



## **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)**

### **State & Federal Government Relations**

**RFP Issue Date: September 30, 2022**

**Proposal Due Date: November 15, 2022, at 5 PM ET  
VIA URA Bidding Software: Ion Wave Technologies**

## **Section 1. General Information**

- 1.1 The Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh (URA) is requesting proposals from firms to provide government relations services. The purpose of this solicitation is to procure professional services for building and maintaining relationships with policy makers and their staff, advancing the URA's legislative priorities, and securing competitive state and federal funding. This may include, but not limited to, direct assistance with legislative drafting, grant writing, and navigating both legislative and administrative processes.
- 1.2 The URA plans to hire one or more respondents to provide government relations services for calendar years 2023 and 2024. This two (2) year contract term will include an optional 2-year extension.
- 1.3 This RFP opens for proposals on September 30, 2022 and closes November 15, 2022. Interested parties are requested to submit a detailed proposal package that clearly defines the relevant experience of the proposed staff and team members, proposed methods and strategy, as well as a fee proposal.
- 1.4 Contact for all queries and receipt of proposals will be managed VIA Ion Wave Technologies by the stated contact below:

David Geiger  
Senior Advisor, Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh  
[dgeiger@ura.org](mailto:dgeiger@ura.org)
- 1.5 Respondents shall direct all contact and questions regarding this Request for Proposals (RFP) and selection process through Ion Wave Technologies. Questions concerning terms, conditions and technical specifications shall be submitted in writing through the URA's bid management software, Ion Wave Technologies (IWT). **Questions will be answered in writing on the URA's website ([http://www.ura.org/working\\_with\\_us/proposals.php](http://www.ura.org/working_with_us/proposals.php)) by November 1, 2022. Questions submitted after October 21, 2022, may not be answered.**
- 1.6 Consideration is expected to be given, but is not guaranteed to be given, to the criteria listed in this RFP. The URA reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, to waive any and all informalities outlined in the RFP and in the selection process, and generally to make the award that, in its judgment, will best meet the objectives stated in this RFP.
- 1.7 Expenses incurred by the respondents in replying to the RFP or in making any appearance before the review committee are at the respondents' own expense and risk. All responses, including attachments, supplementary materials, addenda, etc., shall become the property of the URA and will not be returned.
- 1.8 Respondents may submit proposals for State services, Federal services, or both. The URA reserves the right to make suggestions related to team structure throughout the proposal process and contract negotiations.
- 1.9 Submission of a proposal indicates acceptance by the firm of the conditions contained in this request for proposals unless clearly and specifically noted in the proposal submitted and confirmed in the contract between the URA and the firm selected.

## **Section 2. Background**

The URA was established in 1946 under the Pennsylvania Urban Redevelopment Law and serves as the City of Pittsburgh's community and economic development partner. Since inception, the URA has constructed and rehabilitated tens of thousands of homes, reclaimed thousands of acres of contaminated brownfield and riverfront sites and assisted hundreds of businesses in neighborhoods throughout the City of Pittsburgh. Presently, the URA is committed to creating more housing that is affordable to the average Pittsburgher; encouraging more entrepreneurship and small business development; promoting inclusive growth and quality job creation; expanding neighborhood and main streets revitalization efforts; and developing a talented workforce that is equipped with the skills of the future.

To fill gaps in the development and lending markets, the URA created strategic affiliate organizations. Currently, URA affiliates include the Pittsburgh Housing Development Corporation (PHDC); the Pittsburgh Economic & Industrial Development Corporation (PEIDC); Pittsburgh Urban Initiatives (PUI); Invest PGH (IPGH); and the Pittsburgh Land Bank (PLB). Representation of the URA's interests will include representing the interests of our affiliate organizations.

The URA is a government authority with approximately 100 employees. While the URA is a legal entity separate and distinct from the City of Pittsburgh, only considered to be a component unit of the City for financial statement purposes, the Authority still works closely with the City in fulfilling its redevelopment activities. A key source of funding for URA-related projects and programs is through competitive, intergovernmental grants and loans.

Additional information regarding the Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh may be found on our website at [www.ura.org](http://www.ura.org).

