

**City of Hawkinsville
c/o the Middle Georgia Regional Commission
175 Emery Highway, Suite C
Macon, Georgia 31217**

MEMORANDUM

TO: Qualified Engineering Firms

FROM: Middle Georgia Regional Commission on behalf of the City of Hawkinsville

DATE: June 10, 2022

SUBJECT: Engineering Qualifications for Natural Gas Distribution Improvements

Enclosed is a Request for Qualifications from qualified engineering firms interested in working with the City of Hawkinsville in its effort to undertake the design and construction management of a natural gas distribution improvement project.

To be considered, proposals must be received by **5:00 pm, June 27, 2022**, at the Middle Georgia Regional Commission, Attn: Joe Black, 175 Emery Highway, Suite C, Macon, Georgia 31217. **An electronic copy of the proposal must be included.** This may be submitted on a flash drive, CD, or via email to jblack@mg-rc.org. Zip files will be rejected via email. All proposals must be sealed and should be clearly labeled. Proposals received after the specified date and time will not be considered.

The selected engineering firm will be expected to work with the City of Hawkinsville to complete preliminary engineering work associated with the Department of Transportation Natural Gas Distribution Infrastructure Safety and Modernization Grant-funded improvements. Funding for project work will be contingent on the award of grant funding.

Please direct all questions to Joe Black, Government Services Specialist, Middle Georgia Regional Commission (478) 751-6160, jblack@mg-rc.org. Questions should be submitted no later than seven (7) calendar days before the deadline.

Enclosure

**REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS – ENGINEERING SERVICES
NATURAL GAS DISTRIBUTION IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT**

Background

The City of Hawkinsville is in the process of applying for grant funding to assist with natural gas distribution improvements. The City is seeking an engineering firm with broad experience to provide design and construction supervision for this project that will utilize funds primarily from the DOT grant program if awarded. These grants are funded by the federal government; therefore, all activities must be performed in strict adherence to applicable federal and state regulations. All project activities will be coordinated with Sara Myers, Hawkinsville City Manager.

Project Title for Identification Purposes

City of Hawkinsville Natural Gas Distribution Improvements

Scope

The initial work documents required of the selected firm will consist of the preparation of comprehensive engineering plans, which include providing a scope of work, project schedule, cost estimate, risk profile describing the condition of the current infrastructure for which funding is requested, potential safety benefits, and the proposal's capacity to provide a reduction in lifestyle greenhouse gas emissions and any other impacts that may be beneficial to the environment or public. These must be prepared in close communication with the City of Hawkinsville. The grant writing contact for the project is Joe Black, who can be reached at (478) 751-6160 or by e-mail at jblack@mg-rc.org.

The following engineering services must be provided at a minimum:

Preparation of final design, plans, and specifications to include:

- a) The securing of all necessary permits and clearances as applicable to comply with state and federal mandates. For this project, the engineer will be required to provide engineering plans/drawings showing all dimensions drawn to current engineering standards and the required plans for the contractor to apply for permits.
- b) Preparation of bid and contract documents, including advertising and bidding procedures, holding the bidder's conference, bid openings, and evaluations.
- c) Post-award services, including securing the construction firm's certifications and review of specifications, warranties, operation manuals, and as-built drawings.
- d) Construction services, including the supervision/administration of construction, review of payment requests, change orders, and other coordination with the construction firm. Periodic review of construction (at least one visit per week during regular working hours) and other work as required to ensure proper execution of the work. Periodic construction review must ensure that the construction firm's methods of construction provide for the same.
- e) Construction close-out, final inspection, project certification, and coordination with the City of Hawkinsville and the Middle Georgia Regional Commission to provide periodic updates to satisfy all CDBG program requirements.

Schedule

To be considered, proposals must be received by **5:00 pm, June 27, 2022**, at the Middle Georgia Regional Commission, Attn: Joe Black. All proposals must be sealed and should be clearly labeled. Any proposals received after **5:00 pm, June 27, 2022**, or at any location other than the Middle Georgia Regional Commission at 175 Emery Highway, Suite C, Macon Georgia 31217 will not be considered. **An electronic copy of the proposal must be included.** This may be submitted on a flash drive, CD, or via email to jblack@mg-rc.org. Zip files will be rejected via email. The successful respondent will be notified on or before **July 1, 2022**.

