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Urban Redevelopment Authority
of Pittsburgh

ura.org

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

HOUSING OPPORTUNITY FUND (HOF)

Housing Stabilization Program – Coordinated Entry

RFP Issue Date: Thursday, **January 23, 2020**

Proposal Deadline: Wednesday, **February 5, 2020 at 3:00 PM**

I. INTRODUCTION

Goal of the RFP

The Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh's (URA) Housing Opportunity Fund (HOF) requests proposals from organizations who have the capacity to provide a coordinated entry system for the HOF Housing Stabilization Program (HSP). The coordinated entry system will connect City of Pittsburgh residents to resources, and provide referral services to consumers inquiring about rent, utilities, and/or legal needs.

The purpose of the HOF Housing Stabilization Program's coordinated entry system is to have a centralized point of entry where an applicant can be streamlined to the appropriate HSP Service Provider for a referral, help eliminate duplicates in the system, and to increase efficiency for services. This will be in tandem with the 2018 and 2019 Allocation Years for the Housing Stabilization Program (HSP).

II. HOF BACKGROUND

The HOF is a housing trust fund that has been established in the City of Pittsburgh (City) to support the development and preservation of affordable and accessible housing within the City's boundaries. The City is committing \$10 million per year for the next 12 years to fund HOF programs and initiatives. The HOF programmatic areas for 2018 and 2019 include: Rental Gap Program, For-Sale Development Program, Down Payment and Closing Cost Assistance Program, Homeowner Assistance Program, Housing Stabilization Program, and Demonstration Dollars. HOF is overseen by the HOF Advisory Board, URA Board of Directors, and City Council.

For the 2018 fiscal year, \$750,000 has been allocated for the HOF HSP, and for the 2019 fiscal year, \$800,000 has been allocated for the HOF HSP.

Definitions

For the purposes of this RFP, the following terms shall mean:

- URA refers to Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh
- HOF refers to Housing Opportunity Fund
- HSP refers to Housing Stabilization Program
- Recipients refers to HSP household fund recipients
- Coordinated Entry Providers refers to organizations who have the capacity to streamline services
- City refers to City of Pittsburgh

III. PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The main objective of the HOF HSP is to provide one-time or short-term funding to individuals and families who are struggling with housing expenses including rent and/or utilities. The maximum support a recipient (household) may receive is \$3,000 including legal services and/or administrative services; assistance will not extend beyond four (4) months. Attached are the HOF HSP Program Guidelines. Exact funding limits are to be set in each allocation years' RFP. For the 2018 allocation year, the maximum amount will be \$3,000 with an estimated average amount of assistance per household at \$1,500.

The HOF HSP is designed to assist participants to stabilize their current housing, facilitate access to appropriate housing and prevent homelessness. The program will also allow for legal eviction prevention services including legal consultation and representation for eviction defense and/or related supportive services. A recipient/household may only participate in the HSP one (1) time during a five (5) year period.

Full HOF HSP Program Guidelines are attached to this RFP ([EXHIBIT A](#)).

IV. RFP OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this RFP is to solicit Coordinated Entry Providers to serve as the point of entry for the HOF HSP. The URA will enter into contracts with the Coordinated Entry Providers and reimburse them for costs incurred on a to-be-determined basis. Coordinated Entry Providers must request payments on the proper URA form(s), duly signed and approved by the Coordinated Entry Provider, for a specified dollar amount.

Coordinated Entry Providers may expect to be reimbursed within 2-4 weeks upon submission of appropriate URA forms, but this may take up to 60 days.

Coordinated Entry Provider Responsibilities

- a. Determine recipient eligibility (both income and circumstances)
- b. Ensure timely customer service/referrals
- c. Submit reimbursement forms to URA for payments regarding call volume, not more than monthly
- d. Provide monitoring reports to URA on a quarterly basis

V. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Households receiving assistance under HOF HSP must meet the requirements below:

a. Recipient Requirements:

- i. Each household must reside in the City.

- ii. The annual gross household income of each recipient must be at or below 30% or 50% of the Pittsburgh Area Median Income (AMI) with adjustments made for family size (Refer to [EXHIBIT B](#) for AMI Chart). The income limit will be specified and set in the funding award.
- iii. Determination of the recipient's annual income shall be based on current income projected from the date of application. Annual income should be based on the gross income from all sources before taxes or withholding from all household members who are not minors or full-time students. The most recent federal income tax form will also be required to verify the applicant's income history.
- iv. Each household must demonstrate that it is in a housing crisis which can be successfully addressed through one-time or short-term assistance to stabilize the household's circumstances.
- v. If the Coordinated Entry Provider determines that the recipient/household is able to pay up to 30% of their monthly income towards their rent and utility expenses while they are being serviced by the program, the recipient must do so to be eligible for program funds.

b. Property Requirements:

