

Request for Proposals

RFP793 – Community Engagement Platform

Questions and Answers

The following are ARC's draft responses to all timely-submitted vendor questions for RFP793, grouped by topic. Questions from multiple firms addressing the same topic have been consolidated into a single ARC response.

A. Platform Readiness (New Build vs. Existing/Configurable)

1. *The RFP describes a platform that will be tailored to ARC's needs. Will ARC consider an existing technology/platform foundation that is configured or extended to meet ARC's stated requirements, or must the proposed platform be a commercially available product with all core capabilities already in general release at the time of proposal submission?*

See ARC response below.

2. *Is ARC seeking a fully configured commercial off-the-shelf platform at the time of proposal submission, or will ARC consider an existing operational platform that can be configured, integrated, and/or enhanced during implementation to meet ARC's requirements?*

See ARC response below.

3. *Is ARC open to a newly developed or configurable platform that meets all requirements of the RFP, or is ARC seeking an existing commercially deployed platform with an established customer base?*

See ARC response below.

ARC Response:

ARC is seeking a platform that is already commercially available, with all core capabilities in general release at the time of proposal submission. Respondents may propose to configure, extend, or integrate that existing platform to meet ARC's specific requirements during implementation. ARC is not seeking a newly developed or custom-built solution.

B. Native Functionality vs. Third-Party Integrations (General)

4. *Does ARC require all functionality identified in the Scope of Service and Deliverables to be native to the proposed platform, or may respondents meet certain requirements through integrations with third-party applications, including online meetings, newsletters, communications, and similar functionality?*

See ARC response below.

ARC Response:

ARC prefers that the functionality described in the Scope of Service and Deliverables be native to the proposed platform. Respondents may propose to meet select requirements through integration with third-party applications; however, native functionality is preferred, as reliance on third-party integrations introduces additional coordination and the potential for workflow bottlenecks.

C. Existing Systems, CRM & Technology Environment

5. *What systems or platforms does ARC currently use for public/community engagement, surveys, email communications, public comments, contact management, virtual meetings, GIS/mapping, and data visualization? Which of these systems are expected to be replaced, and which will remain in place?*

See ARC response below.

6. *What existing enterprise licenses or subscriptions does ARC currently maintain that may be used with the proposed solution, such as ArcGIS/Esri, Microsoft 365/Teams, Zoom, Power BI, or other platforms?*

See ARC response below.

7. *Are there any existing ARC applications, databases, or third-party systems that the proposed Community Engagement Platform will be required to integrate with? If so, please identify them and describe the expected integration.*

See ARC response below.

8. *Does ARC currently use Salesforce or another CRM, constituent relationship management, marketing, or engagement-management platform? If so, please identify the system(s) and indicate whether the proposed Community Engagement Platform is expected to integrate with, extend, or operate independently from those systems.*

See ARC response below.

9. *Are there existing ARC systems, including CRM, GIS, email/marketing, collaboration, identity-management, or reporting systems, that the Community Engagement Platform is expected to integrate with? If so, please identify the systems and indicate whether ARC expects API-based integration, file-based data exchange, or another method.*

See ARC response below.

10. *Please identify the engagement, survey, GIS, videoconferencing, email, CRM, or public-comment systems ARC currently uses and describe the data, configurations, contact records, and historical engagement records the selected vendor will be expected to migrate or integrate.*

See ARC response below.

ARC Response:

ARC currently uses PublicInput as its community engagement platform, and the selected vendor should be prepared to replace this functionality. ARC also maintains standard Microsoft 365 licensing (including Microsoft Teams) and uses ArcGIS/Esri and Zoom; the proposed platform should be capable of integrating with these tools. ARC's use of a dedicated CRM system is currently limited, so integration with a CRM is not a primary requirement of this solicitation.

D. Map-Based Engagement / GIS

11. *The RFP states that the platform should enable users to “mark geographic areas of opportunity and concern.” Could ARC clarify the desired user experience? For example, should residents be able to click on a location, drop a pin/marker, highlight or draw an area, or select an area and provide comments or other feedback? Should a pop-up appear when a location or area is selected?*

See ARC response below.