In addition to the requirements set forth in the Request for Qualifications, the selected engineering firm will be required to submit a completed Preliminary Engineering Report no later than **5:00 p.m. on July 15, 2022**. The selected engineering firm will work with the Middle Georgia Regional Commission to provide all information necessary to meet the anticipated Natural Gas Distribution Infrastructure Safety and Modernization Grant deadline of July 25, 2022.

Preliminary Engineering Reports MUST contain sufficient information for the grant writer to be able to answer all project narrative and budget narrative requirements enclosed with this solicitation.

Proposal Contents

Responses are to be returned to the Middle Georgia Regional Commission where an initial evaluation of the proposals will be completed. Those evaluations will be submitted to the City of Hawkinsville for final selection. Respondents are requested to include letterhead pages immediately behind the cover letter that briefly, directly, and exactly answer the following evaluation criteria questions:

1. Your firm's experience, particularly with grant projects. Please refer to specific pages in the proposal that answer each category of experience. References must include the names and telephone numbers of local governments, personnel involved, and a brief description of the projects.
2. Your firm's prior experience with the City of Hawkinsville. Please refer to specific pages in the proposal that answer each category of experience.
3. At a minimum, the engineering firm's proposal should also provide the following information:
 - a. A brief history of the engineering firm and its principal personnel including resumes of the principals.
 - b. The length of time the firm has been providing the specific kind of engineering services requested herein.
 - c. The name(s) and professional experience of the firm's key personnel who will be assigned to this project. The firm must also state how much direct experience the personnel assigned to this project has had with CDBG-funded projects.
 - d. Cost schedules for general services, in addition to cost schedules for additional services.
 - e. Fees for reimbursable expenses, if applicable.
 - f. The firm must provide a professional services contract. (Note: The contract will be written as "direct costs plus a fixed fee, not to exceed a lump sum." If the engineering firm is contracted for the project, the contract must include additional clauses pertaining to federal regulations that will be supplied by the Middle Georgia Regional Commission). The firm should also include the percentage fee that it normally charges for design and construction supervision on this size project and a list of other services included under the contract.
 - g. A proposed plan to implement the project, including key timelines and milestones.
 - h. A written release authorizing all investigations necessary.

Selection

Procedures for selection of an individual/firm will be in accordance with the RFQ package and local procurement requirements, as well as the requirements of the Uniform Administration Requirements (“the common rule”) 24 CFR Part 85.

All qualifications will be evaluated in terms of project approach, quality of work, experience, capacity to perform, mobility, and project familiarity. Past performance on other projects may also be assessed in terms of timeliness, completion within budget, and other factors.

Applications should be well written and free of mathematical errors in the line-item budget and Budget Narrative. Project Narratives should have sections clearly identified and follow the structure requested in this NOFO. The application forms and templates are available on Grants.gov in the 'Related Documents' tab with detailed instructions on the application process.

Project Narrative

The following Project Narrative sections are required to facilitate the application review and award process. Please submit the sections in the order prescribed below. Applicants should clearly identify the sections in the Project Narrative section of the application.

1. Cover Letter
 - a. Organization Name
 - b. Contact Information
2. Applicant Eligibility
3. Project Summary
 - a. Project Location
 - b. Project Eligibility
 - c. Project Funding
4. Detailed Project Description
5. Statement of Authority and Pipeline Infrastructure Safety and Modernization Capabilities
6. Projected Outputs and Objectives
7. Project Implementation and Management
8. Explanation of Evaluation and Selection Criteria Equivalence
9. Equity, as Defined in the Executive Order 13985
10. Buy America
11. Critical Infrastructure Security and Resilience
12. Environmental Analysis

The Project Narrative may not exceed 25 pages in length (excluding cover pages, table of contents, and supporting documentation). PHMSA will not review or consider Project Narrative pages beyond the 25-page limitation. If possible, applications should submit supporting documents via website links rather than hard copies. If supporting documents are submitted, applicants must clearly identify the page number(s) of the relevant portion in the Project Narrative supporting documentation. The Project Narrative must adhere to the following outline.

