EMISSIONS REDUCTION ALBERTA

Request for Proposal – Grant Funding Management Platform

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Date issued:	November 17, 2026
Issued by:	Christine Irwin, RFP Manager (cirwin@eralberta.ca)
Issued with:	Addendum No. 1

About this document

This document sets out ERA's responses to questions received from Proponents by the Deadline for Questions. It is issued with, and forms part of, Addendum No. 1. Where an answer conflicts with the amendments in Addendum No. 1, Addendum No. 1 governs.

Questions have been edited for clarity and do not identify the Proponents who asked them. Similar questions have been combined. Where an answer refers to an amendment, the amendment is set out in Addendum No. 1, Part 1.

Categories

- Section 1 – Finance
- Section 2 – Program Intake and review
- Section 3 – Claims
- Section 4 – Integration and Architecture
- Section 5 – Implementation and Data migration
- Section 6 – Contracting
- Section 7 – Reporting
- Section 8 – Miscellaneous

1. Finance

1.1 Does ERA have a budget for this contract?

ERA is not providing budget information for this RFP. Proponents should propose the solution and pricing that best meets the requirements. Proposals will be evaluated on overall value, as described in the evaluation criteria.

1.2 How much grant funding does ERA disburse annually?

ERA currently disburses an average of approximately $8M per month.

1.3 How are funding payments issued and is there a fixed payment run schedule?

Funding payments are recorded in Xero and issued by EFT through ERA's banking partner. ERA runs EFT payments every two weeks and issues approximately 21 funding payments per month.

1.4 How is GST treated in claims and payments?

Grant funding payments are not subject to GST.

1.5 How are ERA and FIFC set up in Xero, and how are claims recorded?

ERA and FIFC are separate legal entities. Each has its own Xero organization and a different fiscal year-end (ERA: May 31; FIFC: December 31). Milestone payments are initially submitted through the Grant Manager platform, and subsequently a bill is created in Xero. Payment approval happens in ApprovalMax, a separate approval platform integrated with Xero. ERA codes claim invoices using two Xero tracking categories: project code/name and budget category. The integration must route each record to the correct entity's Xero organization.

1.6 Would ERA consider a platform with native financials that replaces Xero? If so, does ERA plan to keep Xero, how should financials be priced and evaluated, and may they be included in the Stage III demo?

Yes. ERA is open to moving to a different financial platform and would consider a proposal that includes native financials (general ledger, payables and receivables) to replace Xero.

- **Xero:** ERA may not keep using Xero for the full contract term. All Proponents should plan for integration flexibility and describe how their solution connects to financial systems in general, whether that is Xero, their own financials or another finance system.
- **Pricing:** Proponents offering financials should price them separately from the grant management solution in Schedule A, as an optional component. The Evaluated TCO should cover the grant management solution, including its integration with a finance system, so that all proposals can be compared on the same basis.
- **Evaluation:** proposals will be evaluated against the grant management requirements in Appendix B. Financial functions will not be scored.
- **Stage III demo:** short-listed Proponents may include financial functions in their demonstration, provided all required scenarios are covered. Scenario 4 (Vendor's Choice) may be used for this.

A Proponent whose grant management offering depends on ERA also adopting its financial platform must state this clearly in its Proposal and identify it as an exception in Schedule D.

1.7 General ledger and accounting questions

These questions are out of scope for this RFP. Proponents who offer financial software along with the grant management platform are encouraged to say so in their Proposal. This may be discussed with the selected Proponent during negotiations. For context:

- Chart of accounts: ERA and FIFC generally use the same accounts but are set up as separate organizations.
- Intercompany activity: ERA and FIFC have a shared services agreement for staff. General overhead and payroll costs that must be allocated to FIFC are coded to a "Due From" account. The Due To and Due From accounts are reconciled monthly, and ERA invoices FIFC for the balance quarterly.
- Budgeting and budget-versus-actual reporting: not in scope.
- Financial history migration: not in scope.

- Investments and interest accruals: ERA is not asking for any finance system functionality to be presented in this RFP.
- Invoices to funders or contributors: FIFC issues invoices to contributors to the fund.
- Repayments, recoveries and co-funding: these are very rare; in the past, ERA has invoiced the recipient.
- Tracking funding against programs and projects: yes, funding received must be tracked against the programs and projects it pays for.
- Non-grant vendor invoices: operational expenses are approximately $1M per month. Approval routing differs by invoice, but each invoice is reviewed about four times. Final approval requires an executive, with three levels of delegation depending on the dollar value.
- Purchase orders, expense reports and corporate cards: ERA uses corporate cards, and employees submit expense reports. ERA does not currently use purchase orders.

2. Program Intake and Review

2.1 How many programs and funding calls run each year, and how do their intake stages differ?

Across ERA and FIFC, approximately five major funding programs are launched each year, along with two quarterly invite only intake programs. Intake funding programs generally have two stages, EOI then FPP, before a project advances to the Project Plan. Some funding programs do not require an EOI. The Invite only quarterly funding programs timelines may overlap with the 5 annual funding programs, however the quarterly intake is much lighter around 7 applications a quarter.

2.2 How many application form templates are in use, and how much do they differ?

There are approximately six template documents at each of the EOI and FPP stages. Application forms are similar across programs.

2.3 Do approval workflows differ by program or application type?

No. Approval workflows do not differ materially by program or application type.

2.4 How often does ERA launch or change a program, and how long does it take today?

Approximately five major funding programs are launched each year, along with two quarterly intake programs (see 2.1). Funding program set up is done in the current platform by selecting standard drafted sections so set up is easy and fast. Minor revisions are made to the sections depending on the call and required reporting. ERA needs to be able to revise the sections as reporting requirements change over time and not have it impact the historical data.

2.5 Are applicant accounts held at the organization level, the individual level, or both?

Applications are held by individual users or organizational levels but all profiles are linked to an email address. Multiple accounts can have access to the same project profile.

2.6 What is the peak volume at an intake deadline?

A single large program may receive up to 200 EOIs; total annual volume is about 260 (Appendix A). ERA does not track daily submission volumes or concurrent users.

2.7 How many documents are uploaded per application, and are there file limits?

- **EOI stage:** the main EOI proposal (generally capped at 10 pages), a milestone summary document and optional letters of support.
- **FPP stage:** the main FPP proposal (capped at 40 pages), plus 5 to 6 appendix documents and optional letters of support.

At a minimum, the platform should support the submission of PDF, Word (.docx), PowerPoint and Excel (.xlsx) documents, including proposals, financial statements, GHG quantification reports, budgets, and supporting documentation. Submission requirements and document quantities vary by program and application stage. The maximum size currently imposed by the existing platform is 10 MB.

2.8 Which automated notifications are sent to applicants and recipients?

ERA needs approximately 5 email templates at the EOI stage, 5 at the FPP stage and 15 during the project lifecycle. Current email notifications are also sent from the platform at the milestone stage: “milestone submitted”, “decline”, “recommended”, and “for processing”.

