DEPARTMENT OF HOMELESSNESS AND SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

RFP Questions and Answers
Issued April 24th, 2018

**RFP #HSH2018-111 Homelessness Response System Housing Solutions
Homelessness Prevention Assistance and Rapid Rehousing**

Pre-Proposal Conference: 9:00 am, Thursday, April 19th, 2018

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MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

1. **Question:** Can we leverage referrals as part of the Minimum Qualifications?
   Answer: Please provide responses to the Minimum Qualifications in accordance with what is requested in the RFP and Appendix 1, Proposal Template.

2. **Question:** Would working collaboratively with legal organizations to provide legal assistance to homeless populations qualify as organizational experience?
   Answer: No. As noted in Minimum Qualification #7 in Appendix 1, the Proposer's experience must be "direct experience."

3. **Question:** For organizations applying to do rapid re-housing only, they are not required to have two years minimum experience of providing direct legal services, correct?
   Answer: Correct**.**

4. **Question:** Does not yet having a history established providing Rapid Re-housing disqualify a vendor from consideration?
   Answer: The Proposer must meet the Minimum Qualifications stated in the RFP and Appendix 1, Proposal Template for the Program Component(s) it is interested in providing.

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

5. **Question:** If applying for both program components, do we submit two proposals?
   Answer: Per RFP Section 4.2, "Proposers proposing to provide services for both Components (Homelessness Prevention Assistance and Rapid Rehousing) must submit a single proposal but must respond to all Minimum Qualifications and provide a separate and distinct program narrative and program budget for each Program Component."

6. **Question:** Are proposers applying for multiple program components allotted five pages for the Minimum Qualifications in total, or is each component allotted five pages?
   Answer: Minimum Qualifications responses for each Program Component individually can be up to five pages.

7. **Question:** For agencies applying for both components, do we write two program narratives of up to 20 pages each (for up to 40 pages total)? Or do we write two narratives that are up to 20 pages combined? (Appendix 1, page 4 of 6)
   Answer: Each Program Component narrative can individually be up to 20 pages (40 pages combined, if applying for both Program Components).

8. **Question:** May agencies submit multiple proposals?
   Answer: Yes.

9. **Question:** (RFP page 15). It says proposals should be printed double-sided. What about font size? Spacing?
   Answer: Proposals should be presented professionally. Text should be a reasonable size and font for ease of readibility.

FUNDING, PROVIDERS and TERM

10. **Question:** How much is the expected award amount for each program area?
    Answer: The allocations between Program Components under this RFP are currently estimated to be 42% for Homelessness Prevention Assistance; 58% for Rapid Rehousing. Please note that these estimated allocations are subject to change based on funding availability, proposals and grant agreement negotiations, as well as future needs.

11. **Question:** Is there an estimate of the total allocation between the two components?
    Answer: See answer to #10.

12. **Question:** How much money is available, and how much of it is new and how much supports existing programs?
    Answer: Approximately $8.9 million annually is available. Currently, approximately $8.6 million is currently awarded to organizations providing Homelessness Prevention Assistance and Rapid Rehousing. This is an open, competitive RFP process and all qualified Proposers may submit proposals for consideration.

13. **Question:** Is this funding (or part of it) intended to renew existing contracts, or is some of it new, and can you identify which is which?
    Answer: See answer to #12.

14. **Question:** What is the approximate amount HSH intends to allocate for each component Homelessness Prevention Assistance and Rapid Rehousing of the total estimated $8.9M?
    Answer: See answer to #10.

15. **Question:** For each of the components, does HSH anticipate that this RFP will lead to an increase to existing service levels, or will it maintain current services levels?
    Answer: Service levels may increase depending on funding availability, proposals and grant agreement negotiations, as well as future needs.

16. **Question:** How does the total amount of funds available compare to what HSH currently pays for these services? (i.e. is this an expansion, reduction, or the same funding availability?)
Answer: See answer to #12.

17. **Question:** Is this expansion of existing funding or just renewal of existing services?
Answer: See answer to #12.

18. **Question:** Is one provider preferred for each of the categories, or is it preferred to have multiple providers for each?
Answer: There is no pre-determined or preferred number of Grantees that will be selected through this RFP.

19. **Question:** How many organizations do you expect or anticipate to contract/award for this?
Answer: See answer to #18.

20. **Question:** Is there a current provider for each of these programs now? Or is this a new fund?
Answer: See answer to #12.

21. **Question:** How long will awarded contracts be made out for? (1, 3, 5 years?)
Answer: Per the RFP cover page, the estimated grant term is a three-year initial term with two additional two-year term extension options subject to City approval. Actual grant periods may vary, depending on service needs and Grantee performance. HSH shall have the sole discretion to extend the Agreement term for up to a total of ten (10) years (or 120 months).

22. **Question:** What is preferred ratio, if any, of services to housing dollars for each pot?
Answer: See answer to #10 regarding funding allocation. Each Proposer should use its experience to determine an appropriate budget for the Program Component(s) services it is interested in being considered to provide.