12. *When a resident marks a location or area on the map, what additional information should they be able to provide? For example, should they be able to select a topic/category, add a comment, or provide other feedback along with the location?*

See ARC response below.

13. *Should mapped submissions be visible to the public, visible only to ARC staff, or configurable by project?*

See ARC response below.

14. *Does ARC currently use ArcGIS, ArcGIS Online, or another GIS platform that the Community Engagement Platform is expected to integrate with? If so, please identify the relevant products/services and any applicable integration requirements.*

See ARC response below.

15. *If available, could ARC provide an example, screenshot, or reference to an existing map-based engagement tool that demonstrates the desired functionality?*

See ARC response below.

16. *For the required map-based engagement functionality, does ARC expect integration with an existing GIS platform, such as ArcGIS, or may the proposed solution provide its own mapping functionality?*

See ARC response below.

17. *Does ARC currently use ArcGIS Online, ArcGIS Enterprise, or another GIS platform for transportation and regional planning? If so, does ARC desire integration between the Community Engagement Platform and its existing GIS environment?*

See ARC response below.

18. *Does ARC require or prefer the ability to import and export geospatial data and community engagement results in GIS-compatible formats and/or publish results to ARC's existing GIS environment?*

See ARC response below.

19. *For the map-based engagement requirement, does ARC expect integration with an existing ARC GIS/Esri environment, or may the proposer provide its own mapping functionality?*

See ARC response below.

ARC Response:

Residents should, at minimum, be able to mark a location or area by dropping a pin, highlighting, or drawing (e.g., a line or shape), and should be able to attach a comment or other feedback to that submission. Mapped submissions should be configurable by project, and should generally be visible to both the public and ARC staff. ARC expects the proposed platform to integrate with ARC's existing ArcGIS Online environment, as well as with GIS systems ARC may develop in the future, including the ability to import and export geospatial data and engagement results in GIS-compatible formats.

E. Public Participants, Registration & Panels

20. *Does ARC require residents to create accounts or participant profiles, or should residents be able to participate anonymously or without registration? If anonymous participation is permitted, how does ARC expect participation to be tracked over time?*

See ARC response below.

21. *What participant information does ARC expect the platform to collect and retain for participant tracking and panel development, such as geography, demographic characteristics, interests, and participation history?*

See ARC response below.

22. *When the RFP refers to assembling participant panels by geography and demographics, should ARC staff be able to create and reuse participant groups for future engagement activities?*

See ARC response below.

23. *What demographic fields does ARC anticipate using for participant-panel segmentation, and are those fields expected to be self-reported?*

See ARC response below.

ARC Response:

ARC does not require residents to create an account or profile, and anonymous participation should be supported; at the same time, the platform should allow ARC to require registration for individual projects where that level of tracking is needed. For participation tracking, the platform should capture geographic information (at minimum, zip code) along with self-reported demographic fields, which are expected to include age, race/ethnicity, gender, household income, and participation history. Name and email address should also be collected as optional, opt-in fields that a participant may choose to provide. ARC staff should be able to use this geographic and demographic information to create and reuse participant panels for future engagement activities.

F. Contact List / Social Media / Historical Data Migration

24. *The RFP references importing contact lists and social media connections. Could ARC clarify what is meant by “social media connections,” which platforms are currently used, and what level of integration is expected?*

See ARC response below.

25. *Does ARC currently use a public-engagement platform or other system containing historical engagement projects, participant records, responses, or contact data? If so, should vendors include migration of those records within Task 1?*

See ARC response below.

26. *What existing information does ARC anticipate importing during implementation, including approximate quantities of contacts, participant records, historical engagement data, mailing lists, or social-media connections, and in what formats or systems is this information currently maintained?*

See ARC response below.

ARC Response:

“Social media connections” refers to the social media channels ARC and its partners use to reach and engage participants, including Instagram, LinkedIn, Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), TikTok, and YouTube. ARC's current community engagement platform (see Section C, above) contains historical engagement projects, participant records, responses, and contact data; migration of this data, where needed, will be conducted under Task 1. This information is currently maintained in Microsoft Excel format.