2.9 Is French-language support required?

No. French-language support is not currently required for applicant-facing content.

2.10 How many external reviewers take part, and how are proposals scored?

Reviewers score proposals against defined evaluation criteria and scoring rubrics. Seven reviewers are assigned to score each Full Project Proposal (FPP). The number of external reviewers engaged each year varies with submission volumes and the number of funding programs. As an indication of scale, a recent major funding program received approximately 200 EOI submissions, supported by 35 reviewers, and the FPP stage received approximately 40 submissions, supported by 28 reviewers.

Reviewers are subject matter experts who support proposal evaluations; they are not Board members. Review panels can include both internal reviewers and third-party reviewers engaged under contract. Reviewers independently assess and score applications against defined evaluation criteria, and provide written comments and preliminary recommendations. External reviewers have restricted, reviewer-specific access to the information and functions needed for their reviews.

2.11 What review templates and approval stages apply, and what is the Board's role?

Two review and scoring templates (EOI and FPP) are typically used for each funding program; one is used when a funding program has no EOI stage. ERA has two primary approval stages:

1. Executive Team approval to advance projects from EOI to FPP.
2. Board approval of projects recommended for funding after the FPP review.

In both cases, an ERA staff member records the decision in the platform on behalf of the Executive Team or Board. Board members will not access the platform. The Board meets quarterly and receives a package summarizing the projects recommended for approval.

2.12 How are conflicts of interest declared and resolved?

Reviewers declare conflicts of interest (CoI) in formal declarations before evaluations begin, and must disclose any conflict identified during the review immediately. All conflicts of interests are declared to both the program lead and an independent fairness monitor. The independent fairness monitor assesses declared conflicts and recommends mitigation, such as continued participation, project-specific recusal or removal from the evaluation. Significant matters may be escalated to ERA's Executive Team and legal counsel. All conflicts and resolutions are documented in the Fairness Monitor's final report.

3. Claims

3.1 How are holdbacks structured, released and forecast?

The holdback percentage is set when the contribution agreement is executed and is typically 5%, 10%, 15% or 20%, depending on the project. The holdback is retained from each milestone payment throughout the project and released after project completion and the required close-out process. ERA Finance approves the release. For cash flow forecasting, holdbacks must be forecast separately from milestone payments (see 7.2).

3.2 What must be submitted with a milestone claim, and how many claim and report templates are used?

Standard milestone deliverables are uploaded through the portal and include an invoice and an expense report using ERA's template. Additional deliverables may vary by project. ERA uses 1 progress report template, 1 final report template and 2 change request forms.

Milestone workplans are unique to each project and are set up in the portal once the contribution agreement is executed.

3.3 How many claims and milestones are there per project?

Projects generally have 3 to 4 milestone claims a year. ERA currently processes approximately 250 milestone claims per year.

3.4 How are minor and major changes defined and who approves them?

- Minor changes are defined as:
    - Altering the timing of tasks and/or completion of milestones without extending the Project Completion Date by more than one hundred and eighty (180) days.
    - A change in the Total Project Eligible Costs of up to fifteen (15%) percent.
    - Moving tasks from one milestone to another without altering the overall objectives or outcomes of the Project or increasing risk for ERA.
    - Minor changes are approved by the Steering Committee (the Project Advisor approves on its behalf) and the ERA Portfolio team.
- Major changes are defined as:

- Altering the timing of tasks and/or completion of milestones by extending the Project Completion Date by more than one hundred eighty (180) days.
- Adding or deleting milestones in the Work Plan.
- A change in the Total Project Eligible Expenses of more than fifteen (15%) percent.
- Reallocating funds from one budget item to another.
- Major changes are approved by the internal ERA Project Review Group and CEO (ERA Portfolio approves in representation)

3.5 What validation and variance rules apply to claims?

A milestone claim is flagged when the claimed amount varies from the planned milestone funds by more than 15%, or when the completion date differs from the planned date. The Project Advisor and Portfolio team review every claim, whether or not it is flagged.

3.6 What approval levels and authority limits apply to claims and payments?

The platform should support two levels of approval before a claim is sent to Xero. In Xero, each invoice then follows its own approval path in ApprovalMax, generally involving about four approvers.

Financial controls such as holdbacks, matching contributions, funding limits and variance tolerances are standardized across ERA and FIFC.

3.7 Are claims audited or verified by a third party before payment?

Claims are audited by a third-party upon project completion before holdback is released.

3.8 What reports must recipients submit during and after a project?

During the project, recipients submit a progress report and a milestone expense report at each milestone. After completion, recipients must submit a post-project report. The standard post-project report template is available in the current Grant Manager.

3.9 Can recipients track their projects, submit documents and view payments themselves?

Yes. Recipients have this self-service access in the current portal.

4. Integration and Architecture

4.1 How should the platform integrate with Xero?

There is currently no integration between Grant Manager and Xero; milestone invoices are pulled from the system and entered into Xero manually. Under the new platform, data should flow in two directions:

- **Grant management system to Xero:**
  - Once a milestone claim is approved, the invoice (bill) and its supporting documents should flow into Xero for payment.
  - Vendor records for new recipients, including name and address, are created in the grant management system and should flow into Xero as contacts. ERA's finance team will then verify each vendor and add banking details.

- **Xero to grant management system:** once payment is made, the payment status and amount paid should flow back into the grant management system.

Automated integration is expected; near-real-time or at least daily synchronization is acceptable. ERA and FIFC each maintain a separate Xero organization, and the integration must post transactions to the correct one. Proponents should describe whether their Xero integration is available out of the box, needs configuration or needs custom development, and how it is maintained through product updates.

4.2 How must ERA and FIFC be separated?

Logical separation within a single tenant is acceptable. ERA and FIFC have separate funding and boards, so the solution must keep each entity's records, workflows, approvals and reporting separate, with consolidated views only where authorized. FIFC has FIFC-specific reporting obligations under the *Clean Fuel Regulations*, so separation of data is required.

Workflows and review processes are relatively the same for ERA and FIFC programs, but reporting requirements vary.

FIFC currently runs two programs, one invite-only and one public. The remaining programs are ERA programs. FIFC and ERA use the same SharePoint site.

FIFC has few employees of its own, and most services are provided by ERA staff under a shared services agreement. ERA and FIFC share one Microsoft Entra ID directory, and many staff work across both entities. Full separation of users is therefore not required. Access to FIFC programs, applications, projects and reporting should be controlled by role and permission, so that each user sees only the entity data their role allows. The specific roles, and any records that must never be visible across entities, will be confirmed during implementation.

4.3 How should staff sign-on and provision work with Entra ID?

ERA has no preference between SAML 2.0 and OpenID Connect. ERA expects platform roles to be assigned through Microsoft Entra ID security groups, so that access is managed through ERA's identity lifecycle. Automated provisioning and deprovisioning through SCIM is desirable. Proponents should describe how their solution creates, updates and deactivates user accounts in their responses.

