



Questions and Answers (Q&A) - Investing in Resilient Infrastructure: Marine Survey, Cable Manufacturing, and Cable Installation Services for the Development of a Submarine Communications Cable System in Puerto Rico

1. Desktop Study Integration (Section 1.6, p.7 & Section 3.2, p.18): The RFP mentions a separate Desktop Study (DTS) will be provided. When will the DTS results be available to proposers, and what level of detail will be included regarding route optimization and technical specifications?

Proponents should use information provided the RFP, specially technical details provided in the appendix section which incorporates information from the DTS. DTS report will shared with selected proponents as per the requirements established in Section 1.6.

2. Environmental Permits (Program Responsibility Matrix, p.15-16): Which environmental and regulatory permits will be the government's responsibility versus the contractor's responsibility? Will permits be issued to the Government of Puerto Rico or the selected proponent?

The PRBP will be publishing an amended responsibility matrix to further clarify these items.

3. How will the Agency evaluate compliance with Act 173-1988 for Transmission/System Design & Engineering Scope of work?

The PRBP will ensure compliance with all applicable Local and Federal Regulations. Regarding Transmission/System Design & Engineering responsibilities, an amended responsibility matrix will be published on the PRBP portal which will offer further clarity on this topic.

4. How will interfaces between multiple contractors be managed if multiple contracts are awarded. How will the “dry plant” component be coordinated with the “wet plant” component? Is Proponent required to provide a coordination strategy?

Dry plant components will not be discussed during this RFP process. Coordination of different activities will be directly managed and monitored by the OMB. All proponents must be open to collaborate and work in conjunction with another entity involved in a different activity under coordination of PRBP/OMB.

5. Intent to Proceed (ITP) (Program Schedule, p.17): The RFP mentions a potential ITP agreement for early mobilization. What would trigger an ITP, and how would it be different from a regular contract? Will the ITP be registered in the Comptrollers contracts registry?/ what work would be authorized under such an ITP? If an ITP is issued, would the contract be executed within the fifteen (15) days provided in the RFP or will the ITP have the effect of extending such term?



The ITP may be executed on a case by case basis, depending on the work and timeline. The ITP will establish a direct selection and coordination of services, but will not constitute a direct contract for the work. Within the ITP, a specific trigger schedule may be included for the execution of the formal contract.

6. Section 4.3.6 Resumes – Please clarify whether Resume of Key Personnel shall not exceed two or three pages. The first paragraph of Section 4.3.6 indicates three pages but further below it indicates two pages.

2-3 pages are acceptable for Resumes.

7. Payment Terms (Section 4.4, p.24-25): Are there any payment milestones and terms for this contract. Will the agency accept a down payment as an initial payment milestone for this contract? Could a proponent propose alternate payment schedules?

Currently, PRBP has not set a firm pay structure requirement. Each proponent should propose their pay structure based on milestones. All contracts associated with this work is expected as a firm fixed price. Submarine Survey and Cable Installation should account for delays and can present a contingency based on additional time.

Additionally, for any proposed Advanced payments, proponents will need to ensure compliance with Department of Treasury Regulation 31 which requires that When the payment amount exceeds \$10,000, the agency will require the supplier to post a bond equal to the total advance payment. The bond must be issued by a surety company authorized by the Office of the Insurance Commissioner to do business in Puerto Rico.

8. Local Business Registration (Section 5.2, p.26): Considering the time constraints before proposal submission deadline, can a proponent not yet registered to do business in Puerto Rico submit a proposal while undergoing the registration process? what is the acceptable timeline for obtaining authorization to do business in Puerto Rico, and registration in the Service Providers Registry (RUP) and sam.gov?

A proponent may submit a proposal without being registered but should present a schedule for when they shall begin and complete the process. PRBP/OMB will not execute a contract with a proponent that has not completed the formal registration process even if selected for the Award.

9. Subcontractor Requirements (Section 4.3.3, p.21): Do the same federal compliance and local registration requirements apply to all subcontractors? Will subcontractors be required to be registered to do business in Puerto Rico, and obtain the RUP certificate and sam.gov as well?

While these requirements were included with the prime contractor in mind, it will be the sole responsibility of the prime to ensure that any subcontractors comply with



applicable local and federal regulations, including but not limited to not being listed on the sam.gov debarment list.

10. Section 6.4 – please confirm that only the registration in the Service Provider Registry (RUP) - and not the Sole Bidder's Registry (RUL) - is required for contract execution.

The requirements included in section were intended to be used as a general guide for some of the contract conditions which are usually required in government contracts. PRBP may require additional registrations and/or certification during the contracting process.

11. Section 6.6 – What does registration within the System for Award Management (SAM) entail? Will the Unique Entity Identification number be sufficient? Will the agency accept evidence that submission of registration in sam.gov has been requested?

Proponent must include their UEI, as well as evidence of their registration on sam.gov. PRBP will not accept proposals from entities with an active exclusion record.

12. Will the PRBP consider the experience, qualifications, and financial resources of parent companies, subsidiaries, and affiliate entities when evaluating applicant proposals?

