

Questions for ESP-RFP-2026-016

Service Provider for Cybersecurity Readiness and Resilience Enhancement for Distribution Utilities in the Luzon Economic Corridor

- 1. On Scope and DU engagement, what is the expected level of access to DU systems during the assessment? Will assessors require physical on-site access to OT/control room environments, or will assessments be primarily document-based and interview-driven?**

Level of access will vary by DU. The successful offeror will propose solutions that vary with levels of access by DUs.

- 2. On Scope and DU engagement, is experience working with Operational Technology/SCADA (grid control systems) required for this project, or is IT cybersecurity experience with OT awareness sufficient?**

Experience with operational technology (OT)/SCADA is preferred and a strong advantage. IT cybersecurity with OT awareness is sufficient, if offeror is proficient in power system OT.

- 3. On Scope and DU engagement, will ESP provide introductions to candidate DUs, or is the Service Provider expected to secure DU participation independently prior to contract award?**

The assumption is offeror has a minimum relationship with the DU recommended - however, ESP can help facilitate. Since this task requires a level of trust - the offeror-DU relationship will be preferred. However, no guarantees can be made by ESP of specific DU participation ahead of contract award. If offeror's proposal is contingent on ESP facilitation of participation by DUs, please make it explicit in proposal.

- 4. On Scope and DU engagement, are the minimum two confirmed participating DUs a prerequisite before Phase 2 begins, or can assessments begin with one DU (Phase 2) while others are being onboarded (Phase 1)?**

Assessments may begin with confirmed participating DUs while additional DUs are being onboarded.

- 5. On Scope and DU engagement, who is responsible for defining and finalizing the candidate DUs? ESP or the Service Provider? Is DU identification formally part of Phase 1 scope, and is the bidder expected to have existing contact persons within candidate DUs prior to award?**

Offeror is not required to have existing relationships with DUs. If none is present at time of award, ESP will assist in facilitating but cannot guarantee the partnership. Offeror is responsible for securing partnerships in a timely manner to complete required activities in the RFP.

- 6. Does the compliance and readiness framework developed under Task 2 need to be validated or approved by DOE, DICT or another government body, or is it for internal ESP/DU use only?**

At this point, ESP may not involve DOE in the review. This may change after meetings with DOE are completed.

- 7. For the mock cybersecurity exercises in Task 4, what is the expected scale? How many participants per exercise, and are these expected to be full-day engagements?**

Offeror should provide this in the proposal.

- 8. Is the workforce training under Task 6 expected to be delivered in person, or is virtual/blended delivery acceptable?**

In-person is preferred but hybrid will be allowed.

- 9. Are the go/no-go decision points between phases based solely on deliverable acceptance, or are there other performance criteria that could trigger discontinuation?**

The timeline is strict with zero opportunity for flexibility. The successful offeror should provide clear go/no-go decision points in their proposal on if/when to abandon engagements with a DU. ESP reserves the right to cease any DU engagement if deemed appropriate. In the event of discontinuation, ESP will work with the offeror on an alternative and/or reduce scope. This should be viewed as an option of last resort, and full payment of contract value will not occur if scope must be reduced.

10. Is there a budget ceiling or indicative budget range for this engagement that bidders should be aware of when preparing their cost proposals?

There is no predetermined budget. ESP will evaluate proposed budget based on best value principle.

11. Does the bidder need to provide personnel with specific certifications such as CISSP, CISM, or CEH to conduct mock cybersecurity exercises, workforce upskilling and training?

Certifications are preferred but not required. If the offeror has relevant certifications and/or specific staff qualifications; they are encouraged to include these in their proposal.

12. Does the bidder need to be included in the whitelist of ES-CERT-PH third-party service providers to conduct any of the activities in this project? That list currently only consists of 11 firms.

This is preferred but not required. Noting the limited number of firms that qualify, offerors are encouraged to submit a proposal even if not part of the whitelist.

13. Is there a minimum organizational size or registration type required? Is there a minimum required team size for deployment to this project?

There is no strict minimum. Offeror must have the requisite staff and registration(s) to complete the works as described in the RFP, within the timeline dictated.

14. Has ESP already initiated contact with any DUs along the Luzon Economic Corridor, and if so, can ESP share which DUs have expressed preliminary interest or willingness to participate?

No

15. What level of DU access should bidders assume for planning purposes, e.g., will DU leadership interviews and assessments be conducted on-site, remotely, or a combination? Should bidders assume travel to each DU location?

DU technical team interviews are expected. Travel to site should be included in the proposal.

16. The SOW references "a minimum of three DUs" for the overall engagement but "a minimum of two participating DUs" under Task 1. Can ESP clarify whether the expectation is assessments and exercises at two DUs, three DUs, or whether the third DU is an optional/recommended addition?

A minimum of two only is required. Partnership with three DUs is an advantage but not required within the timeline of this activity.

17. For Task 6 (Workforce Upskilling and Training), does ESP have a minimum number of training workshops or sessions expected per DU, and an expected number of participants per session?

At least two workshops - ESP will consider a hybrid format but one of these training courses should be in-person.

18. For Task 7 (Equipment and Tooling Support), should the cost proposal include a provisional budget line for equipment procurement, or is the expectation limited to recommendations only, with any procurement to be funded separately by ESP or the DUs?

Yes, if applicable. ESP prioritizes US-technology and/or equipment. In addition, equipment/services should be compliant with the geocode requirement.

19. For the DU Compliance and Cybersecurity Readiness Assessment (Task 3), should bidders assume that DUs will provide access to system architecture documentation, network diagrams, and OT asset inventories? Or should the methodology account for the possibility that such documentation may not exist and would need to be developed as part of the assessment?

Offeror should account for the possibility that actual access to DU's IT/OT system architecture may be denied. Offeror is expected to provide an alternative and creative approach.