### **Section 3. Process**

#### **3.1 Tentative Proposal Calendar:**

A tentative schedule has been prepared for this proposal process. The schedule is subject to change; however, the RFP due date will not be changed without notice on the URA's website:

[http://www.ura.org/working\\_with\\_us/proposals.php](http://www.ura.org/working_with_us/proposals.php)

<b>TENTATIVE Proposal Timeline</b>	
<b>September 30, 2022</b>	RFP Application Opens
<b>October 21, 2022</b>	RFP Question Submissions Due
<b>November 15, 2022</b>	Proposal Submissions Due
<b>Nov 16, 2022 – Dec 1, 2022</b>	Interviews (if deemed necessary)
<b>December 8, 2022</b>	Board Authorization of Contract
<b>December 22, 2022</b>	Execute Contract
<b>Jan 1, 2023 – Dec 31, 2024</b>	Original Contract Period

#### **3.2 Tentative Proposal Review Committee:**

Proposals submitted will be reviewed by the following Review Committee:

1. David Geiger, Senior Advisor
2. Dylan Sloat, Legislative and Systems Specialist
3. Marcus Robinson, Grants and Compliance Manager
4. Hannah Svonavec, Counsel
5. Catherine Murray, Assistant Director of Commercial Lending

This committee's short list and final recommendation will be presented to URA Executive Leadership Team ahead of presentation to the URA Board of Directors for final selection.

#### **3.3 Final Selection:**

The URA Board of Directors will select firm(s) based upon the recommendation of the Review Committee, while reserving the right to reject any and all recommendations, to waive any and all formalities outlined in the RFP and in the selection process, and generally to make the award that, in its judgment, will best meet the objectives stated in this RFP.

#### **3.4 Contract:**

Upon notification of selection by URA staff, the successful respondent is required to enter into a contract within two weeks of receipt of a draft contract from the URA. If the successful respondent is unwilling or unable to execute the agreement as required by the RFP, the URA has the right to request another respondent to enter into the contract with the URA.

#### **3.5 Non-Discrimination:**

If selected, each respondent agrees not to discriminate, whether in employment, contracting or otherwise, in violation of any federal, state, or local law and/or on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity and/or gender expression.

## **Section 4. Proposal Requirements**

### **4.1 Submission Requirements and Deadline**

One (1) electronic copy, **SUBMITTED THROUGH ION WAVE TECHNOLOGIES**, in Word or PDF format must be **received by the URA by no later than 5 PM ET on November 15, 2022**. Paper copies will not be accepted. Proposals received after the deadline will not be accepted.

Submissions should be received through Ion Wave Technologies (IWT) as directed on the [URA website](#)

### **4.2 Proposal Format and Content**

Respondent(s) shall submit a proposal that includes all of the following materials. The Review Committee anticipates that full proposal packages will be less than thirty (30) pages.

During the review process, the URA reserves the right, where it may serve the URA's best interest, to request additional information or clarifications from respondents, or to allow corrections of errors or omissions. At the discretion of the URA, respondents submitting proposals may be requested to interview as part of the process.

#### **1. Title Page**

#### **2. Table of Contents**

#### **3. Transmittal Letter— include the following:**

- A signed statement regarding the respondent's understanding of the work to be done,
- A statement attesting that the firm(s) will perform the work according to professional standards
- A statement that, if hired as a government relations consultant, the company/firm(s) will comply with all relevant laws and regulations.
- A statement that the firm(s) understand that, after a selection is made, all qualifications may be public records under the Pennsylvania Right to Know Law,
- A statement that neither the firm(s) nor any partner, principal, member, or officer of the firm(s) is currently in violation of or being investigated for violation of any regulatory agency rules that may have a material impact on the ability to provide the services requested.

#### **4. Cover Letter**

*Limit to no more than 3 pages; letter should include:*

- Company name(s), contact name, address, and email address
- Brief description of experience providing Government Relations services with specific, relevant projects and clients who you have provided similar work for previously.