Residences that will house the recipient households must meet the following requirements:

- i. Each property must be a permanent structure used primarily for year-round residential use.
- ii. Eligible properties must be located inside the City.
- iii. Eligible properties must pass a Housing Habitability Standards inspection conducted by the URA.
- iv. Eligible properties must have no outstanding City, School District, and County real estate tax obligations and/or the owner must be on a payment plan.

c. Required and Eligible Uses of Funding for Recipients (Households):

- i. Housing Stabilization Program Service Providers will specify in their applications which of the following two (2) types of funding support they will administer: One-Time Funding Support and/or On-Going Funding Support (not to exceed four (4) months).
- ii. One-Time Funding Support may include the following:
 - a) Move-in assistance which may include:
 - First month's rent
 - Last month's rent
 - Security deposit
 - Utility deposits
 - b) Utilities in arrears

- c) Rent in arrears
- iii. On-Going Funding Support may include the following:
 - a) Rent subsidy, not to exceed four (4) months
 - b) Legal services throughout the eviction process
- iv. All funding will be provided as a grant.
- v. All payments will be made by the Housing Stabilization Program Service Providers via dual check to recipient and recipient’s creditor. The URA will reimburse the Housing Stabilization Program Service Providers, or if necessary, provide dual checks to the Housing Stabilization Program Service Providers and the recipient’s landlord/creditor.

VI. FUNDING TERMS, LIMITS, and OTHER RESTRICTIONS

Funding Type

Funding to social service providers and/or law clinics to administer the HSP and/or provide legal consultation to households facing eviction.

VII. PROPOSAL DEADLINES and OTHER REQUIREMENTS

Important Bid Notification Announcement

Please note that the URA is using Public Purchase as its bid notification and RFP Question and Answer (Q&A) platform. In addition to following the Submission Requirements, respondents must also register at: <https://www.publicpurchase.com/gems/register/vendor/register> in order to submit questions for response. See **Addendum A** – Instructions for Registering on Public Purchase.

RFP Anticipated Timeframe*

RFP Issue Date	Thursday, January 23, 2020
Proposal Deadline	Wednesday, February 5, 2020 by 3:00 PM EST
Proposal Evaluation Period	Thursday, February 5, 2020 to February 13, 2020

***Dates subject to change**

Questions and Answers

All inquiries should be submitted on this RFP's posting on Public Purchase

Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprise Participation (MWBE)

The URA has a long history of diversity and inclusion within all its programs and activities. The URA encourages the full participation of minority and women organizations and professionals in this effort. The URA will require that all Coordinated Entry Providers demonstrate a good faith effort to obtain MWBE participation in work performed in connection with this program.

In the form of a narrative state as succinctly as possible your organization's efforts to promote opportunities for MWBE professionals in your organization. MWBE participation can be satisfied by:

- a. Employment levels of minorities and/or women in the organization;
- b. Staffing of minorities and/or women on URA work;
- c. Use of minority or women-owned businesses as vendors for legal, printing, office supplies, travel, etc.; and
- d. Subcontracting with organizations owned and controlled by minorities and/or women. If this is to be done, that fact, and the name of the proposed subcontracting organizations, must be clearly identified in the submission. Following the award of a contract, no additional subcontracting will be allowed without the express prior written consent of the URA.

Any questions about MWBE standards should be directed to mwbe@ura.org.

Additional Information

Additional information regarding the URA may be found on the URA's website at www.ura.org.

VIII. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

All application submissions are to include a completed HOF HSP Administrator Application Narrative (**EXHIBIT C**) and all attachments listed in the Attachments Checklist (**EXHIBIT D**).

The Application Narrative is comprised of the following sections:

- i. Eligibility Checklist
- ii. Organization Information
- iii. Organizational Experience
- iv. Readiness to Proceed
- v. Financial Capacity
- vi. Approach to Providing Social Services and Financial Planning
- vii. Additional Information (Optional)

All sections of the Application Narrative must be completed to the best of the applicant's ability to be considered a complete application.

In addition, a separate MWBE narrative must be submitted with the application.

All submissions must be electronically submitted to hof@ura.org

IX. SELECTION CRITERIA & REVIEW PROCESS

Fully completed applications will be evaluated in accordance to the Scoring Criteria for the HOF HSP ([EXHIBIT E](#)) after which URA staff will present the application for funding to the HOF Advisory Board.

a. Applications will be evaluated using the criteria below:

- i. Feasibility Criteria
 - a) Readiness to Proceed
 - b) Organizational Experience
 - c) Approach to Providing Social Services

b. Preference will be given to Coordinated Entry Providers who:

- i. Provides service citywide

c. Application Review

After the February 5, 2020 proposal deadline, all proposals for Coordinated Entry Providers will be evaluated by HOF staff, upon which a recommendation for HOF Housing Stabilization Coordinated Entry Providers will be presented to the HOF Advisory Board.

