

Request for Proposals (RFP) Addendum #1

Agency: Minnesota Housing Finance Agency

Addendum Number: 1

Date of Addendum: 02/26/2025

Title: Statewide Training Coordination and Implementation

SCOPE OF ADDENDUM

The following are changes to the RFP: (1) Posting vendor questions to the RFP and the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency's answers and (2) Additions are underlined and deletions are shown as ~~strikethrough~~.

Vendor questions to the RFP and Minnesota Housing Finance Agency's answers are as follows:

- 1. Question:** Will in-state and out-of-state travel costs be covered to provide in-person trainings?

Answer: Reimbursement for travel and subsistence expenses actually and necessarily incurred as a result of this contract will follow the guidelines outlined in Attachment C: Cost Detail (Page 19). Travel costs within Minnesota may be reimbursed, but out-of-state travel expenses will require prior written approval from Minnesota Housing. Minnesota will be considered the home state for determining whether travel is classified as out-of-state. Applicants should account for these guidelines when outlining travel expenses in their budget proposals.
- 2. Question:** Does the Workgroup prefer an organization that is in Minnesota?

Answer: There is no preference set for this RFP regarding the location of the selected contractor. As stated in Section 2: Summary of Scope (Pages 6-7), the contractor is expected to provide quarterly and annual written progress reports to Minnesota Housing and the Statewide Training Workgroup, host monthly virtual meetings, and collaborate closely with Minnesota Housing staff and the Workgroup. Given these expectations, applicants should demonstrate their ability to effectively engage with Minnesota-based stakeholders and fulfill the outlined responsibilities, regardless of their location.
- 3. Question:** What is the budget range or maximum set aside for this scope of work?

Answer: There is no predetermined budget range for this RFP. Cost detail will be considered, but the goal is to identify the most innovative and high-quality plan and project design without constraining the budget. After selecting the top scoring candidate, we will enter a negotiation process to discuss the budget based on the proposed scope of work. Applicants should focus on presenting a comprehensive and effective approach that aligns with the project objectives.

4. **Question:** In Section 2 of the RFP, Tasks and Deliverables, Task 2 requires the contractor to coordinate and manage logistics for on-demand, virtual, and in-person training options. Will the contractor have access to an existing Learning Management System (LMS) at Minnesota Housing for these purposes, or will the contractor be expected to procure a LMS solution?
- Answer:** Minnesota Housing does not have an existing Learning Management System (LMS) available for contractor use. The contractor will be expected to procure or utilize their own LMS solution to coordinate and manage logistics for on-demand, virtual, and in-person training options as outlined in Task 2 of the RFP.
5. **Question:** Section 2: Summary of Scope of the RFP under the Tasks and Deliverables states that Task 1 is to “Recruit and hire trainers with diverse backgrounds, including race, culture, sexual orientation, geographic location, and subject matter expertise.” Please confirm that the awarded contractor’s staff may lead the required training-of-trainers for the identified Minnesota-based trainers who will be recruited under Task 1.
- Answer:** Yes, the awarded contractor’s staff may lead the required training-of-trainers for the Minnesota-based trainers recruited under Task 1. Additionally, the contractor has the flexibility to hire or collaborate with subject matter experts as needed to ensure high-quality training.
6. **Question:** Can Minnesota Housing provide details on requirements for the website so that contractors can provide pricing for the website that is consistent with the state’s requirements?
- Answer:** Minnesota Housing does not have specific technical requirements for the website currently. However, the website should be user-friendly, accessible, and aligned with state and federal accessibility standards (e.g., Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1). It should effectively support the program’s goals, including hosting training materials, resources, and updates, providing access to the Curriculum, and displaying all training session offerings via an up-to-date calendar of training offerings by date, time, and readily apparent registration process. Contractors should propose a solution that meets these needs and include pricing based on their recommended approach.
7. **Question:** Does Minnesota Housing have specific technology preferences or requirements for the website platform?
- Answer:** Minnesota Housing does not have specific technology preferences or requirements for the website platform. However, the platform should be user-friendly, accessible, and compliant with state and federal accessibility standards (e.g., WCAG 2.1). Contractors should propose a solution that best meets the program’s needs, including ease of maintenance, security, and functionality.
8. **Question:** Are there any state-mandated technical requirements for websites that the contractor will need to adhere to (e.g., accessibility standards beyond WCAG, security protocols, hosting restrictions)?

