

## PennDOT NEVI Round 1B Technical Questions and Responses

Updated May 13, 2024

### Battery Storage Question:

**Question: Can projects propose an electric grid connection of less than 600 kW if they also include sufficient on-site battery storage to ensure a high probability of satisfying vehicle charging requests up to 150 kW?**

Response: Yes. Projects intending to utilize on-site battery storage and a grid connection of less than 600 kW should include a high demand charging forecast through 2030 for the given site location as part of their proposal submission. The forecasted probability of meeting vehicle power requests up to 150 kW should be well greater than 97% to comply with the high probability expectation and uptime requirements. During the operation of such a station all time that the station does not meet a vehicle's power request up to 150 kW must be counted as downtime.

### North American Charging Standard (NACS) Questions:

**Question: Are permanently attached NACS connectors and/or adapters considered an eligible program expense?**

Response: Section II Paragraph C. Eligible and Ineligible Costs of the NEVI Round 1B Funding Opportunity includes the following within eligible costs, "Costs for additional permanently attached non-proprietary charging connectors, excluding the CHAdeMO connector, so long as each Charging Port has a CCS connector" and the following within ineligible costs, "Costs for any CHAdeMO connectors, proprietary connectors, and any charging plug type adapters."

Therefore, after NACS is officially a standardized connector type, a NACS connector will be an eligible cost, but all adapters are ineligible costs. Note that a separate cable is not necessarily required for an attached plug type to be considered a connector. Charging plug hardware integrated into the design of the charger may be considered a connector even if it shares a cable with another connector. For a determination on specific equipment please submit the equipment specifications to [ra-pdevcorridors@pa.gov](mailto:ra-pdevcorridors@pa.gov).

**Question: May a NACS connector and/or adapter be attached to the chargers?**

Response: Yes, proprietary and non-proprietary connectors and/or adapters may be attached to the chargers, so long as each charger includes a CCS connector.

### Eligible Cost Questions:

**Question: Is charging equipment exceeding the four port NEVI requirements an eligible expense?**

Response: Section II Paragraph C. Eligible and Ineligible Costs of the NEVI Round 1B Funding Opportunity includes the following within ineligible costs:

“Project equipment costs associated solely with installing DC fast charging plugs beyond the four required CCS plugs.

- a. Ineligible costs include power cabinets and charging units that do not also support one or more of the four required plugs. For example, a power cabinet that solely supports charging unit numbers 5 and 6 would not be an eligible cost.
- b. Site-level costs and equipment that support the entire Project may be eligible costs, so long as they are otherwise considered eligible costs. For example, a transformer that supports more than four charging units at the Candidate Site would be an eligible cost, without any need for proration.
- c. Costs such as trenching, asphalt work, etc., for the entire Project are eligible costs as they are not equipment costs.”

**Question: Are customer safety enhancements or features associated with or located near the Charging Station (e.g., lighting, security cameras, emergency call system, fire extinguisher, Automated External Defibrillator (AED)) allowable expenses?**

Response: An expense must be directly related to the charging station to be an eligible expense. Therefore, any amenities that generally support the project site, including customers/visitors not using the charging, would not be eligible expenses. Amenities designed to serve customers of the charging station solely or predominantly may be eligible expenses. For example, lighting or a canopy directly over the charging station can be an eligible expense, while lighting over other locations would not be an eligible expense. If you would like guidance for a specific example, please email [ra-pdevcorridors@pa.gov](mailto:ra-pdevcorridors@pa.gov).

**Question: Are costs associated with EV workforce development and/or community outreach strategies or solutions that enhance a proposer’s approach to equity, diversity, and inclusion eligible expenses?**

Response: Costs must be directly related to the proposed charging station to be considered eligible expenses for reimbursement. Therefore, general EV workforce development and/or community outreach activities are not eligible expenses, but such costs associated specifically with the proposed project may be considered eligible expenses. Please submit more specific activity and cost details to [ra-pdevcorridors@pa.gov](mailto:ra-pdevcorridors@pa.gov) for an eligibility determination.