4.4 How should external reviewers and applicants sign in?

ERA expects external reviewers to sign in using Microsoft Entra ID guest accounts managed by ERA, so that ERA’s MFA, conditional access applies. Proponents should describe whether their solution also supports platform native accounts for external reviewers. Applicants use platform-native accounts, with MFA supported.

4.5 Should documents live in the platform or in SharePoint, and is SharePoint integration required?

ERA is not prescribing the technical approach or the system of record. Criterion 1C asks for recipients and ERA to be able to work on and edit files in the platform. Criterion 1F asks for documents that are searchable, editable, version-controlled and retained according to ERA's retention schedule (see 5.4). The solution must support document and data exchange with Microsoft 365 and SharePoint. Proponents

should describe their approach and identify what is available out of the box, what requires configuration and what requires custom development. No SharePoint site structure is required.

4.6 How should the platform connect to Power BI and Microsoft Fabric?

ERA will use its own Power BI and Microsoft Fabric environments for reporting and analytics, and does not prescribe a specific method. The solution should integrate with these environments so that ERA staff can build their own reports and dashboards from platform data. This may be through scheduled extracts to Fabric (OneLake), a Power BI connector, APIs or another secure method. A daily refresh is sufficient. Proponents should describe the methods they support, the refresh frequencies available, the data and documents included, and any limits or additional costs. (see 6.11)

4.7 Which other systems must the platform connect to, and does ERA use middleware?

ERA is looking for a cloud-based solution and does not anticipate requiring a dedicated middleware layer for the platform. Where integrations are required, proponents should clearly specify the implementation approach, associated costs, and respective responsibilities of the vendor and ERA. Vendors should describe the platform's capabilities including API, built in connections, etc. in their response.

4.8 Can the platform be hosted in an ERA-owned cloud tenant?

The RFP contemplates a cloud-based platform provided under the Proponent's SaaS Agreement, including hosting and support by the Proponent. It does not require deployment within ERA-owned cloud accounts, and ERA has not stated a preference for one. A Proponent may propose an alternative hosting model if it meets the required outcomes and all Appendix C mandatory requirements. A Proponent proposing an alternative model must describe the division of responsibilities between ERA and the Proponent. All costs needed for the proposed solution, including infrastructure, cloud consumption and third-party services, must be disclosed in Schedule A and included in the Evaluated TCO, whether billed through the Proponent or directly by a third party.

4.9 What security assurance satisfies C-4?

C-4 can be met in either of two ways. Route 2 is added by Addendum No. 1, Part 1, Item 6.

Route 1: current assurance at the Closing Date

- Coverage: the hosted platform and every other service that stores or processes ERA Information must be covered by a current SOC 2 Type II report, ISO 27001 certification or an independent assurance report acceptable to ERA. ERA prefers a SOC 2 Type II report. Application-layer and infrastructure-provider assurance may be combined where, together, they cover the relevant services.
- Proponent's own platform: the Proponent's assurance must cover its own platform and supporting operations, under any hosting model. A hosting provider's SOC 2 Type II report or ISO 27001 certification may be relied on for the infrastructure layer only. Where the hosting provider is carved out of the Proponent's report, the hosting provider's current report must also be provided.

- Other independent assurance reports: an alternative report is acceptable where it is issued by a qualified assessor independent of the Proponent, covers the Proponent's platform and supporting operations, assesses whether controls operated effectively over a defined period, and is current.

- Not sufficient under Route 1: penetration tests, threat and risk assessments, policy reviews and point-in-time reports such as SOC 2 Type I. These may be described under Outcome 2A.

- Timing: the report may cover the platform as it currently operates in production; it need not cover ERA's configured environment. Short-listed Proponents must provide it within five (5) business days of ERA's request (Section 6.1(c)).

Route 2: staged assurance, for Proponents without current assurance at the Closing Date (for example, a custom-built platform)

At the Closing Date, the Proponent must confirm in its response to C-4 that it is using Route 2 and provide:

- a current assessment of its security program by a qualified independent assessor; and

- a compliance plan with timelines.

Before Go-live Acceptance, the successful Proponent must provide:

- a SOC 2 Type I report covering the production environment and operations used for ERA's platform; and

- the results of an independent penetration test of ERA's production environment, with all critical and high-risk findings remediated.

The successful Proponent must then provide a SOC 2 Type II report covering the same environment (Security, Availability and Confidentiality criteria) no later than twelve (12) months after Go-live Acceptance, and annually thereafter.

Under Route 2, a SOC 2 Type I report is accepted as an interim step only. If these requirements are not met within the required timeframes, ERA may terminate the Agreement without penalty. All assurance and testing costs must be included in Schedule A. Infrastructure providers must still be covered by current assurance, as in Route 1.

See Addendum No. 1, Part 1, Item 7.

4.10 What does the C-1 data residency requirement cover?

C-1 applies to ERA Information at rest. As defined in Article 2, this includes personal information, documents, AI-generated outputs, metadata and logs. All such information must be stored in Canada, including:

- production environments, replicas, backups and disaster-recovery copies;

- search indexes;
- logs held by monitoring or error-tracking providers;
- any message content, metadata or logs retained by outbound email relay services.

Storage outside Canada requires ERA's prior written approval. Telemetry that contains no ERA Information (for example, no personal information, user identifiers, IP addresses, file names or content) is not subject to C-1.

Transient processing outside Canada is not prohibited by C-1. However, every service that stores, processes, transmits or accesses ERA Information must be disclosed, with its location and purpose, under C-17. Processing by third-party AI model providers is addressed in 4.11.

Access to ERA Information from outside Canada, at any stage including implementation and data migration, is permitted only with ERA's prior approval and in accordance with C-24.

A deployment entirely within Canadian regions (for example, Microsoft Azure Canada Central and Canada East), where no ERA Information is stored, processed or accessed outside Canada, satisfies C-1 without additional written approval from ERA.

4.11 Where may third-party AI models process ERA Information (C-18)?

Third-party AI model providers may process ERA Information inside or outside Canada, provided ERA is notified. Proponents must disclose each third-party AI model provider that will process ERA Information and its processing locations, including any failover, load-balancing or capacity-based routing, in their response to C-18. During the term of the Agreement, the Proponent must give ERA advance written notice before adding an AI model provider or changing a processing location, including any change that would result in processing outside Canada.

Where processing may occur outside Canada, Proponents should describe the safeguards that apply, for example encryption, no retention and contractual protections. ERA may, as part of its privacy assessment, require that particular AI features or data be processed only in Canada.

In all cases:

- ERA Information must not be stored outside Canada (C-1).
- AI model providers must not use ERA Information to train, fine-tune or improve models (C-3).
- AI model providers must not retain prompts or outputs beyond what is needed to provide the service (C-18).
- New AI features must not be enabled without ERA's approval.

ERA does not maintain a pre-approved list of AI providers or regions.

See Addendum No. 1, Part 1, Item 1.

4.12 Where does ERA draw the line between AI screening and AI determining eligibility (C-10), and is an AI flag confirmed by a staff member acceptable?

