



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
Contractor Training and Capacity Building

Posting Date: February 7, 2023

Response Submission Deadline: 3:00 EST p.m. on Friday, March 17, 2023.

NOTE TO RESPONDENTS:

Please be advised that **all** submissions (including those not selected for engagement) may be made available to the public on request pursuant to the Rhode Island Access to Public Records Act, Chapter 2 of Title 38 of the Rhode Island General Laws (the “APRA”) upon award of a contract(s). As a result, respondents are advised not to include information that they deem proprietary or confidential or that constitutes a trade secret.

INTRODUCTION

Through this Request for Proposals (“RFP”), the Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation (“RIHousing”) seeks proposals from qualified firms to provide the following: 1) construction trade training to help workers gain skills and employment; and/or 2) Capacity building education to allow current contractors to grow their businesses.

INSTRUCTIONS

Proposals must be submitted via email to: Stacy Wasserman, Innovation Program Manager, at swasserman@rihousing.com no later than the response submission deadline set forth above.

Proposals that are not received by the response submission deadline or that do not adhere to the submission instructions described herein shall not be accepted or considered by RIHousing.

Proposals should be concise and adhere to the word count applicable to each section of this Request for Proposals (“RFP”). Proposals should be presented on business letterhead and include all attachments, certifications (including the Submissions Certification at Attachment A), and work samples (as applicable). Please note that failure to provide any information, certification, or document requested in this RFP may cause your submission not to be reviewed or considered by RIHousing.

RIHousing may invite one or more finalists to make presentations, including demonstrations of requested products, if applicable.



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SCOPE OF WORK

Please see the Scope of Work as provided on Attachment B.

ITEMS TO BE INCLUDED WITH YOUR PROPOSAL

**SUBMISSION
CHECK LIST**

Section A: General Firm Information (Total word limit: 500 words)

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, business telephone number and business email address of a representative of the firm authorized to discuss your proposal.
 - c. Locations of all offices of the firm.
 - d. Number of employees of the firm.
 - e. Board of Directors. Please note if your firm has representation from the population you serve on your board of directors.
 - f. A copy of your most recent annual report

RIHousing requests that the contact information provided in response to this subsection (1) be strictly limited to business addresses, telephone numbers, and email addresses to protect any personal information from being made available to the public pursuant to APRA.

Section B: Experience and Resources (Total word limit: 3500 words)

1. Describe your firm and its capabilities. In particular, support your capacity to perform the Scope of Work. Provide an overview as to how you would approach the Scope of Work. Please identify if you are applying for one specific component in the scope of work, or the work in its entirety.

2. Indicate which principals and associates from your firm would be involved in providing services to RIHousing. Provide appropriate background information for each such person and identify their responsibilities.

3. If applicable, please indicate the name of any subcontractors that would be involved in providing services to your firm and to RIHousing. Provide appropriate background information for each person or entity, identify the person's responsibilities and outline their capabilities.

4. Provide a detailed list of references, including a contact name and business telephone number for organizations or businesses for whom you have performed similar work.



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- 5. Identify individuals in your firm with multi-lingual skills, who are available to assist with communication in languages other than English. Please identify the language(s).
- 6. Describe your firm’s information security systems and the steps that your firm takes to safeguard client communication, confidential information, and client data. Include in your response whether your firm performs penetration testing, your firm’s encryption methods, and whether client data is stored onshore or offshore.
- 7. Describe your firm’s Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB) measures taken over the past 3 years. Include how are these measures are integrated into your firm’s daily work practices and organizational culture.

Section C: Fee Structure (Total word limit: 500 words)

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 B. Please note if you are proposing to provide one of the or both trainings outlined in the Scope of Work.
- 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 the full cost per cycle for worker training or capacity building education, as applicable.
- 4. 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 RIHousing.

Section D: Affirmative Action Plan and Minority Owned Business/Women Owned Business

- 1. RIHousing encourages the participation of persons of color, women, persons with disabilities and members of other federally and State-protected classes. Describe your firm’s affirmative action program and activities. Include the number and percentage of members of federally and State-protected classes who are either principals or senior managers in your firm, the number and percentage of members of federally and State-protected classes in your firm who will work on RIHousing’s engagement and, if applicable, a copy of your Minority- or Women-Owned Business Enterprise state certification.



