

1. Question: Can you share the estimated budget or preferred budget range to help in scoping this work?

Answer: Bidders are to provide the cost detail based on costs associated with the scope of work. A contract proposal should not exceed 250,000.

2. Question: We would appreciate additional time to respond to this RFP to ensure the answers we receive from this Q&A can be incorporated into our proposal. Would you be open to a one-week extension to May 18?

Answer: Minnesota Housing is extending the deadline by two weeks, due 5 PM Tuesday 5/24. No additional changes have been made to the RFP requirements.

3. Question: What level of detail would be most helpful in describing our proposed workplan? For example, certain elements of the listed deliverables on page 8 would result from planning work with Minnesota Housing. Will providing high-level anticipated suggestions be responsive?

Answer: Bidders are encouraged to provide as much detail as necessary to clearly define the proposed work plan for example, in some areas of the response a high-level overview might not be sufficient. Bidders should use their discretion in responding to the RFP.

4. Question: There are several lists of deliverables throughout the RFP that have some differences and different levels of detail. Is there one list that best aligns with Minnesota Housing's expectations for this work?

Answer: It is recommended that the bidder use both the RFP content as well as the regulations and guidance listed in the RFP to prepare their scope of work and deliverables necessary to prepare the allocation plan and provide the implementation plan. The Sample Tasks and Deliverables detailed in the Summary of Scope in Section 2 provides the most detailed explanation.

5. Question: Besides CPD Notice 21-10, what can you specify about other guidance and notices that are relevant and important for responders to incorporate? [From P4 Not all goals of the project are stated in this RFP. The Respondent must incorporate the elements of the published guidance and notices currently available. For example, the final plan must include the required elements found in CPD Notice 21-10 Part V HOME-ARP Allocation Plan.

Answer: Bidders should refer to the guidance listed as well as accessing information on the HUD exchange for the HOME ARP Program: <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/home-arp/>

6. Question: Does Minnesota Housing have any existing advisory groups that it anticipates playing a role in this project?

Answer: Minnesota Housing anticipates working with many existing stakeholders and advisory groups in the development of the Allocation Plan. Outreach lists used by Minnesota Housing will be provided to the successful bidder.

7. Question: What should we understand about the collaboration role? Should we assume responsibility for all major tasks listed here? For instance, administering the survey through mail and online? [From P4 Collaborate with Minnesota Housing to design and implement...]

Answer: Yes

8. Question: Can you provide examples of products that align with your expectations in the plans, for example level of detail or presentation style?

Answer: Recent federal plans done at Minnesota Housing include 2018 Analysis of Impediments Report, and the Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plans for the US Department of Housing and Urban Development. Examples of plans done at the agency broadly can be found at our website: <https://www.mnhousing.gov/sites/np/plans>

9. Question: We anticipate that consultation and engagement will raise priorities and needs beyond what ARP strategies can accomplish. What will Minnesota Housing do with this information?

Answer: Data collected as part of this contract will be retained by Minnesota Housing and used as appropriate for the purpose of the planning for eligibility activities that may be administered under the HOME ARP program and may be used if the allocation plan requires a future amendment.

10. Question: Would the State confirm the anticipated contract type is Time & Materials?

Answer: Yes. The contract type may include a not to exceed clause to ensure that the costs for the project remain reasonable and allowable, stay within the amount budgeted, and remaining within the activities approved in the final contract statement of work.

11. Question: Would the State confirm that responders may propose multiple rates per deliverable listed in Attachment C: Cost Detail?

Answer: This is acceptable.

12. Question: Would the State provide additional information on what is meant by “recommendation” in Section 2 – Summary of Scope, under the implementation plan section (“specific recommendations that address the requirements for each activity”)? Does it reference project design considerations?

Answer: Recommendation means providing suggested solutions to the gaps and needs that are identified - through the engagement process and will be included in the plan. These recommendations would be intended to assist the program team with implementation of the program requirements of each of the proposed activities. Including stakeholders will also ensure that their expertise is considered in the program design and creatively implement the unique requirements of the HOME ARP dollars.

The language that states; “However, the implementation plan should include specific recommendations that address the requirements for each activity and identify key stakeholders that may be necessary to implement various activities” is written with the expectation that a bidder should address within their scope of work, as part of the implementation of the plan, recommended strategies that may be incorporated into the HOME ARP program, which are intended to address and ensure compliance the HOME ARP regulations and consider stakeholder input in program design.

The Planning process is relatively incomplete without recommendations for how to address the activities that are identified in the plan. Consultation with key stakeholders will ensure necessary considerations are considered to be integrated into the plan.

13. Question: Does the State envision a formal engagement process – beyond public meetings – to inform implementation? For instance, will the State seek public comment/participation on project selection?

Answer: The state anticipates seeking public comment on the plan. The scope of the engagement in this solicitation does not go beyond creating implementation plan and thus would not include engagement on individual project selections

14. Question: Sequence of deliverables: can the State confirm that the Engagement Plan will be drafted, published for public comment, and adopted before consultation with stakeholders for the Allocation Plan begins?

Answer: Yes, the Engagement Plan will be adopted before consultation begins.

15. Will MN Housing staff attend and/or participate in the virtual or consultation interviews?

Answer: Minnesota Housing staff will participate in all larger public meetings and will be available for other virtual or consultation interviews.