Specifically:

- a. For experience evaluation under Section 5.2 "Experience & Qualifications" (30 points), may applicants reference projects performed by parent companies or affiliates as demonstration of relevant capability?
- b. For financial stability assessment under Section 4.4.1, will the financial condition and resources of parent companies be considered to support the applicant's capacity to perform the work?
- c. If parent/affiliate experience and financial backing are considered, what documentation is required to demonstrate the relationship between entities and the availability of such resources and experience to support this project?
- d. Are there any restrictions on the degree of ownership or control required for an entity to be considered a qualifying parent or affiliate for evaluation purposes?

Only proponent's experience and financial backing shall be considered; as such, parent/affiliate experience and financial backing will not be considered.

13. Regarding "Program responsibilities Matrix" on Page 15. Please confirm that the table that reflects the Scope of work is the lower portion of the Table from "Engineering", and that "Front-haul (BMH-CLS) connectivity from the subsea landing point to designated inland interconnection facilities", "Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD)", "Beach Manhole (BMH) Construction where required" are optional items, according to the Scope of work in section 3.1



As per Section 3.2.3., these activities are optional.

14. Regarding price. Can the PRBP confirm the budget available or considered for each part of the Scope and total Price?.

PRBP/OMB shall not disclose the budget for each activity at this time.

15. Regarding Price. Price confirms if the offered price must include taxes and withholdings.

Taxes and withholdings must already be considered in the proposed and cannot be listed as an independent cost category.

16. Regarding Taxes. In the case that the offering must include taxes and withholdings, can the PRBP clarified and provide guidance of the applicable percentages for Taxes and WTH?

PRBP will not be offering guidance as it relates to taxes and WH.

17. Regarding Taxes. Is there any fiscal benefit for applicable taxes considering that this is a governmental initiative?

PRBP will not be offering guidance as it relates to taxes and WH.

18. Regarding Price. Can the PRBP clarify what is the expected payment schedule for the project?

Currently, PRBP/OMB has not set a firm pay structure requirement. Each proponent should propose their pay structure based on milestones. All contracts associated with this work is expected as a firm fixed price. Submarine Survey and Cable Installation should account for delays and can present a contingency based on additional time.

Additionally, for any proposed Advanced payments, proponents will need to ensure compliance with Department of Treasury Regulation 31 which requires that When the payment amount exceeds \$10,000, the agency will require the supplier to post a bond equal to the total advance payment. The bond must be issued by a surety company authorized by the Office of the Insurance Commissioner to do business in Puerto Rico."

19. Regarding permits. Please clarify if the PRBP will be responsible to provide and facilitate in time all permits and studies in PR (maritime, communities, environmental impact) to install the cable system.

PRBP shall engage independently for permits and terrestrial studies if required. For cable ship survey and installation, proponents can include relevant permitting but can defer to PRBP/OMB to request and obtain relevant permitting. Full collaboration is



expected from each proponent in providing the necessary information to request any and all permits if PRBP will handle permit request and acquisition.

20. Regarding Permits. Please clarify in whose name is the FCC application permit issued?

As per Section 2.4 of the RFP, PRBP is entitled to answer questions deemed relevant to the services being procured under this RFP.

21. Regarding "Environmental and archeological baseline submarine studies and collection of permitting-related data" Pag 13: What contingency plans exist if the survey discovers unexpected seabed conditions that require a change in the proposed route?

In the event of a discovery of sensitive, critical, and/or protected habitats or ecological resources, we will complete the necessary mitigation measures or route adjustment to ensure compliance with all applicable regulations.

22. Technical questions: Please clarify How do you estimate the transfer of ownership of the fiber and guarantees?

As per Section 2.4 of the RFP, PRBP is entitled to answer questions deemed relevant to the services being procured under this RFP. Ownership of fiber and guarantees are not a subject which will be discussed during this RFP process.

23. Technical questions :Do you have a percentage of BM considered or is it open to offers?

As per Section 2.4 of the RFP, PRBP is entitled to answer questions deemed relevant to the services being procured under this RFP.

24. Technical questions: Annex F mentions 4 fibers as an option for BUs, but are they the same 4 pairs throughout the entire route or are they interspersed?

BU strands would have 8 fiber pairs, with 4 fiber pairs connecting to each other point. For example, the San Juan to Mayagüez cable should hold 24 fiber pairs with 20 express fiber pairs connecting San Juan to Mayagüez, 4 fiber pairs used for the BU from SJ to the BU and 4 fiber pairs used for the BU from Mayagüez to the BU. In total the BU strand would hold 8 fiber pairs.

25. Regarding Contract: This type of work is very specialized in terms of the clauses included in the final contract. Does PRBP can provide a template draft of the contract to be used?

PRBP will not be providing any template agreement at this time.

26. Regarding Cost: Does PRBP is considering providing and Advance Fee at the beginning of the contract. If affirmative, what percentage is considered?



