



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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Request for Qualifications (RFQ) #156899 Multi-Modal Mobility Enhancement via Dynamic Incentivization Questions and Responses

1. Has funding been secured, or is that expected to take place at a later date?
 - A. The funding is available for the development and initial operation of this project.
2. Is there an anticipated budget, or not to exceed amount, projected for this procurement?
 - A. In accordance with Virginia's procurement rules, budget information for this project is not being disclosed.
3. The RFQ states "VDOT is seeking incentives which are financially sustainable over time". Can you further explain what you mean by "financially sustainable"? Do this mean the incentives should be self-sustaining and not require any VDOT funding? Will VDOT provide funding to purchase incentives in the future? Will VDOT provide funding to pay a team of individuals to get incentives from businesses and other sources?
 - A. VDOT anticipates that the incentives program will move rapidly towards a permanent state of financial self-sustainability following the initial 30-month contract term. The intent is to realize long-term cost stability and efficiency. Consequently, Offerors should describe the types of incentives they will provide, how those incentives will be obtained, and plans for funding the incentives over the short- and long-term.

Per RFQ Section 4, page 27, the successful Offeror will need to must develop partnerships capable of providing incentives. Examples are included in this section and in Section 3, page 16. Financial sustainability is an important aspect of this project. Offerors must identify methods for eliminating – or least significantly reducing – the long-term use of public dollars to fund incentives and rewards.

4. The RFQ states that the DBE goal is 15%. Is this goal just for DBEs or is it for DBEs and SWaM (i.e., can we meet the 15% goal with a SWaM partner or must they also be a DBE)
 - A. Suppliers must be certified as DBE firms in order to count towards the DBE goal. Both SWaM and DBE certifications are issued by the Department of Small Business and Supplier Diversity. However, "SWaM" is a State certification, whereas "DBE" is a Federal designation. Although a given firm may hold both certifications, the two are not interchangeable and one may not be substituted for the other. This project is eligible to utilize Federal funding. Consequently, DBE certification is required.

5. For the prime company responding, we understand they must be registered in eVA. However, do all potential subcontractors also need to be registered in eVA? If so, do they need to be registered now or before any contract is potential executed?
 - A. No, subcontractors do not need to be registered in eVA.

6. From our reading of the RFQ, it appears as though VDOT is anticipating purchasing custom software that will serve as the DI. We're presuming that VDOT staff would then maintain and update this custom DI solution. If a vendor currently has a SaaS platform that provides most of the DI functions today, and can be tweaked to add any missing elements, would VDOT consider a SaaS solution provided by a vendor? In this way, VDOT would simply pay a monthly SaaS fee for the desired service and the vendor would be required to host it, maintain it, and upgrade it.
 - A. Yes, such an approach could potentially be acceptable. VDOT is looking for the selected Offeror to maintain and update the system as needed. Per RFQ Section 4, page 30, VDOT expects that the shared services back-office will be delivered as software-as-a-service (SaaS), but it must be open-source or the Offeror must place its source code in escrow. See also the response to Question 15. Offerors are free to propose an existing app as the primary solutions app to fulfill the solicitation's branding requirements. VDOT is interested in potentially leveraging innovative features already built into Offeror's commercial-off-the-shelf (COTS) product(s).

7. We understand the RFQ is seeking technology that facilitates dynamic travel incentives, short term travel incentives, and travel loyalty incentives. We also understand this RFQ is a part of VDOT's Regional Multi-Modal Mobility Program (RM3P), which includes pursuing technology for a multi-modal analytical planner (MMAP). Would VDOT consider responses that propose a single, integrated mobile app that incentivizes travel while also providing trip planning alternative transit option booking? Such technology could provide trip planning and price comparison, including SOVs fees, public transit, TNC bookings, etc.
 - A. Yes. VDOT would consider such an approach; the additional services would be viewed as "added-value." Keep in mind, however, that the DI environment must support integration of multiple mobile apps. While VDOT encourages Offerors to bring innovations to the project, particularly those that will result in cost and operational efficiencies or improvements, Offerors should explain how innovations and additional services not included in the DI scope (as described in Section 4) will contribute to the success and sustainability of the project.

8. Can VDOT please share with potential offerors their expected annual budget or a range the Department anticipates they will spend on the technology for this procurement? Providing offerors with a clear estimate of the budget will benefit the public by allowing for the most competitive procurement process, as Offerors will compete to provide the greatest value for VDOT's money.
 - A. Budget information for this project is not being disclosed.