Upon Advisory Board approval, the selected Coordinated Entry Provider will then be recommended to the HOF Governing Board for approval.

HOF Housing Stabilization funds are not guaranteed to any proposer, regardless of the Proposal Scoring Criteria score, and are subject to availability.

d. Guidelines

The HOF Governing Board may approve and disapprove awards to the Coordinated Entry Provider in accordance with the HOF HSP Guidelines ([EXHIBIT A](#)) and this RFP.

e. Deadlines

The Coordinated Entry Provider must meet URA deadlines for submission of documents at each stage of the proposal process. Failure to meet the deadlines may result in the cancellation of the proposal and/or Coordinated Entry Provider's loss of a priority position for Housing Stabilization funding.

f. Written Commitment Letter

Approval shall be evidenced by a written commitment to the Coordinated Entry Provider.

g. Withdrawal of Application

Respondents may withdraw their Housing Stabilization proposal at any time before final approval by giving written notice to the URA. The respondent shall bear any costs incurred for items related to their response.

X. LEGAL INFORMATION

The URA reserves the right to verify the accuracy of all information submitted. The URA shall be the sole judge as to which respondent(s) meet the selection criteria. The URA reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to reject any or all responses received, and to waive any submission requirements contained within this RFP.

By responding to this RFP, proposers acknowledge that the URA has no liability to any individual or entity related to this RFP or any proposal and/or the URA's use or nonuse of any such proposal.

APPEALS COMMITTEE

The URA will establish an Appeals Committee whose purpose is to review HOF HSP Program Guideline(s) waiver requests. The Appeals Committee will recommend approval or disapproval of the request to the Director of the HOF. The Director of the HOF can choose to accept or reject the recommendation of the Appeals Committee.

CERTIFICATIONS

In accordance with 24 CFR Part 8, the Authority certifies its compliance with the provisions of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended on June 2, 1988.

NON-DISCRIMINATION CERTIFICATION

The URA abides by all applicable laws and regulations regarding nondiscrimination and refrains from discriminating on the basis of age, race, color, religious creed, ancestry, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, political or union affiliation, and/or disability. No person shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination solely on the basis of any of the above factors under the loan and grant programs operated by the URA.

LIST OF EXHIBITS

[EXHIBIT A – HOF HSP Program Guidelines](#)

[EXHIBIT B – 2019 Area Median Income Chart](#)

[EXHIBIT C – Application Narrative](#)

[EXHIBIT D – Attachments Checklist](#)

[EXHIBIT E – HOF HSP Proposal Scoring Criteria](#)

Addendum A

Instructions for Registering on Public Purchase

Effective March 1, 2018

The Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh (URA) is now using Public Purchase, a web-based eProcurement service, for the automatic notification and transmittal of bid solicitations and notification of proposal opportunities at no charge to vendors. Parties interested in bidding or submitting proposals on URA opportunities must register with Public Purchase.

Registration is a two-step process that requires initial registration with the Public Purchase web-based eProcurement service, followed by registration with the URA. If you are already registered with Public Purchase, proceed directly to step 2.

1. Register with Public Purchase:

Use the link below to begin the registration process. It can take up to 24 hours for your account to become active. You will receive an email from notices@publicpurchase.com letting you know that your account has been activated. Be sure to add this email address to your contacts to avoid bid/proposal notification emails from going into your junk mail folder.

<https://www.publicpurchase.com/gems/register/vendor/register>

2. Register with the URA:

- A. Once you have received your activation email from Public Purchase log in to www.publicpurchase.com and accept the terms and conditions of use.
- B. Click on the "Tools" tab, followed by the "Agencies" tab.
- C. This will take you to "Search for Agencies."
 - In the box for "Agency Name," type in "Urban Redevelopment."
 - Leave the "New Agencies Since" box blank.
 - Make sure "Registration Status" reads "All."
 - Click on "Search" to bring up "Urban Redevelopment."
 - To the far right, you will see "View" and "Register."
 - Click on the "Register" link to complete your vendor registration with the URA.

IMPORTANT REMINDER:

To receive email notifications on URA bid solicitation and proposal opportunities, you must select NAICS Codes that relate to your business. In your NAICS Code selection for URA specific opportunities, please be sure to include NAICS Code 237210 (Land Subdivision) for URA development opportunities.

It is important that this second part of the registration is complete, or you will not receive notifications of upcoming opportunities from the URA. It is your responsibility to keep this information up to date, particularly your contact information and email address. Please email mwbe@ura.org if you encounter an issue setting up your registration.

For Additional Assistance:

If you need additional assistance with this process, please contact Public Purchase at support@publicpurchase.com or use Public Purchase's "Live Chat" during business hours. The "Chat" button can be found in the upper left corner of the Public Purchase screen.

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