Advanced fee may be required, however there is no specific percentage that will be provided at this time. It will be at the proponents full discretion to include a proposed percentage as a part of this RFP and this may be subject to further discussion during the negotiation process with the selected proponents.

Additionally, for any proposed Advanced payments, proponents will need to ensure compliance with Department of Treasury Regulation 31 which requires that When the payment amount exceeds \$10,000, the agency will require the supplier to post a bond equal to the total advance payment. The bond must be issued by a surety company authorized by the Office of the Insurance Commissioner to do business in Puerto Rico."

27. Regarding Timeline: The timeline in the RFP in our experience are not feasible from Submarine Study, Manufacturing, and Installation to be completed before Q4 2026. PRBP is considering an extension of these timelines to be around a more workable schedule?

As per Section 3 of the RFP: " Providers may also present additional schedules ensuring a system ready-for-service (RFS) date which extends into 2027, however it must be properly justified, and they must identify the assumptions for why this schedule would be applicable" Proponents should also consider applicable guidance for the Capital Projects Fund (CPF).

28. Has the government already defined how NOC and NMA aspects will be handled, or is it expected that the bidder will include them in the proposal? Specifically:

- a. What post-installation maintenance arrangements (marine maintenance zone, ACMA membership) are proposed?
- b. What is the proposed Network Operations Center (NOC) and Network Management Architecture (NMA) model?

Post installation items such as the ones included in this section are not a subject which will be discussed. As per Section 2.4 of the RFP, PRBP is entitled to answer questions deemed relevant to the services being procured under this RFP.

29. Given the complexity of the project, is it possible to extend the submission period by 4-6 weeks?

On September 26th of 2025, the PRBP published an addendum to the RFP which extends the proposal submission date to October 23rd of 2026. THE PRBP will not be considering any additional extensions at this time.

30. Has the landing station in Santa Cruz been selected yet?

Possible landing stations in St. Croix were considered as a part of the DTS, as well as availability. However, no agreements have been established at this time.



31. Does the DTS contemplate the submarine cable stretch to the US Virgin Islands? Does the study consider factors such as depth, route, environmental impact, and the point of entry of the cable?

These were taken into consideration as part of the DTS. For more details regarding these components, proponents should consider information included in the appendix section of this RFP.

32. In case the state or federal permits generate a delay within the project timeline, how would the contractor be affected?

In the event that a project delay occurs as a result of permitting delays, contractors can expect adjustments to the execution period of their SOW if dependent on permitting. This may amount to cable storage and/or installation rescheduling if necessary.

33. In section 3.2.3 it is stated: "While the PRBP will coordinate the broader permitting framework, Applicants must identify any key permits or authorizations (e.g., vessel navigation clearances, dredging approvals, or HDD-specific requirements) that should be managed by them or that could affect their proposed scope." however, in the table "Program Responsibility Matrix" (page 15) you indicate the "Supplier" is responsible for USACE permits. We would appreciate this discrepancy is cleared up.

The PRBP will be publishing an amended responsibility matrix to further clarify these items.

34. Since the RFP requires bidders to incorporate findings from the Desktop Study (DTS), could PRBP clarify the process to be followed and the timeline for sharing the DTS results, thereby confirming the technical reliability of the DTS, so that all bidders may rely on a common and accurate baseline for their proposals?

DTS will not be shared at this time, however proponents should consider technical information from the appendix section of the RFP which incorporates information captured with the DTS.

35. As this project will be funded by federal programs such as the Capital Projects Fund and potentially the Puerto Rico Broadband Infrastructure Fund, could PRBP elaborate on the oversight, auditing, and monitoring mechanisms that will be put in place to ensure compliance with 2 CFR 200, Davis-Bacon Act, SAM registration, and other federal requirements, thereby reinforcing confidence among all bidders? Furthermore, please confirm if the federal funds that will cover this project are bound by the Buy America rules.



It is the responsibility of each proponent to consider the requirements established in this RFP and present proposals which ensure compliance with all applicable requirements. PRBP will not be sharing any specific guidance as they relate to compliance requirements established in this section.

36. Could PRBP clarify what measures will be applied to safeguard the integrity of the procurement process and mitigate any actual or perceived conflicts of interest among participants or unfair competition in PRBP procurement processes?

PRBP will ensure compliance with all applicable Federal and Local Regulations. Also, with this Q&A process and as per Section 2.4 of the RFP, PRBP is entitled to answer questions deemed relevant to the services being procured under this RFP.

PRBP will be sharing pertinent information related to the executed process in the adjudication notice, which will be shared with all proponents which submitted proposals.

37. The published schedule provides only 15 days between the release of the RFP (September 17, 2025) and the proposal submission deadline (October 2, 2025). Required clarity will not be obtained until after responses to questions on September 26, 2025. That leaves six calendar days to complete a Proposal. Considering the magnitude and complexity of this project, covering marine survey, cable manufacturing, and subsea installation, this period appears highly ambitious. Would PRBP consider extending the proposal submission deadline by at least 45 days, in order to provide bidders with sufficient time to prepare thorough and competitive proposals, ultimately strengthening the quality, transparency, and fairness of the procurement process?

