

**Request for Proposals  
HOME Program Policy and Procedure Manual  
Consulting Services**

**INTRODUCTION**

Through this Request for Proposals (“RFP”), Rhode Island Housing seeks proposals from qualified firms to develop a Policies and Procedures Manual for the HOME Investment Partnerships Program (“HOME Program”), a grant program of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (“HUD”). The successful firm must demonstrate direct experience providing expertise, consulting services and technical assistance with respect to the HOME Program or other community development initiatives of HUD.

**INSTRUCTIONS**

One (1) original and three (3) copies of the proposal should be submitted to Rhode Island Housing, 44 Washington Street, Providence, RI 02903-1721, Attn: Nancy Tierney, with an electronic courtesy copy to [ntierney@rhodeislandhousing.org](mailto:ntierney@rhodeislandhousing.org). Proposals must be concise and include all attachments and work samples. Proposals must be presented on business letterhead.

Proposals must be postmarked and received no later than 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 18, 2015.

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 Firm Information
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, telephone number and email address of a representative of the firm authorized to discuss your proposal.
    - c. Address of all offices of the firm.

d. Number of employees of the firm.

B. Experience and Resources

1. Describe your firm and its capabilities. In particular, support your capacity to develop written policies and procedures specific to the HOME Investment Partnership Program and your knowledge of the programmatic changes promulgated by HUD in the 2013 Final Rule.
2. Detail the firm's experience developing handbooks, policies and procedures or administrative guidance for state and/or local government agencies. To the extent applicable, describe the firm's experience developing such handbooks and other materials with respect to HUD grant programs.
3. Indicate which principals and associates from your firm would be involved in providing services to Rhode Island Housing. Provide appropriate background information for each such person and identify his or her responsibilities.
4. Provide a detailed list of references including a contact name and telephone number for organizations or businesses for whom you have performed similar work.
5. 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 Rhode Island Housing.

C. Fee Structure

The cost of services is one of the factors that will be considered in awarding this contract. Please provide a thorough breakdown of your proposed fees for this engagement. The information provided must support the reasonableness of your fees.

Rhode Island Housing is interested in a fixed fee arrangement but would consider other options, such as an hourly rate with a "do not exceed" cap.

D. 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. If your firm is a Minority or Women Owned Business Enterprise,

please include a copy of certification from the State of Rhode Island.

2. Discuss any topics not covered in this Request for Proposals that you would like to bring to Rhode Island Housing's attention.

E. 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 **Nancy Tierney at [ntierney@rhodeislandhousing.org](mailto:ntierney@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 March 18, 2015, (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.

### **EVALUATION AND SELECTION**

A selection committee consisting of Rhode Island Housing employees (the “Committee”) will review all proposals and make a determination based on the following factors:

- Professional capacity to undertake the Scope of Work
- Proposed fee structure
- Ability to perform within time and budget constraints
- Evaluation of potential work plans
  
- Previous work experience and performance with Rhode Island Housing and/or similar organizations
  
- Recommendations by references
- Firm minority status and affirmative action program or activities
- Other pertinent information submitted.

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

In its sole discretion, Rhode Island Housing may negotiate with one or more firms who have submitted qualifications to submit more detailed proposals on specific projects as they arise.

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: Nancy Tierney, Programs Manager, at [ntierney@rhodeislandhousing.org](mailto:ntierney@rhodeislandhousing.org).**

## **Attachment A**

### **Scope of Work**

Rhode Island Housing seeks to engage a qualified firm to develop a Policies and Procedures Manual for the HOME Investment Partnerships Program (“HOME Program”), a grant program of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (“HUD”). The successful firm must demonstrate direct experience providing expertise, consulting services and technical assistance with respect to the HOME Program or other community development initiatives of HUD.

Since 1992, Rhode Island Housing has administered the HOME Program on behalf of the State of Rhode Island. Through the current fiscal year, it has committed nearly \$90 million to non-profit and for-profit developers, municipalities, public housing authorities and individual homebuyers for the acquisition, rehabilitation and new construction of affordable housing.

