

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
For
PROMOTIONAL ITEM SERVICES

PURPOSE

Rhode Island Housing invites all interested and qualified firms to submit proposals to supply various promotional items for the agency.

INSTRUCTIONS

Proposals should be submitted to Rhode Island Housing, 44 Washington Street, Providence, RI 02903-1721, Attn: Peter Walsh, Director of External Relations.

One (1) original and three (3) copies of the proposal must be submitted no later than Friday, April 8, 2011 **at 4:00 p.m. EST** at the above office (the "Due Date"). An electronic version of the proposal must be included on disc or delivered by e-mail to pwalsh@rhodeislandhousing.org by the Due Date.

The proposal should be no longer than eight (8) pages. A one-page cover letter may accompany the proposal.

Respondents are advised that all submissions (including those not selected) may be made available to the public on request upon completion of the process and award of a contract.

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

1. Describe your company and its capabilities. In particular, support your capacity to perform the work that likely will be associated with this Scope of Services. Indicate which services (i.e. embroidery, imprinting, etc.) you would perform in-house and which would require outside vendors.
2. Provide a sample of merchandise choices that Rhode Island Housing could select from to include pens, shirts, T-shirts, jackets and hats.
3. Describe your company's role in similar engagements, particularly those involving state or quasi-public organizations.
4. Please include a current client roster, including a lead contact name and telephone number of those organizations or businesses that you service. References should be companies or institutions that have purchased items similar in scope.
5. Describe the general time frame in which your company and any proposed subcontractors would be available to provide the Specifications/Scope of Work described. Please indicate expected turn around time from order to receipt of order, and method and expense of delivery.

SPECIFICATIONS/SCOPE OF WORK

Rhode Island Housing seeks to secure the services of a vendor that can supply a wide array of promotional items utilized by our agency. These items may include, but are not limited to, pens, mugs, hats, clothing and the like. The items would incorporate multiple variations of artwork depending on the use.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Proposals will be held in confidence until all evaluations are concluded and an award has been made. Pricing and other information that are an integral part of the proposal will not be considered confidential after an award has been made. Rhode Island Housing will honor requests for confidentiality for information of a proprietary nature to the extent allowed by law. Bidders should clearly identify and segregate any information in the proposal considered confidential and/or proprietary.

PROPOSAL UNDERSTANDING

By submitting a proposal, Bidder agrees and assures that the specifications are adequate, and the Bidder accepts the terms and conditions herein. Any exceptions should be noted in the Bidder's proposal. Unless otherwise specified, all proposals shall be valid for 90 days from the Due Date of the proposal.

Proposals received after the Due Date will be returned unopened. Bidders are strongly encouraged to submit proposals in advance of the Due Date to avoid the possibility of missing the Due Date because of unforeseen circumstances. Bidders assume the risk of the methods of dispatch chosen. Rhode Island Housing assumes no responsibility for delays caused by any package or mail delivery service. All proposals must be received by the Due Date; postmarking by the Due Date **WILL NOT** substitute for receipt of proposal. Additional time will not be granted to any Bidder. Additional time may be granted to all Bidders if Rhode Island Housing determines that circumstances require it.

A cover sheet with the following information must be displayed on the proposal package:

Name of Bidder
Address of Bidder
Due Date

Proposals may be withdrawn or amended by bidders at any time prior to the Due Date. If Rhode Island Housing determines that a significant mistake has been made by an apparent low bidder, the Bidder may be given the option of fulfilling the contract at the proposed price or withdrawing the proposal. If an extension error has been made, the unit price will prevail.

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 any State vendor who enters into a contract 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. Indicate whether 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. 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 company’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 Rhode Island Housing’s engagement and, if applicable, a copy of your Minority- or Women-Owned Business Enterprise state certification.
4. Include a letter from the principal of the firm certifying that
 - (i) No member of your firm has made inquiries or contacts with respect to this Request for Proposals other than in a written communication to Peter Walsh, Director of External Relations, from the date of this Request for Bid through the date of your proposal;

- (ii) No member of your firm will make any such inquiry or contact until after Friday, June 10, 2011;
- (iii) All information in your proposal is true and correct to the best of her/his knowledge, no member of your firm gave anything of monetary value or promise of future employment to an Agency employee or Commissioner, or a relative of the same, based on any understanding that such person's action or judgment will be influenced;
- (iv) The 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 CRITERIA

A selection committee composed of Rhode Island Housing staff (the "Committee") will evaluate the proposals and recommend a bid proposal to the Executive Director for engagement by Rhode Island Housing.

Proposals will be evaluated on many criteria deemed to be in Rhode Island Housing's best interests, including, but not limited to:

- Costs
- Variety of merchandise available
- Quality of merchandise available
- Ability to meet specifications, terms and conditions and deadlines
- References
- Prior working experience with Rhode Island Housing

AWARD OF PROPOSAL

Rhode Island Housing's objective is to award the proposal to one bidder. However, Rhode Island Housing reserves the right to award this proposal on an item-by-item basis or a group of items. Rhode Island Housing reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, in whole or in part, and is not necessarily bound to accept the lowest cost proposal

Rhode Island Housing has not committed itself to undertake the work set forth in this RFP. Rhode Island Housing reserves the right to reject any and all bids, and to enter into negotiations with one or more bidders. Rhode Island Housing reserves the right to make those decisions after receipt of responses. Rhode Island Housing's decision on these matters is final.

TAX EXEMPTION

Rhode Island Housing is a non-profit organization exempt from the payment of Federal Income Tax, Federal Excise Taxes on articles not for resale and Federal Transportation Tax on all shipments. The Bidder shall quote and shall be reimbursed less these taxes. Upon request, exemption certificates will be furnished when required. In addition, Rhode Island Housing is exempt from the payment of Rhode Island Sales and Use Taxes.