On September 26th of 2025, the PRBP published an addendum to the RFP which extends the proposal submission date to October 23rd of 2026. The PRBP will not be considering any additional extensions at this time.

38. The RFP establishes December 2026 as the required Ready-for-Service (RFS) date. Considering the global challenges around factory slot availability for the manufacturing of the cable, vessel scheduling, and permitting timelines, would PRBP evaluate proposals that include the integration of existing submarine cable infrastructure as part of the overall solution, provided such integration demonstrably accelerates delivery while fully meeting the resilience, redundancy, and capacity objectives outlined in the RFP?

As per Section 3 of the RFP: " Providers may also present additional schedules ensuring a system ready-for-service (RFS) date which extends into 2027, however it must be properly justified, and they must identify the assumptions for why this schedule would be applicable" Proponents should also consider applicable guidance



for the Capital Projects Fund (CPF). which may be found on the U.S. Treasury official portal. Use of existing and dated infrastructure will not be considered as feasible replacements for new submarine fiber implementation.

39. Given Puerto Rico's unique vulnerability to hurricanes and seismic activity, will the evaluation criteria explicitly weigh how bidders incorporate ruggedized, disaster-resilient design features into their systems to ensure continuity of service during and after catastrophic events? Further, will PRBP prioritize solutions that align with the RFP's resiliency goals by demonstrating proven capabilities for rapid recovery and restoration in post-disaster scenarios?

As per Section 2.4 of the RFP, PRBP is entitled to answer questions deemed relevant to the services being procured under this RFP.

For evaluation criteria, proponents should refer to criteria established on section 5 of this RFP.

40. While the RFP outlines preliminary landing locations and subsea segments, in international practice, the detailed route engineering and final selection of landing stations are typically determined by the system supplier through marine surveys and technical analysis. Could PRBP clarify whether bidders will be allowed flexibility to optimize subsea routes and landing station sites based on survey results and engineering best practices, provided that the final design continues to meet the program's resiliency and geographic diversity objectives? Will the DTS Landing Site Surveys be issued in support of this RFP (see Q1).

PRBP is open to adjustments to route and slight changes in landing location based on marine survey results and determination of optimal system permitting and installation routes and locations. While changes in municipal landings are not expected at this time, the PRBP may consider changes in the case of any unforeseen circumstances impeding selected locations.

41. As a complement to route optimization, will PRBP also evaluate the extent to which proposed systems provide restoration paths to existing international submarine cable networks in the Dominican Republic, St. Croix, and other regional hubs, thereby further strengthening Puerto Rico's geographic diversity and reducing reliance on single points of failure?

As per Section 2.4 of the RFP, PRBP is entitled to answer those questions deemed relevant to the services being procured under this RFP. Proponents should only refer to information included in Section 3.1 and 3.2 of this RFP for a full understanding of the scope and services being procured.

42. Will PRBP give consideration to solutions that not only deliver the submarine cable system but also provide an integrated connection with the terrestrial transmission infrastructure, using



modern optical technologies that allow for real-time monitoring, flexible capacity management, and automation to benefit carriers, ISPs, and content providers?

As per Section 2.4 of the RFP, PRBP is entitled to answer those questions deemed relevant to the services being procured under this RFP. PRBP considers that Line Termination Equipment and relevant infrastructure is not part of this RFP.

43. Could PRBP clarify how it intends to define the division of responsibilities between contractors and the Government in areas such as landing stations, front-haul, permitting, and terrestrial interconnections? In addition, will PRBP favor a turnkey integrated approach handled by a single provider, or will it consider awarding contracts under a split-scope model across different service categories?

Alternate Question Posed Later:

(A) Could PRBP clarify how it intends to define the division of responsibilities between contractors and the Government in areas such as landing stations, front-haul, permitting, and terrestrial interconnections?

(B) In addition, will PRBP favor a turnkey integrated approach handled by a single provider, or will it consider awarding contracts under a split-scope model across different service categories? This includes ownership of risk for the Permits in Principle and the Environmental Impact Assessment that are needed prior to of start cable load for installation, among many other items that would be outside of the control of the installer under the current RFP requirements.

As per Section 2.4 of the RFP, PRBP is entitled to answer those questions deemed relevant to the services being procured under this RFP.

As per Section 5.2 of the RFP: "The PRBP reserves full discretion to compare turnkey and component proposals in order to determine the most cost-effective and value-driven award configuration. Optional front haul pricing will be evaluated separately and solely at the PRBP's discretion. "

Proponents should also refer to Section 3.1 and Section 5 respectively for information related to the procured services, as well as the Evaluation criteria for submitted proposals.

44. Could PRBP clarify whether bidders are expected to include in their proposals the full scope of cable burial, as well as special protections at pipeline or power cable crossings? Furthermore, will PRBP require contractors to take responsibility for obtaining all necessary operational and regulatory installation permits (e.g., USACE, navigation clearances, HDD-specific requirements), or will certain permitting activities remain under the Government's purview? If



permits to complete the installation and finalize the project will be the winning bidder's responsibility, how does PRBP contemplate incorporating time for that milestone into the timeline for completion?