**Question: Are level 2 charging ports considered an eligible expense?**

Response: No, NEVI guidance from the Federal Highway Administration states that NEVI funds cannot be used for level 2 charging ports until after a state receives Alternative Fuel Corridor “build-out” certification.

#### Minimum Requirements Questions:

**NEW Question: Can PennDOT please describe the process to request a waiver from the local hiring preference requirement, and how determinations on these requests will be made?**

Response: Section IV Paragraph H of the NEVI Round 1B Funding Opportunity states that, “Any time after issuance of Conditional Award, a Prospective Contractor may request a waiver from this

requirement if they can demonstrate to PennDOT that they are unable to satisfy the requirement.” PennDOT may consider factors such as the availability and presence of qualified construction contractors that perform work relevant for NEVI projects, as well as the Prospective Contractor’s efforts in identifying, contacting, and encouraging interest from these qualified contractors. All waiver requests must be submitted in writing to [ra-pdevcorridors@pa.gov](mailto:ra-pdevcorridors@pa.gov) and will be approved or denied on a case-by-case basis.

**Question: Are charging ports required to provide a minimum amperage output?**

Response: Neither 23 CFR 680, nor PennDOT’s NEVI Round 1B Funding Opportunity, include a minimum amperage output requirement.

Note that PennDOT requires each charging station to be capable of charging two vehicles at 300 kW speeds each, when only two vehicles are charging. The Federal Highway Administration’s NEVI guidance includes the following:

Question: What is the minimum electric current strength (amperage) required for NEVI-funded DCFCs?

Answer: Minimum current levels are not directly addressed in the regulatory text of 23 CFR 680; however, current levels should be based on the voltage range and power levels that are specified in the regulation at [23 CFR 680.106\(d\)](#). The preamble to the final rule (88 FR 12724 at 12737 (Feb. 28, 2023)) states that “FHWA suggests that DCFC connectors be rated with a current carrying capacity of greater than or equal to 375 Amps” which is sufficient amperage to provide 150 kW of power to a vehicle rated for 400 volts.

**Question: Are projects required to provide light-duty vehicle charging infrastructure, or will medium- and/or heavy-duty vehicle charging infrastructure projects also be considered?**

Response: Round 1B projects are required to provide 24/7 public access and include a CCS connector on every charging port. Light-duty vehicles may not be restricted from utilizing the charging station.

**Question: The final site design checklist includes the following question, “Are the operable parts operable with one hand and not require tight grasping, pinching, or twisting of the wrist, and require no more than five (5) pounds of force to activate operable parts?” Can PennDOT please clarify if this is a mandatory requirement for NEVI funded EV charging stations?**

Response: Yes, the accessible operations standards, including one-handed operation, limited grasping, pinching, and twisting motions, and limited activation force, are mandatory requirements for NEVI funding EV charging stations per the US Access Board [Design Recommendations for Accessible Electric Vehicle Charging Stations \(access-board.gov\)](#).

**Question: The final site design checklist includes the following question: “Does the Charging Station meet fare machine requirements including, but not limited to, clear floor or ground space, operable parts, privacy, speech output, input, display screen, and two-way communication systems? Color coding or audible signals/cues shall not be used as the only means of conveying information, indicating an action, or prompting a response.” Can PennDOT please clarify if this is a mandatory requirement for NEVI funded EV charging stations?**

Response: Yes, the accessible operations standards, including clear floor or ground space, operable parts, privacy, speech output, input, display screen, and two-way communication systems, are mandatory requirements for NEVI funding EV charging stations per the US Access Board [Design Recommendations for Accessible Electric Vehicle Charging Stations \(access-board.gov\)](https://www.access-board.gov/design-recommendations/).

**Question: Is PennDOT aware that there is an impending federal rulemaking on accessibility requirements for EV charging stations that may impact the final site design checklist, and if so, how will PennDOT account for that as part of the solicitation process?**

Response: Federal rulemakings take effect after they are published in final form. Based on the language in the rulemaking, and the status of a given NEVI project, an upcoming rulemaking may or may not apply to a project already in progress. If PennDOT is required to enforce a new requirement on a NEVI project after the Proposal submission date PennDOT will work with the Contractor and provide reasonable support and accommodations, at PennDOT's discretion. If you have questions regarding regulatory compliance issues, please email [ra-pdevcorridors@pa.gov](mailto:ra-pdevcorridors@pa.gov).

