

1. Should the RFP response be limited to what is assumed possible to accomplished within a 2-year period?

Answer: The full period of performance of CPB's 2022 NGWSGP grant from FEMA ends on September 30, 2025, with closeout occurring shortly thereafter. There is also a possibility that FEMA may award CPB additional NGWSGP grant funds. Vendors should therefore identify work that would occur both within and beyond the 2-year period should CPB exercise its option to extend its contract for technical services.

2. Will the vendor be required to administer grants, to include reviewing and approving grant submissions by subgrantees, making preliminary payment determinations, and appeals of denials?

Answer: No.

3. How will the categories of items for the NGWSGP Supply Schedule be established? What would be the vendor's role in this process?

Answer: The vendor selected for Task 2 (Technical Expertise) will recommend the categories of items for the NGWSGP Supply Schedule which CPB must approve.

4. Will CPB be responsible for making all funding decisions?

Answer: CPB will be responsible for all funding decisions, but may seek and will consider vendor's recommendations.

5. What applicable inventory, asset management, or control tower solutions are currently in place to track and manage assets across CPB and its affiliated local radio and television stations?

Answer: CPB has no ownership of public television and public radio stations. Assets purchased under this grant will be property of the subgrantees. CPB's Grant Management System maintains records of subgrants awarded and purchases made by subgrantees.

6. What is the nature of the “Assist subrecipients with FCC licensing” task? Would the vendor be expected to prepare or sign engineering statements for FCC applications, or to provide stations with legal advice or representation?

Answer: In the event this service is needed, CPB expects the vendor to prepare or sign engineering statements for FCC applications. The vendor is not expected to provide stations with legal advice or representation.

7. What is the expected duration of the active subgrant award process?

Answer: CPB expects to begin awarding subgrants in the 4th quarter of 2023. Subgrant awards will continue until award funds are exhausted and will be managed and monitored until closeout, which will be shortly after 9/30/2025.

8. How long will any technology system be required to be maintained for audit or reporting purposes following the completion of deliverables?

Answer: For audit and reporting purposes, CPB expects to require access to systems data until January 2027.

9. Are we allowed to submit three (3) projects total that demonstrate our experience across the task orders; or are we allowed to submit (3) projects for each task order that demonstrate our experience in that area, for a total of nine (9) projects?

Answer: Yes. Although the RFP permits submission of three projects demonstrating a vendor's experience, CPB will permit, but does not require, up to three such projects per task order for a maximum total of nine.

10. Without specifying the number and duration of in-person visits, how should vendors estimate travel costs?

Answer: CPB does not know how many of the 548 total potential subgrantees will apply or will need in-person visits. Travel will be considered a last-resort option if information cannot be obtained any other way.

11. The FEMA NOFO limits M&A fees to 5%. Is the awardee of this RFP obligated to this limit; and if so, how does this impact payment schedules for multi-year agreements? Is it constrained to the annual award for a given fiscal year or at the contract level which could potentially be for multiple years?

Answer: This limit does not apply to contractors under this award.

12. Does each site receive complete design documentation, installation of cabling, configuration of equipment, test and commissioning, and as-built drawings, or is that the responsibility of the site owner with CPB and its vendors' supervision? Will there be a list of "NGWSGP-approved equipment" prior to the start of work, or does the vendor's design imply this level of approval?

Answer: The vendor awarded Task 2 (Technical Expertise) will work with CPB to generate the list of approved equipment which is expected to grow as stations' needs are identified during the needs assessment process. Stations or equipment installer are expected to provide schematics and visuals for use in the needs assessment process. Any documentation developed by the vendor in the needs assessment process, including but not limited to drawings or testing results will be provided to the applicant.

13. Will vendor be expected to gather equipment data for closeout or just assist in developing the process?

Answer: We plan to include equipment data in quarterly Performance Progress Reports to simplify the closeout process. Vendor may be required to assist in gathering data for closeout in addition to assisting in the development of the process.

14. How long will stations be given to apply once the grant application is posted?

Answer: CPB expects that stations will be given 60 days to apply for grants.

15. Will vendor be responsible for station not meeting grant application deadlines for stations requiring vendor assistance? What timeline will station be given?