1. Cover Letter.

- a. **Organization Name.** This should include: (1) name and title of this NOFO; (2) your organization's name and mission; (3) a brief overview of the structure of your organization, programs, leadership, and special expertise; and (4) your organization's experience and capacity to manage Federal grant programs. If your application proposes to partner with another nonprofit organization, a letter of support is required with your application.

- b. **Contact Information.** Identify the designated project director, including the name, position, address, email address, and telephone number of the individual(s) who will be responsible for coordinating the funded activities. Additionally, identify the Authorized Representative(s) who will accept the awarded grant document, as well as individuals responsible for the submission of required Federal financial reports and progress reports.
2. **Applicant Eligibility.** Explain how applicant meets the eligibility criteria outlined in Section C.1. of this NOFO.
3. **Project Summary.** Describe the identified need to repair, rehabilitate, or replace the natural gas distribution pipeline system or portions thereof, or the equipment needed to (a) reduce incidents and fatalities and (b) avoid economic losses. Briefly explain how the proposed activities will help to address the identified needs.
- a. **Project Location:** Include geospatial data for the project, as well as a map and aerial photographs of the project's location. DOT has made the following tool available for applicants to identify disadvantaged communities in their area: <https://usdot.maps.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/d6f90dfcc8b44525b04c7ce748a3674a>. All projects will be considered except those without location-specific infrastructure information.
- b. **Project Schedule:** Include a detailed project schedule that identifies all major project milestones. Examples of such milestones include state and local planning approvals; start and completion of Tier 2 Environmental Questionnaire, which will detail compliance with Federal environmental and historic preservation requirements. The project schedule will also include required approvals such as: permitting; design completion; right-of-way acquisition; approval of plans, specifications, and estimates; procurement; state and local approvals; public involvement; project partnership and implementation agreements; and construction agreements. The project schedule should be sufficiently detailed to demonstrate that: 1) all necessary activities will be completed to allow NGDISM Grant Program funds to be expended within 36 months after award; 2) all real property and right-of-way acquisition will be completed in a timely manner in accordance with 49 CFR Part 24, 23 CFR Part 710, and other applicable legal requirements or a statement that no right-of-way acquisition is necessary; and 3) the applicant has sought community input through public involvement, particularly engaging with environmental justice communities or disadvantaged rural and urban communities that may be affected by the project where applicable.
- c. **Project Eligibility:** Identify how this project is eligible for funding under this NOFO. Eligible grant project expenses include the following:
- Construction costs related to repairing, rehabilitating, or replacing natural gas pipeline distribution systems.
 - Labor costs related to planning, repairing, rehabilitating, or replacing natural gas pipeline distribution systems.

- Equipment costs related to repairing, rehabilitating, or replacing natural gas pipeline distribution systems.
- Equipment costs related to reducing incidents and fatalities and avoiding economic losses on natural gas distribution systems.

d. **Project Funding:** Indicate in table format the amount of Federal funding requested and total project cost. Identify whether partial funding would be accepted in order to complete the project and the level of minimum funding needed. Identify whether the replacement, rehabilitation, or repair project was in process prior to the announcement of this award—and whether and by how much the grant would expedite the project or expand the scope or impacts of the project. (This will not prevent possible grant award). Identify if all or a majority of the project is located in a disadvantaged rural or urban area. (*See Definition of “Disadvantaged Community”*)

4. **Detailed Project Description.** Include a detailed project description that expands upon the brief project summary. The detailed description should provide, at a minimum, the following elements:

- a. A SOW against which PHMSA, and the applicant, can identify and measure expected outcomes of the proposed work and monitor progress toward completing project tasks and deliverables during the period of performance.
 - The SOW should address the scope, schedule, location, and budget for the proposed project.
 - The SOW must contain sufficient detail such as project planning, preparation, or design—including site design; maps; site photos, if available; an aerial photograph of the site depicting the proposed location; engineering drawings; environmental and community impacts; and other pre-construction activities—of eligible pipeline infrastructure projects.
 - The SOW must include a description of materials being replaced, repaired, or rehabilitated.
- b. Safety risk profile and condition of the current infrastructure for which funding is being requested. This should include relevant data, leak statistics, and risk analysis that are present in the operators Distribution Integrity Management Plan (DIMP).
- c. To assist PHMSA’s environmental review prior to award, potential awardees will provide a completed Tier 2 Environmental Questionnaire, as detailed in #12, Environmental Analysis, below.
- d. A description of whether the project addresses requirements under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and their implementing regulations, including 28 CFR. Applicants should review these civil rights statutes carefully, including 28 CFR 401, et al. Applicants are encouraged to review these authorities to ensure full compliance with these obligations and to describe credible planning activities and actions. These requirements apply to grant recipients as well as subrecipients.

