

Notice of Funds Available
Community Implementation Funding

INTRODUCTION

Through this Notice of Funds Available (“NOFA”), Rhode Island Housing is accepting grant proposals under its KeepSpace program from non-profit and for-profit organizations, municipalities, and public housing authorities (“organizations”) for innovative, implementation ready projects. At this time, \$250,000 is available in grant funds. This NOFA is targeting non-residential projects that will enhance quality of life and housing within a community. Priority will be given to projects focused in or around Rhode Island Housing financed developments or public housing. Public/private partnerships and collaborations are strongly encouraged.

KeepSpace is an initiative of Rhode Island Housing that promotes comprehensive community development. A community is more than homes; it includes different elements critical for high quality of life. Many elements are integral to creating vibrant communities, including:

Good homes, Public Infrastructure, and Transportation

A good home is safe, accessible, healthy, and affordable to rent or own; public infrastructure includes sidewalks, streets, hospitals, community centers, libraries, police and fire stations, parks, playgrounds, and schools; transportation is access to buses and trains, safe spaces for bicycling, and automobiles.

Health, Safety, and Education

Healthy neighborhoods have clean air, open space, health services, and access to fresh food; safe neighborhoods have low crime and safe spaces for residents to gather, walk, and live; strong education includes access to quality and safe schools for children.

Strong Economy and Jobs

A strong economy includes good jobs for community residents that are nearby and pay a living wage, easy access to a variety of goods and services, and public and private investment in the community.

Community Engagement

For a community to function at its best, residents should have the opportunity to engage with one another through participation in civic, cultural and religious organizations and events. Community engagement provides a sense of safety, belonging, and neighborhood pride.

Together, these elements provide the framework for comprehensive community development. There are efforts underway in Rhode Island communities that build upon these elements, such as the Rhode Island Department of Health’s Health Equity Zones, the U.S. Department of Justice’s

Byrne JAG Program, LISC's Sustainable Communities Program, and HUD's Choice Neighborhoods. We are interested in projects that incorporate these elements and/or build upon other current comprehensive community development work.

FUNDING PARAMETERS

Rhode Island Housing seeks proposals for implementation projects that are **ready to proceed**. For full funding parameters please see Attachment A.

ITEMS TO BE INCLUDED WITH YOUR PROPOSAL

A. General Applicant Information

1. Provide a brief description of your organization, including but not limited to the following:
 - a. Name(s) of organization executive staff and board members
 - b. Name, telephone number and email address of an individual within your organization authorized to discuss your proposal.
 - c. Address of all offices of the organization.
 - d. Number of employees of the organization.

B. Project Summary

1. A narrative discussion on the project and its goals. Include anticipated outcomes and achievements.
2. A narrative discussion of how this project incorporates KeepSpace elements, and will benefit the community in an equitable manner.
3. A narrative discussion of how this project will positively impact the community and improve quality of life.
4. A budget for the project including all funding sources currently committed.
5. A discussion of whether this funding will be used to leverage other resources.
6. A discussion on how this project fits into broader community development plans.

C. Experience and Partnerships

1. Describe your organization and its capabilities. In particular, explicitly demonstrate organizational capacity and proven leadership for the project to be completed within twelve months.

2. Indicate which individuals from your organization would be involved in the proposed project. Provide appropriate background information for each such person and identify his or her responsibilities.
3. If applicable, identify organizations you will partner with, including a description of the role and responsibilities of each partner.

D. Certifications

1. 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 organization?

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.

INSTRUCTIONS

The proposal should be submitted electronically to swasserman@rhodeislandhousing.org. Proposal narrative should be concise and no more than five pages in length. Attachments and renderings are allowed in addition to the narrative. Proposals should be presented on business letterhead.

Proposals must be received no later than 5:00 EST p.m. on April 30, 2015.

Respondents are advised that all submissions (including those not selected for funding) may be made available to the public on request upon completion of the process and award of funds. Accordingly, any information included in the proposal that the respondent believes to be proprietary or confidential should be clearly identified as such.

EVALUATION AND SELECTION

A selection committee will review all proposals and make a determination based on the following factors:

- Positive impact on area housing and quality of life
- Integration of elements noted in the introduction
- Ability of project to serve as an innovative model of community development
- Anticipated outcomes and achievements
- Ability to commence and complete the project within twelve months of award of funding agreement execution
- Demonstrated professional capacity to undertake the project
- Demonstrated ability to perform within time and budget constraints
- If applicable, identification and description of partnerships or collaborations
- If and/or how funding will be used to leverage additional resources
- Previous work experience and performance with Rhode Island Housing and/or similar organizations
- Recommendations by references

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

For additional information please contact: Stacy Wasserman, Special Projects Coordinator,
swasserman@rhodeislandhousing.org

Attachment A

Funding Parameters

Rhode Island Housing seeks grant proposals for “implementation ready” projects that are immediately ready to proceed, have completed the planning phase, if applicable, and are anticipated to have positive community outcomes. Projects need not be housing centric, but must support and/or establish a positive connection between housing and other community resources within the targeted neighborhood. Priority will be given to projects that are focused in or around Rhode Island Housing financed developments or public housing and leverage significant other public and private resources. Selected proposals will illustrate a creative approach to making communities more livable for all residents. Such projects could potentially serve as models for other communities. This funding may be used for a single project, as gap funding, or to fund several smaller interrelated projects. All projects must connect the KeepSpace elements and provide demonstrable benefit to community residents. This NOFA offers an opportunity for successful applicants to implement tangible projects in a creative manner while aligning to the KeepSpace elements.

A total amount of \$250,000 is anticipated to be available for grant funding, with projects receiving a maximum amount of \$100,000. Funding amounts and numbers of projects to be chosen are subject to change depending on the quality of proposals received. Projects in the planning phase are ineligible for funding. We anticipate making funding commitments in June. Projects must be substantially completed within twelve months of receiving funding.

Funding agreements must be signed no later than June 30, 2015. Agreements must be signed by the organization’s executive officer. Quarterly reports will be due between date funding is disbursed and the twelve month completion deadline. A final report on outcomes will be due no later than September 15, 2016. Rhode Island Housing will provide awardees with reporting parameters for the quarterly reports and final report to evaluate success in reaching project outcomes and achievements.