**Question: With the updated requirement for sites to have 2 ADA parking spaces for EV charging, do the 2 ADA parking spaces need to be adjacent to each other?**

Response: No. The 2 ADA parking spaces do not need to be adjacent to each other.

**Question: Are Contractors required to purchase insurance for installed charging equipment?**

Response: Paragraph 8(c) of the agreement states that, "The Contractor shall procure and maintain insurance on all Project property (including EVSE) against fire, destruction, or other similar risks, in sufficient amounts to adequately protect the current value of PennDOT's investment in the Project property..." Alternatives to obtaining insurance may be proposed by providing substantially detailed information to ensure PennDOT's investment would be adequately protected. These alternatives are evaluated on a case-by-case basis. For a determination on proposed insurance alternative please submit the request to [ra-pdevcorridors@pa.gov](mailto:ra-pdevcorridors@pa.gov).

#### Proposal Submission Questions:

**Question: For Proposal question 1.1A, does PennDOT evaluate and score proposer teams who identify all project team members higher than teams whose organizational policies only allow selection of subcontractors such as installers post award?**

Response: PennDOT's scoring team will score submitted Proposals in accordance with the provided scoring rubric, at their discretion. The proposer's team is an important part of the overall Proposal and PennDOT relies on the experience and qualifications of the team members to determine whether the proposer is qualified to receive a financial award. When a proposer does not yet know all team members at the time of Proposal submission PennDOT recommends providing information on how such team members will be selected and any minimum requirements or expectations the Contractor will impose when selecting the team member.

**Question: For Proposal question 1.1B, should proposers include resumes?**

Response: Resumes are not required. Responses to Proposal question 1.1B should focus on the experience of the proposer's team members, as organizations. The experience and qualifications of the team members' employees could be a component of the response.

**Question: When describing relevant team experience in question 1.1B, can PennDOT confirm that the Prospective Contractor's team includes key members of the installers, O&M providers, and/or EVSE manufacturer staff?**

Response: All organizations listed in the response to question 1.1A are considered part of the proposed project team, and any relevant experience from these organizations may be described in 1.1B.

**Question: When completing Proposal question 1.1C, can projects completed by other members of the proposer's team members, such as installer or electrical contractor, be included in the table to demonstrate experience?**

Response: Yes, EVSE projects completed by team members may be included in the table for question 1.1C.

**Question: When completing Proposal question 1.2B, should the schedule be a narrative essay with a 3000-character limit, or can it be shown as a Gantt chart?**

Response: The project schedule may be provided in any format, including a table, chart, or text.

**Question: Is a non-binding letter signed by the Site Host expressing a commitment to host the EVSE at the location identified in the Candidate Site schematic for a minimum of five (5) years from when the EVSE acceptable documentation for PennDOT at the time of Proposal?**

Response: Yes, a non-binding letter of commitment signed by the Site Host is acceptable documentation for the Proposal question 2.2.

**Question: Can PennDOT share if and how additional points are calculated for proposers who include a binding Site Host agreement for question 2.2?**

Response: PennDOT will consider the relative level of commitment expressed by the Site Host when scoring question 2.2. A signed Site Host agreement would be considered a high level of commitment.

**Question: Is there a template for the Site Host letter of commitment identified in question 2.2, or any specific required components of the letter?**

Response: No, PennDOT is not providing a template Site Host letter of commitment nor establishing any specific required components for the letter.

**NEW Question: How much notice should the electric utility be provided to complete the utility form to score the maximum points for Proposal question 3.1?**

Response: The scoring rubric states that if the electric utility is provided with less than 15 calendar days' notice to complete the utility form and the Prospective Contractor receives no response before the submission deadline then a score of 0 will be given for this scoring item. If the Prospective Contractor provides the electric utility with at least 15 calendar days' notice and does not receive a response by the submission deadline then the Prospective Contractor will receive the maximum 5 points, if they provide documentation that the utility was given sufficient notice.