Answer: The contractor must ensure the website complies with state and federal accessibility standards, including WCAG 2.1. The State of Minnesota developed IT Accessibility Standards that entails, in part, the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) and Section 508 which can be viewed at: <https://mn.gov/mnit/government/policies/accessibility/> Additionally, the website must meet applicable state security protocols and data privacy requirements. The State of Minnesota Information Security Policy & Standards are available at <https://mn.gov/mnit/government/policies/security/> While Minnesota Housing does not have specific hosting restrictions, the contractor should propose a secure, reliable hosting solution that aligns with industry standards.

9. **Question:** Will the contractor be responsible for ongoing website hosting, or will the site be hosted on Minnesota Housing servers?

Answer: The contractor will be responsible for ongoing website hosting. Minnesota Housing will not provide hosting on its servers. Contractors should propose a secure, reliable hosting solution that ensures accessibility, security, and ease of maintenance.

10. **Question:** Will the training content and registration be publicly available to anyone, or should access be restricted to specific audiences?

Answer: Access to training content and registration may vary depending on the training type. Some materials may be publicly available, while others may be restricted to specific audiences. The contractor should propose a flexible solution that allows for both public access and restricted access as needed, ensuring appropriate security and user management.

11. **Question:** Will the contractor need to integrate any aspects of the website with any existing Minnesota Housing systems (e.g., authentication, existing databases)?

Answer: Minnesota Housing does not anticipate requiring integration with existing systems at this time.

12. **Question:** What is the expected volume of registrations (per month or per training)?

Answer: The expected volume of registrations may vary depending on the training type and frequency. While Minnesota Housing does not have exact projections, contractors should anticipate a range of 20-100+ attendees per group trainings. Proposals should include a flexible registration system that can accommodate varying levels of demand.

13. **Question:** How should the contractor plan to identify which users are Minnesota Housing grantees? Will this information be self-reported or cross-referenced with existing data?

Answer: The contractor should plan for Minnesota Housing grantees to self-report their status during the registration process. Minnesota Housing may provide guidance on any additional verification methods if needed, but there will not be an automatic cross-referencing with existing data systems.

- 14. Question:** Will the contractor be responsible for providing captioning/transcription services for recorded training sessions?
Answer: The contractor will be responsible for providing captioning or transcription services for recorded training sessions to ensure accessibility for all participants. These services should be included in the proposal.
- 15. Question:** What is the expected format for on-demand trainings? (e.g., pre-recorded videos, interactive modules)?
Answer: The expected format for on-demand trainings may include a combination of pre-recorded videos, interactive modules, and other engaging content. The contractor should propose a flexible approach that accommodates various learning styles and ensures accessibility. Interactive elements and assessments are encouraged to enhance participant engagement.
- 16. Question:** Is there a need to track completion of on-demand trainings? If so, what constitutes "completion" (watching 100% of a video, passing a quiz, etc.)?
Answer: Yes, there is a need to track completion of on-demand trainings. 'Completion' will typically be defined by passing a quiz, assessment, or other measurable activity associated with the training, rather than simply watching 100% of a video. The contractor should propose a tracking system that records participation and completion of any required assessments.
- 17. Question:** At the end of the contract period, what are the expectations for website transition or handover?
Answer: At the end of the contract period, the contractor will be expected to provide all data contained on the website to Minnesota Housing. This includes delivering all content, relevant materials, documentation, etc. to Minnesota Housing. We do not expect the website to be transitioned to us at this time.
- 18. Question:** May contractors propose edits to the indemnification terms included in the Sample Contract (Exhibit A, Term #5) for consideration of acceptance by Minnesota Housing?
Answer: Yes, contractors may propose edits to the indemnification terms included in the Sample Contract (Exhibit A, Term #5) for consideration by Minnesota Housing. However, any proposed changes are subject to review and acceptance by Minnesota Housing. Contractors should clearly outline any requested modifications and provide a rationale for the proposed changes in Attachment B: Exceptions to Minnesota Housing's Terms and Conditions.
- 19. Question:** Attachment C: Cost Detail asks for us to identify travel costs. Is that travel costs across all tasks or by task?
Answer: The travel costs should be broken down by task and clearly noted in Attachment C. Contractors should provide the travel expenses that are proposed for the entirety of the contract, considering the full scope of work outlined in the RFP.