An AI flag on completeness or potential eligibility issues is acceptable if it shows its sources and is reviewed and confirmed by authorized ERA personnel. AI may assist with completeness checks, flagging potential eligibility issues, summarizing proposals, mapping content to evaluation criteria and identifying unusual claims. It must not independently reject, screen out, advance or rank applications, approve or decline claims or payments, or communicate eligibility or funding outcomes to applicants.

This means:

- staff review the relevant application content and the reasons or sources for the flag, not only the flag itself;
- staff can accept, change or override the flag;
- the AI output and the actions or decisions taken on it are logged (C-16).

Confirming AI flags in bulk without reviewing the underlying application would not meet C-10.

4.13 Which AI capabilities are needed, and how should they relate to Microsoft Copilot?

Section 3.2 lists the AI support ERA is seeking, such as completeness screening and flagging potential eligibility issues, summarizing and comparing submissions, flagging unusual claims or reporting gaps, and drafting routine correspondence. Proponents should describe how these features work, including:

- the models and providers used;
- how outputs cite their sources;
- how ERA turns features on or off;
- how outputs are protected against manipulation;
- what is included in the base price (Schedule A, item (e)).

The platform's AI and Microsoft 365 Copilot are complementary. Proponents are not required to use Copilot or Microsoft technology. The platform must, however, let ERA use its own data with Copilot and other ERA-approved AI tools at no extra charge beyond Schedule A pricing (C-27). This can be done through APIs, connectors, scheduled extracts or other secure methods. Proponents should describe this under Outcome 1G.

All AI use is subject to Appendix C, including C-3 (no training on ERA Information), C-10 (human decision-making) and C-18 (as clarified in 4.11).

4.14 What RTO and RPO does ERA require (Criterion 2B)?

Proposals must be priced on the basis of an RTO and RPO of no more than 24 hours each, applying at all times, including during application intake deadlines and a regional disaster, with recovery in Canada. A shorter RTO or RPO may be offered as a separately priced option, which is not included in the Evaluated TCO. A Proponent that cannot meet the baseline should state its committed values; this will be assessed

under Outcome 2B and is not, on its own, grounds for disqualification. Proponents must describe how their RTO and RPO are achieved and how often recovery is tested (C-19).

See Addendum No. 1, Part 1, Item 8.

4.15 Is ERA committed to the no-code configuration requirement in C-25?

Yes. C-25 reflects ERA's requirement that its administrators can make routine changes themselves. It is not a mandatory Part A requirement. A Proponent that cannot meet it may propose an alternative, such as vendor-performed configuration included in the subscription price, by identifying it as an exception in Schedule D. ERA will assess exceptions and score accordingly.

C-25 identifies forms, fields, workflow steps, statuses, templates, notifications, approval routing, reporting views and similar business configuration as routine changes that authorized ERA administrators must be able to make without vendor development. On that basis, adding a workflow approval stage and setting up a new funding program are expected to be configurable by ERA. The RFP does not address changes to financial calculation rules; Proponents should state whether these are configurable or require custom development.

4.16 What controls does ERA need on data exports?

ERA has not set specific restrictions on exports by region or user. ERA expects to manage location-based access through its own Microsoft Entra ID conditional access policies. Within the platform, ERA is interested in controls such as:

- export permissions assigned separately from view permissions, by role
- exports limited to data the user is authorized to access, including ERA and FIFC separation
- restriction or masking of sensitive fields
- additional controls for bulk exports
- logging of all exports, including the user, data, date and record count

Proponents should describe how their solution controls and logs exports, and any other controls they recommend. These will be considered under Criteria 1A and 2A.

4.17 What export formats does ERA expect under C-8?

ERA has not prescribed specific export formats. Exports must include ERA's complete data, documents and relevant metadata in usable, commonly supported formats. For example, structured data in CSV or JSON with unique record identifiers that preserve relationships between records, and documents in their original file formats with an index linking each document to its record. Proponents should describe their standard export formats, how record relationships, documents, metadata and audit history are preserved, and any limitations. A full database extract is not expressly required, provided the export satisfies C-8.

4.18 Will ERA run its own security testing or PIA, and are there ERA-specific security controls?

ERA will complete a privacy impact assessment (PIA) using its own template, which will be shared with the successful Proponent. The PIA will be completed during implementation and before Go-live Acceptance. The successful Proponent must support it by providing data-flow documentation, details of

subprocessors and processing locations, and related privacy and security information (C-6, C-17). Proponents should allow for this in their implementation plan and in their estimate of ERA staff time (Appendix A, Implementation Expectations).

Security assessment and testing: ERA will rely primarily on the Proponent's independent assurance (C-4) and its recent penetration testing and vulnerability management (Outcome 2A). ERA may carry out its own security review before Go-live Acceptance. ERA may also, with reasonable notice and in coordination with the Proponent, conduct or commission testing of ERA's environment and configuration. Proponents should describe their policy on customer-initiated security testing and share recent independent penetration test results on request, subject to a reasonable non-disclosure agreement.

ERA-specific controls: ERA's security requirements are set out in Appendix C. There are no separate ERA-specific controls beyond those requirements. In particular:

- *Access restrictions* - For ERA users, these are applied through single sign-on with Microsoft Entra ID, under which ERA's MFA and conditional access policies apply (C-14). Platform-level IP restrictions are not required. Proponents may describe them if available.
- *Logging* - Audit logs must be complete, tamper-evident and searchable and exportable by ERA (C-16). Real-time forwarding of logs to ERA's security monitoring tools is not mandatory. Proponents should describe any log-streaming or SIEM integration they offer; it will be considered under Outcome 2A.

4.19 Must AI features stay off until after go-live (C-18)?

No. C-18 requires AI features to be disabled by default and enabled only by authorized ERA administrators, by program, workflow stage and user role. It does not set a date by which AI features may be turned on.

During implementation, ERA may enable AI features for configuration and testing, including user acceptance testing. ERA will decide which features to enable, where, and with what data. AI features will be enabled in production only with ERA's approval, taking into account ERA's privacy impact assessment (see 4.18).

ERA may choose to introduce AI features in phases, at go-live or afterwards. Proponents should describe how AI features can be enabled, tested and phased in their implementation approach (Outcome 3A). The Proponent must not enable any AI feature, including on ERA's behalf or for migrated historical data, without ERA's approval.

All AI processing remains subject to C-3, C-10 and C-18, including the requirements on disclosure and processing locations clarified in 4.11.

5. Implementation and Data Migration

5.1 What are ERA's and FIFC's fiscal year-ends and 2027 intake deadlines, for the go-live blackout windows?

ERA's fiscal year-end is May 31 and FIFC's fiscal year-end is December 31. The approximate 2027 major-program deadlines are:

- **EOIs:** January, June and December 2027
- **FPPs:** March, April and September 2027

Blackout planning should take both fiscal year-ends and the applicable major intake deadlines into account. Actual schedules may vary.