23. **Question:** In the past, HSA/HSH-funded rental subsidy programs had to extend to 5 years, per legislation I believe was passed by the Board of Supervisors around 2010. Is that no longer the case? I see a 24 month max referred to in Page 10 of the RFP.
Answer: Currently, HSH's Rapid Rehousing programs have a maximum time limit of 24 months. HSH is researching this legislation and will provide more information to selected Grantees after consulting with our City Attorney.

BUDGET PROPOSAL

24. **Question:** What percentage of indirect costs are allowed in the budget?
    Answer: Indirect costs are subject to grant agreement negotiations. Proposers should use their experience to determine the appropriate level of indirect costs for proposed services.

25. **Question:** Can capital allocations be used for affordable housing real estate costs?
    Answer: No. Capital allocations may not be used for housing real estate costs.

26. **Question:** Is there a limit percentage as to how much of a program budget can be allocated to capital expenses and to operating expenses?
    Answer: Funds for services under this RFP may not be used to pay for capital expenses. Operating expenses are subject to grant agreement negotiations. Each Proposer is expected to use its experience to determine costs for the services it is proposing to provide.

27. **Question:** What are the upfront costs grantees will have to put up for this program? (An approximation is fine) and by when?
    Answer: Each Proposer is expected to use its experience to determine program costs and timing for the services it is proposing to provide.

28. **Question:** Will grantees be able to receive an advance on the contract amount if a grant is awarded? If so how much, or what percentage of the contract amount? And could this advance be received within 30 days of contract execution?
    Answer: Advances may be negotiated, at the HSH's discretion, with selected Grantees in compliance with the City's guidelines.

PROGRAM DEFINITIONS AND SCOPE

29. **Question:** What is the definition of "imminent risk of homelessness"? Is it the same as the HUD definition used in the past? ("scheduled for eviction within the next 14 days")
    Answer: The HUD definition of "at risk of homelessness" will be used initially. As HSH learns more about the needs facing households at imminent risk of homelessness these eligibility criteria may change.

30. **Question:** For "households to be served", will you want only clients served specifically under this contract, or include all clients served with these kind of services, even if funded by another source?
    Answer: For "households to be served" Proposers must indicate the number of households to be served by the Homelessness Prevention Assistance and/or Rapid Rehousing programs that will be funded through this RFP.

31. **Question:** Can providing rental assistance via deposit assistance be an intervention to prevent imminent risk of homelessness? Could this include tenant counseling or landlord negotiation? (RFP section 2.2, page 7)
Answer: Rental assistance to pay the cost of deposit may be proposed to assist households experiencing homelessness who are moving into a housing unit secured through a Rapid Rehousing subsidy. Proposers may propose to provide Housing-Focused Case Management for Homelessness Prevention Assistance and Rapid Rehousing—this intervention may include tenant counseling and landlord negotiation.

32. **Question:** Is there any reason that an organization serving a specific sub-population of homeless adults (homeless veterans) should not apply to serve that sub-population?
Answer: Proposers may propose to serve specific sub-populations as long as the scope falls within one or both of the two Program Components described in the RFP.

33. **Question:** Will proposals for services such as the following also be welcomed under this RFP?
    - One-time move-in assistance grants for homeless families attempting to secure public housing units, below market rate units, or unsubsidized private-market units.
    Answer: Yes.
    - Grants that remove barriers to housing, such as payment of outstanding utility bills that appear on a family's credit report.
    Answer: Yes. Proposers must only provide this assistance to households who are at imminent risk of homelessness and paying the utility bill will prevent homelessness.
    - Advocating for families with potential landlords, lease negotiation, and household start-up.
    Answer: Yes. Housing-Focused Case Management may include advocating for families with potential landlords, lease negotiation, and household start up. Housing Locator Assistance may also be used for advocating for families with potential land lords and lease negotiation.

34. **Question:** Does HSH wish to fund "broad based" security deposit assistance for homeless adults and families through this RFP?
Answer: See answer to question #33.

35. **Question:** Can homeless prevention assistance include assistance with utilities or barrier removal, such as helping clients with current debt? (RFP section 2.2.1, page 7)
Answer: Yes. Proposers may propose to provide this assistance to households who are at imminent risk of homelessness and paying the utility bill will prevent homelessness.

36. **Question:** Please clarify the following outcome objective (Section 2.4.2, page 12): "a. % of participants whose housing loss was prevented." Does this refer to the second bullet under section 2.2.1, page 7, for residents recently forced to leave their housing situation?

Answer: Yes. Additionally, Proposers will track their data in the ONE System for all households served. The ONE System will be a tool for calculating this metric.

37. **Question:** Does a proposer have to have legal services or could there be a separate contract with a legal advocacy agency separately and in coordination?
Answer: Proposers proposing to provide Homelessness Prevention Assistance are not required to provide the following eligible activities: Response to Eviction Lawsuits and/or Legal Representation in Eviction Lawsuits. The Proposer must meet the Minimum Qualifications stated in the RFP and Appendix 1, Proposal Template for the Program Component(s) it is interested in providing.

