

**Request for Action  
by  
Board of Commissioners**

**Approval of Engagement of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Consultant**

**1. Summary of Request**

This Request for Action (“RFA”) is for the authorization of Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation (“RIHousing”) to enter into a contract with The Exeter Group to provide diversity, equity, and inclusion (“DEI”) consulting services. The firm would provide DEI consulting services corporation-wide including training for the executive and leadership team, employees, and the Board of Commissioners.

**2. Discussion**

RIHousing strives to be a leader in providing its employees and customers with diverse and inclusive practices, policies, and programs. The consultant will provide RIHousing with the expertise needed to elevate the corporation’s efforts with the development of a customized DEI assessment, plan, and training program (“DEI Consultant Services”).

In March of 2021, RIHousing issued a Request for Proposals seeking proposals from qualified consulting firms to provide DEI Consultant Services in the following areas:

1. Provide leadership alignment sessions with corporation leaders to ensure a shared DEI vision and assist leadership in their communication of the DEI vision to staff.
2. Perform a current state organizational assessment of RIHousing’s policies, procedures, and practices, including employment practices and corporation programs.
3. Develop a DEI plan which will provide a short and long-term roadmap for making concrete improvements in the areas of diversity, equity, and inclusion.
4. Provide an education and training program based on the DEI plan. The consultant will provide RIHousing with a recommended education and training program for leadership.

RIHousing received proposals from twelve consulting firms. A selection committee comprised of RIHousing staff (the “Review Committee”) reviewed and scored the responses in accordance with the criteria set forth in RIHousing’s solicitation. Two of the proposals were deemed non-responsive to the RFP. Attachment A sets forth the ten responsive proposals, scoring criteria, and scores for each respondent. References were checked for the top four scoring consultants and interviews were conducted with the top two scoring consulting firms. Based on the review and scoring process, references, and finalist interviews, staff recommends the engagement of The Exeter Group for DEI Consultant Services.

The Exeter Group is a privately-owned, Chicago-based equity consulting firm founded in 1998. The Exeter Group partners with organizations across multiple sectors to improve equity for employees and their stakeholders. The Exeter Group’s approach integrates research, practice, and

actionable data to produce measurable results. The Exeter Group is an MBE and WBE with 13 full-time staff members.

Staff proposes to enter into a contract for a maximum two-year engagement with The Exeter Group using a phased work plan approach. RIHousing will develop a statement of work for each phase which will include a summary of work, pricing, time frame for services, and other service-specific details. Staff anticipates that the total cost of the engagement could be up to \$100,000.00 if the final work plan includes the full range of solicited DEI Consultant Services.

**5. Recommendations**

The Review Committee recommends that the Board of Commissioners approve the resolution set forth in Attachment B authorizing the engagement of The Exeter Group to provide DEI Consultant Services to RIHousing.

**6. Attachments**

- A. Scoring Information
- B. Resolution

ATTACHMENT A

DEI CONSULTANT SCORESHEET

Consultant	Professional capacity to undertake the Scope of Work	Work Plan and Approach for completing the Scope of Work	Proposed fee structure	Ability to perform within time and budget constraints	Proven track record and performance with similar organizations	Recommendations by references	Firm minority status and affirmative action program or activities	TOTAL POINTS (100 maximum)	RANK scores only	RANK Post Interview
	20	20	10	10	10	10	20	100		
The Exeter Group	19	18	8	8	5	10	20	88	2	1
Analytic Insight	20	20	8	6	10	10	19	91	1	2
Racial Equity Group	16	18	9	8	8	9	19	87	3	
Management Dynamics	17	16	8	10	9	4	18	82	6	
Winston Strategic Partnership	18	18	6	7	9	10	20	86	4	
Tangible Development	19	17	6	8	8	6	20	83	5	
Carter Leadership Collaborative	16	16	6	6	5	10	19	78	7	
Phillips Consulting	12	14	7	6	6	10	18	74	8	
Ranglin and Associates	15	10	3	3	5	5	20	61	9	
Phase Consulting	10	12	4	5	5	9	14	58	10	

**Attachment B**

**Resolution of the Board of Commissioners  
of  
Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation**

**WHEREAS:** the enabling act of Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation (“RIHousing”) provides it with all of the powers to make and execute contracts necessary for the exercise of powers and functions provided to it under the Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation Act, R.I. Gen. Laws §42-55-5(6); and

**WHEREAS:** RIHousing has determined that it is in the best interests of the corporation to engage a consultant to assist the corporation in the development of a customized diversity, equity, and inclusion (“DEI”) assessment, plan, and training program (“DEI Consulting Services”); and

**WHEREAS:** RIHousing issued a Request for Proposals (“RFP”) and invited consulting firms to submit proposals to provide DEI Consulting Services; and

**WHEREAS:** a review committee comprised of staff reviewed the proposals, evaluated them in accordance with the criteria outlined in the RFP, and recommends the engagement of The Exeter Group.

**NOW THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY:**

**RESOLVED:** that RIHousing be and hereby is authorized to enter a contract with The Exeter Group to provide DEI Consulting Services to the corporation, as the Executive Director or her designee deems such services to be advisable or necessary; and

**RESOLVED:** that the Executive Director, Deputy Executive Director, and Chief Operating Officer, each acting singly, be and hereby are authorized and empowered to take any and all actions necessary or desirable to carry out the foregoing resolution, including without limitation the authority to negotiate terms and fees of the engagements as he or she may determine to be in the best interests of RIHousing, and to execute any and all agreements and to take such further actions as he or she deems necessary to carry out the foregoing resolutions.