5.2 What is the current system, and how can its data be extracted?

ERA's current grant management system is Grant Manager, provided by PwC.

ERA's current vendor has confirmed that Grant Manager data can be provided as a database extract and as export files, with uploaded documents provided in their original file formats. Direct API access is not expected to be available. Schema documentation describing the data structure will be made available to the successful Proponent during implementation. It will not be provided before the Closing Date. Proponents should state their migration assumptions in their Proposal (Appendix B, 3B and 5B).

5.3 Current Records and files in current Grant Management Platform

These figures update the Appendix A estimate of 4,500 records and 30 GB. Grant Manager holds approximately 8,660 primary records (3,900 EOIs, 920 FPPs, 490 Project Plans and 3,350 milestones), with associated organizations, contacts, agreements, claims, payments and documents, a database of about 1 GB and documents of 47 to 50 GB. See Addendum No. 1, Part 1, Item 7.

5.4 Which programs and records are in scope for migration, and what can be archived?

All 29 funding programs are in scope. Grant Manager data, documents and records must be migrated accurately and completely, with relationships between records intact.

Proponents should recommend a migration approach that reflects ERA's retention requirements. Under these requirements, project records are kept for five years after project completion, then archived for a further two years and deleted. Records subject to litigation or an access-to-information request are kept longer. For example, active and recently completed projects could be migrated in full, while older closed records could be archived in a searchable, read-only format that ERA can access.

Archived records must remain in Canada (C-1). They must be exportable, and ERA must be able to delete them, or place them on hold, when its retention schedule requires. Proponents should state the cost of their approach in Schedule A.

5.5 How should data entered in Grant Manager during implementation be handled at cutover?

ERA does not expect real-time synchronization between Grant Manager and the new platform during implementation. A final transfer at cutover, covering all data entered or changed in Grant Manager since the initial migration, is expected to be sufficient. Proponents should describe their cutover approach in their implementation plan, including:

- how data changed during implementation will be captured and transferred;
- how long Grant Manager would need to be frozen, if at all;
- how the migrated data will be reconciled and verified before go-live.

ERA will work with the successful Proponent to schedule cutover outside application intake periods.

5.6 Which functions are "core" for a phased go-live, and can Grant Manager stay in use for later phases?

Under a phased plan, the core functions are application intake and review (see the definition of Go-live Acceptance in Article 2). ERA's target is go-live of these core functions within six months; this is a target - longer timelines are acceptable where needed and realistic (Outcome 3A, as amended by Addendum No. 1, Part 1, Item 10). Later phases may add post-award functions such as invoice submission, claims management and forecasting. Grant Manager will remain in operation until Go-live Acceptance (Appendix A, Implementation Expectations (d)) and may continue to be used for post-award functions on active projects until those functions go live. Proponents should describe their phasing, coexistence and cutover approach in their implementation plan.

5.7 How will Go-live Acceptance and user acceptance testing work?

Go-live Acceptance is ERA's written confirmation that the platform is in production use and meets the acceptance criteria agreed in the implementation plan, including successful user acceptance testing (UAT), reconciled data migration and working integrations (Article 2).

Proponents should propose acceptance criteria and a test plan in their implementation plan for ERA's agreement. UAT will be carried out by ERA staff (Appendix A, Implementation Expectations (a)), with the successful Proponent providing test scripts, environments and support.

If a Proponent proposes a phased plan, Go-live Acceptance applies to the core intake and review functions. Each later phase should also have its own UAT cycle and ERA acceptance before going live, including regression testing of functions already in production. Holdbacks apply to each phase (see Addendum No. 1, Item 2).

5.8 How much time can ERA's project lead and subject-matter experts commit?

As stated in Appendix A (Implementation Expectations), ERA staff availability is limited. For planning purposes, ERA expects to provide approximately:

- Project lead: up to 50% of a full-time role for the duration of implementation.
- Subject-matter experts from intake, portfolio and finance at about 4–6 hours per week each during requirements confirmation and configuration, increasing to about 1–2 days per week each during user acceptance testing.
- IT and security support: as needed for single sign-on, integrations and the privacy impact assessment.

Availability will be lower around major intake deadlines and ERA's fiscal year-end (see Appendix A, item (d)). These figures are estimates and do not limit ERA's obligations under the Agreement.

Proponents must state the ERA staff time their approach requires, by role and phase (Outcome 3A). An approach that achieves the outcomes with less demand on ERA staff, for example through vendor-led configuration, data migration and testing support, will be viewed favourably under Outcome 3A.

5.9 Who needs training, and what training approach does ERA prefer?

ERA estimates that 9 staff will need subject-matter-expert training: 2 in Finance, 2 in intake, 2 in Portfolio, 2 Project Advisors and 1 in IT. ERA suggests group virtual training for the remaining Project Advisors and for external reviewers. Approximately 4 ERA staff will configure funding programs in the platform.

ERA expects the Proponent to keep training materials current and provide updated training as the product changes. Proponents should state whether this is included in the subscription.

5.10 How do the 46 internal users break down by role?

There are approximately 7 administrators and 5 finance team members. Two are internal ERA reviewers: ERA staff who can view data but not edit it (they are not external reviewers). The remaining users are Project Advisors and other ERA staff.

5.11 Does ERA have a preferred project methodology?

ERA does not prescribe a project methodology. Proponents may use the approach that best suits their solution, whether agile, phased, waterfall or a hybrid. Whatever methodology is proposed must meet the minimum expectations in Appendix A (Implementation Expectations):

- the required deliverables;
- a named project manager, regular status reporting and change control;
- a clear statement of the ERA staff time required at each phase; and
- user acceptance testing by ERA staff before Go-live Acceptance.

5.12 What is driving the implementation timeline?

The six-month target reflects ERA's objective to modernize its grant management processes and realize the benefits of the new platform, including AI-assisted administration, as soon as is practical, while planning go-live around ERA's program intake and fiscal-year cycles (Appendix A, item (d)).

The target is not a fixed deadline. ERA's current system will remain in operation until Go-live Acceptance, and phased plans are acceptable. Go-live of core intake and review functions within six months is a target; longer timelines are acceptable where needed and realistic (Outcome 3A, as amended by Addendum No. 1, Part 1, Item 10). ERA places greater weight on a realistic, well-managed plan than on speed. Proponents should propose the timeline they can deliver with confidence, identifying key risks and dependencies, including the ERA staff time required (see 5.8).

5.13 Would a customer-led data migration approach meet ERA's requirements?

Data migration is part of the Proponent's Scope of Work (Appendix A, Section 1.1(c)). Appendix A requires a data migration plan, including data mapping and reconciliation, and a change-control process for any change to scope, schedule or cost. Proponents should describe how migrated data will be reconciled to the source and signed off by ERA, what ERA must provide, and the ERA staff time required at each phase. The RFP does not otherwise divide responsibilities among ERA, the current system provider and the Proponent.

