

MARAMA

Mid-Atlantic
Regional Air
Management
Association, Inc.



Allegheny County Health Dept., Air Quality Program, Pittsburgh, PA.
District of Columbia Dept. of the Environment, Air Quality Division
Delaware Dept. of Natural Resources & Environmental Control, Division of Air
Maryland Dept. of the Environment, Air & Radiation Management Admin.
New Jersey Dept. of Environmental Protection, Division of Air Quality
North Carolina Dept. of Environment & Natural Resources, Division of Air Quality
Philadelphia Dept. of Public Health, Air Management Services
Pennsylvania Dept. of Environmental Protection, Bureau of Air Quality
Virginia Dept. of Environmental Quality, Air Division
West Virginia Dept. of Environmental Protection, Division of Air Quality

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Request for Proposals for National Air Quality Training Project

March 2, 2011

Summary and Background

The National Association of Clean Air Agencies (NACAA) Training Committee, acting on behalf of all state and local agencies, has identified a need to prepare documents that help state and local agencies determine the training needs of their employees and identify courses available to meet those training needs. MARAMA has received a grant from EPA to coordinate preparation of a Professional Development and Training Guide (PDTG) to serve this need.

MARAMA plans to hire a contractor to provide assistance in developing an updated Professional Development and Training Guide (PDTG) for professional employees of state, and local air quality agencies in the U.S.

Training for state and local air management agency staff members is an integral part implementing and enforcing the laws, rules, and regulations which help protect our nation's air quality and the health and well-being of the public. The Mid-Atlantic Regional Air Management Association (MARAMA) provides training to staff from state and local agencies in the Mid-Atlantic region. MARAMA is a voluntary, nonprofit association of ten state and local air pollution control agencies. (See www.marama.org.)

Funds for conducting training courses are limited, and it is important for states and local agencies to collaborate through regional associations like MARAMA in order to pool resources for training. MARAMA collaborates with regional organizations from other regions of the U.S. through the Training committee of the National Association of Clean Air Agencies (NACAA).

MARAMA's training program relies primarily on courses endorsed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Air Pollution Training Institute (APTI) and the

California Air Resources Board (CARB). The PDTG will provide information about APTI and CARB courses and how they address training needs of state and local air agency staff. The Guide should also include information about other relevant training courses.

The U.S. Clean Air Act requires EPA to “conduct and promote coordination and acceleration of training for individuals relating to the causes, effects, extent, prevention, and control of air pollution” (Section 103(a)(5)). Through APTI, EPA has for many years offered a selection of training courses used to help train EPA’s employees as well as employees of state and local agencies and the private sector.

With support from EPA, CARB provides a national training program of courses for improving students’ ability to conduct enforcement of and promote compliance with air pollution control statutes and regulations. The training program is an integral part of enforcing regulations and promoting healthy air quality.

EPA is developing a Learning Management System (LMS) that will house information about available courses, recommended training for various common functional areas, course schedules, and individual employees’ transcripts. The PDTG developed through this project will be integrated into the EPA’s LMS to guide students, with a variety of job functions, through their training program.

Resources

MARAMA and other members of the NACAA Training Committee have begun to compile information related to the tasks above. This information is posted on MARAMA’s website under Requests for Proposals along with this RFP. (The direct link is <http://www.marama.org/pdtg-project-2011>.)

Scope of Work

For purposes of initiating this project, the eleven common functions performed by professional employees of state and local air management agencies are the following:

1. Basic air management policy and practices
2. Inspection/enforcement
3. Permit writing
4. Planning/regulation development
5. Air quality monitoring/quality assurance/quality control
6. Modeling & data analysis
7. Emissions inventory development
8. Air Toxics/Hazardous Air Pollutants (HAPs)
9. Mobile Sources
10. Climate Change
11. Other

This project includes four tasks, listed below. MARAMA welcomes bids that cover individual tasks or groups of tasks.