5. Statement of Authority and Pipeline Infrastructure Safety and Modernization

Capabilities. Describe the municipality- or community-owned utility's state authority and capability to perform pipeline infrastructure repairs, rehabilitation, or replacement, in accordance with 49 CFR Part 192, and to purchase equipment.

6. Projected Outputs and Objectives. Provide quantifiable and measurable outputs planned for the grant's period of performance. Outputs are quantitative data that describe the proposed activities. For repair, rehabilitation, or replacement of natural gas distribution pipeline systems, or portions thereof, or acquisition of equipment, outputs should include: (1) the quantity (e.g., feet, yards, or mileage and diameter) of pipeline affected; (2) cost of equipment that may be purchased for the project, if appropriate; (3) an estimate of the number of jobs the project may create; (4) an estimate of the project's potential for benefiting disadvantaged rural and urban communities; (5) an estimate of the economic impact or growth over the length of the project; and (6) an estimate of the reduction in methane emissions attributable to the project. Please provide supporting analysis showing how the estimated outputs were calculated. Additionally, broader outcomes or goals may be provided to describe the intended impact of the proposed outputs. This can be either quantitative or qualitative and should reflect the projected impact of the grant activity outputs.

PHMSA will consider the extent to which the project addresses the following project output criteria, which are explained in greater detail below and reflect the key program objectives.

Output Criteria #1: Safety – The applicant should include information on, and to the extent possible quantify, how the project will improve the safe delivery of energy to often underserved communities, reducing incidents and fatalities as well as methane leaks within the project area.

Output Criteria #2: Environment – The applicant should describe how its project(s) contributes towards protecting our environment and climate by remediating leak-prone pipelines and by purchasing equipment to aid in detecting or potentially mitigating methane leaks.

Output Criteria #3: Job Creation – The applicant should describe how the project will contribute to at least one of these outputs: 1) result in high-quality job creation by supporting good-paying jobs with a free and fair choice to join a union in project construction and in on-going operations and maintenance, and incorporate strong labor standards, such as paying prevailing wages and benefits, the use of project labor agreements, the use of community benefits agreements registered apprenticeship programs, pre-apprenticeships tied to registered apprenticeships, and other joint labor-management training programs⁴; 2) result in workforce opportunities for historically underrepresented groups, such as through

⁴ <https://www.apprenticeship.gov>

the use of local hire provisions, the use of community benefits agreements, or other workforce strategies targeted at or jointly developed with historically underrepresented groups, to support project development; 3) outline partnerships with training providers such as labor-management partnership training programs (including registered apprenticeships) and community colleges; 4) foster economic growth and development, creating long-term, high-quality jobs, addressing acute challenges, such as energy sector job losses in energy communities as identified in the report released in April 2021 by the interagency working group established by section 218 of Executive Order 14008⁵.

Output Criteria #4: Equity – The applicant should include information about whether the project(s) benefits a disadvantaged community or population, or areas of persistent poverty. (*See Definitions.*)