On July 24, 2013, HUD published a new HOME Program final rule in the Federal Register. See 78 Fed. Reg. 44627 (“2013 HOME Final Rule”). In response to these regulatory changes, Rhode Island Housing seeks to systematically update and formalize its HOME policies and procedures in the form of a written manual. The successful respondent will assist Rhode Island Housing to assess its current policies and procedures, review best practices and all applicable HUD requirements and guidance, make recommendations for operational changes, develop new and revised program documents as needed, and memorialize final revised policies and procedures in a detailed program manual. Each of these project components is further described below.

#### **Assessment of Current Policies and Procedures**

Rhode Island Housing has a small staff specifically dedicated to the HOME Program. The successful firm will work intensively with staff to review existing protocols, and perform a limited file review to become familiar with the written documents and other materials currently being used.

More specifically, the selected firm will interview staff, collect and review program forms (program agreements, mortgages, deed restrictions, subsidy layering forms, and the like), program files, internal regulations and, based on such review, compile an inventory of Rhode Island Housing’s current HOME policies and procedures.

#### **Review of Best Practices and HUD Requirements and Guidance**

Following the assessment of Rhode Island Housing’s current policies and procedures, the selected firm will reach out to a representative sample of other state housing finance agencies (“HFAs”) participating in the HOME Program and compare Rhode Island Housing’s policies and procedures to those of other HFAs. The selected firm will also

collect and perform a detailed review of all applicable HUD rules, regulations, notices, program guides, handbooks, HOMEfires, and other published guidance. From these activities, the firm will provide a written assessment of HOME Program best practices for discussion with Rhode Island Housing.

### **Development of Recommendations and Documents**

The selected firm will develop recommendations based on the assessment activities in the foregoing paragraphs, and advise Rhode Island Housing with respect to (i) operational changes and (ii) amendments to and supplementation of existing Program forms and documents. All such recommendations and advice must be reflected in a written, step-by-step workplan for carrying out program changes.

The firm will develop a collection of Program forms and documents for Rhode Island Housing's use in the governance and management of the HOME Program, including for compliance tracking purposes. Documents may include new templates, flow charts, checklists and/or modifications to existing forms and documents.

### **Policies and Procedures Manual**

The firm will produce a comprehensive policies and procedures manual for the Rhode Island Housing HOME program. Staff will use the manual as a basis for making funding decisions, governing day-to-day operations and assisting grantees to understand and maintain program compliance. In addition to any other topics that are required under the HUD regulations and the 2013 HOME Final Rule, the manual must include the following:

- Underwriting, cost allocation and subsidy layering
  - See 24 CFR 92.250, 92.254, and Notice CPD 98-02
- Match and reporting requirements
  - See 24 CFR 92.218 - 92.222
- Monitoring and risk assessment
  - See 24 CFR 92.504 - 92.508; Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, 78 Fed. Reg. 78589, Dec. 26, 2013 (commonly known as the “OMB Omni Circular”)
- Property inspection procedures and construction standards
  - See 24 CFR 92.251, 92.504
- Identification and definition of tenant income, utility allowances, and rent limits
  - See 24 CFR 92.203, 92.252
- Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (“FFATA”) reporting
  - Compliance with FFATA; policies and procedures relating to the FFATA Subaward Reporting System (“FSRS”) system
- Financial management/distribution of funds
  - Policies and procedures relating to the Integrated Disbursement and

Information System (“IDIS”); IDIS components and functions; recordkeeping

- Affirmative marketing
  - See 24 CFR 92.351
- Displacement and temporary relocation
  - See 24 CFR 92.353
- Community Housing Development Organization (“CHDO”) set-aside and operating funds
  - See 24 CFR 92.300

The manual will also incorporate the new and revised Program forms and documents described in the previous section. All materials produced by the consulting team must meet all applicable HUD regulations, including without limitation title 24, part 92 of the Code of Federal Regulations, as amended and supplemented by the 2013 HOME Final Rule, and comply with all other federal, state and local statutes and regulations.

**Proposed Schedule:**

Firm selection and contract  
Assessment activities complete:  
Written plan/recommended actions:  
Document development:  
Completion of manual

**Due:**

April 2015  
June 2015  
July 2015  
October 2015  
January 2016