G. Formal Public Comment Period

27. *Please clarify the requirements for formal public comment periods, including submission, moderation, public visibility, response tracking, opening/closing dates, retention/archiving, and reporting requirements.*

See ARC response below.

ARC Response:

Requirements for formal public comment periods vary by project. At minimum, the platform must support comment moderation; the ability to display comments publicly or keep them private, depending on project needs; the ability to set defined opening and closing dates for a comment period; and reporting that summarizes comments both for an individual project and across multiple projects over a specified time period.

H. Online Meetings / Videoconferencing

28. *Does ARC expect the proposed platform to provide native online meeting functionality, or is integration with ARC's existing virtual meeting platform acceptable? If integration is acceptable, which meeting platform(s) does ARC currently use?*

See ARC response below.

29. *Does ARC expect attendance or participation data from online meetings to be incorporated into participant engagement histories and reporting?*

See ARC response below.

30. *For the online-meeting requirement, will ARC accept integration with an existing conferencing platform such as Microsoft Teams or Zoom, or is natively hosted meeting functionality required?*

See ARC response below.

31. *Does ARC expect online meetings to be hosted directly within the proposed platform, or may the solution integrate with an existing conferencing platform such as Microsoft Teams, Zoom, or another ARC-approved system?*

See ARC response below.

32. *Does "host online meetings" require native videoconferencing within the platform, or are integrated third-party meeting platforms such as Zoom/Teams/Meet acceptable?*

See ARC response below.

ARC Response:

Online meetings do not need to be natively hosted within the platform; integration with ARC's existing conferencing tools is acceptable. ARC currently uses Microsoft Teams and Zoom, and the proposed platform should, at minimum, integrate with these. ARC would also view favorably the ability to integrate with additional platforms, such as WebEx or Google Meet, to accommodate future needs. The platform should be able to capture comments and participation from online meetings for inclusion in participant engagement histories and reporting.

I. Communications & Newsletters

33. *Does ARC expect newsletters and participant communications to be created and distributed directly from the proposed platform, or may the solution integrate with ARC's existing email or communications tools?*

See ARC response below.

ARC Response:

ARC prefers, as an optional capability, that the proposed platform be able to create and distribute newsletters and participant communications directly. At minimum, the platform must be able to integrate with ARC's existing email and communications tools; native newsletter functionality is a preference rather than a strict requirement, and respondents should describe both capabilities where available so ARC can evaluate the best fit.

J. Generative AI

34. *The RFP requires preliminary analysis of public input using generative AI. What types of analysis does ARC anticipate, such as summarization, topic identification, thematic grouping, categorization, or sentiment analysis? Does ARC have policies or restrictions governing the use of generative AI for public input?*

See ARC response below.

35. *Does ARC require AI-generated analysis to be reviewed and approved by ARC staff before it is incorporated into reports, presentations, or other deliverables?*

See ARC response below.

36. *For the requirement that public input receive preliminary analysis by generative AI, please clarify the intended uses of that analysis and any restrictions regarding AI providers, handling of personally identifiable information, provider data retention, or disclosure of AI-assisted analysis. Is ARC open to either a commercial hosted AI service or a privately hosted open-weight model, provided the approach meets ARC's security, privacy, performance, and human-review requirements?*

See ARC response below.

37. *What types of preliminary analysis does ARC expect generative AI to perform on public input, such as summarization, topic identification, sentiment analysis, categorization, or trend analysis? Are there specific requirements related to human review, AI governance, privacy, or retention of data processed using generative AI?*

See ARC response below.

38. *For the requested preliminary analysis of public input using generative AI, does ARC have requirements or restrictions concerning AI providers, data privacy, personally identifiable information, data retention, use of ARC data for model training, or human review of AI-generated analysis?*

See ARC response below.

39. *For the requirement to provide preliminary analysis of public input using generative AI, does ARC have specific requirements or restrictions regarding AI governance, privacy, data processing, model providers, data retention, or human review of AI-generated analysis?*

See ARC response below.

40. *Does ARC have preferred or required generative-AI models/security standards for preliminary analysis of public input?*

See ARC response below.