38. **Question:** When will the ONE system be up and running?
Answer: The ONE System is already up and running for current RRH providers. It will be configured and ready for Grantees by July 1, 2018.

39. **Question:** (RFP page 12, the ONE System). What happens to CARBON & FSP? Where will we enter legal clients? Currently they go into CARBON.
Answer: Grantees selected to provide Homelessness Prevention Assistance: "Response to Eviction Lawsuits" and "Legal Representation in Eviction Lawsuits" will upload data into CARBON. All selected Grantees will use CARBON for invoicing and back up data.

40. **Question:** What's the difference between "participants whose housing loss was prevented" and "participants whose eviction was prevented"? (RFP page 12). Will the percentage of participants whose eviction was prevented also be included in the percentage of participants whose housing loss was prevented?
Answer: "Participants whose housing loss was prevented" refers to any household that retained their housing through Homelessness Prevention Assistance and was not facing an eviction. "Participants whose eviction was prevented" refers to any household that retained their housing and whose eviction was prevented through Homelessness Prevention Assistance. These metrics will remain separate.

41. **Question:** (RFP page 11). "Number of unduplicated clients served in grant period". Does this mean the number served in each fiscal year, or the number served collectively over the entire 2018-2021 grant period?
Answer: Both. Proposers must indicate the number of unduplicated clients served in each fiscal year and during the initial 2018-2021 grant period.

42. **Question:** Will "CHANGES" be used in lieu of ONE? If so, for how long?
Answer: CHANGES is used to track adult shelter data. The CHANGES data system will be migrated into the ONE System in the future. The ONE System will be used to track all Homelessness Prevention Assistance and Rapid Rehousing programs.

43. **Question:** Is there requirements for having an office in San Francisco?
Answer: No.

44. **Question:** Under rapid rehousing are organizations allowed to contract legal organizations under this contract to help resolve and address housing issues for clients?
Answer: No. Per RFP Section 4.2, "Proposers proposing to provide services for both Components (Homelessness Prevention Assistance and Rapid Rehousing) must submit a single proposal but must respond to all Minimum Qualifications and provide a separate and distinct program narrative and program budget for each Program Component."

45. **Question:** If a proposer organization owns, has access to, or is acquiring property for affordable housing? Could rental subsidies be paid out to the same organization to provide that housing for clients served under the same contract? If so how would said process work/operate?
Answer: Yes, if the following conditions are met: (1) the units are not already set aside for households experiencing homelessness; (2) demonstrate that paying the subsidy is allowable to retain tax credits; and (3) ensure that tenants and service providers have a plan to generate the income required to pay the full rent amount after the subsidy ends. This plan must be in place before the subsidy is activated.

46. **Question:** Are there requirements/restrictions as to type of housing facilities where clients could be referred to?
Answer: Rapid Rehousing subsidies may be used to pay for habitable housing units in which the subsidy is paid directly to the landlord and not the household. HSH will provide habitability criteria to selected Grantees.

47. **Question:** What kind of technical support will be provided to be able to transfer data from one system to internal data systems service providers use?
Answer: HSH will not provide support to export and upload data from the ONE System into Grantee data systems. HSH's efforts to implement Application Program Interfaces (APIs) to facilitate data transfer from the ONE System to agency data systems are in early stages and ongoing. Selected Grantees must certify willingness to enter data in the ONE System.

48. **Question:** Will service providers be able to access all their particular program data, export, manipulate and analyze said data from the ONE system?
Answer: Grantees will be able to access their particular data in the ONE System.

OTHER SOLICITATIONS

49. **Question:** Agencies that have current ESG grants have been told that they will be renewed at the same level for the next FY as the contract management is transferred from MOHCD to HSHS. Is there going to be a separate RFP next year for ESG funds, or is this RFP (111) anticipated to be used to make future awards of ESG grants?
Answer: There will be an additional, separate procurement for ESG funds formerly with MOHCD, in the future.

50. **Question:** Does an agency need to have been approved for the RFQ flex subsidy
program to apply for this Rapid Rehousing Program?
Answer: No, that is a separate and unrelated solicitation process.

51. **Question:** I see that the target population for this is single adults and families. Can we
expect a separate RFP for Transition Age Youth (TAY)? Or should TAY providers
respond to this under the single adult category, as we know that TAY may access the
homelessness system through adult access points?
Answer: There will be an additional, separate procurement for TAY Rapid Rehousing in
the future.

52. **Question:** For our project that is currently funded by HSH (collaboration between
Swords to Plowshares and the Homeless Advocacy Project for legal services to homeless
persons, including eviction prevention), will there be another RFP? If so, when?
Answer: HSH will follow up individually, as needed, with providers to determine next
steps for expiring agreements.