5.14 What does ERA expect during the 60-day stabilization period?

After go-live, ERA expects a stabilization period of at least 60 days with enhanced support before the transition to standard support (Appendix A, item (e)). During this period, ERA expects:

- Priority support: faster response and resolution times than standard service levels, with defects and issues attributable to the implementation or the platform resolved at no additional charge.
- Continuity: members of the implementation team, including the project manager, remain available.
- Active oversight: regular check-ins with ERA, monitoring of integrations, the finance export and data accuracy, and timely reporting on open issues.
- Support through first cycles: hands-on support through the first live intake, claim and payment cycles and month-end processes on the new platform.
- Completion of knowledge transfer: final training, administrator handover and up-to-date documentation (Outcome 3C).

Transition to standard support should occur when agreed exit criteria are met, for example no open critical or high-priority defects, stable integrations and completed handover. If those criteria are not met by the end of the period, stabilization should continue until they are. The cost of stabilization should be included in the implementation pricing in Schedule A.

Proponents should describe their stabilization approach, including service levels and proposed exit criteria, under Outcome 3A. Proponents may propose a longer period.

5.15 Who provides first-line support to applicants?

ERA provides first-line support for applicant accounts. Applicants contact ERA through a shared support email address with questions about account access and user roles, document uploads, general technical issues and administrative matters. ERA staff resolve these where possible and escalate issues they cannot resolve to the vendor. The successful Proponent will provide second-line support to ERA staff under the support and escalation requirements in C-21 and Appendix B, 4C.

6. Contracting

This section covers both ERA's contribution agreements with recipients (6.1 to 6.2) and the Proponent's agreement with ERA (6.3 to 6.18).

6.1 Which e-signature tool does ERA use?

ERA currently uses Adobe e-signature and is open to a different tool. ERA is not prescribing whether e-signature is built into the platform or integrated. Proponents should describe their proposed approach.

6.2 How many document templates must the platform generate?

The RFP does not set a fixed number of templates. As an indication of current volume, ERA uses:

- Agreements: two Contribution Agreement (CA) templates and one Amending Agreement template (Outcome 1C)

- Contracting: an offer letter, a next-steps letter and a CA sign-off document
- Project lifecycle: templates for change requests, on-hold requests, milestone expense reports, milestone progress reports and project close-out, plus an on-hold letter and two notification letters

FIFC uses equivalent templates, configured separately (Outcome 1F). Proponents should describe how templates are generated from platform data and how ERA staff can create and update them without vendor support (Outcome 3C).

6.3 What deliverables or milestones does ERA prefer for vendor payments?

ERA does not prescribe a payment schedule. Proponents should propose implementation payment milestones in Schedule A, consistent with C-36, under which:

- implementation fees are tied to deliverables or milestones;
- at least 10% of implementation fees are held back until Go-live Acceptance or, under a phased plan, until acceptance of each phase (Addendum No. 1, Item 2); and
- recurring subscription fees begin no earlier than Go-live Acceptance, unless otherwise agreed in writing by ERA.

Under a phased plan, Proponents should state in Schedule A how subscription fees apply before all phases are live (for example, reduced fees until the final phase is accepted).

6.4 When do the contract term and subscription fees start, including under a phased plan?

Contract term: The implementation phase begins following execution of the Agreement (Section 8.1). The initial five-year subscription and support term runs from Go-live Acceptance, not from signing, with up to three one-year renewals at ERA's discretion (Section 1.1). Under C-36, subscription fees begin no earlier than Go-live Acceptance unless ERA agrees otherwise in writing. A Proponent that requires the term or fees to start earlier must identify this as an exception in Schedule D and show the fees in Schedule A. These fees are included in the Evaluated TCO (Criterion 5).

Phased plans: Go-live Acceptance occurs when the core intake and review functions are in production use, so the five-year term and subscription fees may start from acceptance of that first phase. Proponents may propose fees that increase as later phases go live. Each later phase requires its own acceptance against criteria agreed in the implementation plan. The holdback applies to each phase (Addendum No. 1, Item 2), and the C-36 remedies apply to any delay in the agreed implementation schedule attributable to the Proponent.

6.5 What insurance coverage is acceptable?

Required insurance is set out in Appendix A, Section 1.3:

- **Commercial General Liability:** at least $2,000,000 per occurrence, with insurers licensed in Alberta, naming Climate Change and Emissions Management (CCEMC) Corporation operating as Emissions Reduction Alberta, and Fuel Innovation Fund Corporation, as additional insureds.

- **Technology Errors and Omissions:** at least $2,000,000 per claim and $5,000,000 annual aggregate.
- **Cyber Liability:** at least $5,000,000 per claim and in the annual aggregate, including privacy breach response, network security and data restoration costs.
- **WCB:** registration where required in Alberta, with a clearance letter on request before the Agreement is signed.

Under C-35, the Technology E&O and Cyber requirements may be met by the Proponent, its hosting, platform or other material service provider, or both, if the Proponent shows that the combined coverage applies to the Services and adequately covers the risks. The Proponent remains responsible for the performance of the Services. A single policy covering both Technology E&O and Cyber is acceptable if it meets the required limits; any shared aggregate limit should be identified.

A Proponent may propose alternative limits or coverage structures in Schedule D, which ERA will assess having regard to the nature and allocation of risk. As C-35 is a Part B requirement, an exception will not, on its own, result in disqualification (Appendix C).

Proponents must confirm in their Proposal that they hold, or will obtain before the Agreement is signed, the required insurance, or identify any alternative (Section 6.1(a)(vii)). Short-listed Proponents must provide a certificate of insurance within five business days of ERA's request (Section 6.1(c)), and certificates are also required before the Agreement is signed and on each renewal.

6.6 Who are the parties to the agreement?

The agreement will be with ERA only.

6.7 Does the consent requirement for key subcontractors include hosting providers and sub processors?

No. The consent requirement in Section 3.2 applies only to key subcontractors or partners named in a Proposal that will deliver a material part of the Services. Examples include a platform provider, implementation firm or data migration partner. Proponents should identify which of their subcontractors or partners they consider key in their Proposal (Section 6.1(a)(iv) and Schedule C). Replacing a key subcontractor or partner after the Closing Date requires ERA's prior written consent.

Hosting providers, subprocessors and other third-party systems disclosed under C-17 are not subject to the Section 3.2 consent requirement unless they are also identified as key subcontractors or partners. Changes to them are governed by C-17 and C-22: they must be disclosed and require advance notice to ERA of material changes (see 6.15). Any replacement must continue to meet Appendix C, including the requirement that ERA Information be stored in Canada unless ERA gives prior written approval (C-1) and, for AI model providers, the requirements clarified in 4.11.

6.8 May the Proponent use service-operation data and de-identified aggregated data?

Service-operation data: Logs, metadata and usage data generated by the Services are ERA Information (Article 2). Under C-2, the Proponent may use them only as necessary to provide the Services, including to operate, maintain, secure, support and bill for them. The Proponent may also use aggregated

technical metrics, such as availability, response times, error rates and resource usage, to maintain and improve the performance and security of its platform, provided they contain no content, personal information or identifiers of ERA, its users or applicants. This data must not be sold or licensed to third parties, or used to train AI models (C-3).