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Section E: Miscellaneous (Total word limit: 1000 words)

1. Discuss any topics not covered in this RFP that you would like to bring to RIHousing’s attention.

Section F. Certifications

- All applicants must respond to and provide documentation as outlined in the Request for Proposals Submission Certifications at Attachment A.

EVALUATION AND SELECTION

A selection committee consisting of RIHousing employees will review all proposals that meet the requirements set forth in the “Instructions” section of this RFP and make a selection based on the following factors:

- Professional capacity to undertake the Scope of Work (as evaluated by reference in Section B: Experience and Resources);
- Proposed fee structure (as evaluated by reference in Section C: Fee Structure);
- Ability to perform within time and budget constraints (as evaluated by reference in Section B);
- Evaluation of proposed project approach (as contained in the Attachment B-Scope of Work. Section B);
- Previous work experience and performance with RIHousing and/or similar organizations (as provided in Section B: Experience and Resources, subsection 3);
- Recommendations by references (as provided in Section B: Experience and Resources, subsection 3);
- Firm minority status and affirmative action program or activities (as requested in Section D: Affirmative Action Plan and Minority Owned Business/Women Owned Business)
- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB) measures taken over the past 3 years; and how are these measures are integrated into daily work practices and organizational culture (as provided in Section B: Experience and Resources, subsection 7);
- Foreign language capabilities of the firm (as provided in Section B: Experience and Resources, subsection 5);
- Other pertinent information submitted.



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By this RFP, RIHousing has not committed itself to undertake the work set forth herein. RIHousing 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. RIHousing reserves the right to make those decisions after its receipt of responses. RIHousing's decision on these matters is final.

For additional information contact: Stacy Wasserman, swasserman@rihousing.com.

Revised: January 31, 2022



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Attachment A

Requests for Proposals Submission Certifications

Please respond to **all** items below and include it in your response to this RFP. Be sure to include any additional information in the space provided or as an attachment as needed. Please ensure that any attachments refer to the appropriate item by name (i.e., “Conflict of Interest,” “Major State Decision Maker,” etc.)

Total word limit for Sections A and B: 500 words

Section A: Conflicts of Interest

1. 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 RIHousing. **If none, check below.**

None

2. Describe how your firm will handle actual and or potential conflicts of interest (*please include in your proposal or attach a sheet with this information*).

Section B: Litigation, Proceedings, Investigations

1. Identify any material litigation, administrative proceedings, or investigations in which your firm is currently involved. **If none, check below.**

None

2. 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 finally adjudicated or settled within the past two (2) years. **If none, check below.**

None

Section C: Certifications

1. RIHousing 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 RIHousing, 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



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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. **Please acknowledge your understanding below.**

I have read and understand the requirements of Chapter 27 of Title 17 of the Rhode Island General Laws, Reporting of Political Contributions by State Vendors.

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.

Please indicate your response below.

Yes

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.

No



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3. In the course of providing goods or services to RIHousing, the selected respondent may receive certain personal information specific to RIHousing 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 RIHousing are of vital importance to RIHousing.

Please certify below that in the event your firm is selected:

- (i) any Personal Information disclosed to your firm by RIHousing 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 RIHousing 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). In addition, if selected, your firm may be requested to provide a copy of its information security plan.

I certify that in the event our firm is selected, we will comply with the Personal Information and Security guidelines noted above.

4. Your firm’s president, chairman or CEO must certify below that (i) no member of your firm has made inquiries or contacts with respect to this RFP other than in an email or written communication to Stacy Wasserman, swasserman@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 March 17, 2023, (iii) all information in the proposal is true and correct to the best of your knowledge, (iv) no member of your firm gave anything of monetary value or promise of future



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employment to a RIHousing 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.

I certify that no member of our firm has made or will make any such inquiries or contacts; all information supplied is true and correct; no member of our firm has provided anything of value to influence RIHousing; and our firm is in compliance with applicable political contribution reporting.

President, Chairman or CEO (*print*): _____

Signature: _____

Firm Name: _____



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Attachment B

Scope of Work

I. Services to be Provided

RIHousing is seeking one or more firms to help increase the number of construction workers in the state of Rhode Island, and assist existing contractors in gaining the skills to own, grow and run their own businesses. We aim to achieve this through 1) Worker trainings; and 2) Building small contractor business capacity. Applicants may apply to provide one or both training programs. Applicants are encouraged to expand upon existing programs and/or build partnerships to provide these trainings.

