

**Request for Proposals**  
**Comprehensive Community Development Program**

**INTRODUCTION**

Through this Request for Proposals (“RFP”) Rhode Island Housing seeks proposals from qualified organizations including, Community Development Corporations, non-profit organizations, public housing authorities, property management firms, housing development owners, developers and municipalities (all referred to as “organizations” within this RFP) for innovative, community-oriented projects and programs that will support, improve and benefit neighborhoods and communities in which Rhode Island Housing has made significant investments. Rhode Island Housing seeks to fund proposals that will improve the quality of life for residents. Grants of up to \$75,000 are available with a 20% match required. The match may be met through either cash and/or in-kind contributions. This grant program is intended to help transform and stabilize neighborhoods in a positive and comprehensive manner.

The two major focus areas for this program are:

1. Place-based Community Improvements: Projects and initiatives that focus on physical improvements that contribute to open space, recreational space, commercial space, community building activities such as community gardens, and other enhancements. The intent of these activities should be to improve the quality of life for residents in neighborhoods and communities with significant Rhode Island Housing investments.
  
2. Resident Development: Programming that will assist and support residents of neighborhoods and communities in which Rhode Island Housing has made significant investments. Programming may improve educational performance, increase public safety, develop and enhance employment opportunities, develop the skillset to be responsible tenants, advance economic stability, and increase health outcomes.

**INSTRUCTIONS**

Proposals should be submitted with a cover letter addressed to Barbara Fields, Executive Director via email to: [swasserman@rhodeislandhousing.org](mailto:swasserman@rhodeislandhousing.org). Proposals should be no longer than 5 single sided pages, not including attachments. Attachments may include resumes, proposed budget, letters of support, project renderings and documents relevant to projects and programming. Brevity and clarity will be appreciated. Proposals should be presented on business letterhead.

Proposals must be received no later than 5:00 EST p.m. on **April 15, 2016**.

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). Accordingly, any information included in the proposal that the respondent believes to be proprietary or confidential should be clearly identified as such.

### **SCOPE OF WORK**

Please see the Scope of Work provided at Attachment A.

### **ITEMS TO BE INCLUDED WITH YOUR PROPOSAL**

#### A. General Organizational Information

1. Provide a brief description of your organization, including but not limited to the following:
  - a. Name of organization executive staff (and resumes) and board members (stating length of service and affiliation if relevant).
  - b. Describe the organization's service area and organizational goals.
  - c. Organizational chart annotated to describe staff functions in the proposed project or programming.
  - d. Name, telephone number and email address of a representative within your organization authorized to discuss your proposal.

#### B. Proposal Summary

1. A narrative discussion of the project or program, anticipated goals, expected outcomes, and system of measuring if outcomes are being achieved including what will be measured, and how that measurement will occur. Please see Attachment B for further guidance on defining outcomes and measuring progress in achieving them. Please discuss if this project or program will fill a community need, and if it is part of a larger community effort.
2. Describe your organization's capacity to perform the proposed project or program. Provide a staffing plan for the proposed project or programming including collaboration with partners such as neighborhood-based organizations or institutions, businesses or public entities, if applicable. Identify individuals in your organization or firm with multi-lingual skills, who are available to assist with communication in languages other than English. Please identify the language(s). Include information on previous experience implementing similar projects or programs.
3. Previous work experience and performance with Rhode Island Housing and/or a similar organization.

4. Identify any material litigation, administrative proceedings or investigations in which your organization is currently involved. Identify any material litigation, administrative proceedings or investigations, to which your organization 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. Letters from neighborhood organizations, public entities, or tenant coordinating committees (if applicable) supporting the scope of the proposed project or program and up to three references from partners or funders.

C. Budget Structure and Timeline

1. The program budget is one of the factors that will be considered in awarding funds. The information requested in this section is required to support the reasonableness of your budget. Respondents may apply for grants of up to \$75,000. There is a 20% minimum match requirement. The match may be met through cash, and/or in-kind contributions. The program description should include an explanation of why the proposed budget is appropriate and necessary to achieve proposed outcomes and how this funding is leveraging additional funds or reducing costs in management of Rhode Island Housing financed properties while still maintaining quality of living. An attached, itemized budget should include the funding source(s) for each component of the project. A listing of funding and income to be committed should be included indicating whether these funds are presently available or, if not, when these funds or income are expected during the life of the project.
2. Include a timeline for implementing the proposed project, or the timeline for proposed programming. Identify any resources or approvals that must be received before the project or program can be implemented.

E. Miscellaneous

1. Rhode Island Housing 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 Rhode Island Housing's engagement and, if applicable, a copy of your Minority- or Women-Owned Business Enterprise state certification.
2. Discuss any topics not covered in this Request for Proposals that you would like to bring to Rhode Island Housing's attention.