ARC Response:

ARC requires that any AI-generated analysis of public input — which may include summarization, topic identification, thematic grouping, categorization, or sentiment analysis — be reviewed and approved by ARC staff before it is incorporated into any report, presentation, or other deliverable. Consistent with ARC's Acceptable Use Policy governing artificial intelligence, any generative-AI functionality within the proposed platform must be reviewed and approved by ARC's IT Department (in coordination with Legal, Procurement, and the relevant business owner as needed) before it is used on ARC public input, based on the tool's alignment with ARC's intended use, the degree of human control and oversight preserved, the transparency of its behavior, and the security of ARC data. Respondents must not permit sensitive, confidential, or personally identifiable information to be used in a manner ARC has not specifically reviewed and approved, and must be able to describe the AI provider(s) used, data retention practices, and whether ARC data would be used to train underlying models, so that ARC can evaluate the proposed approach against these standards. ARC does not currently mandate a specific AI model or provider; ARC

is open to either a commercial hosted AI service or a privately hosted model, provided the approach can satisfy ARC's security, privacy, and human-review requirements.

K. Reporting, Data Visualization & Export Destinations

41. *Does ARC expect charts, graphs, maps, and other visualizations to be produced entirely within the proposed platform, or may the solution integrate with existing ARC reporting and visualization tools? Please also identify any expected export formats or destination platforms.*

See ARC response below.

ARC Response:

Charts, graphs, maps, and other data visualizations should be able to be produced entirely within the proposed platform, without reliance on a separate reporting tool. See Section R, below, for ARC's expected data export formats and destinations.

L. Discovery, Templates, UX/UI & Testing (Task 1 Implementation)

42. *The RFP states that the successful bidder will have the opportunity to meet with ARC to assess organizational needs and tailor the platform. Could ARC clarify whether stakeholder/user discovery activities, such as interviews or working sessions with ARC staff and public engagement professionals, are expected as part of Task 1? Should the consultant assess workflows and user requirements for both ARC staff and public participants?*

See ARC response below.

43. *For the tailored templates required under Task 1, is ARC expecting staff to independently create and modify reusable project templates after implementation without developer assistance? If so, what level of configuration or customization should ARC staff be able to perform?*

See ARC response below.

44. *Does ARC expect usability testing or user acceptance testing with ARC staff and/or representative public users as part of implementation? If so, please describe the expected testing process and acceptance criteria.*

See ARC response below.

ARC Response:

ARC is expecting that the platform will be fully operational off-the-shelf, however, there may be an opportunity to tweak some things to better meet ARC's needs. Users of the platform should be able to independently create and modify the project template, although developer technical assistance is expected to be available.

M. Accessibility & Language Access

45. *What accessibility standard and conformance level does ARC require for the public-facing platform and administrative interface (e.g., WCAG 2.1 AA or WCAG 2.2 AA)? Does ARC require accessibility testing and documentation as part of implementation and acceptance?*

See ARC response below.

46. *What accessibility standard should the platform satisfy, such as WCAG 2.1/2.2 AA or Section 508? Is multilingual functionality required, and if so, which languages should proposers plan to support?*

See ARC response below.

47. *Are there required cybersecurity, privacy, hosting, data-residency, authentication, or accessibility standards that the proposed platform must meet, including requirements related to WCAG, Section 508, SSO, MFA, encryption, or security certifications?*

See ARC response below.

48. *Does ARC require or prefer multilingual public engagement capabilities? If so, which languages should the proposed platform support?*

See ARC response below.

49. *Are there specific accessibility standards the platform must meet, such as WCAG 2.1 AA or another accessibility standard?*

See ARC response below.

50. *Does ARC require the proposed public-facing platform to meet WCAG 2.1 AA, Section 508, or another specific digital accessibility standard?*

See ARC response below.

ARC Response:

The proposed platform must support multilingual public engagement and should support as many languages as the platform is able to accommodate. ARC is required to meet Section 508 accessibility standards and expects the proposed platform to meet an equivalent conformance level, such as WCAG 2.1 AA.