For both trainings, we seek firms that will provide outreach to underrepresented groups. Firms must have the ability to provide the trainings in different languages, including, but not necessarily limited to, Spanish. Firms must have a strong understanding of cultural competency and be able to provide training through that lens. All of this should be reflected in outreach, recruitment and all aspects of training and education provided.

1. Worker Trainings

With this funding opportunity, RIHousing is looking for firms who can provide construction trade trainings for workers interested in joining the trades, or workers interested in growing their skillsets and knowledge in the construction trade field. We are looking for firms who can support a variety of construction trades, including, but not limited to, carpentry, electric, plumbing, HVAC, painting, building performance and weatherization, etc.

We are seeking firms that provide comprehensive education and training up through the licensing or certification that needs to happen for participants to begin working. In addition to training in different trades, the ideal firm will also provide the eight-hour Lead Renovation, Repair and Painting class, OSHA 10 certification, and knowledge around qualifying as a Section 3 worker. Firms will encourage participation in a 40-hour lead supervisor class, helping connect interested students to a training class. Ideally, the selected firm(s) will have models that allow participants to get hands on experience through time in the classroom and time in the field, experiential learning on active job sites, apprenticeships, etc.

Firms should have strong recruitment plans and be clear on where and who they will target, including underrepresented groups. Outreach and/or communications strategies should be clearly outlined. Curriculums should be tied to outcomes so trainers can understand if participants are gaining the skillsets and knowledge they need to be successful upon completion.

In addition to providing trade programs training, firms should also provide life skills training that will make program participants successful employees. This would include, but is not



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limited to, time management, communication (verbal, non-verbal and written), professionalism, and self-awareness.

Programs must include an evaluation and assessment component. Program participants should be given the opportunity to provide programmatic feedback regarding course materials and content, comprehension of materials, competency and ability of facilitators and trainers, training facilities, general satisfaction with the training program, and other topics as desired. This evaluation process must be built into the program to understand outcomes, successes, challenges and setbacks experienced during the funding period.

Lastly, the program must include a clear, measurable outcomes component to track participant progress.

This opportunity is open to existing and newly formed training organizations. We also welcome partnerships between different organizations that could create innovative models to provide training and assistance.

2. Building Small Contractor Business Capacity

RIHousing understands there are smaller contractors in Rhode Island who have the technical skills to take on larger jobs or supervise jobs, but do not have the skills or knowledge needed to take their businesses to the next level. We are seeking firms who can provide training, education, and mentorship to these small business owners to help them grow and strengthen their businesses, thus allowing them to take on larger jobs.

Smaller contractors may not know how to obtain or gain the knowledge that is needed to take on larger construction jobs and grow their businesses. This includes, but is not limited to:

- forming relationships with lenders and banks to access lines of credit
- finding insurance
- increase their bonding capacity
- when applicable, completing the WBE/MBE and Section 3 business concern certification process
- general financial/accounting trainings
- construction accounting, invoicing, and billing
- developing resumes/portfolios and building relationships with general contractors and customers
- developing good project management/filing system tools



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- understanding construction contracts and related documents
- blueprint reading, cost estimating and managing the bid process
- understanding change orders, RFI's, submittals, scheduling, project close-out, requirements, etc
- hiring and managing employees
- compliance requirements on jobs with state or federal funding sources

Services provided to contractors for capacity building should use real world techniques coupled with evidence based best practices.

Additionally, program design should include measurable individualized plans showing how services provided to contractors increased capacity with the ability to demonstrate how this increased capacity translates to a healthier business model. Thus, an evaluation process must be built into the program to understand outcomes, successes, challenges and setbacks experienced during the funding period.

We do not assume that all contractors will need the same assistance, so as part of this engagement firms must conduct assessments on the training and tools needed for contractors to take their businesses to the next level. Firms should be clear on outreach and/or communication strategies used when formulating needs assessments.

The firm must have a demonstrated ability and resourcefulness to either provide the trainings as needed, or to create a network of providers able to assist contractors build capacity in areas identified through the needs assessment.

In particular, we are seeking firms that bring innovative and relevant approaches to providing this assistance. Firms should be clear on how they integrate lived participant experience from the target population into their program design and development. Firms should take into consideration that it will not be easy for contractors to leave job sites and miss work opportunities. We seek firms that will use approaches to minimize time away from work, which may include reaching contractors on site, at night and weekends, virtually, or other options to be identified.

Firms may consider utilizing existing partnerships or creating new partnerships.