Alternate Question Posed:

(A) Could PRBP clarify whether bidders are expected to include in their proposals the full scope of cable burial, as well as special protections at pipeline or power cable crossings?

(B) Furthermore, will PRBP require contractors to take responsibility for obtaining all necessary operational and regulatory installation permits (e.g., USACE, navigation clearances, HDD-specific requirements), or will certain permitting activities remain under the Government's purview with the Permits In-Principle?

(C) If permits to complete the installation and finalize the project will be the winning bidder's responsibility, how does PRBP contemplate incorporating time for that milestone into the timeline for completion?

At this time burial is not expected within the RFP SOW, proponents may include an estimate for burial if the survey determines it necessary, however little to no burial is expected to be required at this time. Installers must consider any measures necessary to ensure system protection along any cable crossing path. Please refer to responsibility matrix for permitting.

45. The RFP description appears to suggest a point-to-point segment configuration between landing stations. Could PRBP clarify whether the final system design will be required to ensure that each landing station has independent and resilient connectivity to the overall network, so that the operation of one site is not affected by potential failures at another?

As per Section 2.4 of the RFP, PRBP is entitled to answer questions deemed relevant to the services being procured under this RFP.

46. We note that you identify the services under the RFP as "professional services". How comfortable is PRBP with classifying the scope as professional services when it includes the manufacturing and purchasing of the cable? How would the classification of "professional services" change the treatment of the procurement process?

As per Section 2.4 of the RFP, PRBP is entitled to answer questions deemed relevant to the services being procured under this RFP.



47. The RFP timeline states that Notice of Award and/or Intent to Proceed (ITP) will be October 9, 2025 and states that PRBP will consider proposals with schedules that “ensure/guarantee(ing)”: completion: • Marine survey: delivery of final reporting by Q4 2025 or Q1 2026 (calendar year). • Cable Manufacturing: system ready-to-load (RTL) date by Q3 or early Q4 2026 (calendar year), inclusive of all required factory acceptance testing (FAT). • Cable Installation: system ready-for-service (RFS) date by December 31, 2026, with testing periods of at least 30 days and a final splice completed no later than December 1, 2026.

Realistic project scheduling, which would include:

- permit activities for the survey and the installation activities,
- the insertion of slack time between linked activities like the survey and the cable manufacture, and the cable manufacture and the installation,
- allowance for typical weather delays including hurricane season, and
- task and project contingency

By all objective measures in the industry, the target milestones provided are unachievable, considering that the contracts have not been awarded, the scope of work and technical specifications not adequately defined, and work under it has not been authorized. The preamble that “PRBP will consider” indicates that proposals which do not claim to meet these target dates will not be considered.

Proposals stating compliance with unachievable dates will likely factor that into the Proposal and/or in contract negotiation – e.g. negotiating “No Penalties for Lateness” or “Grace Period for Liquidated Damages”. This disadvantages bidders who take meaning of the RFP but acknowledge the risk.

(a): How did PRBP determine these target dates and how confident is PRBP that these dates are in fact achievable?

(b): If the target dates are in fact to be considered inviolable, does PRBP understand that the aggressive schedule will come with a significant cost premium?

(c): Does the Evaluation Committee intend to adjudicate the cost of target date compliance as a separate factor from the price? The Scoring Method in the RFP combines “Technical Solution & Timeline/Schedule” which appears to blur these two different factors and doesn’t indicate how important schedule is weighted compared to other source selection criteria such as technical solution by the Evaluation Committee. Which evaluation factor is more important for the government and how will each be weighted in the scoring criteria?



(d): What should the bidders consider the impact of schedule delay /lateness to be – will there be commercial penalties or liquidated damages?

As per Section 2.4 of the RFP, PRBP is entitled to answer only those questions it deems relevant to the services being procured under this RFP.

For evaluation criteria, proponents should refer to criteria established on Section 5 of this RFP.

48. PRBP is aware that schedule delays may occur, and these will be handled on a case by case basis. Any such items will be a matter which will be discussed during the contract negotiation process in the event of a proponent (or multiple proponents) being selected.

The RFP defines three scopes of work – Marine Survey, Cable Manufacture and Cable Installation – but does not provide detailed technical specifications for each.

In order to ensure a fair and balanced bid evaluation bidders should be provided with detailed technical specifications, as each of the categories have many variables which directly affect cost, schedule and quality.

(a): Will PRBP provide detailed technical specifications or requirements including but not limited to: survey tools and technologies to be deployed; a bid Straight Line Diagram showing armor types and quantities and repeater counts and spacings to normalize the bids; system design requirements including fiber count and design capacity; installation requirements such as amount (Kms) of Route Clearance, Pre Lay Grapnel runs, burial type and depth to be included in the price?

This RFP was submitted with the intent of obtaining proposals from experienced firms which can ensure the projects implementation. The PRBP considers that sufficient information has been included which was confirmed with the DTS in this RFP (Reference Sections 3 and the Appendixes respectively) to obtain proposals from experienced firms.

