Minutes per day in-use
- Total sessions by day
- Total energy used (kWh/day)
- Real-time availability of EVSE (e.g., online, offline, charging, connected, fault).

Power Fluctuations

You may request that a supplier address how its EVSE units can adjust to varying power supply, including such topics as whether the EVSE must be manually reset after a power outage and what Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers standards the equipment meets.

Metering

You may consider how the EVSE units monitor and report their power usage. For example, do the units require integration with your building's energy management system?

Additional Proposal Topics

Business Organization

You may request that the proposing company provide its full name and address, as well as the same information for any parent company to be included with the proposal. If a branch office or subordinate company will be providing the service, you may want to require its information as well. The company's corporate structure (corporation, partnership, individual, etc.) is sometimes required, as well as the state in which the company is incorporated or licensed to operate.

Electronic Images

If your organization wishes to display public service announcements or advertisements, you may consider requiring that the EVSE have the capability to display electronic images via a built-in screen.

EVSE Wrap

If your organization wishes to brand the EVSE unit with a logo or colors, you may consider requiring the ability to do so.

Warranty

You may specify the desired length of the warranty, and what the warranty would cover. You may also request the cost of extended warranties, if available, and what the ongoing cost of typical maintenance of the EVSE will be. Warranty needs should be considered for the hardware, as well as the electrical, foundation, and restoration work.

Corporate Experience

You may ask how long the potential supplier has been manufacturing and selling EVSE units or similar equipment, as well as what certificates and standards they meet.

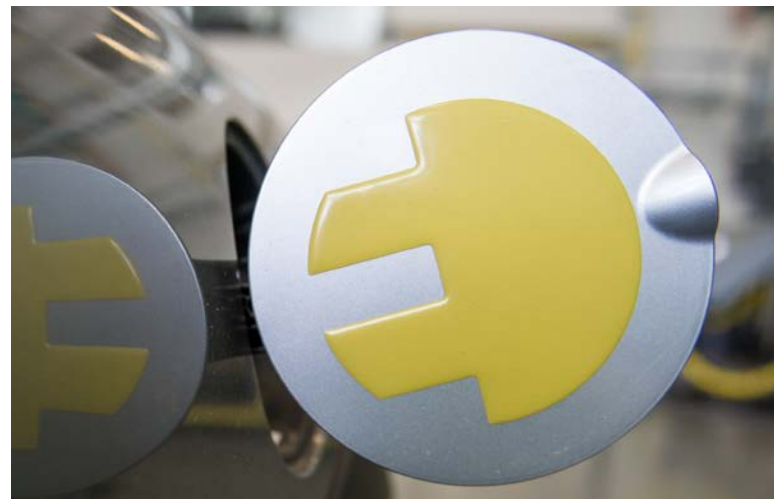


Photo by Dennis Schroeder, NREL 29845

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Prior Experience

You may ask the proposing company to provide relevant corporate experience and individual experience for personnel who will be actively engaged in the project. Possible items to require would be a list of project titles, task descriptions and requirements, and the year performed. You may also require references from previous clients, including names and contact information.

Personnel

Some organizations request names and qualifications, such as licenses, certifications, bonds, insurance, and experience for the individuals whom the supplier will assign to the project, including their tasks and percentage of time allocated in support of the project. Organizations may also wish to specify that the bidder meets all applicable federal, state, and local wage and employment requirements.

Non-Collusion and Non-Conflict of Interest

Organizations may decide to designate the period from RFP is issuance to completion as a no-contact period, limiting potential suppliers to contacting only the person designated in the RFP for answering questions. You may also indicate any penalties for violating this term.

Proprietary Information

It may be beneficial to advise the supplier if information included in the proposal may become public property, and what steps a supplier may take to prevent disclosure of proprietary information. An example of a possible method includes marking each page the supplier wishes to keep confidential to the proposal reviewers only. You may post a warning if there is potential for this information to be made public.

Authorized Negotiator

You may have the supplier provide the name, address, and telephone number of the person in its organization who is authorized to negotiate contract terms and render binding decisions on contract matters.

Cost Proposal

Some organizations find it beneficial to have a potential supplier complete a pricing and cost sheet, or table, to be included as an attachment with its RFP response. You may wish to request that bidders make equipment recommendations here, and provide an explanation of why.

Terms and Conditions

You may wish to include a section on terms and conditions of the award as part of the RFP.



Additional Attachments

EVSE Pricing and Network Costs

You may require that proposing suppliers provide pricing information for equipment and other considerations, such as network membership or charging fee, perhaps providing a table for the supplier to fill out.

EVSE Installation Costs

You may also wish to provide a list of installation sites and request the installation cost for each site. This section may also be used to specify if change orders to the installation costs will be allowed. This should include restoration cost. Generally a contractor would offer “least disruptive” and/or “lowest cost” installations.

Disclosure of Prior Findings of Non-Responsibility Form

You may also choose to require that applicants provide a disclosure if they have been found to be incapable of performing work under any prior contracts by a finding of non-responsibility.

Join the Workplace Charging Challenge

The U.S. Department of Energy is inviting employers to advance the deployment of plug-in electric vehicles by signing the Workplace Charging Challenge Pledge, a commitment to providing employee charging.

Learn more about the Challenge and how to join at electricvehicles.energy.gov.

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