



Request for Proposals Development of Policies and Procedures Manual

INTRODUCTION

Through this Request for Proposals (“RFP”), Rhode Island Housing seeks proposals from pre-qualified consulting firms to develop a policies and procedures manual for the Rhode Island Housing Rental Assistance (“RIHRA”) Program.

INSTRUCTIONS

One (1) original and three (3) copies of your proposal must be submitted to Rhode Island Housing, 44 Washington Street, Providence, Rhode Island 02903-1721, Attn: Jessica Mowry, Assistant Director, Leased Housing and Rental Services. Please also direct a courtesy copy by email to: jmowry@rihousing.com. Proposals should be concise and include all attachments and work samples. Proposals must be presented on business letterhead.

Proposals must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. EST on Friday, September 29, 2017.

Respondents are advised that all submissions (including those not selected for engagement) may be made available to the public on request upon completion of the process and award of a contract(s).

SCOPE OF WORK

Please see the Scope of Work provided at Attachment A.

ITEMS TO BE INCLUDED WITH YOUR PROPOSAL

A. General Firm Information

1. Provide a brief description of your firm, including but not limited to the following:
 - a. Name of the principal(s) of the firm.
 - b. Name, telephone number and email address of a representative of the firm authorized to discuss your proposal.
 - c. Address of all offices of the firm.
 - d. Number of employees of the firm.

B. Experience and Resources

1. Describe your firm and its capabilities. In particular, support your capacity to perform the Scope of Work at Attachment A.
2. Indicate which principals and associates from your firm would be involved in providing services to Rhode Island Housing. Provide appropriate background information for each such person and identify his or her responsibilities.
3. Identify any conflict of interest that may arise as a result of business activities or ventures by your firm and associates of your firm, employees, or subcontractors as a result of any individual's status as a member of the board of directors of any organization likely to interact with Rhode Island Housing.
4. Identify any material litigation, administrative proceedings or investigations in which your firm is currently involved. Identify any material litigation, administrative proceedings or investigations, to which your firm or any of its principals, partners, associates, subcontractors or support staff was a party, that has been settled within the past two (2) years.
5. Describe how your firm will handle actual and or potential conflicts of interest.

C. Fee Structure

The cost of services is one of the factors that will be considered in awarding this contract. The information requested in this section is required to support the reasonableness of your fees.

1. Please provide a cost proposal for providing the Scope of Work at Attachment A.
2. Provide an itemized breakdown of billing rates and hourly costs, list of key personnel and their hourly rates, reimbursable expenses, etc. for any services that may be requested in addition to the services previously described.
3. Please provide any other fee information applicable to the engagement that has not been previously covered that you wish to bring to the attention of Rhode Island Housing.

D. Miscellaneous

Discuss any topics not covered in this Request for Proposals that you would like to bring to Rhode Island Housing's attention.

E. Certifications

1. Rhode Island Housing insists upon full compliance with Chapter 27 of Title 17 of the Rhode Island General Laws, Reporting of Political Contributions by State Vendors. This law requires State Vendors entering into contracts to provide services to an agency such as Rhode Island Housing, for the aggregate sum of \$5,000 or more, to file an affidavit with the State Board of Elections concerning reportable political contributions. The affidavit must state whether the State Vendor (and any related parties as defined in the law) has, within 24 months preceding the date of the contract, contributed an aggregate amount in excess of \$250 within a calendar year to any general officer, any candidate for general office, or any political party.
2. Does any Rhode Island “Major State Decision-maker,” as defined below, or the spouse or dependent child of such person, hold (i) a ten percent or greater equity interest, or (ii) a Five Thousand Dollar or greater cash interest in this business?

For purposes of this question, “Major State Decision-maker” means:

(i) All general officers; and all executive or administrative head or heads of any state executive agency enumerated in § 42-6-1 as well as the executive or administrative head or heads of state quasi-public corporations, whether appointed or serving as an employee. The phrase “executive or administrative head or heads” shall include anyone serving in the positions of director, executive director, deputy director, assistant director, executive counsel or chief of staff;

(ii) All members of the general assembly and the executive or administrative head or heads of a state legislative agency, whether appointed or serving as an employee. The phrase “executive or administrative head or heads” shall include anyone serving in the positions of director, executive director, deputy director, assistant director, executive counsel or chief of staff;

(iii) All members of the state judiciary and all state magistrates and the executive or administrative head or heads of a state judicial agency, whether appointed or serving as an employee. The phrase “executive or administrative head or heads” shall include anyone serving in the positions of director, executive director, deputy director, assistant director, executive counsel, chief of staff or state court administrator.

If your answer is “Yes,” please identify the Major State Decision-maker, specify the nature of their ownership interest, and provide a copy of the annual financial disclosure required to be filed with the Rhode Island Ethics Commission pursuant to R.I.G.L. §§36-14-16, 17 and 18.

3. In the course of providing goods or services to Rhode Island Housing, the selected respondent may receive certain personal information specific to Rhode Island Housing customer(s) including, without limitation, customer names and addresses, telephone numbers, email addresses, dates of birth, loan numbers, account numbers, social security numbers, driver's license or identification card numbers, employment and income information, photographic likenesses, tax returns, or other personal or financial information (hereinafter collectively referred to as the "Personal Information"). The maintenance of the Personal Information in strict confidence and the confinement of its use to Rhode Island Housing are of vital importance to Rhode Island Housing. Please include a letter from your president, chairman or CEO certifying that, in the event your firm is selected:
 - (i) any Personal Information disclosed to your firm by Rhode Island Housing or which your firm acquires as a result of its services hereunder will be regarded by your firm as confidential, and shall not be copied or disclosed to any third party, unless Rhode Island Housing has given its prior written consent thereto; and
 - (ii) your firm agrees to take all reasonable measures to (a) ensure the security and confidentiality of the Personal Information, (b) protect against any anticipated threats or hazards to the security or integrity of the Personal Information, and (c) maintain reasonable security procedures and practices appropriate to your firm's size, the nature of the Personal Information, and the purpose for which the Personal Information was collected in order to protect the Personal Information from unauthorized access, use, modification, destruction or disclosure; and
 - (iii) when discarding the Personal Information, destroying it in a commercially reasonable manner such that no third party can view or recreate the information, electronically or otherwise.