De-identified or aggregated ERA Information: No. Under C-2 (Appendix C, Part A), ERA retains ownership and control of ERA Information, and the Proponent may use it only as necessary to provide the Services to ERA. It may not sell, monetize, reuse or use it for unrelated purposes, including in de-identified, anonymized or aggregated form. Collecting, using, commercializing or licensing de-identified, anonymized or aggregated ERA Information for product improvement, new services or other purposes is not permitted without ERA's prior written consent. As C-2 is a Part A requirement, exceptions cannot be proposed in Schedule D.

6.9 Which parts of the Proposal will be incorporated into the Agreement?

The Agreement will consist of the Proponent's SaaS Agreement, as negotiated, together with Appendix C (Sections 3.3 and 8.2). Appendix C prevails over the SaaS Agreement in the event of a conflict, except for any Part B exception ERA expressly agrees to in the executed Agreement. The requirements of Appendix A, including the Implementation Expectations and Sections 1.3 and 1.4, also apply.

Addendum No. 1, Item 5 sets out the parts of the successful Proposal that will be incorporated into the Agreement and their order of precedence. These include:

- the responses to Appendix C and any Schedule D exceptions agreed by ERA;
- the pricing in Schedule A;
- the implementation plan, including deliverables and payment milestones;
- named key personnel and key subcontractors or partners (see Section 3.2);
- clarifications accepted under Section 7.2; and
- statements in the Appendix B response that functionality is available in the current product and included in the base price.

Roadmap items are not contractual commitments unless expressly included in the executed Agreement.

Other vendor terms, including online terms, order forms and policies incorporated by hyperlink, apply only if expressly incorporated into the executed Agreement (Appendix A, Section 1.2), and cannot be unilaterally amended (C-34). Negotiations will not be used to materially change the Proposal, the Part A requirements or the pricing (Section 8.3).

6.10 How will ERA handle access-to-information requests for a Proponent's confidential information?

ERA is subject to the *Access to Information Act* (ATIA) (Section 10.2(c) and C-13). ERA will process any access request involving a Proponent's information in accordance with the ATIA, including its provisions protecting third-party business information. Before disclosing information that may be confidential to a Proponent, such as security reports, technical documentation or pricing, ERA will contact the Proponent

and give it an opportunity to make representations, in accordance with the ATIA. ERA cannot guarantee non-disclosure, as decisions are made under the ATIA and may be subject to review by the Information and Privacy Commissioner.

Proponents may, but are not required to, identify information they consider confidential in their Proposal (Section 10.2(c)). Security reports requested at verification may be provided under a reasonable non-disclosure agreement (Section 6.1(c)). As stated in Section 8.4, ERA may publicly disclose the name of the successful Proponent and the total value of the Agreement.

6.11 Should Microsoft and other third-party licenses be included in pricing?

ERA will procure its own Microsoft licenses, including Power BI and Microsoft Fabric, through its existing Microsoft agreement. These should not be included in the Evaluated TCO. However, Proponents must identify any Microsoft licenses or capacity their solution requires beyond standard Power BI Pro licenses (e.g., Fabric or Premium capacity) for the proposed integration or reporting features. ERA will consider these requirements in its evaluation.

ERA's existing Microsoft 365, Copilot and Power BI Pro licences should not be priced. Any other licences the solution itself requires to operate, such as Azure, Dynamics 365 or Power Platform, must be included in Schedule A; costs not identified are deemed included.

6.12 Should hosting be bundled into the subscription or priced separately?

Either approach is acceptable. ERA has no preference, and the choice will not affect scoring. Schedule A provides a separate row for hosting "if separately priced". If hosting is bundled into the subscription, Proponents should say so in that row (for example, "included in subscription").

6.13 Which fees does the renewal cap in C-32 apply to?

C-32 applies to all fees and rates in Schedule A, including subscription, hosting, support, AI and other usage-based charges, overage rates and professional services rates. Fees are fixed for the initial term except for escalation stated in Schedule A, and renewal increases are capped at the lesser of Alberta CPI (Statistics Canada, all-items, 12 months before renewal) or 3% per year. The cap applies to rates; charges arising from increased usage or additional services ERA chooses to add are not increases. AI features not identified as separately priced are included in the base subscription for the initial term and any renewal (Schedule A, item (e)). Any proposed exception to C-32 must be identified in Schedule D.

6.14 What transition assistance is required at expiry or termination?

At expiry or termination, ERA must be able to retrieve its complete data, documents and relevant metadata in usable, commonly supported formats. The Proponent must provide standard data exports at no additional charge within 30 days of ERA's request (C-8). The Proponent must not withhold or delete ERA Information (C-29), and must securely delete any remaining ERA Information, with written certification, only after ERA confirms the data has been returned (C-9).

Any further transition assistance, for example data mapping, extraction support or cooperation with a successor provider, must be available at the rates disclosed in Schedule A and agreed by ERA in advance (C-8). Proponents should describe their standard exit process and disclose those rates in the Pricing Assumptions and Exclusions section of Schedule A.

6.15 What minimum notice periods does ERA expect under C-22?

C-22 does not set a fixed period. ERA expects at least 30 days' advance written notice of material changes affecting hosting, subprocessors (including AI model providers, as clarified in 4.11), security architecture, material functionality or the approved use of AI involving ERA Information. Urgent changes needed to address a security threat may be made on shorter notice, with notice given as soon as practicable.

Notice does not replace other requirements. Storing ERA Information outside Canada still requires ERA's prior written approval (C-1), and material reductions in functionality, security or service levels are not permitted (C-34). Proponents should state their standard notice periods in their response to C-22, and any shorter period should be identified in Schedule D.

6.16 What minimum liability limit will ERA accept under C-30?

ERA is not prescribing a minimum liability limit. Under C-30, any general limitation of the Proponent's liability must not apply to, or must be subject to a separate higher limit for, breaches of privacy, security or confidentiality obligations and loss or corruption of ERA Information.

Proponents should submit their Proposal on the basis of C-30 and state the limit they propose for these matters in their Appendix C response, including any separate or aggregate limits and applicable exclusions. Any exception to C-30 should be identified in Schedule D. ERA will assess the proposed liability structure under Criterion 5C, taking into account the Proponent's insurance coverage, and final limits will be subject to negotiation.

6.17 What cure periods does ERA consider reasonable (C-29 and C-36)?

- Implementation delays (C-36): ERA has not specified a cure period. ERA may require a remediation plan and, where a delay attributable to the Proponent is not remedied within an agreed period, terminate the affected implementation services without penalty. As a guide, ERA would generally expect a remediation plan within 10 business days of notice and the delay to be remedied within 30 days, depending on its nature. The period will be agreed in the Agreement.
- Fee disputes (C-29): ERA has not defined a cure period. As a guide, ERA would generally consider at least 30 days after written notice, followed by escalation to senior representatives of both parties, to be reasonable. ERA must keep access to its data at all times, including during a dispute. Proponents may propose a period in their SaaS Agreement; any exception to C-29 must be identified in Schedule D.