All application and data hosting must be within the continental United States to ensure adherence to ARC security policies. The application should ensure data is encrypted both in transit and at rest. MultiFactor Authentication should be mandatory on all administrative interfaces.

ARC's preferred standards for information security follow the NIST 800-53 standard. Respondents should follow this guidance for information security, authentication, compliance and retention in proposing solutions. Solutions proposing the utilization for single sign on should be compatible with Entra iD with Conditional Access. All proposals must include a minimum backup retention of 90 days with 6 months considered an ideal available recovery window. All backups should be immutable from the hosted application.

N. Hosting, Security, Privacy, Data Residency & Availability/Support

51. *Does ARC have a preference or requirement regarding vendor-hosted SaaS versus deployment within ARC-managed infrastructure? Please identify any applicable hosting, security, privacy, authentication, data-residency, or cloud-compliance requirements that proposers should account for in their technical approach and pricing.*

See ARC response below.

52. *What mandatory hosting, information-security, privacy, accessibility, records-retention, and service-level standards will apply, and what restrictions will ARC impose on generative-AI processing, including model providers, data retention, human review, and use of ARC data for model training?*

See ARC response below.

53. *Does ARC have required or preferred standards for cloud hosting, data residency, encryption, cybersecurity, backup/disaster recovery, authentication, or single sign-on?*

See ARC response below.

54. *Does ARC have preferred or required standards regarding cloud hosting, data residency, security, authentication, backup/disaster recovery, data retention, or privacy that are not otherwise specified in the RFP?*

See ARC response below.

55. *Does ARC have required uptime, system-performance, technical-support response times, backup, disaster-recovery, or business-continuity requirements for the platform?*

See ARC response below.

ARC Response:

ARC anticipates a vendor-hosted SaaS solution rather than deployment within ARC-managed infrastructure. ARC has a strong preference for high system uptime and responsive technical support; proposers should describe their current uptime performance and technical-support response times, along with any related service-level guarantees.

O. Usage Volume & Scale

56. *Approximately how many concurrent or annual engagement projects does ARC anticipate supporting through the platform, and what level of public participation should vendors plan for per project?*

See ARC response below.

57. *Please provide anticipated usage volumes, including the number of concurrent projects, public participants, contact records, annual responses or comments, emails or notifications, meetings, and storage requirements; also confirm whether the eight platform licenses are named or concurrent administrative licenses and whether consultant access counts against that limit.*

See ARC response below.

58. *The RFP specifies up to eight platform licenses for administrative users. Approximately how many residents or other external participants does ARC anticipate engaging annually, and are there expected peak participation volumes for individual projects or campaigns?*

See ARC response below.

59. *Approximately how many community engagement projects, surveys, public-comment periods, meetings, or campaigns does ARC anticipate managing through the platform annually or concurrently?*

See ARC response below.

60. *Please provide, if available, the anticipated number of public participants, concurrent or annual engagement projects, surveys, comments, and other interactions expected during the contract period.*

See ARC response below.

61. *What approximate number of public participants, contacts, active projects, surveys, comments, file uploads, and concurrent users should the platform be designed to support annually?*

See ARC response below.

ARC Response:

Engagement volume varies significantly by project and is difficult to predict precisely. The platform should be able to accommodate participation ranging from several dozen to tens of thousands of unique participants on an individual project, with most projects falling toward the lower end of that range. At any given time, ARC anticipates

having between 10 and 100 concurrent engagement projects active on the platform, with most falling toward the lower end of that range; ARC would prefer not to have a hard limit imposed. The eight platform licenses referenced in the RFP are a separate figure covering administrative users (see Section Q, below) and are not a limit on the number of concurrent projects.

P. Licensing Model (8 Licenses, Consultants, Public Users)

62. *The RFP requests up to eight platform licenses while also stating that the tool may be shared with consultants as needed. Are consultants included within the eight licensed users, or should the proposed solution accommodate additional external/guest users?*

See ARC response below.

63. *Does “up to 8 platform licenses” refer to ARC staff/administrative users, with public participants accessing engagement activities without requiring a platform license?*

See ARC response below.

