Issuance of Answers to Questions

New York State Division of Homes and Community Renewal
Housing Locator & Listing Services: NYHousingSearch.gov Website & Call Center
(Request for Proposals #07182014)

No.	Question	Answer
1	Why is the RFP being issued for this service?	New York State Finance Law requires formal competitive bidding for goods or services that are expected to exceed $50,000 and are not available under a current New York State contract. The purpose of competitive bidding and soliciting quotes is to encourage competition in the procurement of goods and services that is paid with public funds. Competition provides taxpayers with the greatest assurance that quality goods or services are procured in the most prudent and economic manner.
2	Is it your intention to host this service fully or partially on-site at HCR?	No, the NYHousingSearch.gov service will be fully hosted by an external vendor as outlined in the RFP. The proposal must include a detailed description of a Proposer's approach to meeting the requirements as well as information on the location of the office(s) to be used to perform the services. Interested Proposers should not assume DHCR will host or provide any supplies, materials, staff, etc. Cost Proposals should be inclusive of all costs as outlined in PART II Tab 4: *Budget* on page 35.
3	How many call center agents do you currently have?	DHCR confirmed there are approximately 50 agents who are responsible for answering the current volume of calls. The Proposer must include its recommended number of call center agents in the RFP response and its approach for handling increases and decreases in call center and email volume (that may be as a result of natural or other disasters, successful marketing efforts, or general waves of activity) while maintaining call pick up and other minimum performance levels included in the proposal.
4	Considering 1,000 calls/per month, how many are unique and how much follow up is needed for each call or groups of calls?	We are not able to provide an answer as there are many different types of calls with varying degrees of follow-up. Details on the nature and reasonable expectations for inbound and outbound calls are outlined in the RFP. Proposers must provide detailed descriptions on their approach to meeting the requirements of the RFP including, but not limited to, email correspondence, inbound and outbound calls, as well as performance reporting.

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5	Assuming there is a selection decision by August 12th, there is just one month to get folks in place, trained, and in position for the assignment in addition to the fact that some of the staff may possibly be new hires. We are not saying this cannot be accomplished but it is complex. Has HCR examined the complexities of this mobilization and do you feel that this is a realistic schedule for this level of outreach centers and staffing?	Yes. The successful Proposer will demonstrate a track record of timely implementation, operational excellence, consistency, quality, flexible capacity, and strong systems of accountability and compliance.
6	Is the timeline to select a vendor by August 12th and to be fully operational by November 28th set firmly? Would it be acceptable to propose a "ramping up" of staff if the staffing and operational plan meets all other RFP criteria?	Yes, the RFP is very specific about minimum requirements and what needs to be operational by November 28th to ensure there is no interruption of service to those in need. Proposals must include a detailed description of the approach that will be used to meet these requirements, which may include a "ramping up" strategy so long as minimum requirements for the November 28th deadline can be met.

Proposers are being evaluated partially based on readiness. Proposers who demonstrate the ability to staff up quickly and readiness to perform all tasks will be rated more favorably. Specific work plans, examples of past mobilization experience, and verifiable statistics as to project management capacity are expected. |
| 7 | Can you tell me about the marketing effort that you would like to see? | Please follow the guidance outlined in the RFP. HCR is interested in reaching a larger population of owners and tenants who successfully use the site and creative ways to increase the use and value of the site The Successful Proposer will demonstrate the experience and creativity to help build on the websites current success. |
| 8 | Is there a budget for this project? | There is no budget for this project however proposals may not exceed $275,000 per year and $1.1 million during a four year period. As outlined in Section XII.B. *Scoring and Evaluation*, 25% of the score will be based on the proposal budget. |

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9	Can you tell us more about the function of the website?	We strongly encourage interested Proposers to review the existing website www.NYHousingSearch.gov and follow the minimum guidelines outlined in the RFP.
10	Can you provide additional detail on requirements for the GIS and Mapping components?	Please follow the guidance outlined in the RFP. DHCR is seeking creative ways to increase the use and value of the website. On a basic level, mapping capabilities must support the goal of connecting tenants with suitable housing and service providers. We also want to connect New Yorkers to other housing services in the State with the ability to easily view amenities within close proximity of available rental units. We encourage Proposers to include creative ideas, detailed descriptions of the proposed approach, and examples that demonstrate the capacity to implement the Proposal submitted.
11	Should we assume there is a preference to utilize mapping platforms that HCR and/or TED already license?	The proposed mapping should be both a well-known and robust solution.
12	Are there no issues with proposing a cloud-computing solution?	No, however, all technical solutions, including cloud-computing must meet the NYS Security policy as outlined in the RFP.

We strongly encourage interested Proposers to review the New York State Office of Information Technology Services guidelines and standards prior to submitting a Proposal. Hyperlinks to relevant information may be found on page 6 of the RFP. |
13	Are there credit cards and payments as part of this?	No, this is a free service.
14	Who is the incumbent(s) providing the tasks, or some of the tasks in this RFP?	This question is not relevant to the RFP.
15	What is the Statement of Work (SOW) of the incumbent (s) contracts?	We recommend interested Proposers review the existing website www.NYHousingSearch.gov and follow the guidelines outlined in the RFP. The existing SOW is not relevant to this RFP.
16	How does the SOW in this RFP differ from that of the incumbent(s)?	This question is not relevant to the RFP. We encourage interested Proposers to follow the guidelines and requirements outlined in the RFP.
17	Is the incumbent(s) eligible to bid on this RFP?	This is an open competitive procurement. All companies that meet the minimum requirements outlined in the RFP or partner with other firms in order to meet the minimum requirements are encouraged to apply.

No.	Question	Answer
18	Can companies from Outside the USA apply for this? (From India or Canada)	Companies from outside the USA are permitted to submit a proposal, however, as outlined in Section VIII.A. *Technological Capacity* beginning on page 13 of the RFP, all code, code development, contractors and employees, including subcontractors of the successful Proposer must physically reside within the continental United States. Additionally, please review Amendments to the RFP posted to the DHCR Procurement website. We strongly encourage interested Proposers to review the New York State Office of Information Technology Services guidelines and standards prior to submitting a Proposal. Hyperlinks to relevant information may be found on page 6 of the RFP.
19	Will we need to come to the U.S. for meetings?	Yes, milestone meetings may need to take place in person at the HCR office in Albany, New York. Proposals should include a detailed approach to meeting the requirements and timeline demands outlined in the RFP. As provided in the answer to question #18, and outlined in Section VIII.A. *Technological Capacity*, there are geographic requirements for code development, data, call center locations, etc. We strongly encourage interested Proposers to review the New York State Office of Information Technology Services guidelines and standards. Hyperlinks to relevant information may be found on page 6 of the RFP.
20	Can we perform the tasks (related to RFP) outside USA? (From India or Canada)	No. Please see the information provided in the answers to questions #18 and 19 as well as Section VIII.A. *Technological Capacity* on page 13 of the RFP as well as Amendments posted on DHCR's Procurement Website.
21	Can we submit our proposals via email?	Yes. Proposals must be delivered by email in two parts no later than: 12:00 noon (EDT) on July 18, 2014. See Section XI, page 37 of the RFP for full details for proposal submission requirements.