16. Does MN Housing have a list of organizations that at a minimum the consultant needs to reach out to?

Answer: Minnesota Housing maintains a contact list for community outreach and will share that list with the successful bidder.

17. On its website, MN Housing indicates “any eligible project, in the state, whether or not it is located in one of the other six PJs, will be able to submit an application to Minnesota Housing for HOME-ARP funding.”

Based on this statement we have the following questions:

a. Will MN Housing expect the consultant to hold engagement sessions with the other entitlement communities (including their constituents, service providers, developers, etc.) or just the balance of state (BOS) entities?

Answer: Minnesota Housing expects to engage with the other entitlement communities receiving HOME-ARP dollars in addition to the BOS entities. Note that the other entitlement communities receiving HOME-ARP are Duluth, Minneapolis, and Saint Paul and the consortiums of St. Louis, Hennepin, and Dakota counties.

Will MN Housing expect the consultant to engage supportive housing providers, COC’s etc. in both the Metro and BOS?

Answer: Minnesota Housing expects engagement with such providers across the state.

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18. Question: Can the State provide more detail on the format for the video recordings for the website? For instance, does the State envision brief informational videos using PowerPoint or a similar program for visuals?

Answer: Bidders are encouraged to utilize a variety of creative, innovative, and more standardized formats for video and visual communication. All communication is to be delivered in an equitable, informative and accessible manner. When video is contemplated the successful bidder can work directly with Minnesota Housing’s communication team to ensure the delivery meets the agency’s standards.

19. Attachment C – Cost Detail: Deliverable #5 indicates that the implementation project plan will be based on the HOME-ARP Allocation Plan, and the Scope of Work (on p. 5) indicates the Implementation Plan will be developed once the Allocation Plan is approved. Deliverable #6 indicates that the draft Allocation Plan “must include the implementation project plan.”

a. Question. Can the State confirm that while the Allocation Plan will inform the Implementation Plan, the Allocation Plan will be completed and submitted first?

Answer: Yes, the Allocation Plan will be delivered first. However, the drafting of the Implementation Plan can begin during the Allocation Plan planning process.

Page 5 of the RFP states “Once the Allocation Plan is approved” then develop a plan for implementing the HOME ARP Activities. Additionally, deliverable 6 states that the **draft of the Implementation Project Plan** must be included with the Allocation Plan. The Allocation Plan informs the Implementation Plan. The Implementation Plan is a planning document critical to the efficient launch of the HOME ARP program. It is intended that the Implementation Plan be part of the Allocation Planning process as the engagement of stakeholders will provide important insights into how the program might be launched once the Allocation Plan is approved.

The Implementation Plan is a planning document that will not become final until the Allocation Plan is approved by HUD. The Implementation Plan is developed in consultation with MHFA staff and does not have to be reviewed by HUD. The goal of the Implementation Plan is to more efficiently consider and incorporate the complex relationships and partner arrangements that will ensure the intended outcomes are realized, and the delivery of the funds are efficient and meet regulatory deadlines.

b. Question: Does the deliverable #6 requirement indicate the State wants to acknowledge in the Allocation Plan that an Implementation Plan will be developed?

Answer: 19b. The Implementation Plan can be mentioned in the Allocation Plan but is not an emphasis in the narrative of the Allocation Plan. Considering the complex implementation of the HOME ARP funds, it is necessary to have thoughtful planning around implementation. An Implementation Strategy is integral to the planning process as the concepts around implementation are contemplated while the gap analysis and needs assessment is conducted and the public provides feedback on what should be incorporated into the activities that are going to be in the Allocation Plan.

20. Question: Attachment C – Cost Detail: Please confirm that deliverable #2 (Collect/Analyze existing applicable data and information) is a separate cost, but intended to inform, deliverable #4 (conduct a comprehensive, statewide needs assessment and gap analysis)?

Answer: Yes, deliverable 2 is needed to inform deliverable 4.

21. Question: Attachment C – Cost Detail: Please confirm that required deliverable #3 and bulleted subtasks are for consultation efforts to complete the Allocation Plan and not for engaging community members on the proposed Engagement Plan, which will be adopted before consultation begins. Does the State want the responder to provide separate costs for each of the bulleted subtasks under deliverable #3, or are those only provided as examples?

Answer: Yes, deliverable 3 and the subtasks are needed to engage community members so that the Allocation Plan can be developed. The Engagement Plan will be necessary to design and implement engagement of the community and the stakeholders, but it is part of the contract proposal as engagement is a key aspect of the Allocation Plan. For deliverable #3 in the matrix it states that the items listed below must be included in the engagement opportunities, but engagement is not limited to that list.

There are essentially three high level stages to this process: **Engagement Plan** (plan to engage the community and stakeholders), **Allocation Plan** (the outcome of community engagement and research, the proposal to HUD of the activities that will be done under the HOME ARP program at Minnesota Housing), **Implementation Plan** (the strategy to assist with implementation of the program considering the cross collaborative nature and unique partnerships that will be necessary and as appropriate so that an efficient, effective and compliant program results).

22. Question: Can the State confirm a total of 3 required public comment periods: (1) on the draft Engagement Plan, (2) on the draft Allocation Plan, and (3) on the draft Implementation Project Plan

Answer: Section 4-Proposal Contact, Page 8 of the RFP states that there will be two public comment periods. One for the Draft of the Engagement Plan, and the other for the Allocation Plan. The comments from the public are then to be incorporated into the Allocation Plan that is submitted to HUD for review.