1. Compile and organize a catalog of existing courses offered by EPA's Air Pollution Training Institute, EPA's National Enforcement Training Institute (NETI), and the California Air Resources Board.
 - a. Prepare a draft catalog that will include the following:
 - i. A detailed description of the content of each course and identify the date it was most recently updated. The description will include learning objectives, pre-requisites, and intended audience. (An example can be found on the Resources webpage.)
 - ii. A draft flow chart and/or list – i.e., “road map” for each of the eleven common functions performed by professional employees of state and local air management agencies that show courses relevant to each of the functions in such a way as to identify core courses, pre-requisites, and recommended sequences and/or tracks of courses that address sub-functions. (For an example of a flow chart, see the posted excerpt from the 1994 APTI Course Catalog. For an example of a list of courses, see the MARAMA Draft Training Guide and other resources posted.) Note that this “road map” will be revised later in the project after completion of Tasks 2 and 3.
 - b. Prepare a revised catalog based on comments from the NACAA Training Committee provided through MARAMA.

Deliverables: A draft and revised catalog.

2. For the eleven common functions performed by professional employees of state and local air management agencies, identify the core knowledge, skills, and abilities needed for each function.
 - a. Prepare a draft report on professional competencies that includes the information on core knowledge, skills, and abilities for each function and describes the training needs implied by this information.
 - b. Prepare a revised report on professional competencies and training needs based on comments from the NACAA Training Committee provided through MARAMA.

Deliverables: A draft and final report on professional competencies and training needs

3. Conduct a gap analysis based on the previous two tasks.
 - a. Compare the content of the courses described in Task 1 with the competencies identified in Task 2. Identify where competencies are covered completely, somewhat, or not at all.
 - b. Update the draft flow chart and/or list of courses by function prepared in Task 1 based on the information gathered in Task 2.
 - c. Identify existing courses offered by other training providers that might meet these needs not covered by APTI or CARB courses.

- d. Prepare a draft gap analysis report.
- e. Prepare a draft outline for a final PDTG.
- f. Prepare a final gap analysis report and PDTG outline based on comments from the NACAA Training Committee provided through MARAMA.

Deliverables: A draft and final gap analysis report and PDTG outline.

- 4. Prepare a final PDTG.
 - a. Prepare updated information for posting in EPA's Learning Management System (LMS).
 - b. Update the course catalog prepared in Task 1, including an updated course syllabus for each course.
 - c. Prepare a draft recommended curriculum for each of the eleven common functions listed above, including core courses, tracks, and identifying basic prerequisites and advanced courses.
 - d. After review of the draft, prepare a final PDTG based on comments from the NACAA Training Committee provided through MARAMA.

Deliverables: A draft and final PDTG in a form compatible for posting within EPA's Learning Management System and on websites used by MARAMA and other regional associations. EPA's LMS will conform to the Sharable Content Object Reference Model (SCORM) and Section 508 (29 U.S.C. §794d).

All information and data developed under this contract will be in the public domain. While MARAMA encourages potential bidders to consider publishing papers using information developed for this project, MARAMA will not delay making the documentation and work products produced available to the public via governmental and non-governmental association websites.

Deliverables include a report and associated documentation for each of the four tasks. Each report and associated documentation must be submitted in draft form, allowing two weeks for review, and then a final version must be prepared after consideration of comments provided within the two-week period.

All deliverables must be submitted electronically. MARAMA uses Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Adobe Acrobat Reader, so electronic copies must use these programs and be compatible with EPA's LMS. The contractor is expected to work closely with EPA's LMS contractor to ensure compatible format is delivered.

In addition, the contractor will be expected to participate in eight 1-hour conference calls, prepare materials for posting on internet web sites, and give a presentation to the NACAA Training Committee via conference call.

Preliminary Schedule

The schedule for completing this project is as follows:

Month	Task
March 2011	Contractor selection and agreement
April 2011	Complete Task 1 draft report – initial course catalog
May 2011	Complete Task 1 final report
June 2011	Complete Task 2 draft report – professional competencies and training needs report
July 2011	Complete Task 2 final report
August 2011	Complete Task 3 draft report – gap analysis report
September 2011	Complete Task 3 final report
October 2011	Complete Task 4 draft report – PDTG
November 2011	Complete Task 4 final report

Nature of Contract and Payment

This contract will be a fixed price contract. Bids must identify costs by task and deliverable. Contractors will be paid for work completed and deliverables received, not on the basis of hours worked. Payment of the final 10% of each task will not be made until the agreed products are delivered.

Submittal of Proposals

If you are interested in being considered for this project, please submit the information listed below to MARAMA by 4:30 p.m. March 18, 2011. Three paper copies and one electronic copy of the complete proposal must be submitted. (MARAMA uses Microsoft Word, Excel, Power Point, and Adobe Acrobat Reader, so electronic copies must be accessible with these programs.)