**Question: Can a parking stall serve multiple uses? For example, if a single parking is ADA accessible and accommodates pull-through, can it count as an ADA parking space, a pull-through parking space for Proposal question 3.4, and a medium-duty vehicle parking space for question 3.5?**

Response: Yes, a single parking space can count towards the minimum 2 ADA parking spaces and count as pull-through for question 3.4. Proposal question 3.5 focuses specifically on future plans for new/additional medium and/or heavy-duty vehicle charging.

**Question: If a site design includes future plans for medium-duty vehicle charging, but not heavy-duty vehicle charging, could the site still receive full points for Proposal question 3.5?**

Response: PennDOT's internal scoring team will score all projects in accordance with the provided scoring rubric in Appendix IV of the NEVI Round 1B Funding Opportunity. The scoring rubric does not explicitly require plans for both medium and heavy-duty vehicle charging to receive maximum points.

**Question: If the site offers the ability to purchase cash cards such as prepaid debit cards and gift cards and then use items to pay at the station, can these be considered cash payment for charging relevant when answering question 4.3?**

Response: When responding to question 4.3 proposers should describe any ability for a customer to pay for a charging session with cash by using amenities or services available within a reasonable distance of the charging station (about 500 feet).

**NEW Question: The Round 1B Funding Opportunity states that, "To incentivize EV charging workforce development activities, up to \$40,000 of the federal share of these costs will not be counted as part of the funding request for the purposes of scoring." Can you describe how this will be implemented and if the Prospective Contractor's response to question 6.1 should include or exclude the EV charging workforce development costs?**

Answer: Prospective Contractors should provide the total eligible costs and total requested federal funds in question 6.1, including EV charging workforce development costs. If the Prospective Contractor identifies in their budget breakdown uploaded to question 6.2 that their costs include EV charging workforce development costs, then PennDOT will exclude up to \$40,000 of the federal share of these costs from the federal funding request for the purposes of scoring question 6.1. PennDOT will perform the workforce development adjustment for scoring purposes only. See the scoring rubric for more information on how PennDOT will score questions 6.1 and 6.2.

**Question: What are the page limits and expectations of the cost breakdown and narrative (Section 6.2 of the Proposal)? Does PennDOT require proposers to provide quote(s) for installation of stations with the file upload?**

Response: File attachments do not have a page limit. PennDOT's expectation is that the cost breakdown and narrative is sufficient for PennDOT to understand where costs will be incurred on the project and confirm that costs appear to be eligible. Please see question 6.2 in Appendix III – Proposal Questionnaire of the NEVI Round 1B Funding Opportunity for more information.

**Question: How should essay responses that exceed 3,000 characters be submitted?**

Response: When an essay response exceeds 3,000 characters proposers may submit the response within a file attachment uploaded to question 7.1. The response in the eGrants essay field should state that some or all of the response is attached to question 7.1, and the information within the uploaded file should reference the corresponding question number in eGrants. There is no limit on file size, nor the number of files uploaded to question 7.1.

**Question: Are any bid bonds required as part of the Proposal process?**

Response: No, bid bonds are not required.

**Question: When completing required Proposal attachments and forms, are scanned signatures allowed or do they have to be electronic signatures? Many electronic signature software programs produce a final page verifying electronic signature. If electronic signatures are required, is this page an allowable additional page?**

Response: Scanned signatures are allowed on Proposal attachments and forms. An additional page for electronic signatures is also allowed.

**Question: If a proposer has multiple sites across the state operating under multiple, separate LLCs, all with common ownership, does the proposer submit per LLC or submit a single Proposal under the parent organization?**

Response: A separate Proposal must be submitted for each proposed location. The legal entity that will own or lease the charging equipment and be responsible for the implementation and operations of the charging station must submit the Proposal.

**Question: Can a Prospective Contractor submit multiple Proposals for multiple sites within the same corridor-group, or even within the same interchange segment?**

Response: Yes. Prospective Contractors are only restricted from submitting multiple Proposals for the same site address.

