



**United States Energy Association  
Request for Proposals: Webinar Series and Handbook  
on Cybersecurity Risks for the Electricity Sector**

**Issue date of RFP:** April 19, 2023

**Closing date/time for questions:** May 3, 2023, at 12:00PM (EST)

**Closing date of RFP:** May 17, 2023, at 5:00PM (EST)

**Implementing Agency:** United States Energy Association (USEA)

**Funding Agency:** United States Agency for International Development (USAID)

**Subject:** Request for Proposal (RFP) No. USEA/AMPUP-2023-808-01-01 – United States Energy Association

**Re:** Partnership with the United States Energy Association for a Webinar Series and a Handbook on Cybersecurity Risks for the Electricity Sector

Components of this RFP as follows:

- Scope of Work (SOW) described under article IV
- Instructions for the preparation of the proposal described under article V
- Evaluation criteria described under article VI
- Budget Template

Dear Offeror,

The United States Energy Association is inviting prospective organizations or individuals through this Request for Proposal (RFP) to submit proposals for developing a Webinar Series and a Handbook on Cybersecurity and Digitalization for the Electricity Sector.

USEA intends to subaward a sub-agreement and/or consultancy agreement with a period of performance for 7 months.

Offerors are requested to submit their most responsive technical proposal addressing the SOW outlined under article IV of this RFP and a competitive offer proposing a reasonable price to accomplish the objectives of the work.

- Questions concerning this request shall be submitted via email to the attention of Ms. Marina Barnett, Program Manager, at [mbarnett@usea.org](mailto:mbarnett@usea.org) by 12:00 hours EST on May 3, 2023. *In compliance with standard procedure, all inquiries and comments will be shared with the rest of the Offerors along with the Project's response. Questions received after the closing date for questions will not be answered.*
- Proposals are due by 17:00 hours EST of the closing date. Please submit all proposals with a read receipt to Ms. Marina Barnett, Program Manager, at [mbarnett@usea.org](mailto:mbarnett@usea.org). Proposals must be in digital format (PDF). *Please note that USEA will not accept responsibility for delays with transmission or receipt of proposals. Proposals received after that date and/or time specified will not be considered.*

- **LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS** – The proposal shall be delivered in English, and all the deliverables shall be produced in English.
- **AUTHORIZED GEOGRAPHIC CODE** – The authorized geographic code for procurement of services under this contract is 937.
- **ELIGIBILITY** – This RFP is open to qualified organizations domestically (in the U.S.) and internationally (abroad).
- **USEA will evaluate responsive and technically acceptable proposals in accordance with the evaluation criteria stated under article VI, “Evaluation Criteria.” USEA will not evaluate nonresponsive or technically unacceptable proposals. Please note that USEA will find proposals technically unacceptable if they fail to comply or fully respond with the material terms of this RFP.**
- **Issuance of this RFP does not constitute a subaward commitment on the part of USEA, nor does it commit USEA to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of an application. Further USEA reserves the right to reject any or all applications received.**

**As this is a USAID-funded program, the RFP follows USAID Procurement Regulations and Laws. All applicants’ details will be kept confidential.**

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

The United States Energy Association is a nonprofit, apolitical, non-lobbying organization founded in 1924. USEA’s mission has two pillars of equal importance. USEA serves as a resource, by convening energy stakeholders to share policy, scientific, and technological information to foster the advancement of the entire energy sector. Internationally, USEA promotes energy development by expanding access to safe, affordable, and environmentally acceptable energy in partnership with the U.S. Government.

Through a cooperative agreement with the USAID Bureau for Development, Democracy and Innovation, USEA implements the Advancing Modern Power through Utility Partnerships (AmpUp), available to all USAID-assisted countries and USAID Missions. AmpUp supports the efforts in USAID-assisted developing countries to increase environmentally sustainable energy production and to improve the operational efficiency and increased financial viability of their utilities and related institutions, with the goal of increasing the access of these countries to safe, reliable, affordable and environmentally sound energy services.

## **II. BACKGROUND**

USEA plans to host a series of ten (10) webinars and develop an accompanying Handbook on Cybersecurity Risks for the Electricity Sector.

These webinars are aimed at giving USAID partner-country utilities, policy-makers, and regulators a clear panorama of the relevance of cybersecurity within the electricity sector, including how to mitigate supply chain risks and monitor third-party vendor access.