(b): Will the DTS be provided to all of the bidders so no one bidder has more project specific information than the others, to ensure fairness of the bid process?

Proponents should use information provided the RFP, especially technical details provided in the appendix section which incorporates information from the DTS. DTS report will share with selected proponents as per the requirements established in Section 1.6.

(c): Will bidders be provided with the opportunity to present their proposal to the PRBP Evaluation Committee and highlight the unique benefits of their offer prior to the selection process or will the PRBP Evaluation Committee be relied upon to discern that solely from the written response provided?



As indicated in Section 5.1 of this RFP: "An Evaluation Committee, designated by the PRBP, will review, evaluate, and score all proposals, including oral presentations if required. Each member of the Evaluation Committee shall possess the necessary experience to conduct proposal evaluations and will perform an independent assessment of the submissions in accordance with the evaluation criteria and contractual conditions set forth in this RFP. Evaluation Committee members will score proposals according to the stated evaluation criteria at their discretion. Point assignments from each member of the committee will be totaled for an overall proposal score. Applicants will be ranked based on these overall scores. In the event of a tie between two overall proposal scores, the Evaluation Committee will assess the awarded scores to determine whether any adjustments are appropriate. If appropriate, any adjustments made will be approved by the PRBP. If no adjustments are warranted, the Government Parties may use individual scoring criterion within each evaluation criteria category to break the tie."

(d): Does PRBP have experienced undersea cable experts capable of evaluating cost, quality and schedule impact of the disparate responses that an RFP without detailed requirements and specifications is expected to produce?

As indicated in Section 5.1 of this RFP: " An Evaluation Committee, designated by the PRBP, will review, evaluate, and score all proposals, including oral presentations if required. Each member of the Evaluation Committee shall possess the necessary experience to conduct proposal evaluations and will perform an independent assessment of the submissions in accordance with the evaluation criteria and contractual conditions set forth in this RFP."

(e): If the DTS is not provided to all bidders upfront, that information could provide the DTS provider with an unfair competitive advantage in violating procurement rules applicable to processes where federal funds are to be used to fund the project. Will the PRBP bar the DTS provider from presenting a proposal for the Marine Survey, Cable Manufacture and Cable Installation?

(e) As per federal guidelines, any firms which participated in the preparation of the procurement process may not be considered for selection.

49. The RFP defines three scopes of work – Marine Survey, Cable Manufacture and Cable Installation – which presumably can be bid on and/or awarded individually.

(a): Is PRBP acting as the General Contractor with responsibility for coordinating the separate scopes and overseeing overall project or program management? Is PRBP acting as the General Contractor/System Integrator with responsibility for coordinating the separate scopes and the work needed to be performed in parallel with these deliverables, but not



included in the RFP, including the Environmental Impact Assessment and Permits in Principle, and overseeing overall project or program management?

Proponents should only consider services and specifications being directly procured in the RFP. As per Section 2.4 of the RFP, PRBP is entitled to answer questions deemed relevant to the services being procured under this RFP.

Q16 (b): The Program Responsibility Matrix assigns the “Transmission/System Design & Engineering” to “Supplier” but does not specify which Scope of Work that falls under. Which Supplier is responsible for Transmission/System Design & Engineering? Note: It is not possible to quote for Cable manufacture without the basic information on system capacity and the number of fiber pairs that are required. This information is missing from the RFP but is presumably in the DTS that has not been issued to bidders.

An amended responsibility will be published on the PRBP portal which offer further clarity regarding Transmission/System Design & Engineering responsibilities.

For fiber pairs and technical data, proponents should refer to the appendix section of the RFP.

50. The RFP requires and solicits for three scopes of work – Marine Survey, Cable Manufacture and Cable Installation.

(a): Is it the intent of the PRBP to only receive proposals from companies which own the relevant assets themselves (marine vessels, cable factories)?

PRBP may also consider proposals from Project Integrates which contemplates using 3rd parties.

(b): Is PRBP anticipating bids from integrators acquiring these services under subcontract with the explicit understanding that such subcontracting adds overhead costs and the necessary effort of Project Management, Project Engineering, and Quality Assurance / Quality Control (QA/QC)?

Any overhead cost must already be considered within the price proposal which is submitted.

(c): If the responses to Q17(a) & Q17 (b) above anticipate project integrators to submit proposals utilizing 3rd party assets, the time and effort required to align subcontractors will require much more time than a bidder providing a proposal based on their own ships and/or cable factory. Would the government grant additional time to adequately prepare comprehensive proposals (after receipt of the detailed technical specification) so bidders can develop and submit technically sufficient and accurately priced bids?



On September 26th of 2025, the PRBP published an addendum to the RFP which extends the proposal submission date to October 23rd of 2026. THE PRBP will not be considering any additional extensions at this time.

51. In reference to the Evaluation Criteria and Scoring Method, please describe how Cost/Pricing will be evaluated. Will it simply be resolved with highest score to the lowest price, or other metrics be utilized?