20. **Question:** Is Attachment F required for subcontractors to complete as well?
Answer: Attachment F: Qualifications and Experience should include the qualifications and experience of the Contractor and any subcontractors being proposed to complete the scope of work. A separate form for subcontractors should not be submitted.
21. **Question:** In section 3 of the RFP, should the period of performance for the anticipated base period be July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2027 (currently, the period of performance appears to end on June 20, 2027)?
Answer: Yes, the anticipated contract term is July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2027. The current end date of June 20, 2027, listed in Section 3 is an error, and the correct end date for the anticipated contract term is June 30, 2027.
22. **Question:** If the contract is extended and option years are exercised, can you please confirm that the awarded contractor will have the opportunity to provide pricing for the extended period of performance?
Answer: Yes, if the contract is extended, the awarded contractor will have the opportunity to negotiate pricing for the extended period of the contract. Pricing for the extension will be negotiated based on the scope and needs of the extended term.
23. **Question:** Is the Diverse Spend reporting requirement also required of our subcontractors?
Answer: No, the Diverse Spend reporting requirement only applies to the Contractor. Contractors must track and report, on a quarterly basis, the amount paid to diverse businesses both: 1) directly to subcontractors performing under the Contract, and 2) indirectly to diverse businesses that provide supplies/services to the Contractor.
24. **Question:** Is this a new project, or is there a previous project that this draws on? If this draws on a previous project, who is the incumbent vendor on this or a predecessor project?
Answer: It is a new project with no incumbent vendor to coordinate and implement the statewide training. However, we did contract with Minnesota Engagement on Shelter and Housing (MESH) for the development of the curriculum in 2017-2018.
25. **Question:** Can Minnesota Housing confirm that the contractor is expected to develop the materials for all 11 content areas in the Minnesota Training Curriculum? If not, how many content areas will the contractor be expected to develop?
Answer: The contractor is expected to develop materials for all 11 content areas in the Minnesota Training Curriculum. The contractor should plan to create comprehensive materials for each of these areas as part of the project scope.
27. **Question:** The RFP includes recommended modalities for each content area. Should contractors assume we will develop each recommended modality for each topic, or choose one or more of the recommended modalities at our discretion?

Answer: Contractors should choose one or more of the recommended modalities for each content area at their discretion, based on what they believe will be most effective for the training objectives and target audience. While the RFP includes recommended modalities, the contractor has the flexibility to propose the best approach for each content area.

- 28. Question:** Does Minnesota Housing anticipate a certain number of locally recruited trainers for each CoC?

Answer: Minnesota Housing does not anticipate a specific number of locally recruited trainers for each Continuum of Care (CoC). The number of trainers will depend on the needs of each CoC and the scale of the training program. Contractors should propose a flexible approach to recruit trainers based on the specific requirements of each CoC.

- 29. Question:** Is the website for the training expected to be hosted on the Minnesota Housing website?

Answer: No, the contractor will be responsible for hosting the training website, and it will be a separate platform from Minnesota Housing's website. The contractor should propose a secure and reliable hosting solution for the training website.

- 30. Question:** The RFP states that a minimum of 20 trainings must be provided annually. Given that time will be required for training development and implementation planning, when are the trainings anticipated to start in Year 1?

Answer: The trainings are anticipated to start as soon as the necessary development and planning are completed in Year 1. Given the time required for training development and implementation, it is expected that the first trainings could begin within 3-4 months after the contract start date. The contractor should include a detailed timeline in their proposal, outlining key milestones for development and the start of the training sessions.

- 31. Question:** Does Minnesota Housing have an expected benchmark for the number of trainings provided per month once trainings commence?