6.18 How does ERA pay vendors, and what must invoices include?

ERA currently pays for its existing system monthly, but is open to the billing frequency proposed by the Proponent. ERA will pay all invoices according to the payment terms included in the Agreement. ERA's preferred payment method is EFT. Invoices should include:

- vendor legal name and address
- invoice number and invoice date
- bill-to: Emissions Reduction Alberta
- description of services provided and the service period
- subtotal, GST amount and GST registration number, and total amount due

- payment terms

Invoices should be submitted by email to finance@eralberta.ca

7. Reporting

7.1 Which reports and dashboards are produced today, and which are needed at go-live?

Current reporting: ERA produces quarterly Board reporting (including the Stewardship Report), an Annual Report and financial reporting. FIFC also prepares reports under the Clean Fuel Regulations. These reports are largely compiled outside Grant Manager, with milestone details drawn from it. ERA builds its dashboards in Power BI, internally or through a service provider.

At go-live: ERA expects the platform to provide the operational views staff need to run programs day to day, and ERA's data to be available to Power BI and Microsoft Fabric from go-live (C-27). Board, annual and regulatory reports will continue to be compiled by ERA, drawing on platform data.

- Single go-live: views covering the application pipeline and status, review progress, milestone and claim status, the payment schedule and the cash flow forecast.
- Phased plan: at Go-live Acceptance, views covering the application pipeline and status, and review progress. Milestone, claim, payment and cash flow forecast views are expected as the related post-award functions go live. While Grant Manager remains in use, ERA will combine data from both systems in Power BI, so platform data must be accessible from the first phase.

Proponents should describe the standard reports and dashboards available at each phase under Outcome 1E.

7.2 How should cash flow forecasting work, including overdue milestones and holdbacks?

ERA's cash flow forecast should be based on the milestone payments set out in each project's Contribution Agreement. Project Advisors should be able to update forecast payment dates and amounts for each milestone, while the original contracted figures are kept for comparison. The forecast should be available by month and fiscal year, for ERA and FIFC separately and combined.

- Overdue milestones: a milestone that passes its forecast date without payment should be flagged as overdue and roll forward into the current month until it is paid or its forecast is updated.
- Holdbacks: holdbacks should be forecast separately from milestone payments. ERA typically releases them about three months after project completion, but the timing should be configurable.

Proponents should describe their approach under Outcome 1E. This will be demonstrated in Stage III, Scenario 3.

7.3 Does FIFC have reporting obligations under the Clean Fuel Regulations?

Yes. FIFC has reporting obligations under the Clean Fuel Regulations, which is one reason ERA and FIFC data must be kept separate (see 4.2).

7.4 Is emissions-reduction outcome tracking in scope?

No. ERA does not track emission reduction in Grant Manager right now. Applicants and recipients submit GHG information, and these documents will continue to be submitted through the platform. The GHG assessment results are held in a separate ERA database, which ERA may connect to the platform in the future. Proponents are not required to build GHG tracking or integrate with this database for go-live. However, Proponents should describe whether their solution can store and report on GHG outcomes by project, and how it could integrate with an external ERA database through APIs or other standard methods.

7.5 How important are audit features, and is version control needed?

Audit features are very important to ERA. These records support both our financial close process and our external financial audits. Examples of situations where we would rely on audit features include:

- Project decisions: a reliable record of when each project was approved or rejected, and by whom. At month-end and year-end, we use the approval date to determine whether a project met the cutoff and whether its expenses should be accrued.
- Funding changes: a history of changes to funding amounts and when they occurred.
- User access: the ability to see who has access to the data, and when user profiles were added or removed, to support our IT audit.

Yes. Outcome 1F requires documents that are version-controlled.

8. Miscellaneous

8.1 Will ERA consider custom-built, configured or locally built solutions?

Yes. ERA has no stated preference between established commercial platforms, configurable SaaS solutions and custom-built platforms, and does not require Made-in-Alberta products or solutions. Proponents may submit original work and may work with partners. ERA will evaluate how well the proposed approach achieves the required outcomes, meets Appendix C requirements and offers best overall value.

Proposing an established platform that is configured and tailored for ERA during implementation is consistent with ERA's requirements. Proponents must identify which ERA-specific forms, workflows and integrations will be delivered through configuration, and which require custom development, third-party services or future roadmap delivery.

8.2 What references are acceptable?

References may relate to the Proponent or to its subcontractors or partners, provided at least one (1) relates to the proposed platform. References from clients whose production systems run on the same core platform proposed to ERA meet this requirement. For each reference, Proponents should briefly describe how the deployment relates to the solution proposed to ERA, including any significant custom development.

Where a custom-built solution is proposed, references may instead come from clients for whom the Proponent, or its subcontractors or partners, has designed, built and supported a comparable custom platform that has been in production within the last three (3) years.

At least one reference from a public-sector body, funding agency or not-for-profit that administers grant or contribution funding is preferred but not mandatory. Relevant experience is assessed under Criterion 4A. ERA may contact references during Stage III (Section 7.3).

See Addendum No. 1, Part 1, Item 4.

8.3 How will Stage III demonstrations work, and will ERA provide sample data?

Short-listed Proponents will demonstrate their current product live in their own demonstration environment, using their own sample data and following the Stage III scenarios in Appendix B. Pre-recorded material or slides should not be used, and ERA Information or real applicant data must not be used. To keep demonstrations comparable, ERA may provide basic scenario parameters, such as the number of program stages, milestones and the holdback percentage, when demonstrations are scheduled. Where a custom-built solution is proposed, Proponents should demonstrate their existing comparable platform or base framework.

Proponents should clearly distinguish functionality available today from functionality requiring configuration, custom development, third-party components or future roadmap delivery. Financial functions may be included, provided all required scenarios are covered.

The RFP Manager will confirm the date, format and time allocation at least five (5) business days in advance. The evaluation committee may ask for a simple configuration change live, and the same requests will be made of each short-listed Proponent. Demonstrations are not scored separately; information obtained will be used to adjust scores for Criteria 1 to 4 (Section 7.3).

8.4 Is an accessibility conformance report (VPAT) required with the proposal?

No. The accessibility conformance report is requested only from short-listed Proponents at verification. A report for the proposed platform's standard applicant-facing interfaces is acceptable; a report for different software is not. Proponents should describe in their response to C-11 how WCAG 2.1 AA conformance is maintained for configured forms and through product updates.

The WCAG 2.1 AA requirement in C-11 applies to applicant-facing interfaces only, not to interfaces used by ERA staff and reviewers.

8.5 Will ERA share its current forms, templates and workflows?

Sample EOI and FPP templates are attached to Addendum No. 1 (Attachments 1 and 2). Editable Word versions of Appendix C and Schedules A to D are provided as Attachment 3.