Answer: CPB will favorably consider requests for extensions of time by stations needing assistance. Application deadlines are the applicant's responsibility, not the vendor's. Nevertheless, vendors providing assistance to stations are expected to be aware of the deadlines and to inform stations when their work may delay a station's application.

16. What equipment data is required by FEMA for project closeout?

Answer: FEMA has not yet informed CPB of the detailed equipment data required by FEMA for closeout. CPB will advise the vendor when that is determined.

17. How will the Guidelines for the grant program be developed? What involvement will vendor be expected to provide in the guideline process?

Answer: The Guidelines are currently in development. The selected vendor may be asked to advise CPB on related policies and procedures.

18. Will CPB supply fraud/abuse surveillance of sub grant applications or is the expectation that the awardee will fulfill this responsibility?

Answer: CPB's grant managers will periodically meet with subgrantees and conduct desk audits. The vendor is expected to exercise due diligence to avoid and report any waste, fraud, or abuse which it observes or identifies in the performance of its duties.

19. What platform is the current grants management system built on? Will the vendor be required to integrate/extend this platform as part of the delivery work?

Answer: The expectation is for applications to go into the CPB's Grants Management System's portal, and no vendor involvement in integrating or extending the platform will be required.

20. What Enterprise Low-Code Applications (e.g., ServiceNow, Salesforce, Appian) does CPB currently use which the vendor could leverage as part of its sourcing and grants management approach?

Answer: Grants issued to stations will be administered and managed by CPB staff using CPB's Grants Management System.

21. Will the vendor be paid monthly for the previous months work?

Answer: Yes.

22. What financial systems interfaces will be needed to streamline functions with CPB Finance? (Release of Grant Funds)?

Answer: None. CPB's Grants Management System includes payment processing and will be used to manage all NGWSGP subgrants. The vendor will assist grantees with the grant application process, but CPB staff and systems will manage the award and payment of grants to stations and equipment vendors.

23. Will any technology solution implemented need to be integrated with any CPB existing technology solutions, and if so, can details on those technology solutions be provided?

Answer: None.

24. Does CPB anticipate the vendor will enable subrecipients to apply for and implement NGWSGP funding requirements in compliance with Federal rules (e.g., 2 C.F.R. Part 200) using an automated Grants Management and / or eProcurement solution to access the NGWSGP Supply Schedule?

Answer: CPB does not expect the vendor to produce or provide a new automated system. Vendor is, however; required to provide an NGWSGP supply schedule.

25. Is there an existing CRM system and/or subgrant application system for managing applications, review, and approvals?

Answer: Yes. CPB's Grants Management System performs these functions.

26. Would vendor "technical assistance" include functioning as a System Integrator?

Answer: Yes, as necessary.

27. Who determines if ATSC 3.0 or HD Radio should be a requirement or an option at a given facility? Is it a nice-to-have or an absolute requirement for modernization? Does this include any potential external infrastructure improvements required to accommodate the upgrade (i.e., tower/antenna improvements, downleads, weather protection, etc.)?

Answer: The vendor will make recommendations for improvements that enhance all EAS capabilities and services, which CPB must approve.

28. How are the “gaps” defined? Are they based on the location of the broadcast facility/transmitter and its inherent transmitting power, the surrounding population density, some measurable deficiency derived from the current technology, or something else?

Answer: Yes, gaps are primarily based on broadcast coverage areas and populations served, including rural, tribal, and underserved areas, though other factors may be considered. CPB will determine the gaps and priorities for grants.

29. What factor takes precedence, the station applicant's internal standards and system architectural/broadcast preferences and practices or the CPB's drive towards equipment standardization and value engineering?

Answer: The most cost-effective solutions are preferred, taking into account each station's internal standards and standardization of EAS capabilities.

30. Will the vendor be required to do any work (such as the design of power distribution systems or the structural assessment of towers for additional antennas) for which a state professional engineering license is required?

Answer: Possibly; they may have to procure local services.

31. How many CPB staff will require access to the technology solution selected to manage deliverables, and what will their roles be?

Answer: Deliverables will be managed by CPB staff under CPB's Grants Management System.