As per Section 5.2: "The proposal that offers the lowest evaluated price for the relevant base scope shall receive the maximum points allocated to pricing. However, the PRBP will take into consideration the quality of product and overall value in combination with the pricing considerations. "

52. Based on the limited number of Cable manufacturers Worldwide and the government's application of Federal Laws and Regulations, is there a waiver for procuring the Cable form a foreign manufacturer? If this is permissible, are there any tariff waivers the Government will grant to the selected industry partner/partners?

While the use of foreign manufacturers is allowed, the proponent must ensure compliance with the requirements established in the RFP. Also, any ancillary cost must already be considered within the proposed price proposal, however the PRBP will not be offering any Tariff guidance at this time as it considers that this is the responsibility of the proponent.

53. If Tariff waivers are not available, and give the continued uncertainty of the Tariff level that may be implemented at the time of delivery, will a bid that excludes Tariffs be acceptable? If not, how do you propose to account for the impact of Tariffs on proposals and on the change in cost of the system once contracts have been awarded?

Any ancillary cost must already be considered within the proposed price proposal, however the PRBP will not be offering any Tariff guidance at this time as it considers that this is the responsibility of the proponent.

54. The government is requiring detailed cost breakdown with "fee" for each of the major requirements: Marine Survey, Cable Design and Fabrication, and Cable Deployment; Is the government's intent to award a Cost-Plus Fee Contract type?

As per Section 3.2: " Applicants may submit proposals for one, multiple, or all categories. The PRBP retains discretion to award a single turnkey contract or multiple contracts for individual components."

55. What are the Terms and Conditions that the government intends to apply to these contracts available for review?



It is the responsibility of each proponent to consider applicable Local and Federal regulation beyond the ones which are specifically included as a part of this RFP (Please refer to Section 6)

56. What is the fiber type requested?

Low loss subsea transmission cable per ITU G.654.B and D compliant. 48 fiber count, 24 fiber pair non-repeated fiber optic cable.

57. What is the fiber count of the (spare?) BU with the 13.5km tail?

BU strands would have 8 fiber pairs, with 4 fiber pairs connecting to each other point. For example, the San Juan to Mayagüez cable should hold 24 fiber pairs with 20 express fiber pairs connecting San Juan to Mayagüez, 4 fiber pairs used for the BU from SJ to the BU and 4 fiber pairs used for the BU from Mayagüez to the BU. In total the BU strand would hold 8 fiber pairs.

58. For the RFP answer submission, where do we upload the file? On the page mentioned (<http://www.smartisland.pr.gov/>), there are boxes to fill in text, but there is no “file upload” option (see screen shot below)

This omission has been duly noted and the PRBP will make all efforts to make necessary adjustment on the platform. As per the requirements of this RFP, all proposal must be submitted via the Smart Island portal. A fix is being made.

59. We kindly request an extension to the due date of two weeks in order to provide a meaningful response, considering the following questions.

On September 26th of 2025, the PRBP published an addendum to the RFP which extends the proposal submission date to October 23rd of 2026. The PRBP will not be considering any additional extensions at this time.

60. Section 4.4.1: Who should we address the letter to? Can you provide entity name, entity address, contact name and contact email.

Proposals should be addressed to the Puerto Rico Broadband Program (PRBP) and the address for the entity is:

Calle Cruz #254

Esq. Tetuan

San Juan, PR 00902



There should not be any specific contact persons listed as the proposal should be submitted via the PRBP portal and any communications will be managed via FAQ@smartisland.pr.gov

61. If the Applicant is a foreign entity that has worked and installed subsea fiber optic within Puerto Rico in the past, must it obtain certain licenses? If so, please advise which ones

Surveyors are required to obtain the necessary permission to perform marine survey work in Puerto Rico.

Installers should consider applicable local requirements for engineering services, including but not limited to Act 173-1988. Proponents should also consider applicable requirements for foreign entities to do business in Puerto Rico.

62. If we are using existing HDD conduits are they empty and have they been inspected?

Submarine conduits and BMH shall be built prior to installation on Mayagüez and Ponce as they are new landing sites, but for SJ and US VI Saint Croix we expect to use existing and available infrastructure, but inspections have not been completed by PRBP.

63. The RFP document references PLGR/burial/PLIB in multiple locations, however the below table, found in Attachment E, shows a total of 0 burial. Please confirm the amount of burial to be assumed for the RFP.

At this time very little to no burial is expected based on initial assessments. If the survey establishes the need for burial, the contract with the selected awardee can accommodate this task if necessary.

64. Page 17; Section Program Schedule: For the clients request to have the final deliverables done for Q1 2026, is for the base scope of work (Segments 1,2, and 3) and does not include the optional segments?

The Q1 2026 is for the Submarine Survey and only contemplate the base scope. The optional BUs are not expected to require survey at this time as the BUs are considered for future expansion.

