

**Request for Action
by
Board of Commissioners**

Pre-Qualification of Focus Group Firms

1. Summary of Request

This Request for Action (“RFA”) is for the authorization of Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation (“RIHousing”) to establish a roster of pre-qualified firms to provide focus group recruitment, scheduling, facilitation and report out writing. RIHousing may accept bids from and engage such firms on an as-needed basis to provide these services, either in part or whole.

Periodically, RIHousing utilizes focus groups to better understand how our programs function and could be improved, how to best design future initiatives, and to understand public perception of the agency, our programs, and topics that relate to our mission. Consequently, RIHousing issued a Request for Proposals (“RFP”) for firms that are qualified to provide 1) focus group facilitation only; or 2) focus group recruitment, scheduling, facilitation, and report out writing.

The RFP notice was posted on the RIHousing website and the website maintained by the State of Rhode Island Department of Administration, Division of Purchases. In addition, the RFP was sent by email to more than 300 partners, organizations, consultants and communications and research agencies.

Overall, RIHousing received proposals from five (5) unique firms, with all proposing to provide focus group recruitment, scheduling, facilitation, and report out writing.

A selection committee comprised of RIHousing staff (the “Review Committee”) reviewed the responses in accordance with the criteria set forth in the RFP and determined whether respondents were qualified to perform the required services. Based on this review, RIHousing seeks approval to include the following five (5) firms on its roster for Focus Group Services:

Coeuraj
Systems Change Strategies
Highland Planning
Level Up Coaching
Probolsky Research

The selected firms will appear on RIHousing’s roster of pre-qualified Focus Group Firms for a period of three years, which period may be extended if determined by staff to be in the best interests of the corporation. Staff will engage firms from this list on an as-needed basis or solicit bids for particular projects consistent with RIHousing’s Purchasing Policies. Funding for the

focus group recruitment, scheduling, facilitation, and report out writing will come out the Board-approved FY23 public engagement budget.

2. Recommendations

The Review Committee recommends that the Board of Commissioners approve the attached resolution authorizing the creation of a roster of qualified providers of Focus Group services.

3. Attachments

- A. Scoring Sheet
- B. Resolution

Attachment A

Scoring Sheet

Name	Capacity (5pts)	Fee Structure (5pts)	Previous experience (5pts)	Minority status/affirmative action (5pts)	Foreign language capabilities (5pts)	Total (25pts max)
Probolsky Research	5	4	5	5	5	24
Coeraj	5	2	5	5	5	22
Level Up Coaching	5	5	5	4	1	20
Systems Change Strategies	5	3	5	4	3	20
Highland Planning	5	2	5	4	1	17

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 create a roster of approved focus group firms to provide, as needed, focus group recruitment, scheduling, facilitation and report out writing;

WHEREAS: RIHousing issued a Requests for Proposals (“RFP”) for qualified focus group firms; and

WHEREAS: a selection committee comprised of staff reviewed the proposals and evaluated them in accordance with the criteria outlined in the RFP.

NOW THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY:

RESOLVED: that RIHousing be, and hereby is authorized, to create a roster of qualified focus group research firms from which RIHousing may select providers of focus group recruitment, scheduling, facilitation, and report out writing on such matters as the Executive Director or her designee deems advisable or necessary; and

RESOLVED: that RIHousing be, and hereby is authorized, to establish the following roster of firms pre-qualified to provide focus group recruitment, scheduling, facilitation and report out writing services to the corporation, as such services were described in the RFPs and consistent with the responses submitted in response thereto:

Coeuraj
Systems Change Strategies
Highland Planning
Level Up Coaching
Probolsky Research

RESOLVED: that RIHousing be, and hereby is authorized, to engage the above-listed firms on an as-needed basis and/or solicit bids or proposals from such firms for specific projects consistent with RIHousing’s Purchasing Policies; and

RESOLVED: that the Executive Director, the Deputy Executive Director or the Chief Strategy and Innovation Officer, each acting singly, be and hereby is authorized and empowered to take any and all actions necessary or desirable to carry out the foregoing resolutions, 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.