Electronic copies may be submitted to handrews@marama.org. Paper copies may be submitted to Susan S.G. Wierman, Executive Director, MARAMA, 8600 LaSalle Road, Suite 636, Towson, MD 21286.

Proposal Content and Format

Proposals should be limited to 20 pages (i.e., 10 double-sided pages) with 12 point font size with a margin of 1” on all four sides, and should address the following:

1. Deliverables Summary. Include a list of the items to be delivered and services provided.
2. Proposed Approach and Schedule. Describe in narrative form your proposed approach for accomplishing this work. MARAMA expects this will address how you will accomplish each of the project tasks you may wish to perform. Include a more detailed schedule (a time/task chart) for completing the project, showing what support you will need from project sponsors and subcontractors, review periods for draft documents, and other relevant information.
3. Costs. Include hourly rates for personnel who will be assigned to the project as well as costs for elements of the project. (Hourly rates are used as a mechanism of comparing bids.) Costs must be linked to tasks and deliverables so that billing and payment can be linked to the delivery of products.
4. Prior Experience. Experience shown should be work done by individuals who will be assigned to this project as well as that of your company. Include information about any work already completed or underway, funded by another source, that could satisfy MARAMA's requirements.
5. Studies or projects referred to should be identified and the name of the customer shown, including the name, address, email address and telephone number of the responsible official of the customer, company, or agency who may be contacted as a reference.
6. Personnel. Include the number of executive and professional personnel, analysts, researchers, programmers, consultants, etc., who will be engaged in the work. Show the expected number of hours each will be engaged in the work. Summarize the qualifications of the primary contractor and any subcontractor. Short resumes of major project personnel and the role each would play in this project should be included. Include education and experience of key individuals who will be assigned to this project. Indicate the responsibilities each will have in this project and how long each has been with your company.
7. MBE/WBE. Indicate the percentage of Minority-Owned Business Enterprise/Women-Owned Business Enterprise (MBE-WBE) participation. Minority- and women-owned businesses are encouraged to identify themselves, since MARAMA seeks to meet EPA goals for utilizing these businesses.
8. Non-Disclosure / Confidentiality. Indicate willingness to enter into a non-disclosure and/or confidentiality agreement(s) regarding access to potentially state confidential and/or company proprietary information.
9. Non-debarment Certification. Proposals must certify that the contractor is not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from covered transactions by any Federal department or agency.

Evaluation of Proposals

MARAMA will only select experienced contractor(s). Selection criteria will include

- Cost (considering both total cost and hourly rates) (30%)
- Technical approach (35%)
 - Understanding of the Scope of Work
 - Nature and level of effort proposed for each task
 - Quality and completeness of proposed approach
 - Timing and schedule proposed
- Key technical personnel committed to the project (25%)
 - Relevant experience and/or education
 - Number of hours key personnel will work on the project
- Past experience and performance (10%)
 - Timely and acceptable performance on related projects
 - Completion of past projects within budget
 - Percentage of MBE/WBE participation.

Experience of key personnel, expected quality of product, and timing will be the most important criteria, provided that cost is within available resources. MARAMA is not required to select the lowest cost bid, but will consider cost among the other factors listed above.

Evaluating proposals will assist MARAMA in better defining the scope of the project and selecting the contractor. Depending on the nature and scope of proposals received, MARAMA may request the preparation of follow-up proposals from a small number of contractors and/or adjust the scope of the work. MARAMA reserves the right to negotiate a contract covering fewer tasks than those identified above or to split the project into parts that can be accomplished with available funds.

MARAMA recognizes that it may be necessary to utilize more than one contractor to provide the expertise needed to complete the project. The decision on how to proceed will be made based on the expected quality of the resulting work, and proposals covering only parts of the work are welcome. Potential candidates for contracts may be requested to conduct a rapid review of draft contractual documentation. Any such request would be made after proposals have been submitted.

Funds available for this contract are federal funds from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and contractors must meet requirements associated with the use of federal funds.

Questions

Any questions about this RFP should be sent in writing via e-mail to Alice Lutrey at alutrey@marama.org. Questions and answers will be posted on MARAMA's web site at www.marama.org under "Requests for Proposals." No further questions or answers will be posted after March 14, 2011.

MARAMA will not provide information about the amount of funds budgeted for this project.