Please click [here](#) to see the first series of webinars on digitalization and cybersecurity for the electricity sector organized by USEA in 2020. Please also see the original “[Electricity Sector Cybersecurity and Digitalization Handbook](#).” A Handbook to be developed within the framework of this project shall be an updated edition of the original.

## **III. IMPLEMENTATION AND APPROACH**

The purpose of this RFP is to solicit proposals from interested organizations or individuals (private/government/nongovernmental/institutes/not-for-profit/civil societies) deemed most suitable to undertake

the project. The applicant can propose an association/consortium/partnership of maximum two organizations, however, one organization must be identified as the lead organization.

### **Subaward Agreement Management and Oversight**

An agreement between USEA and the potential selected applicant shall be subject to all USEA/USAID Special Terms and Conditions, including all mandatory standard provisions (RAAs and ADS) Flow-Down clauses, where applicable, and the provisions included in 2CFR200 and 2CFR700. All bidders are strongly encouraged to review these provisions prior to submitting a proposal.

- Standard Provisions for U.S. Nongovernmental Organizations: <https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/303maa.pdf>
- Standard Provisions for Non-U.S. Nongovernmental Organizations: <https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/303mab.pdf>
- 2CFR200: <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2014-title2-vol1/pdf/CFR-2014-title2-vol1-part200.pdf>
- 2CFR700: <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2015-title2-vol1/pdf/CFR-2015-title2-vol1-part700.pdf>
- USAID Mandatory Standard Provisions that are mentioned in USEA’s cooperative agreement (attached).

Subaward agreement management, oversight of contractual obligations, and payment will be carried out by USEA. USEA will be responsible for any communication with USAID regarding the subaward. Subawardees and contractors have no relationship with USAID under the terms of this subaward. All required USAID approvals must be directed and processed through USEA.

### **USEA Involvement and Responsibilities**

USEA will be involved in all the activities under a subaward agreement between USEA and the Subawardee and/or Consultant in the following ways:

- Review and approval of proposed activities
- Review and approval of deliverables
- Approval of invoices for payment

## **IV. SCOPE OF WORK**

**Tasks:** The tasks to be performed by the consultant under this Scope of Work shall include the following:

**Task 1: Identify and confirm presenters for the ten (10) webinars.** The consultant will collaborate with USEA and USAID on identifying industry experts and leading international utilities to present on the series of ten (10) webinars on the following topics. The consultant will also organize/host preparatory calls with the presenters and gather all presentation materials.

#### **List of topics for the webinars:**

##### **Risk Management**

1. The Emerging Cyber Threats to Industrial Control Systems (ICS) – categorized Threat Intelligence Sources
2. Standards on Third-Party Risk Management and Cyber Risk Reviews
3. Cyber Supply Chain Risk Management and Conducting Cyber Risk Assessments

##### **Asset Management**

4. Defensible Architecture and Asset Management
5. Best Practices for Remote Access and Cloud security

## Planning

6. Incident Response Plan Development
7. How to develop and maintain a cybersecurity policy to establish organizational cybersecurity governance

## Procurement

8. Process of developing specifications for procurement (SCADA, AMI, Solar PV, Billing systems, etc): Ensuring Interoperability
9. Integration of cybersecurity into the ICS procurement language, ICS investments/financing, and Market research and proposal evaluation criteria
10. Negotiation and contracts with vendors; Onboarding and offboarding of 3rd party suppliers/vendors

**Task 2:** **Arrange and co-host the ten (10) webinars on an online platform (i.e. Zoom or Webex).** The consultant will collaborate with USEA and USAID to arrange and host these ten webinars on an online platform that can be recorded and uploaded onto USEA’s website, YouTube Account, and Google Drive Account.

- Prior to the webinars the consultants will develop a standardized format for all presenters to use, so that presentations are uniform using USAID- and USEA-approved branding.
- Presentations and shared materials should be in an approved format and contain worksheets, guidelines, links, etc.
- After each webinar, the consultant will upload the recorded webinar onto USEA’s platform, as directed by the USEA project manager.