9. Can VDOT share its anticipated procurement timeline? (i.e: when does VDOT anticipate releasing its RFP? When does VDOT anticipate awarding its RFP? When does VDOT anticipate RFP interviews? When is project commencement?)
 - A. The estimated release date of the RFP is December 2021. Notice-to-Proceed on the DI project is currently projected for Winter/Spring 2022.

10. We understand that "VDOT retains the option of inviting qualified Offerors to demonstrate their products during the RFP evaluation process." Does VDOT anticipate inviting RFQ respondents to demonstrate their software or have a one-on-one conversation prior to the release of the Department's RFP?

A. Demonstrations during the RFQ process will not take place. VDOT may ask for demonstrations during the RFP process. Additionally, down-selected Offerors will have an opportunity to include screenshots and descriptions of key functions in their proposals. A Pre-Proposal Conference will be scheduled as part of the RFP process.

11. Can VDOT please confirm that verified e-signatures will be acceptable for this submission?

A. Yes, verified e-signatures will be acceptable.

12. In order to compile a thorough and thoughtful response to VDOT's RFQ, we respectfully request a 2-week extension of the proposal deadline to November 3rd.

A. To ensure that project and program timelines remain on schedule, the RFQ response deadline will not be extended.

13. In order to properly incentivize different types of travel, it will be helpful for the incentive provider to be able to "nudge" travelers towards different options using gamified financial or reward incentives. Is the Authority open to solutions that aggregate the region's TDM initiatives (described on page 15 and 16 on the RFQ) within one mobile app and management system so that travelers can see all their options and their respective prices / incentives within one mobile interface?

A. Yes, VDOT welcomes innovative solutions. With the concurrence of the region's TDM program management team, an approach that offers the regional TDM incentives through the DI initiative may be satisfactory. However, bear in mind that the DI project goal is to offer incentives to the public using one or more mobile apps, giving consumers alternative venues for accessing DI rewards. The system architecture should, consequently, be structured to allow multiple app providers to access the incentive solutions/rewards from various sources including the DI project, regional TDM programs, private partners, etc.

The successful Offeror will be responsible for providing the primary mobile app. Some third-party app owners that choose to participate in the DI ecosystem will only be able to connect to the DI back-end after they are approved by the VDOT DI oversight committee. No matter how many apps a consumer uses, progress towards incentive goals will need to accrue in a single location on the DI back-end so that users are not double-credited for a single trip reported by multiple apps or multiple incentives for the same trip.

14. Appendix B lays out a very detailed and prescriptive description of how VDOT's DI system is envisioned. How open is the Authority to the input of vendor in the system design?

A. Appendix B is provided for informational purposes only to assist Offerors in developing their Expression of Interest (EOI) submissions. VDOT is open to system design alternatives that satisfy project requirements and capitalize on an Offeror's innovative commercial-off-the-shelf (COTS) products.

Several important needs motivated delineation of the architecture in Appendix B. These needs were to:

- Create an environment where multiple mobile apps are capable of delivering incentives so that consumers can choose their preferred apps.
- Reduce risk of adverse consequences should a selected vendor fail or choose to exit the market.

Approaches which addresses these needs may potentially be suitable solutions.

15. The Authority is explicitly mandating that vendors have deployed DI solutions before and have experience in this area. In this case, vendors are likely to have an off-the-shelf, or at least

customizable off-the-shelf, SaaS solution that is highly unlikely to follow the exact architecture the VDOT describes. Is VDOT looking for a software development shop to co-develop this functionality according to the Authority's design, or an experienced vendor of dynamic incentivization software and systems?

A. VDOT anticipates working with an experienced vendor with an existing software platform that can be enhanced to satisfy project goals and requirements. It is understood that development and customization may be needed to produce the desired system. The final solution need not match the architecture in Appendix B precisely. Key needs shaping the rationale for preparing the Appendix B architecture were identified in response to Question 14, above. Offerors may propose modifications to the architecture that are able to address these needs.

16. The RFQ states that "team members must have experience successfully implementing at least two transportation incentivization projects for commuters." Can VDOT clarify if this requirement:

Must apply to each team member?

May apply to one of the team members?

Must apply to the primary company submitting the RFQ response?

Applies if an individual employee of a team has this experience but at a prior firm?

A. VDOT seeks qualified vendors that have experience implementing services comparable to those outlined in the RFQ. The required experience applies to the team as a whole. Applicable experience by primary vendors, subcontractors, or other team members will be considered.