64. *Does each of the eight platform licenses refer to a named ARC staff administrator account? Are consultant accounts included within those eight licenses, and are there anticipated limits on public participants, concurrent engagement projects, or other user types?*

See ARC response below.

65. *What types of ARC users are expected to use the eight platform licenses, and should consultant access be included within those eight licenses or provided separately?*

See ARC response below.

66. *The RFP references up to eight platform licenses. Please confirm that these licenses are intended for ARC staff/administrative users and that public participants will be able to access engagement projects, surveys, maps, polls, forums, and public-comment functionality without requiring individual paid licenses or accounts.*

See ARC response below.

67. *Are the eight licenses intended as named administrator accounts, while public participation remains unlimited?*

See ARC response below.

ARC Response:

Public participants do not require one of the eight platform licenses to participate in engagement activities. The eight licenses are intended for ARC staff/administrative users; consultant access is expected to be provided in addition to, rather than counted against, those eight licenses. Eight licenses represent a minimum requirement — proposals offering additional licenses at no or low additional cost will be viewed favorably.

Q. Data Ownership, Rights, Export & Vendor IP

68. *ARC states that it will own collected data. Please clarify required data-export formats, retention expectations, and end-of-contract transition requirements. Should the selected platform provide ARC with a complete export of participant records, responses, attachments, project configurations, and related metadata?*

See ARC response below.

69. *Please clarify that ARC's rights in project data and deliverables do not transfer ownership of the vendor's pre-existing platform software, source code, algorithms, models, libraries, or other background intellectual property used to provide the service.*

See ARC response below.

70. *Please confirm that ARC's ownership rights apply to ARC data and project-specific deliverables, while the selected vendor retains ownership of its pre-existing SaaS platform, reusable components, configurations, and underlying intellectual property; additionally, may recurring subscription fees be presented as platform licensing in Exhibits A and A-1 rather than allocated entirely as labor, overhead, and profit?*

See ARC response below.

71. *For respondents proposing an existing proprietary software platform, please confirm whether the "Rights in Documents, Materials and Data Produced" provision applies only to materials and data produced specifically under the resulting agreement and does not transfer ownership of the respondent's pre-existing software, source code, algorithms, frameworks, libraries, templates, or other background intellectual property.*

See ARC response below.

72. *The example contract provides ARC and the Concerned Funding Agencies rights to use data and materials produced under the agreement, including computer programs. For a proposer offering a proprietary or reusable software platform, will ARC distinguish between the proposer's pre-existing platform intellectual property and ARC-specific configurations, templates, deliverables, and data created under the contract?*

See ARC response below.

73. *What specific ownership, portability, retention and deletion rights does ARC expect under the requirement that staff "own the data collected"?*

See ARC response below.

ARC Response:

ARC's ownership rights apply to ARC's data and project-specific deliverables; they do not extend to the vendor's pre-existing platform software, source code, algorithms, models, libraries, or other background intellectual property used to provide the service. At a minimum, ARC requires the ability to export its full data — including participant records, responses, attachments, and project configurations — in Microsoft Excel and ArcGIS-compatible formats, as well as other commonly used formats.

R. Budget / \$76,000 Funding Scope

74. *The RFP states that anticipated funding will not exceed \$76,000. Does this amount include platform licensing, hosting, implementation/configuration, custom development, integrations, training, and Task 3 annual support, or is the \$76,000 intended primarily for implementation services?*

See ARC response below.

75. *Should ongoing AI/model usage, hosting, mapping/geocoding, communications, conferencing, and other third-party operating costs be included within the proposed platform licensing and annual service/support pricing, or does ARC anticipate providing any existing enterprise accounts or approved services?*

See ARC response below.

76. *Please confirm whether the anticipated maximum available funding of \$76,000 is intended to cover implementation/onboarding, platform licensing for up to eight users, hosting, training, technical support, and all other costs for the initial contract period.*

See ARC response below.

77. *Does ARC anticipate that the stated project funding of up to \$76,000 will cover implementation, platform licensing, and annual service/support for one year? If so, should proposers also provide pricing for subsequent annual licensing and support periods?*

See ARC response below.