Answer: Minnesota Housing does not have a specific benchmark for the number of trainings to be provided per month once trainings commence. However, the contractor is expected to provide a minimum of 20 trainings annually. The contractor should propose a schedule that meets this requirement while considering the complexity and needs of the training content.

- 32. Question:** Is Minnesota Housing open to the contractor using a staffing mixture of its own staff as trainers and trainers newly contracted as part of this effort?

Answer: Yes, Minnesota Housing is open to the contractor using a mixture of its own staff and contracted trainers as part of this effort. The contractor has the flexibility to recruit and utilize trainers based on their expertise and the needs of the training program.

- 33. Question:** Does the Workgroup have an existing set of partners it expects the contractor to work with, or who will be made available for recruitment, as local trainers?
Answer: Minnesota Housing does not have an existing set of partners that the contractor is required to work with. However, the contractor is encouraged to work with Minnesota Housing and the Workgroup to recruit local trainers. Minnesota Housing may provide guidance or recommendations for potential partners or contacts that could be valuable for recruitment. Ultimately, the contractor will be responsible for identifying and recruiting appropriate local trainers.
- 34. Question:** Does the Workgroup have existing organizations, networks, or a list of partners it will make available to facilitate outreach and advertising to the intended audience? Or are trainings only available to Minnesota Housing grantees?
Answer: Minnesota Housing may provide guidance or recommendations regarding organizations, networks, or partners that can facilitate outreach and advertising to the intended audience. However, the contractor will be responsible for the overall outreach strategy. Trainings are not limited to Minnesota Housing grantees; they are intended to be available to the broader audience as specified in the RFP. The contractor should plan for outreach beyond just Minnesota Housing grantees, ensuring inclusivity and broad participation.
- 35. Question:** Does Minnesota Housing expect that any of the trainings, supporting materials, or website will be available in languages other than English? If so, do you have an expected number of languages?
Answer: Yes, Minnesota Housing expects that some trainings, supporting materials, and the website may need to be available in languages other than English to ensure accessibility for a diverse audience. While the specific number of languages is not predetermined, contractors should propose a plan for translating key materials into relevant languages based on the needs of the target audience if possible and applicable. Contractors should also consider the availability of resources to ensure effective translation and accessibility.
- 36. Question:** Does the Workgroup have an expectation for how many rounds of evaluation data collection the contractor will do?
Answer: Minnesota Housing does not have a specific expectation for the number of rounds of evaluation data collection. However, the contractor should plan for ongoing evaluation throughout the training program to assess effectiveness, participant satisfaction, and areas for improvement. The contractor is encouraged to propose a reasonable number of evaluation rounds, such as pre- and post-training evaluations, as well as periodic check-ins during the contract term, to ensure continuous feedback and improvement.
- 37. Question:** Will contractors be eligible for the preference points if an eligible targeted business is a subcontractor?

Answer: No, the preference points apply to the responder themselves. Responders that are eligible and certified by the State as targeted group (TG) businesses, economically disadvantaged (ED) businesses, and veteran-owned businesses will receive points equal to 12% percent of the total points available as preference.

- 38. Question:** The RFP stipulates that at least 50% of trainings must be offered live, either virtually or in-person. Does Minnesota Housing have a threshold for the percentage of trainings that must be offered in-person?

Answer: Minnesota Housing does not have a specific threshold for the percentage of trainings that must be offered in-person. The RFP stipulates that at least 50% of the trainings must be offered live, either virtually or in-person, allowing flexibility in how those live trainings are delivered. Contractors should propose an approach that best meets the needs of the audience while ensuring a balance of live training modalities.

The following are changes to the RFP:

1. Section 3. Anticipated Contract Term is amended as follows:

Anticipated Contract Term.

The term of this contract is anticipated to be from July 1, 2025 to ~~June 30, 2027~~ June 30, 2027, with the option to extend up to an additional three (3) years in increments determined by Minnesota Housing, not to exceed a total of five years from the execution of the contract.

This addendum shall become part of the RFP and should be returned with, or acknowledged in, the response to the RFP.

RESPONDER NAME:

SIGNATURE:

TITLE:

DATE: