



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Solar-Renewable Resource Utilization

Posting Date: Thursday, October 5, 2023

Response Submission Deadline: 4:00 PM, Thursday, October 26, 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 identify barriers to maximizing the utilization of solar and other renewable energy resources in affordable housing in Rhode Island and develop statutory and regulatory language to remove or mitigate those barriers.

As the state’s Housing Finance Agency (HFA) RIHousing is interested in promoting the utilization of renewable energy resources in affordable housing projects. However, there are a number of statutory, regulatory, and logistical barriers to doing that. Those challenges include a statutory prohibition on family developments of more than 10 units utilizing a master meter ([RIGL 39-3-7.1](#)), which, combined with requirements that onsite or virtual net metering runs through a single meter, makes it difficult for the benefits of renewable energy savings to be shared with residents of these developments. It also creates challenges with being able to size renewable resources to the needs of the entire development rather than just the needs served by a common area meter. Through this RFP, RIHousing seeks proposals from qualified firms to identify barriers to maximizing the utilization of solar and other renewable energy resources in affordable housing in Rhode Island, develop statutory and/or regulatory language to remove or mitigate those barriers, and provide support to RIHousing as needed in moving these statutory and/or regulatory recommendations forward.

The deliverables for this project are:

1. Production of a report that includes;
 - Identification of barriers to maximizing the utilization of renewable energy in affordable housing developments and sharing the benefits of energy cost savings with tenants. This should include identification of statutory and/or regulatory barriers in Rhode Island;
 - Overview of best practices from Rhode Island and around the country that are being used to overcome these or similar barriers to utilizing solar and renewable energy in affordable developments;
 - Recommendations for addressing identified barriers including statutory and/or regulatory changes.
2. Drafting of recommended new statutory and/or regulatory language

3. Availability to assist RIHousing in moving recommended language forward through the legislative or regulatory process with topical expertise and supporting written materials as needed.

INSTRUCTIONS

Proposals must be submitted via email to: **Abeer Khatana**, at akhatana@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.

Updates, amendments and Q&As related to this Request for Proposals may be posted from time to time at: [RFPs & RFQs | RIHousing](#).



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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)

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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)

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1. Describe your firm and its capabilities. In particular, support your capacity to perform the Scope of Work. Please include samples of previous work relevant to this project. Please indicate your knowledge of renewable energy utilization in residential developments, particularly affordable housing. Please also include any relevant information indicating your familiarity or involvement with policy, statutory or regulatory work to facilitate the utilization of solar and other renewable energy resources in residential developments.

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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.

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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.

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4. Provide a detailed list of three 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. Describe how your firm will handle actual and or potential conflicts of interest.

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.
- ☐ 2. Provide an itemized breakdown of flat fees, 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.

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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.

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.



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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)
- 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: Abeer Khatana, at akhatana@rihousing.com.



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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.
- (iv) In the event of a disclosure of personal information or any breach of the security of the system that may cause a significant risk of identity theft, Contractor agrees to provide notification to any Rhode Island resident whose personal information was, or reasonably believed to have been, acquired by an unauthorized person or entity. Notification shall be made as soon as possible but shall not exceed forty-five (45) calendar days after confirmation of the breach and the ability to ascertain the information required by the notice requirements of R.I. Gen. Laws § 11-49.3-4(d). Notification shall be consistent with law enforcement's legitimate needs per R.I. Gen. Laws § 11-49.3-4(c). Where more than five hundred (500) Rhode Island residents are to be notified, the Contractor shall notify the attorney general and major credit reporting agencies regarding the timing, content, and distribution of the notifications and the estimated number of affected individuals. Such notice shall be made without delaying notification to affected Rhode Island residents. Notification may only be delayed in accordance with R.I. Gen. Laws § 11-49.3-4(b).

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



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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 Amy Rainone, arainone@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 August 11, 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 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 seeks a qualified firm to produce the following deliverables:

1. Production of a report that includes;
 - Identification of barriers to maximizing the utilization of renewable energy in affordable housing developments and sharing the benefits of energy cost savings with tenants. This should include identification of statutory and/or regulatory barriers in Rhode Island;
 - Overview of best practices from Rhode Island and around the country that are being used to overcome these or similar barriers to utilizing solar and renewable energy in affordable developments;
 - Recommendations for addressing identified barriers including statutory and/or regulatory changes.
2. Drafting of recommended statutory and/or regulatory language
3. Availability to assist RIHousing in moving recommended language forward through the legislative or regulatory process with topical expertise and supporting written materials as needed.

II. Project Schedule

RIHousing is seeking assistance to develop legislative language which could be considered in the 2024 session of the Rhode Island General Assembly which begins in January 2024. Therefore the report and recommended statutory/regulatory language must be completed by February 2024. Additional support, if required, associated with moving this language through the legislative or regulatory process could extend through calendar year 2024.

Work will be performed primarily off-site and delivered to RIHousing through electronic communications, over telecommunication channels, or by use of physical copies. However, some work may be required to be performed in-person, on-site at the RIHousing office, in governmental offices, or in legislative chambers on an as needed basis.

III. Project Approach

RIHousing seeks a firm that has in-depth knowledge and expertise of both the utilization of renewable energy resources in residential developments (preferably including experience with affordable housing) and the development of policy, statutory and regulatory frameworks to facilitate that utilization.

Firms may propose to hire a subcontractor to assist with the execution of this Scope of Work. Approval of any subcontractors is at RIHousing's discretion.

IV. Fee Schedule



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RIHousing is seeking a fee structure consistent with the following general format:

- A flat fee for drafting the report and proposed statutory language outlined in Section I of this Scope of Work
- An hourly billing rate for services rendered in furtherance of moving the recommended language through the legislative and regulatory process, and supporting written materials, as outlined in Section I of this Scope of Work.