

**Energy Trust of Oregon**

**Request for Proposals:**

**Independent Restaurant Energy Opportunities and Supply Chain Research**

**Responses to Questions**

**February 5, 2024**

1. *Question: I was hoping you could provide some guidance on the conflict-of-interest clause for the restaurant research RFP. Having read the conflict-of-interest statement, I don’t feel like being a subcontractor to TRC on the Existing Buildings contract is a conflict of interest. I was hoping you could confirm that you agree that this does not constitute a conflict of interest.*

Answer: Having a subcontract with TRC to work on the implementation of the Existing Building program could represent a potential or perceived conflict of interest. Firms in this position would need to carefully think through the potential ways their work could be biased by their contractual relationship with TRC and how they would mitigate those potential conflicts and biases. I would expect to see this addressed in the COI section of a proposal. For example, could their contractual relationship with TRC influence the findings/outcomes of the study to benefit their future work within the program or with TRC? Also, how would a subcontractor ensure that they did not double bill TRC and Energy Trust for work on the program and this study, which may be closely related at times. I’m sure there are other issues I haven’t thought of, but ultimately it is up to the respondent to identify potential conflicts and bring them to our attention. I don’t think that being a subcontractor to TRC disqualifies anyone from being part of a proposal for this RFP, but it’s not completely free of potential/perceived conflicts either.

1. *Question: Throughout the RFP, the Energy Trust mentions accessing their contracted translation resource to help translate study materials into different languages. Please confirm if the bidder should budget for this service or if the Energy Trust will cover translation costs. If the bidder should cover translation costs, can the Energy Trust please provide an estimated value for budgeting purposes?*

Answer: Energy Trust will cover the translation costs for study materials and use their own contracted resources to do this. Bidders should assume a two-week turnaround time, for planning purposes, from submission to Energy Trust until translated documents are available.

1. *Question:* *Will most meetings with the advisory committee and research advisor be virtual or in-person?*

Answer: They will be almost entirely virtual, although it is possible that we could get everyone together for an in-person or hybrid meeting at some point. To date this has not been possible based on the location of Committee members around the state and their schedules.

1. *Question: Will the research advisor and advisory committee be part of the proposal review and research team selection?*

Answer: Yes. The Research Advisor and two members of the Advisory Committee will be part of the team reviewing and scoring proposals and selecting the Research Team.