F. 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. 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 Stacy Wasserman, [swasserman@rhodeislandhousing.org](mailto:swasserman@rhodeislandhousing.org) 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 May 19, 2016 (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.

### **REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

All grantees will be required to submit quarterly reports. These quarterly reports will include a more in-depth mid-year and final report. Rhode Island Housing will provide the reporting parameters, but each report will include an update on activities, outcomes and progress in achieving proposed outcomes using approved metrics, as well as a description of challenges experienced. Additionally, each report will require an update on how the 20% match is being met, accompanied by relevant documentation.

### **EVALUATION AND SELECTION CRITERIA AND SCORING**

Below are the selection criteria under which proposals will be evaluated, and the scoring weight associated with the criteria. Proposals should address the criteria that represent their proposed projects and programs, and provide comprehensive information for each. We recognize that each project and program will be different, and not all criteria will be applicable to each one. However proposals that address the most criteria are likely to have higher scores and a greater chance of receiving funding.

Connection to a neighborhood or community with significant Rhode Island Housing investment.

- Grantee must show how the project or program is connected to a neighborhood or community in which Rhode Island Housing has made significant investments, and how the project or program will benefit this housing and the residents.

Cohesion of project or program goals, clear outcomes and evaluation criteria based on well-collected data.

- Evaluation criteria should be included for the proposed project or program. This criterion should suggest clear metrics so as to facilitate evaluation of the

overall intent of the proposal. If these funds are to be used for a start-up project or program then clear goals for the start-up period should be identified. If the project or program is intended to continue longer than one year then future goals and funding sources should be identified.

Capacity to undertake the proposed scope of work. Past successful work with Rhode Island Housing in program development a plus.

- Grantees must show that staffing has the capacity to complete the project or program within the proposed timeline. The grantee must also include an annual organizational budget and show that the organization has the financial capacity to complete the project or program as proposed and to sustain the organization throughout the life of the project or program. Grantees should demonstrate the ability to administer multi-year projects if applicable. If partners are engaged, the grantee should show their role within the project or program and their capacity to fulfill their role. Additionally, Rhode Island Housing will assess the applicant's previous work with Rhode Island Housing. This will include keeping projects or programs on time and budget, completing projects or programs, and an organization's capacity based on previous work. If work has occurred with other housing agencies, please describe.

Strategic partnerships which will enhance engagement and help facilitate successful outcomes

- Please note any partnerships for completing your project or program. The role and relationship of each partner should be discussed. Community collaboration is encouraged.

Reasonableness of proposed budget

- An itemized budget should be included. It should be noted where Rhode Island Housing funding is anticipated to be used.

Amount of other funds leveraged to sustain or enhance the project or program

- Leveraged funds should be noted. Commitment letters must be included for any funding noted as committed.

Project or program will fill a community need

- Please note and provide evidence that this project or program will not be duplicative with another community effort. Also note and provide evidence if this project or program is filling a need within the community.

Project or program is part of a larger community effort

- Please note and describe if this project or program is part of a larger community revitalization effort.

Letters of recommendation or references from key stakeholders

Participation by persons of color, women, person with disabilities and members of other protected classes; affirmative action program or activities

<b>Category</b>	<b>Points</b>
Connection to a neighborhood or community in which Rhode Island Housing has made significant investments	25
Cohesion of project or program goals, clear outcomes and evaluation criteria based on well-collected data	20
Capacity to undertake the proposed scope of work. Past successful work with Rhode Island Housing in program development or implementation a plus	15
Strategic partnerships which will enhance engagement and help facilitate successful outcomes	10
Reasonableness of proposed budget	10
Amount of other funds leveraged to sustain or enhance the project or program	4
Project or program will fill a community need that is not currently met	4
Project or program is part of a larger community effort	4
Letters of recommendation or references from key stakeholders	4
Participation by persons of color, women, person with disabilities and members of other protected classes; affirmative action program or activities	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>

A selection committee consisting of Rhode Island Housing employees and external partners (the “Committee”) will review and score all proposals based on the above factors.

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

In its sole discretion, Rhode Island Housing may request additional information from organizations which have submitted proposals.

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: Stacy Wasserman,**  
[swasserman@rhodeislandhousing.org](mailto:swasserman@rhodeislandhousing.org) Please include questions in an email.

## **Attachment A** **Scope of Work**

Through this Request for Proposals (“RFP”) Rhode Island Housing seeks proposals from qualified organizations including, Community Development Corporations, non-profit organizations, public housing authorities, property management firms, housing development owners, developers and municipalities for innovative, community-oriented projects and programs that will support, improve and benefit neighborhoods and communities in which Rhode Island Housing has made significant investments. Rhode Island Housing seeks to fund proposals that will enhance neighborhoods and communities and improve the quality of life for residents. This grant program is intended to help transform and stabilize neighborhoods in a positive and comprehensive manner.