ARC Response:

The \$76,000 funding ceiling is all-inclusive and is intended to cover all proposed costs — including platform licensing, hosting, implementation/onboarding, training, technical support, and any third-party operating costs such as AI/model usage, mapping/geocoding, or conferencing — for the first year of the contract (Tasks 1–3). Should the contract be extended into subsequent years, the funding amount would be amended to reflect the cost of each additional year.

S. Contract Term & Renewals

78. *Task 3 references annual service and support. What is the anticipated base contract term, and are renewal option years contemplated? Does the \$76,000 not-to-exceed amount cover implementation and the full base contract term, or implementation plus a single year of licensing and support?*

See ARC response below.

79. *Please confirm the anticipated initial contract term and any renewal options, and clarify whether the stated \$76,000 funding ceiling applies only to first-year licensing, implementation, training, and support or to the entire potential contract term, including renewals.*

See ARC response below.

80. *What is the anticipated initial contract term for the Community Engagement Platform, including Task 3 Annual Service/Support, and are renewal options anticipated? Please also confirm whether the stated funding amount of up to \$76,000 is intended to cover implementation, onboarding, licensing, training, support, and all other costs for the full initial contract term.*

See ARC response below.

81. *What initial contract and platform licensing term does ARC anticipate, and does ARC anticipate renewal options following the initial term?*

See ARC response below.

82. *Is there an anticipated contract term for the annual licensing/support component: one year with renewals, or another structure?*

See ARC response below.

ARC Response:

The initial contract term covers the 2027 calendar year, with the option to extend for up to two additional one-year periods. As noted in Section S, above, the \$76,000 funding ceiling applies to the first year of the contract; funding for any renewal year would be amended separately.

T. Implementation Timeline

83. *Does ARC have a desired contract start date, implementation period, or target date by which the Community Engagement Platform should be fully operational?*

See ARC response below.

ARC Response:

ARC anticipates a contract start date of January 1, 2027.

U. Experience, References & Evaluation Criteria

84. *For purposes of the 40% experience criterion, may ARC consider relevant experience of the lead firm's founder/key personnel and proposed subconsultants, including work demonstrated through currently operating platforms? For the two required references, will ARC accept engagements of comparable scope and technical complexity, or must the references specifically relate to prior public-engagement platform implementations?*

See ARC response below.

85. *May the required relevant experience and references include projects completed by the proposer's key personnel and/or proposed subcontractors, or must all referenced projects have been completed directly by the proposing legal entity?*

See ARC response below.

ARC Response:

Relevant experience and references must belong to the proposing legal entity (the firm submitting the proposal) itself. Experience held only by an individual employee, founder, or subconsultant — without having been performed under the proposing firm's own name — does not satisfy this criterion. Experience and references should relate specifically to public-engagement platform implementations of comparable scope and technical complexity to this solicitation.

V. Vendor Demonstration / Interviews During Evaluation

86. *Does ARC anticipate inviting shortlisted respondents to demonstrate their proposed platform or participate in interviews as part of the evaluation? If so, what is the anticipated format and timing?*

See ARC response below.

87. *Will proposers have an opportunity to provide a live demonstration of the proposed platform during the evaluation or selection process?*

See ARC response below.

ARC Response:

ARC may require a demonstration from all finalists, which would be conducted online. ARC currently anticipates making a selection decision based on the written proposals; however, if the initial evaluation does not provide sufficient distinction among proposers, ARC will invite a short list of finalists for interviews and/or demonstrations following that initial review.

W. Proposal Submittal — Forms, Typos & DBE Documentation

88. *In the Proposal Submittal section, should the requirement stating “Description of approval proposed for scope of services and deliverables” read “Description of approach proposed for scope of services and deliverables”?*

See ARC response below.

89. *Please clarify which Exhibit B forms, certifications, affidavits, and DBE-related documentation must be completed and submitted with the initial proposal. Is a DBE Utilization Plan required with the proposal, and if so, is there a required ARC form or template?*

See ARC response below.

ARC Response:

Yes — the requirement should read “Description of Approach proposed for scope of services and deliverables.” A DBE Utilization Plan is not required for this solicitation. There is no required form or template.