



## **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

### **Updates to RIHousing’s Design and Construction Guidelines and Stakeholder Engagement**

---

**Posting Date:** December 14, 2022

**Response Submission Deadline:** 3:00 EST p.m. on February 17, 2023

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Through this Request for Proposals (“RFP”), the Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation (“RIHousing”) seeks proposals from qualified firms to provide one or both of the following activities: 1) evaluate and update our existing Design and Construction Guidelines; and 2) conduct stakeholder engagement. Respondents may apply to one or both of the activities requested.

#### **INSTRUCTIONS**

Proposals must be submitted via email to: **Nivea Linhares, Real Estate Development Assistant** at **nlinhares@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.

#### **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.



RFP/RFQ Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
Respondent Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**SCOPE OF WORK**

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

**ITEMS TO BE INCLUDED WITH YOUR PROPOSAL**

**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.

**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)**

**SUBMISSION  
CHECK LIST**

1. Provide a short narrative to describe your firm and its capabilities. In particular, support your capacity to perform the Scope of Work.

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. Provide information regarding any special professional affiliations or licenses your team members obtain.

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.
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).



RFP/RFQ Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
Respondent Name: \_\_\_\_\_

- 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.

**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 one or both components of the Scope of Work listed in Attachment B.
- 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 RIHousing.

**Section D: Proposed Process and Timeline**

Please describe the process you would propose to complete the Scope of Work listed in Attachment B. Include a timeline for key milestones.

**Section E: 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.

**Section F: 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.



RFP/RFQ Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
Respondent Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Section G. 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 (as evaluated by reference in Section B and Section D);
- Evaluation of proposed project approach (as contained in Attachment B-Scope of Work).
- 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 E: Affirmative Action Plan and Minority Owned Business/Women Owned Business)
- Other pertinent information submitted.

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: Anthony A’Vant, Assistant Director of Design & Construction at [tavant@rihousing.com](mailto:tavant@rihousing.com).**



RFP/RFQ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Respondent Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Attachment A**

This form must be completed and signed by your firm’s president, chairman or chief executive officer. Please respond to **all** items below, include additional information as necessary, and ensure that any attachments refer to the appropriate item by name (i.e., “Conflict of Interest” etc.).

**Total word limit: 500 words**

**Section A: Conflicts of Interest**

1. Identify any conflict of interest that could arise during your firm’s performance of the Scope of Work set forth at Attachment B. **If none, check below.**

None

2. Identify any conflict of interest that may arise as a result of any of your firm’s employees, associates, or subcontractor’s status as a member of the board of directors of any organization likely to interact with RIHousing. **If none, check below.**

None

3. Describe how your firm will handle actual and or potential conflicts of interest (*respond below or attach a document 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**

The undersigned certifies, under the pains and penalties of perjury, as follows:

1. No member of my firm has made inquiries or contacts with respect to this RFP other than in an email or written communication to Anthony A’Vant (tavant@rihousing.com) seeking clarification on the Scope of Work set forth in this proposal, from the date of this RFP through the date of our



RFP/RFQ Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
Respondent Name: \_\_\_\_\_

proposal, and that no member of my firm will make any such inquiry or contact until after February 17, 2023.

2. To the best of my knowledge, all information provided in my firm's proposal is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.
3. My firm did not consult with RI Housing in connection with the development of this RFP.
4. No member of my firm gave anything of monetary value or promise of future employment to a RI Housing employee or Commissioner, or a relative of the same, based on any understanding that such person's action or judgment will be influenced.

President, Chairman or CEO (*print*): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Firm Name: \_\_\_\_\_



RFP/RFQ Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
Respondent Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Attachment B

### Scope of Work

#### **I. Project Overview:**

RIHousing is requesting qualifications and proposals from qualified firms to complete one or both of the following activities: 1) Review, research, and update our existing [Design and Construction Guidelines](#) (the "Guidelines") and 2) Conduct stakeholder engagement as part of the review and update process. Firms may submit proposals for either one or both activities. Firms may also choose to partner with another firm and submit a joint proposal.

The Design and Construction Guidelines have been designed to establish a clear predictable process and timeframe from reservation of financing to loan closing and to establish Design and Construction Standards. It is our goal to construct housing that is safe, affordable, high quality, sustainable, energy efficient and healthy for residents.