7. **Project Implementation and Management.** Provide a description of the monitoring, and quality assurance plan to ensure successful project completion. Describe how you will ensure the applicable Federal pipeline safety regulations will be followed. These may include, but are not limited to, ensuring your Distribution Integrity Management Program (DIMP) is up to date, safety and performance checks, inspections, and audits of the project.
8. **Explanation of Evaluation and Selection Criteria Equivalence.** Include a thorough discussion of how the proposed project meets all the evaluation criteria and selection criteria as outlined in Section E of this NOFO. If an application does not sufficiently address the evaluation and selection criteria, it is unlikely to be a competitive application.
9. **Statement Certifying Compliance with Equity Requirement.** In accordance with Executive Order (EO) 13985, Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government, funds must be distributed equitably under this grant. Equity means the consistent and systematically fair, just, and impartial treatment of all individuals, including individuals who belong to underserved communities that have been denied such treatment, such as Black, Latino, and Indigenous persons, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders; other persons of color; members of religious minorities; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) persons; persons with disabilities; persons who live in rural areas; and persons otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty or inequality. Applicants must include a statement certifying they will comply with EO 13985.
10. **Buy America.** Provide a description of whether materials and manufactured products to be used in the project are produced or manufactured domestically. PHMSA expects all applicants to comply with this requirement without needing a waiver. However, this section should also include an assessment of what, if any, materials, or manufactured products would require an exception or waiver of the Buy America provisions described

⁵ [Initial Report to the President on Empowering Workers Through Revitalizing Energy Communities \(doe.gov\)](#)

in Section F.2 of this NOFO and the applicant's current efforts and planned future efforts to maximize domestic content.

- 11. Critical Infrastructure Security and Resilience.** Each applicant selected for NGDISM grant funding under this notice must demonstrate, prior to the signing of the grant agreement, effort to consider and address physical and cyber security risks relevant to their natural gas distribution system and the type and scale of the project. Projects that have not appropriately considered and addressed physical and cyber security and resilience in their planning, design, and project oversight, as determined by the Department of Transportation and the Department of Homeland Security, will be required to do so before receiving funds for construction, consistent with Presidential Policy Directive 21 - Critical Infrastructure Security and Resilience and the National Security Presidential Memorandum on Improving Cybersecurity for Critical Infrastructure Control Systems.
- 12. Environmental Analysis.** PHMSA will publish an "Environmental Assessment, Tier 1" in the Federal Register that will analyze the environmental impacts of this grant program on a nationwide basis and solicit public comment. PHMSA will consider the public comments on the "Environmental Assessment Tier 1" in developing the "Tier 2 Environmental Questionnaire," which will consider any additional site-specific environmental impacts.

Once provisionally selected for funding, PHMSA will provide the Tier 2 Environmental Questionnaire to applicants for completion. The Tier 2 Environmental Questionnaire will analyze the environmental effects caused by the proposed project(s) specific to each site. It will also detail (1) actions to comply with state and Federal environmental, environmental justice, and historic preservation requirements and (2) additional mitigation actions to ensure that environmental impacts, such as those from excavation or the use of heavy equipment, are minimal and insignificant. PHMSA has personnel available to answer questions and assist with the completion of this process, if needed.

To facilitate planning and so that applicants may begin collecting information, PHMSA is providing the following list of subjects that the Tier 2 Environmental Questionnaire will cover with respect to the project site and vicinity:

- a) Project Description and Location** - Describe all project-related construction activities including: the number of route miles; how many miles are buried vs. aerial construction; number and types of pipelines with approximate dimensions; and whether all or part of the project is to be located on or within previously disturbed road rights-of-ways.
- b) Maps** - Include a map (or maps) that show the location of all project construction activities known at the time of application. U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute quadrangle maps at a map scale of 1:24,000 are recommended; larger scale maps may be provided for site-specific proposals. USGS maps may be obtained and purchased at USGS's website. All project elements, if known at the time of the application, must be clearly depicted on any map provided. If

appropriate, photographs or aerial photographs of site-specific proposals may be provided.