32. In-person visits may require inspecting the existing systems and documenting the as-built condition so that an appropriate and subsequent redesign can be facilitated: are these drawings required to be formalized and given back to the applicant as a deliverable?

Answer: Yes.

33. Will the vendor be required to help subrecipients execute task orders to purchase goods and services off of the NGWSGP Supply Schedule?

Answer: Yes, some help may be necessary, depending on how the vendor designs the process.

34. What licenses does CPB anticipate will be required to perform this work? In what states must these licenses be valid?

Answer: Vendor should have appropriate licenses for the required work in all 50 states, including tribal lands, plus the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, and American Samoa.

35. Are we assuming CPB will be following and using FEMA's processes and systems (ND Grants System)?

Answer: Yes.

36. Where does the funding for this RFP come from? Is it only sourced from the NGWSGP funding?

Answer: The only source of funding for this RFP and NGWSGP is the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) grant to CPB under Funding Opportunity Number DHS-22-IPAWS-138-00-01 as provided by the FY 2022 Consolidated Appropriations Act.

37. While not specifically identified in the RFP, is CPB seeking to have the vendor provide a digital catalog/ordering portal as part of the proposed solution?

Answer: Vendor may include a digital catalog/ordering portal in its proposal, but it is not necessary.

38. Does the vendor need to track time by activity? Or just resource (personnel)?

Answer: Yes, the vendor needs to track time by station and by activity, including personnel resources.

39. What is 'producing schedules and technical reports'? Is that producing quarterly grantee reports? (1.b.)

Answer: Yes, vendor would be required to do quarterly reports. Vendor would also be required to generate regular reports indicating their progress and different project management metrics.

40. What is the timeline for awarding the first grants?

Answer: Q4 of Fiscal Year 2023.

41. Will CPB be looking for assistance writing the grant application, FAQ's or any other pre-award related materials?

Answer: Yes.

42. Will the vendor be involved in developing the grant application forms and templates? Or, will this be done by CPB?

Answer: Yes, the vendor will be involved as needed.

43. How many stations do you anticipate will be in each priority category?

Answer: To be determined.

44. Will station power level increases or facility changes be considered eligible for funding in this program?

Answer: Yes.

45. What prioritization of funding is envisioned for the grant program? How will grants be prioritized for award?

Answer: Funding will be prioritized based on the FEMA priorities stated in the FY 2022 Next Generation Warning System Grant NOFO.

46. What CPB staff will the vendor be working with?

Answer: Executive Director; project officers; Director, Media Technology; VP, System Strategies; SVP, Innovation and System Strategies, and other members of CPB's team.

47. Of the potential 547 member stations that may participate, does CPB have any inkling as to what percentage may actually participate?

Answer: No.

48. Is there a prioritization methodology?

Answer: Yes, FEMA's priorities in the FY 2022 Next Generation Warning System Grant NOFO.

49. Does it seem practical that the TV and Radio stations could be categorized or standardized into small, medium, large packages of equipment?

Answer: Yes.

50. The RFP indicates that the awardee(s) will support the development of subgrant applications especially for smaller/rural stations. What percentage of stations will be self-sufficient in applying for sub grants vs. those stations that will need 100% support to apply?

Answer: CPB believes that rural, tribal, and underserved stations will need significant support. We do not know how many stations will apply, and how many applicants will need assistance. It is likely that most if not all of those stations will need assistance.

51. May additional questions be asked, if deemed necessary, before February 24?

Answer: The deadline for questions was extended to March 3, 2023.

52. Should vendor schedule a conference or not? Is it required?

Answer: Pre-proposal conferences are not required, and CPB has chosen not to schedule one.

53. Will vendor need to track time by station or just total time on the project?

Answer: Vendor will be required to track time per station and by activity.

54. To level the playing field across vendors, would CPB provide plug numbers for number of Labor Hours, and for ODCs and Travel costs in dollars?

Answer: No.

55. Can CPB provide the estimated number of contracts it expects to make up the NGWSGP Supply Schedule?

Answer: No.

56. Is the expectation of CPB that all staff assigned will meet all requirements in section IX.1.d.i or is the expectation that the team in aggregate will cover all requirements?

Answer: Yes, the vendor's team will be required to do this in aggregate.