There have been minor modifications to the Guidelines over the years, but the document has not gone through a thorough review or update within the past decade, thus there is a need to revise, reorganize and consolidate the Guidelines. The final product should be a user-friendly document that addresses innovation, modern design, construction systems, materials and techniques that may be used as a tool for RIHousing and our development partners.

#### **II. Scope of Services to be Provided**

The intent of the Scope of Services described herein is to serve as a framework for the major tasks as currently envisioned by RIHousing. RIHousing envisions the following for each task:

- 1) Review and update the existing Design and Construction Guidelines. We seek architects, design firms, or similar firms to complete the following tasks:
  - A. Complete best practices research into (i) innovative construction techniques to reduce the cost of construction, (ii) design guidelines to improve energy efficiency, resiliency, and sustainability, and (iii) how energy efficiency treatments and providing access to alternative modes of transportation can reduce occupancy costs for residents.
  - B. Review and assess several other housing finance agency (HFA) Design Guidelines for best practices and new ideas. Focus should be on other HFAs in New England and HFA's that are portfolio lenders.
  - C. Review the existing Design Standards and make suggested changes that:
    - i. Produce improvements to the form and appearance of the Guidelines, so that it is easier for the casual user to access and find information.
    - ii. Eliminate unnecessary or antiquated requirements that increase cost or provide little value.



RFP/RFQ Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
Respondent Name: \_\_\_\_\_

- iii. Revise sections of the Guidelines that conflict with other sections or are overly complex.
- iv. Address feedback received through stakeholder engagement.
- v. Address any internal inconsistencies, errors or omissions, including grammatical errors.
- vi. Introduce table of contents, checklist and tables where possible to better organize and/or simplify information.
- vii. Revise or eliminate vague, unclear, or confusing language and ensure that language, terms, and intent are consistent from one section to another.
- viii. Update all code and program related sections and update or add proper hyper-links to these sections.

- D. Create a new section in the Guidelines that promotes innovative design and building techniques, including both construction technologies and site design, that will help to reduce construction cost.
- E. Update Energy Efficiency and Sustainability requirements in the Guidelines and determine whether there are additional codes, standards or certificate programs that RIHousing should consider adopting or promoting.
- F. Create new section of the Guidelines to address resilient planning, climate change and disaster planning.
- G. Review and update RIHousing's [National Housing Trust Fund Rehabilitation Standards](#) to ensure that this document is consistent with the Guidelines. Evaluate whether these documents can be merged to avoid confusion by end users.
- H. Prepare draft(s) of the proposed Guidelines for RIHousing and public comment prior to finalization.

## 2) Conduct Stakeholder Engagement

Administer stakeholder engagement to inform the updated guide. This is likely to include at least two focus groups: one consisting of housing developers and housing development consultants, and one consisting of architects, contractors, and design/environmental consultants. Additional focus groups may be identified as the review and engagement process takes place. In addition to focus groups, one on one interviews will also be needed with 5-10 stakeholders. Lastly, a survey may be required in order to ensure we are providing a way for all interested partners to share their opinions, as well as to share the information gathered in the focus groups/interviews and garner additional feedback.

RIHousing staff will assist the selected firm in identifying appropriate stakeholders to engage and supply contact information as needed. The firm is expected to coordinate recruitment, schedule engagement, and identify locations for focus groups and one-on-one interviews as needed. As part of this engagement, the chosen firm will complete a comprehensive report





RFP/RFQ Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
Respondent Name: \_\_\_\_\_

out with findings from the stakeholder engagement that will be used to inform the updated design guidelines.

The chosen firm will work closely with the firm, if different, that is working on the review and update of the design guidelines. While RIHousing will facilitate this partnership at the start of the project, the firms will be expected to work closely to ensure that the stakeholder engagement is held within the timeframe needed and findings are shared in a meaningful and useful way.

**A. Project Schedule**

Once a consultant has been chosen and a contract signed, a pre-planning meeting with RIHousing should be scheduled within two weeks. Following the pre-planning meeting, we will expect the stakeholder engagement to be completed within eight weeks. At this time, it is anticipated that the presentation of all significant findings to the agency and the updated Draft Guidelines should be completed by August 14, 2023 with a final document due by September 29, 2023.