**Task 3:** **Compile the presentation materials, notes, and information from the webinars into a draft Handbook.** This should be used as an updated Edition from the original “[Electricity Sector Cybersecurity and Digitalization Handbook](#)” and follow the same format as the original handbook. The title of this new Edition can be “Handbook on Cybersecurity and Digitalization: Supply Chain Risks in the Electricity Sector”. The handbook requirements include:

- Incorporating information from the webinars, including additional resources and sample terms of reference, checklists, guidelines for the supply chain procurement, negotiations and onboarding and onboarding vendors.
- Each webinar would be its own section of 2-3 pages in length, and should incorporate utility presentations as examples, perhaps in text boxes, plus images from the presentations, as appropriate.
- A 2-3-page executive summary
- An introduction
- A conclusion that pulls it all together, drawing out the links and synergies among the presentations
- Formatting the handbook into USAID- and USEA-approved branding.

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.

**Task 4:** **Incorporate USEA edits and suggestions into a final product.** Incorporation of USEA suggestions into a final product is an essential part of this project.

## Deliverables:

**Task 1:** **Deliverable 1.** 10 – 50 volunteer speakers (at least 1 per webinar) identified and engaged to deliver presentations on the topics specified in Task 1.

**Task 2:** **Deliverable 2.** The consultant’s staff member to co-host each webinar on an online platform for 1-2 hours for each webinar.

**Deliverable 3.** A standardized presentation format for all presenters to use so that all presentations are uniform.

**Deliverable 4.** Webinar materials, including speakers’ bios and presentations, provided to USEA at least 3 days prior to each webinar.

**Deliverable 5.** Recorded webinars uploaded onto USEA’s platforms within 5 days after each webinar.

**Task 3:** **Deliverable 6.** A digital copy of a **draft** Handbook, developed according to the specifications described in Task 3, submitted to USEA for their review.

**Task 4:** **Deliverable 7.** Digital copies – in MS Word and PDF formats – of the **final** version of the Handbook. The final version shall incorporate responses to USEA’s comments to the draft submitted earlier.

## Reporting:

The Subawardee and/or consultant will report to USEA.

## Schedule:

The project is expected to begin in June 2023 and take approximately 7 months to complete. These tentative assignment dates are provided solely for information purposes and the benefit of bidders. Modification of these assignment dates will not constitute a change in scope.

## V. PROPOSAL CONTENT

The proposal must follow the structure outlined below, contain the following components, and be within page limitations. Failure to follow the outline and page limits prescribed or exclusion of any of the required items will impact the proposal’s scoring. Maximum proposal limit 50 pages (inclusive of cover page and annexes).

### Questions to be addressed by the developer in the proposal:

- What is your experience in writing handbooks or manuals?
- What is your knowledge of the cybersecurity sector, supply chain risks, and how it was acquired?
- What is your knowledge of the electricity sector, and how it was acquired?

Cover Letter			
Subject heading	Description	Notes	Maximum Page Limit
Cover Letter	Must include the bidder’s current Unique Entity ID (UEI) assigned to an entity by SAM.gov.  Give the status of System of Award Management (SAM) registration.	UEI and SAM registrations are only required for proposals over \$25,000 USD.  Proposals in value of \$25,000 or greater without a UEI number will not be considered and need not apply.	2 pages

Technical Proposal			
Subject heading	Description	Notes	Maximum Page Limit
Understanding of the issues	Demonstration of an understanding of the issues outlined in the SoW	Bidder to avoid repeating the information already provided in the RFP.	1 page
Technical approach	Approach to implementing the SoW		4 pages
Schedule of tasks	Proposed schedule of tasks and deliverables per the SoW		2 pages
Team members, key assignments and bio sketches	For each member of the team: 1st: Summary of work to be performed by/assignment of each individual proposed.  2nd: (Immediately following the assignment) Short bio sketch that highlights the individual's direct experience with the subject matter.	The bidder can propose a consortium of multiple organizations and/or individuals; however, one organization must be identified as the lead organization who will enter into a contract with USEA and be in compliance with the SAM and UIE registration noted in this RFP.	1 page per person total  ½ page for assignment per person, followed by ½ page for bio sketch
Financial proposal			
Subject heading	Description	Notes	Maximum Page Limit
Summary of costs fees	Line-item budget excluding labor with detailed justification of all costs associated with the project, including direct and indirect costs (printing, admin supplies, etc.).	Must be in USD  Must be inclusive of taxes (if applicable)  USEA reserves the right to request a budget narrative after a proposal has been submitted	2 pages
Labor	Anticipated labor costs, broken down by the number of man-hours and fully loaded daily rate for each individual proposed for this project.	Must include names and titles of the individuals. Must be in USD. Must be inclusive of taxes & fees (if applicable)  All salary information will be kept confidential.  USEA reserves the right to request a budget narrative after a proposal has been submitted	2 pages