57. The RFP indicates that the bidder will set up a procurement process (AKA the NGWSGP Supply Schedule) to support the individual stations in acquiring the requested technology. Does CPB request the bidder to set up a procurement team that negotiates preferential pricing with common vendors and act as a centralized procurement clearinghouse for each station to buy technology from? Or should a procurement process be set up like the GSA schedule, with a price list only?

Answer: The vendor should create a procurement and supply process similar to the GSA schedule under which the vendor will competitively procure equipment for purchase by subgrantee stations.

58. How does CPB understand the procurement auditing requirements spelled out in 2 C.F.R. Part 200?

Answer: See 2 C.F.R. § 200.501 Audit requirements.

59. a. Does auditing need to be done at the individual Radio and TV station level or at the program level?

Answer: Yes. Subrecipients must obtain independent audits within 2 C.F.R. § 200.501 Audit thresholds. This is the Subrecipients' responsibility, not the vendors'.

60. b. Does the audit have to be conducted by an independent third party, or can it be an internal audit?

Answer: See 2 C.F.R. § 200.7 Auditor. Auditor means an auditor who is a public accountant or a Federal, state, or local government audit organization, which meets the general standards specified in generally accepted government auditing standards (GAGAS). The term auditor does not include internal auditors of nonprofit organizations.

61. How will vendor be expected to support federal records retention?

Answer: Vendor would be required to follow federal records retention guidelines.

62. Will CPB be providing access to legal counsel regarding the federal procurement rules and grant management requirements at 2 C.F.R. Part 200? Or, is the Vendor to retain its own counsel for these matters?

Answer: No. Vendor must rely on its own legal counsel.

63. How would independence be resolved if the selected vendor has a prior or current relationship with any potential or selected equipment supplier?

Answer: Vendor must disclose the relationship and CPB will decide if a conflict precludes the equipment vendor's participation.

64. How much time will be allocated to close out of the grants?

Answer: Subrecipients are required to submit closeout materials within 90 calendar days of the period of performance end date, 9/30/2025. See 2 C.F.R §200.344.

65. Is it envisioned to have a rolling window? Or, will there be specific deadlines for stations to apply?

Answer: There will be specific application deadlines for station applications that the stations will have to meet. CPB envisions that qualifying applications for grants not initially awarded will remain open for subsequent rounds of grants.

66. What role, if any, would the vendor have in selecting subrecipients?

Answer: Vendor will be expected to advise CPB on grant applicants' technical issues.

67. Has CPB already established guidelines for technical information to be submitted by potential subrecipients, either in general or for specific kinds of proposed expenditures? If so, could these requirements be shared, please? If not, would establishing these be part of the vendor's work?

Answer: This is currently a work in progress, and the selected vendor will be asked to assist with their completion.

68. The FEMA NOFO differentiates between recipients and sub-recipients when establishing M&A limits on fees. Which category applies to the selected vendor(s) for the RFP?

Answer: Neither category. The selected vendor will not be treated as a recipient or subrecipient.

69. Which parts, if any, of the vendor's scope of work would be subject to FEMA grant limits on management and administration (M&A) expenses? How much of the allowable M&A funds would be available for such work (as opposed to being expended internally by CPB)?

Answer: The selected vendor will not be treated as a recipient or subrecipient.

70. Does the initial grant award to CPB from FEMA of \$40M from September 2022 need to be depleted in calendar year 1 and CPB anticipates additional funding from FEMA in years 2, 3, 4, 5?

Answer: The period of performance of the 2022 grant to CPB expires on September 30, 2025.

71. We suggest an additional point of clarification around expected vendor execution of Tasks 1 and 3: is CPB expecting the selected vendor to leverage existing CPB technology for grants management or are they seeking additional technology investments to improve grants management systems? a. If CPB is seeking the vendor to integrate with existing solutions, the RFP should include technical integration details around capabilities and requirements for working within the existing technical solution.

Answer: Please see answer to question #19.

72. Please confirm the requirements in IX.1.d.i do not apply to grants management and sourcing specialists supporting Tasks 1 and 3, as these requirements primarily apply to Task 2.

Answer: Confirmed

73. Upon selection, when is the selected vendor expected to begin execution?

Answer: As soon as possible.