- c) **Property Changes** - Describe and indicate the amount of property to be cleared, excavated, fenced, or otherwise disturbed for each site affected by construction.
- d) **Wetlands** - Determine and describe whether wetlands are present on or near the project site(s) affected by construction. Maps of wetlands may be obtained from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's National Wetland Inventory [website](#) or from soil maps obtained from the U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resource Conservation Service's [website](#) (NRCS maps provide delineations of hydric soil areas that are indicative of potential wetland areas). Wetland information may be obtained from state agencies in those states that have such resources.
- e) **Threatened and Endangered Species** - Determine and describe whether any project site(s) or activities will directly or indirectly affect any threatened, endangered or candidate species; or if they are within or near critical habitats. To document the analysis, applicants must provide species lists and appropriate species accounts obtained from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's [website](#) for each county affected by construction of the project.
- f) **Floodplains** - Determine and describe whether any facilities or sites are located within a 100- year floodplain. Information related to floodplains and National Flood Insurance Maps may be obtained from the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) [website](#). If any project-related construction activities are within floodplains, a copy of the FEMA, "FIR Mette" map with construction activities depicted on the map must be included. For information on obtaining FIR Mette maps, review the tutorial provided by FEMA. In addition, consideration may be paid to whether pipes located in floodplains are upgraded consistent with the Federal Flood Risk Management Standard in Executive Order 14030, Climate-Related Financial Risk (86 FR 27967) and 13690, Establishing a Federal Flood Risk Management Standard and a Process for Further Soliciting and Considering Stakeholder Input (80 FR 6425.)
- g) **Historic Properties** - Provide a list of historic properties that have been listed on the [National Register of Historic Properties \(NRHP\)](#) including National Historic Landmarks and any properties, if known, that have religious and cultural significance to Indian tribes located within a quarter mile radius of the project area. Information related to such resources can be obtained from the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) in your respective state. See the website of the [National Conference of SHPO](#), and describe how identified historic properties may be affected or impacted by the proposed construction activities (e.g., possible disturbance to archaeological sites, visual effects of tower construction). Identify Indian tribes that may have an interest in your project area. Information regarding historic properties located on tribal lands may be obtained from the [Tribal Historic Preservation Officer](#) (THPO) or the tribe's official representative for historic preservation website. For further information see the following resources: the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development HUD Tribal Directory Assessment Tool, [2021 Tribal Directory](#), and the National Park Service ([NPS](#)) [Native American Consultation Database](#).
- h) **Coastal Areas** - Determine whether the project is within the boundaries of a

coastal zone management area (CZMA). For boundary and contact information related to CZMA, see the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management's [website](#).

- i) **Brownfields** - If a proposed project is located within a brownfield site, then you should contact the appropriate Federal/state regulatory authority responsible for environmental contamination from releases of hazardous substances to determine whether there are any land use restrictions or regulations regarding development of the site. If there are restrictions, then you must provide that information in the application along with an analysis of how any such restriction could affect the proposed project whether short or long-term.

For questions or assistance in understanding and complying with the environmental review process, feel free to contact PHMSAPipelineBILGrant@dot.gov.

In the event that a completed Tier 2 Environmental Questionnaire identifies higher than anticipated impacts to environmental or other resources for a particular site, PHMSA and the applicant may need to identify further mitigation actions; and PHMSA may seek public comment in developing those actions.

Budget Narrative

The Budget Narrative is an explanation of each budget component, which supports the cost of the proposed work. The Budget Narrative should focus on how each budget item is required to achieve the proposed project goals and objectives. It should also justify how budget costs were calculated. The Budget Narrative should be clear, specific, detailed, and mathematically correct; it should correspond to the SF-424C line-item categories.

To assist with your budget narrative, the Procurement of Property and Services Worksheet template is available on Grants.gov. You may use this form or similar to accompany the Budget Narrative justification with reference to the object class categories found on the SF-424C. For each proposed activity, explain why the requested amount is needed to implement the project as proposed in the Project Narrative. The Budget Narrative must correlate with the costs identified in the SF-424C line-item budget.

Procurement of Property and Services

Include a list and description of the necessary project equipment and/or activities for the NGDISM Grant Program. Include a clear timeline of forecasted dates for projected activities. This section should include: (1) type of activities; (2) any necessary pipeline infrastructure components; and (3) a list of necessary equipment, if applicable.

Object Class Categories *(For Applicants' Reference)*

A well-developed Budget Narrative is an effective monitoring tool for both the awarding agency and the grant recipient. However, a Budget Narrative that does not accurately represent a project's needs makes it difficult to recommend for funding and to assess financial performance over the life of the project. A description of the object class categories is provided below:

1. **Personnel Costs:** Employee salaries for those working directly on the grant project. Include the number, type of personnel, the percentage of time dedicated to the project, hourly wage (or salary), and total cost to the grant. Each applicant selected for NGDISM grant funding must demonstrate, to the full extent possible consistent with the law, an effort to create good-paying jobs with the free and fair choice to join a union and incorporation of high labor standards.