65. Page 18; Section 3.2.1: We don't do archeological evaluation of the data and this is something we would sub-contract out. I'm not sure how we would quote this unless the sites are identified in the DTS. Will the client arrange for any archaeological evaluations required using the data collected by applicant?



We understand it is a specialty activity that may require subcontracting. PRBP can proceed with completing these specific archeological evaluations at the subsea area, but we will welcome this as part of proposals as an additional option.

66. Page 18; Section 3.2.1: Collection of environment and regulatory baseline data for subsea permitting. With the client not outlining exacting what they require, it is difficult for us to confirm whether the data we plan to collect will meet these requirements. Any assessment, processing or reporting of the data for these items will be the responsibility of the client.

PRBP shall be responsible for processing and reporting baseline data. We expect to work closely between regulators and suppliers to ensure all necessary data is captured during survey execution in collaboration with the supplier.

67. 6. Page 18; Section 3.2.1: Applicant shall be responsible of securing marine survey permit (s) necessary to carry out these operations. We typically put these back on the client. With it being a government project, you would think they would hand the permit. I've asked Pelagian to quote a permit study for the MRS and to manage the permit for the survey vessel just in case we want to handle them. I'm not sure if this is a client question or an internal question.

PRBP can work with obtaining construction and environmental implementation related permits, but we expect the suppliers to handle operational and navigational permits for survey ships and installation vessels.

68. Page 19; Section 3.2.3: Optional Component – If they chose to HDD, then will they still require a Diver Survey?

Yes, please include to ensure we have full topographic/bathymetric coverage in the event plans / designs change.

69. 6. Page 38; Attached D Survey Information and Parameters: The Client specs don't mention anything about Subbottom data or the required geotechnical data/spacing. They mention in Section 3.2.1 as an overview. Can the client confirm they require subbottom data? What type of geotechnical sampling (grab samples, gravity cores, or CPTs) is required and at what spacing?

Sampling is not currently planned or required, however in the event gravity cores or CPTs become necessary, please provide an optional price per gravity core and per CPT.

70. Is it possible to obtain an extension for the RFP submission deadline?

On September 26th of 2025, the PRBP published an addendum to the RFP which extends the proposal submission date to October 23rd of 2026. The PRBP will not be considering any additional extensions at this time.



71. The project budget is \$85.7 million. In the event additional funds are required, would it be viable to secure them?

Proponents should present realistic price proposals specifically for the services being procured in this RFP. PRBP will not be disclosing the project amount at this time.

72. Can we obtain access to the desktop study conducted by your team?

Proponents should use information provided the RFP, especially technical details provided in the appendix section which incorporates information from the DTS. DTS report will be shared with selected proponents as per the requirements established in Section 1.6.

73. The project documentation does not mention the operation and maintenance of the system. Who will be responsible for this component?

As per Section 2.4 of the RFP, PRBP is entitled to answer questions deemed relevant to the services being procured under this RFP. Please reference section 3.2 for further guidance.

74. Can these funds be used as a complementary allocation to another project, such as the Public Housing CDBG program?

The PRBP may consider the use of other federal funds, however proponent must ensure that they properly understand federal regulations for doing so and must clearly define how they will avoid any possible duplication of funds.

As an added note, PRBP will not be considering the use of these funds as a cost share for any other federal program.

75. Regarding existing facilities, who guarantees that the equipment can be installed, managed, operated, and accessed within them? Is there any documentation available to determine and analyze whether the facilities comply with the standards applied to existing landing stations?

As per Section 2.4 of the RFP, PRBP is entitled to answer questions deemed relevant to the services being procured under this RFP. Please reference section 3.2 for further guidance.

76. At the San Juan facility, why was a location selected within a high-risk hurricane and flood zone?



As per Section 2.4 of the RFP, PRBP is entitled to answer questions deemed relevant to the services being procured under this RFP. Please reference section 3.2 for further guidance.

77. For the Ponce facility, could another existing site be considered? The proposed location does not include telecomunicaciones infrastructure. If we already have existing facilities in that area that could fully meet the “landing station” requirements, could they be accepted as a replacement for the recommended one?

As per Section 2.4 of the RFP, PRBP is entitled to answer questions deemed relevant to the services being procured under this RFP. Please reference section 3.2 for further guidance.

78. For the Mayagüez facility, could another existing site be considered? The proposed location does not include telecommunications infrastructure. If we already have existing facilities in that area that could fully meet the “landing station” requirements, could they be accepted as a replacement for the recommended one?

As per Section 2.4 of the RFP, PRBP is entitled to answer questions deemed relevant to the services being procured under this RFP. Please reference section 3.2 for further guidance.

79. The proposal must include the connection of the Branch Units (BU), taking into account the other three landing stations.

The proposal should only consider the cost of including the BUs as part of the cable system as an option, we will need transparency between the cost of including the BUs and excluding them from the system build at our discretion.

80. As part of the project, should the Branch Units (BU) also consider connections to terrestrial POPs?

The proposal should only consider the cost of including the BUs as part of the cable system as an option, we will need transparency between the cost of including the BUs and excluding them from the system build at our discretion.