**Question: Does PennDOT consider materials submitted in the Proposal as legally binding or a legal commitment before execution of the funding agreement?**

Response: No, PennDOT does not consider materials submitted in the Proposal to be legally binding or a legal commitment. Should PennDOT select the project for a conditional award, and the parties subsequently execute a legal agreement, then the Proposal will be attached as an exhibit to the agreement. The proposer will be held to commitments they made in the Proposal when implementing the project, unless deviations are accepted by PennDOT.

**Question: Will PennDOT consider redlines or negotiate amendments to the draft agreement? If so, should proposers include redlines in their Proposal, or is this process expected to occur post-award?**

Response: PennDOT will work to finalize the agreement language by the time Contractors and PennDOT are ready to sign Round 1B agreements. This language will then be used identically for all Round 1B projects. Proposers that wish to submit comments or redline edits to the agreement should do so at

their earliest convenience, so PennDOT has time to consider them before finalizing the agreement language.

**Question: Can a proposer with a quote for installation upload this as an additional attachment to the application to further demonstrate their project viability and readiness?**

Response: Yes, cost quotes may be uploaded as additional documentation for questions 6.2 or 7.1.

**Question: If a proposer can certify at the time of submission that match funds can be provided, can a different entity provide the proposed match after the effective date of the Agreement if they are able to demonstrate the financial capabilities to do so?**

Response: Proposers must attest, via a pre-Proposal question, that eligible match funding will be provided should they be selected for funding. The match funding may come from other sources or entities, so long as the source is not ineligible to match NEVI funds.

**Question: Are there any page limits, size limits, or formatting requirements for Proposal attachments?**

Response: No, there are no limits on the number of attachments, size of attachments, pages of attachments, nor is PennDOT requiring specific formatting for attachments.

**Question: May Prospective Contractors request a one-on-one meeting with PennDOT staff to discuss the NEVI Round 1B Funding Opportunity and project requirements in detail?**

Response: Yes, Prospective Contractors may request one-on-one meetings with PennDOT staff. Note that PennDOT may not provide any technical guidance or clarifications beyond that which is already available.

#### NEVI Round 1B Priority Locations Map Questions:

**Question: Is the current priority map just for Round 1B or will it also apply to subsequent funding rounds?**

Response: The current priority locations map only applies to PennDOT's NEVI Round 1B.

**Question: Will the requirement to be within 1 mile of an exit remain in future rounds?**

Response: PennDOT is not allowed to use NEVI funds for projects greater than 1-mile roadway travel distance from an Alternative Fuel Corridor exit until after receiving "build-out" certification from the Federal Highway Administration. After receiving this certification, PennDOT will look to fund projects in a greater variety of locations.

**Question: Should proposers use the DAC mapping provided by PennDOT on the Round 1B Priority Locations map and not the Federal Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CJEST) (<https://screeningtool.geoplatform.gov/en/#3/33.47/-97.5>) to confirm DAC status?**



Response: Correct. The Disadvantaged Community layer on the Round 1B Priority Locations map displays the DAC score for all eligible project locations. The CJEST tool was utilized in the development of these DAC scores.

#### Agreement Questions:

**Question: Paragraph 9(a) of the Agreement states that the Contractor must own or lease the EVSE equipment following installation and Notice of Acceptance. Who owns the equipment prior to commissioning?**

Response: PennDOT's funding commitment begins at the Notice of Acceptance and so prior ownership is neither addressed nor considered. The Contractor must own or lease the EVSE equipment by the time of Notice of Acceptance.

**Question: Paragraph 10(c) of the Agreement states that, "PennDOT shall approve proposed additions, deletions, or changes to the Contractor's Project team, in writing." Please clarify the process and the proposed timeline for requesting changes to the project team.**

Response: A Contractor may request a team member change via correspondence to [ra-pdevcorridors@pa.gov](mailto:ra-pdevcorridors@pa.gov) any time after the date of Conditional Award. PennDOT will review team member change requests to confirm that the new team member is similarly qualified and experienced as the original team member, and to confirm the team member change aligns with any commitments made in the Proposal. Subcontractors must be an approved member of the project team prior to incurring any eligible costs on the Project.