Applicants should describe whether laborers and mechanics performing construction work on projects funded under this NOFO are paid wages and fringe benefits at least equal to those paid for similar work in the community as determined by an applicable state or local prevailing wage law or ordinance or in accordance with a wage determination for the locality issued by the US Department of Labor under 40 U.S.C. 3141 *et seq* and 29 CFR Part 1. To access prevailing wage rates by county and state for various classifications of work, visit <https://SAM.gov>'s homepage. Scroll down and use the drop-down option to choose *Wage Determinations*. Click on the category of wage, for example, Construction. Type in the state and county and click search to identify the necessary wages.

2. **Fringe Benefit Costs:** The allowances and services provided by employers to their employees as compensation in addition to regular salaries and wages. Fringe costs are benefits paid to employees, including the cost of employer's share of FICA, health insurance, workers' compensation, and vacation. Include how the fringe benefit amount is calculated (i.e., actual fringe benefits estimate, approved rate, etc.). Include a description of specific benefits charged to a project and the benefit percentage. Additional considerations:
 - The personnel salaries should have corresponding fringe benefits identified. PHMSA cannot pay fringe benefits for a position that is not listed in the Personnel section.
 - Explain what is included in the benefit package and at what percentage.
 - Fringe benefits are only for the percentage of time devoted to the grant project.
 - The applicant must not combine the fringe benefit costs with direct salaries and wages in the personnel class category.
3. **Travel Costs:** Those costs requested for field work, or for travel to professional meetings associated with grant activities. Provide the purpose, method of travel, number of persons traveling, number of days, and estimated cost for each trip. If the details of each trip are not known at the time of application submission, provide the basis for determining the amount requested.
4. **Equipment Costs:** Those items which are tangible, nonexpendable, personal property having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more per unit, unless the applicant has a clear and consistent written policy that determines a different threshold. Include a description, quantity, and unit price for all equipment.
 - Pipeline infrastructure components.
 - Purchases of less than \$5,000 should be listed under "Supplies" or "Other."

- Each item of equipment must be identified with the corresponding cost. General-purpose equipment must be justified as to how it will be used on the project.
 - Analyze the cost benefits of purchasing versus leasing equipment, particularly high-cost items, and those subject to rapid technical advances. List rented or leased equipment costs in the “Contractual” or “Other” category, depending upon the procurement method.
5. **Supplies:** Tangible personal property other than equipment. Include the types of property in general terms. It is not necessary to document office supplies in detail (for example: reams of paper, boxes of paperclips, etc.). However, applicants should include a quantity and unit cost for larger cost supply items such as computers and printers.
 6. **Contractual Costs:** Those services carried out by an individual or organization, other than the applicant, in the form of a procurement relationship.
 7. **Other Costs:** Expenses that do not fit any of the categories, include rent for buildings used to conduct project activities, utilities, leased equipment, etc. “Other” direct costs must be itemized.
 8. **Indirect Costs:** Must include an indirect cost rate agreement or statement claiming a de minimis rate. Indirect costs are allowable under the NGDISM Grant Program. Indirect costs are incurred for common or joint objectives that benefit more than one project. The applicant must include a current, and fully executed, indirect cost rate agreement or statement claiming a de minimis rate in the application, if claiming indirect costs. The rate must be applied to the appropriate base in the approved agreement. If the rate will not be approved by the application due date, attach the letter of renewal or letter of request sent to the cognizant agency for your application. If the applicant has never received or has an expired indirect cost rate agreement, the applicant may be eligible for the 10 percent de minimis rate provided by 2 CFR § 200.414. A nonprofit entity that has never received a negotiated indirect cost rate may elect to charge a de minimis rate of 10 percent of modified total direct costs, per 2 CFR § 200.414, which may be used indefinitely. Applicants intending to charge the de minimis rate must include a statement verifying that the organization has never received a negotiated indirect cost rate and that the organization has elected to charge the de minimis rate.

D.3 Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and SAM

PHMSA may not make an award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable UEI and SAM requirements. If an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time PHMSA is ready to make an award, PHMSA may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive an award and use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant. PHMSA recommends that applicants review the SAM database to ensure that their UEI is updated and “active” at the following link:
<https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/>.