These provisions, which implement the requirements of the Rhode Island Identity Theft Protection Act, R.I.G.L. § 11-49.2 et seq., will also be incorporated into the final contract with the selected respondent(s).

4. Please include a letter from your president, chairman or CEO certifying that (i) no member of your firm has made inquiries or contacts with respect to this Request for Proposals other than in an email or written communication to Jessica Mowry, jmowry@rihousing.com, seeking clarification on the Scope of Work set forth in this proposal, from the date of this RFP through the date of your proposal, (ii) no member of your firm will make any such inquiry or contact until after September 29, 2017, (iii) all information in your proposal is true and correct to the best of her/his knowledge, (iv) no member of your firm gave anything of monetary value or promise of future employment to a Rhode Island Housing employee or

Commissioner, or a relative of the same, based on any understanding that such person's action or judgment will be influenced and (v) your firm is in full compliance with Chapter 27 of Title 17 of the Rhode Island General Laws, Reporting of Political Contributions by State Vendors.

EVALUATION AND SELECTION

A selection committee consisting of Rhode Island Housing employees (the "Committee") will review all proposals and make a determination based on the following factors:

- Professional capacity to undertake the Scope of Work
- Proposed fee structure
- Ability to perform within time and budget constraints
- Previous work experience and performance with Rhode Island Housing and/or similar organizations
- Other pertinent information submitted.

Rhode Island Housing may invite one or more finalists to make presentations.

In its sole discretion, Rhode Island Housing may negotiate with one or more firms who have submitted qualifications to submit more detailed proposals on specific projects as they arise.

By this Request for Proposals, Rhode Island Housing has not committed itself to undertake the work set forth. Rhode Island Housing reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, to rebid the original or amended scope of services and to enter into negotiations with one or more respondents. Rhode Island Housing reserves the right to make those decisions after receipt of responses. Rhode Island Housing's decision on these matters is final.

For additional information contact: Jessica Mowry, jmowry@rihousing.com.

Attachment A

Scope of Work

Rhode Island Housing seeks to engage a professional consulting firm to develop and prepare a policies and procedures manual for the Rhode Island Housing Rental Assistance (“RIHRA”) Program. Funded with approximately \$3 million in U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (“HUD”) Continuum of Care (“CoC”) rental assistance funds, the RIHRA Program supports rental assistance and supportive services for the benefit of persons experiencing homelessness.

The successful respondent will assist Rhode Island Housing to assess its current policies and procedures, review best practices and all applicable HUD requirements and guidance, make recommendations for operational changes, develop new and revised program documents as needed, and memorialize final revised policies and procedures in a detailed program manual. Each of these project components is further described below.

Assessment of Current Policies and Procedures

Rhode Island Housing has a small staff specifically dedicated to the RIHRA Program. The successful firm will work with staff to review existing protocols, and perform a limited file review to become familiar with the written documents and other materials currently being used.

More specifically, the selected firm will interview staff, collect and review program files, internal procedures and, based on such review, compile an inventory of Rhode Island Housing’s current RIHRA policies and procedures.

Review of Best Practices and HUD Requirements and Guidance

Following the assessment of Rhode Island Housing’s current policies and procedures, the selected firm will perform a detailed review of the Housing Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (“HEARTH”) Act and all applicable HUD rules, regulations, notices, program guides, handbooks, and other published guidance. From these activities, the firm will provide a written assessment of opportunities for improvement in the RIHRA Program to be discussed with Rhode Island Housing.

Development of Recommendations and Documents

The selected firm will develop recommendations based on the assessment activities in the foregoing paragraphs, and advise Rhode Island Housing with respect to (i) operational changes and (ii) amendments, standardization, or supplementation of existing Program forms, processes, and documents. All such recommendations and advice must be reflected in a written, step-by-step work plan for carrying out program changes.

The firm will develop a collection of Program forms and documents for Rhode Island Housing's use in the governance and management of the RIHRA Program, including for compliance tracking purposes. Documents may include new templates, flow charts, checklists and/or modifications to existing forms and documents. All such documents must reflect compliance with the HEARTH Act and all other applicable statutes, regulations, and requirements.

Policies and Procedures Manual

The firm will produce a comprehensive policies and procedures manual for the RIHRA Program. Staff will use the manual as a basis for assessing utilization, governing day-to-day operations and assisting grantees to understand and maintain program compliance. In addition to any other topics that are required to be included under the HUD regulations, the manual must address the following requirements:

- Program Components and Eligible Costs
 - See 24 CFR 578 Subpart D
- Program Requirements
 - See 24 CFR 578 Subpart F

The manual will also incorporate the new and revised Program forms and documents described in the previous section. All materials produced by the consulting team must meet all applicable HUD regulations and comply with all other federal, state and local statutes and regulations.

Staff Training

The selected firm will be responsible for providing initial training to RIHRA Program staff on the implementation of the policies and procedures manual and related work flow.

Proposed Schedule:	Due:
Firm selection and contract:	October 6
Assessment activities complete:	October 20
Written plan/recommended actions:	November 3
Document development:	November 10
Completion of manual:	November 10
Staff training:	November 14-17