This grant is focused on two areas of funding, and proposals may be submitted for one or both areas:

### **1. Place-Based Community Improvements**

Rhode Island Housing is seeking projects that will make physical improvements that enhance neighborhoods and communities in which Rhode Island Housing has made significant investments and contribute to an increased quality of life for residents.

Funding is available for innovative projects that are ready to proceed, have completed the planning phase, if applicable, and are consistent with the program goals as identified in Attachment B. Projects should not be housing centric, but must support and/or establish a positive connection between neighborhoods and communities in which Rhode Island Housing has made a significant investment and other community resources. This funding may be used for a single project, as gap funding, or to fund several smaller interrelated projects. Projects should provide needed amenities and/or assets to area residents. Applicants are encouraged to be creative in their proposed projects and programs.

### **2. Resident Development**

Programs that will help residents living in neighborhoods and communities in which Rhode Island Housing has made significant investments gain the skills needed to succeed in school or at work, improve their economic situation, improve health outcomes, increase public safety, and become responsible tenants.

The ultimate goal of resident development programming is to provide activities and content that will improve the lives of residents. Programming may be focused on specific residents such as youth or the elderly or serve all residents. Programming may also be focused on different areas of improvement such as college readiness, job training or financial literacy. Programming should be easily accessible to residents, and program participants should reside in a neighborhood or community in which Rhode Island Housing has made significant investments. Grantees are encouraged to be creative in thinking about what type of programming would be most beneficial to residents, fill an existing need, and/or help create a sense of community, upward mobility, access and education.

Resident development program proposals should note the number of participants anticipated to be served and the cost per person.

## Attachment B **Outcomes and Metrics to Measure Success**

Each grantee is expected to develop project or program goals, clear outcomes and evaluation criteria based on well-collected data. Rhode Island Housing's goals for this grant program are 1) Enhance neighborhoods and communities in which Rhode Island Housing has made significant investments through improvements that have positive, measurable impacts; and 2) Increase the quality of life and access to opportunity for residents living in neighborhoods or communities with significant Rhode Island Housing investments. A description of both goals is below. Grantees must address how these goals will be met, and create specific outcomes and metrics that will be used to meet these goals. In addition, grantees are encouraged to outline additional goals/outcomes and metrics for your proposed project or program. If these funds are to be used for a start-up project or program then clear goals for the start-up period should be identified. If the project or program is intended to continue longer than one year then future goals should be identified.

- 1. Enhancing neighborhoods and communities in which Rhode Island Housing has made significant investments.** Available funding is to be utilized for programs and projects that will have a positive impact on neighborhoods and communities with significant Rhode Island Housing investments. This can occur through improvements associated with the physical buildings and infrastructure, and greater investment in the neighborhood and community. This can occur in a number of ways and we encourage grantees to be creative in thinking about how this funding will improve and protect the neighborhoods and communities with Rhode Island Housing investments. Examples include:
  - a. The creation of a park and/or play ground near or in a housing development that provides youth with a place to play, congregate and be active. Having a designated place to congregate will improve health outcomes, enhance public safety, and will also equate to the youth being less likely to cause trouble throughout the development, therefore protecting the physical housing structures.
  - b. A financial literacy program that provides tenants with the skill set to manage their finances, pay their rent on time, and budget appropriately. Better money management gives tenants the skillset to pay their rent and bills on time, leading to less eviction and lower vacancy rates.
  - c. The establishment of spaces that provide access to fresh food. This could vary from brick and mortar commercial spaces, farmer's markets, mobile markets, or other avenues that will make fresh food more accessible to area residents. Access to fresh food gives residents greater choice over what they eat, improves health outcomes, and makes neighborhoods more comprehensive, offering services and goods that residents need nearby.
  
- 2. Increased quality of life and access to opportunity for residents of neighborhoods and communities in which Rhode Island Housing has made significant investments.** Funding should be used to increase the quality of life and

access to opportunity for residents living in and around Rhode Island Housing investments. There are a number of ways increased quality of life can occur, and we encourage grantees to be creative in thinking about this. Examples include:

- a. Youth programming that gives children the skill set to succeed in school, and provides parents with a safe space for their children to go after school, or during the summer break. This improves quality of life by giving children a greater chance of success in the future, and relieves parents of the stress of providing after school or summer activities.
- b. Public art and cultural improvements to neighborhoods and communities will increase the area's aesthetic, create a sense of place, and signify that the neighborhood is an important asset worthy of being improved and engaged, creating an increased sense of pride for residents.
- c. The creation of an enclosed bus stop would mean residents do not need to stand outside in inclement weather waiting for the bus. Having a protected place to stand would remove some stress of waiting for the bus, and acknowledge that public transportation is a necessary commodity that should be valued and improved.