#### **5. Firm Profile & Biography of Assigned Personnel:**

- Provide a brief profile of the firm(s) that describes the type of organization(s) and that includes names and qualification of your staff. Specifically indicate which staff provide Government Relations services.
- Identify the staff within the firm(s) who would be providing government relations services to the URA and provide a brief biography that includes relevant experience. Please include the estimated percentage of time or estimated number of hours that each staff member will work with the URA and its affiliates on a monthly basis

## 6. Conflict of Interest

- Respondents and team members must disclose any conflict of interest, or potential conflict of interest, with regards to any work performed by the respondents with/for a member or employee of the URA or any related entity.
- Provide a complete list of other clients that members of the team are currently serving as registered lobbyist for and identify potential conflicts of interest.

## 7. References

- Provide three (3) references with agencies or parties that have worked with the proposed, assigned personnel from section 5. Include the reference's name, title, email, and direct telephone number.

## 8. Proposed Method

- A detailed narrative of methods and plan to carry out the scope of work that explains why your firm is best qualified to serve as the URA's government relations consultant.

## 9. M/WBE Participation

- The URA strives to provide equal opportunities for business growth and development to minority and female business owners. All contracts in excess of \$250,000 are required to submit a [Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprise \(MWBE\) Plan](#) to achieve or exceed the goal of awarding 18% of the total project costs to MBEs and 7% of total project costs to WBEs.
- While the total cost of this contract may fall short of \$250,000, the URA requests a description of how the award of this contract will promote opportunities for women and minority professionals in your organization and/or through the services that the URA would pay for through this contract. MBE/WBE participation can be satisfied by:
  - Ownership/Partnership of firm
  - Employment levels of minorities and/or women in the firm
  - Firm's use of minority or women-owned businesses as vendors for legal, printing, office supplies, travel, etc.
  - Subcontracting with firms owned and controlled by minorities and/or women. If this is to be done, that fact, and the name of the proposed subcontracting firms, must be clearly identified in the proposal.
- Please include any relevant third-party certification and/or documentation of MWBE status.

## 10. Fee Proposal and Pricing Methodology

- Briefly describe your fee proposal and pricing methodology for serving as the URA government relations consultant based on a retainer model. All applicants must provide pricing in retainer model structure. Alternative pricing strategies will also be considered but must be included as a supplement. Please note any distinctions based upon type of activity or any other factor that you deem significant.
- Please provide a breakout of pricing for state, federal, or both services, depending on the firm's proposal structure, per section 1.8.

## 11. Other Information

- Please provide any other information which you believe is pertinent to the URA's consideration of your firm. Please limit your response to this item to no more than five (5) pages.

## **Section 5. Evaluation Criteria**

### **5.1 Experience**

The respondent's experience in providing services similar to those described in Section 1.1; the quality of the applicant's management, reputation and references; the number of years of experience providing the services specified (3 – 5 years minimum).

### **5.2 Quality of Submission**

The quality of the submission and the degree to which it demonstrates the team members' full understanding of their ability to perform the services to be rendered; the content of the response should demonstrate the applicant's full understanding of this can be achieved with as little conflict of interest as possible; evidenced by the documentation requested.

### **5.3 MWBE Participation**

The applicant's MWBE narrative should indicate whether the applicant is an MWBE and also include an overview of the applicant's strategy toward MWBE participation, in general.

### **5.4 Fee Proposal**

The URA reserves the right to accept an offer or proposal other than the lowest offer and will determine awards at its sole discretion. Although the URA is not required to select the lowest bid, a respondent's fee proposal should be competitive for industry standards.

### **5.5 Accuracy**

The URA shall have the right to verify the accuracy of all information submitted and to make such investigation as it deems necessary to determine the ability of each respondent to perform the obligations in the response. The URA in its discretion reserves the right to reject any response when the available evidence or information does not satisfy the URA that the respondent is qualified to carry out properly the obligations of the response.

### **5.6 Review of Proposals**

The URA shall be the sole judge as to which, if any, respondent best meet the selection criteria. The URA reserves the right to reject any or all responses, to waive any submission requirements contained within this response, and to waive any irregularities in any submitted response.

### **5.7 Nature of the RFP**

This form is submitted subject to errors, omissions, and/or withdrawal without notice by the URA at any time.

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