

**WRITING A UTILITY HANDBOOK ON CYBERSECURITY AND
DIGITALIZATION FOR THE ELECTRICITY SECTOR**

RFP Closing Date: January 8, 2021

Responses to Questions Received by December 28, 2020

Q1: Which is the timeline in which the writer is asked to perform the tasks? If you have not fixed a precise deadline for the various task, could you please let us know at least a rough idea of your expectations?

A: We do not have a fixed outline, since the time needed to obtain all the necessary approval varies, but this is roughly what we expect.

	January			February				March
	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 1
Contract approval								
First draft								
Review								
Second Draft								

Q2: Will the writer(s) be recognized as author(s) and or editor of the text

A: We will acknowledge the author, as well as the webinar presenters, reviewers, coordinators etc. in the acknowledgements.

Q3: Will you accept proposals sent by entities?

A: Yes. Please make sure you have thoroughly reviewed the PDF attachment to this RFP, where important information about the regulations respecting entities is specified.

Q4: Are control system devices in-scope even though none of the webinars or panels addressed them?

A: Please see task 2 in the PDF of the RFP: If the proposal contains additional features that the writer believes will improve the final product, please note them as such in the proposal, and if they are an additional cost, that cost should be noted in the detailed budget. Please make sure you have thoroughly reviewed the PDF attachment to this RFP.

Q5: Is NIST 800-53 Risk Management Framework (RMF) in scope for the handbook?

A: We are just requesting a write up of the webinars, with very light desk research to complement. However, as per task 2 in the PDF of the RFP: If the proposal contains additional features that the writer believes will improve the final product, please note them as such in the proposal, and if they are an additional cost, that cost should be noted in the detailed budget. Please make sure you have thoroughly reviewed the PDF attachment to this RFP.

Q6: Can you provide a sample of stakeholders' roles who would benefit from the final product?

A: This handbook is aimed at supporting the efforts of stakeholders in USAID partner countries around the world to better understand the importance of cybersecurity for the electricity industry, and of where they can find tools to start the process of improving cybersecurity in the industry. Specific stakeholders will vary from country to country, but will generally include utilities, policy makers, regulators, sector planners, and system operators.

Q7: Given that cybersecurity changes every day, this handbook may need to be revised on an on-going basis. Will there be opportunities to provide that support beyond this effort?

A: No. If USAID asks for an updated handbook, a new RFP would be developed and posted.

Q8: How many USEA stakeholders will be involved in reviewing the draft?

A: This project was commissioned by the USAID Bureau for Economic Growth, Education and Environment, and they will be the only USEA stakeholder involved in reviewing the draft.

Q9: Is a security clearance required for the scope of work? If so, at what level?

A: No security clearance is required.

Q10: Is this RFP going to be awarded to small business such as EDWOSB, WOSB, or 8(a)?

A: None of these are criteria for awarding the RFP. However, under USAID Procurement Regulations and Laws, which we must follow, since this program is funded by USAID, all bidders must comply with the Standard Provisions for U.S. Nongovernmental Organizations, 2CFR200, 2CFR700, and must have, or be in the process of acquiring, SAMS registration and a DUNS number. Please make sure you have thoroughly reviewed the PDF attachment to this RFP, where this information is specified.

Q11: Is the 50% industry and expertise experience in cybersecurity and electricity sectors evenly split?

A: All other things being equal, we would expect to give more weight to expertise in cybersecurity.

Q12: Are you currently under any time constraint to complete the handbook?

A: While we do not have a formal time constraint, we do want to get this handbook done quickly. The answer and illustrative timeline in the 1st question may also be useful.

Q13: is it OK to provide 2 resumes and 2 experiences summaries if the writer will collaborate closely with another analyst, or should only one set of qualifications be provided? If so, can the qualifications of the other person, reviewers, etc., be provided in the narrative?

A: Yes, that is fine. However, we do need a detailed (line-item) financial proposal specifying labor, other direct costs, indirect costs, and level of effort for each employee proposed for this project.

We also need biodata forms with salary information (privacy will be maintained). Please make sure you have thoroughly reviewed the PDF attachment to this RFP, where this information is specified.

Q14: Can we add few items which are not mentioned in the webinars or industry panel discussions.

A: Yes. Please see task 2 in the PDF of the RFP: If the proposal contains additional features that the writer believes will improve the final product, please note them as such in the proposal, and if they are an additional cost, that cost should be noted in the detailed budget. Please make sure you have thoroughly reviewed the PDF attachment to this RFP.

Q15: When is the expected award date and is there a hard deadline to have the Draft and Final handbooks completed?

A: We hope to be able to award the contract before the end of January. The deadline will be determined by when the contract is signed. Please see questions 1 and 12 for further information.

Q16: Is USEA interested in an alternative fee arrangement, such as a fixed fee proposal?

A: We do want a fixed fee proposal, however, we also need a detailed (line-item) financial proposal specifying labor, other direct costs, indirect costs, and level of effort for each employee proposed for this project, as well as biodata forms with salary information (privacy will be maintained). Please make sure you have thoroughly reviewed the PDF attachment to this RFP, where this information is specified.

Q17: Are the “prospective organizations or individuals” invited to participate in the RFP limited to legal service providers?

A: No. Under USAID Procurement Regulations and Laws, which we must follow, since this program is funded by USAID, all bidders must comply with the Standard Provisions for U.S. Nongovernmental Organizations, 2CFR200, 2CFR700, and must have, or be in the process of acquiring, SAMS registration and a DUNS number. Please make sure you have thoroughly reviewed the PDF attachment to this RFP, where this information is specified.