Annexes			
	Description	Notes	Maximum Page Limit
Annex 1k	Proof of System of Award Management (SAM) registration	Please note that <a href="#">SAM registration</a> is a 10-step process and can take several weeks to complete. Please refer to this <a href="#">guide</a> for more information. If a bidder has not completed the SAM registration process by the proposal submission due date, USEA will accept a proposal if it includes a PDF copy of an email from " <a href="mailto:notification@sam.gov">notification@sam.gov</a> " to the bidder stating that the bidder "successfully submitted the entity	1 page

		registration for NAME OF COMPANY in the U.S. Government’s System for Award Management (SAM)”. Proposals without proof of SAM registration or an email from <a href="mailto:notification@sam.gov">notification@sam.gov</a> stating acceptance of SAM application, will not be considered and need not be submitted.	
Annex 2	Curricula Vitae	Summary of relevant experience of each proposed team member for (not beyond) the past 10 years. Relevant experience should be listed chronologically (starting with the most recent).	2 pages per person
Annex 3	USAID Contractor Employee Biographical Data Sheet	Completed USAID Contractor Employee Biographical Data Sheet forms ( <a href="https://www.usaid.gov/forms/aid-1420-17">https://www.usaid.gov/forms/aid-1420-17</a> ) for each employee proposed for this project.  Bidders must fill the form completely and should follow the instructions provided in the form.  Salary information must be included, but the information will be kept confidential.  Bidders must submit the form for all team members mentioned in the proposal as per the template provided.  Bidders are not allowed to not make any modification in the template.  USEA reserves the right to reject a proposal that does not meet the aforementioned requirements.	1 page per person
Annex 4	Organization experience	Summary of the company’s or companies’ background and experience with similar projects.	3 pages

## VI. EVALUATION CRITERIA

All bidders are required to provide a UIE number and maintain a current SAM registration. Proposals without a UIE number or proof of SAM registration will not be considered.

In evaluating the proposals, USEA will seek the **best value for money** rather than the lowest priced proposal. Selection of an offer for a subaward award will be based on an evaluation of proposals against qualifications, subject matter expertise and budget justification. USEA will use a two-stage selection procedure:

- The first stage will evaluate the Technical Proposal: Proposals shall first be evaluated from a technical standpoint (qualifications and subject matter expertise) without regard to proposed budget justification.
- The second stage will evaluate the Cost Proposal for proposals that pass the Technical Proposal evaluation.

Specifically, the selection committee will evaluate each proposal upon the following criteria and using the following weighting:

Evaluation Criteria:      20%:    Background in cybersecurity  
                                          20%:    Background in the electricity sector  
                                          20%:    Experience with similar projects  
                                          20%:    Technical approach  
                                          20%:    Cost

If at any time prior to the award USEA deems there to be a need for a significant modification to the terms and conditions of this RFP, USEA will issue such a modification as a written RFP amendment to all competing bidders. No oral statement of any person shall in any manner be deemed to modify or otherwise affect any RFP term or condition, and no bidder/applicant shall rely on any such statement. Such amendments are the exclusive method for this purpose.

USEA is not bound to accept the lowest or any proposal and reserves the right to accept any proposal in whole or in part and to reject any or all proposals.

USEA shall not be legally bound by any award notice issued for this RFP until an agreement is duly signed and executed with the winning bidder/applicant.

Any resulting agreement will be subject to the terms and conditions contained in the Subaward and/or Consulting Agreement.

## **VII. QUESTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS**

All questions and clarification requests related to this RFP should be submitted via email to Ms. Marina Barnett, [mbarnett@usea.org](mailto:mbarnett@usea.org) no later than 12:00 PM on May 3, 2023. Questions will be answered and posted publicly on the USEA website.

**END OF RFP**