

**2014 Weatherization Assistance Program
Request for Qualifications #20141010
Applicant Questions with HCR Answers**

The following questions were submitted to HCR in response to the Weatherization Assistance Program Request for Qualifications (RFQ). Questions were submitted at the October 28, 2014 applicant conference and by electronic mail prior to the November 5, 2014 deadline. Each question and answer is listed below:

Application Process

Question 1: When are applications due?

Answer: Both electronically-submitted and mailed applications must be received by 5:00 PM December 2, 2014

Q2: Where can I find copies of the application forms?

A: All required forms are included with the application package, on the HCR website (<http://www.nyshcr.org>). Click "About Us," then "Procurement Opportunities" to view or download a copy of the RFQ with forms.

Q3: How many copies of the application must be submitted?

A: Applicants must mail or send by a courier service one paper copy to HCR at the address listed in the RFQ. Applicants must also send a copy via e-mail to weatherization@nyshcr.org. Hand-delivered copies will not be accepted.

Q4: What is the contract procurement number for this contract?

A: The contract procurement number that is assigned to this RFQ is 20141010.

Q5: When will selections be announced for this RFQ?

A: It is anticipated that subgrantees will be notified in January, 2015.

Q6: If an applicant is selected to be a subgrantee, when will a contract be issued?

A: It is expected that subgrantees will receive contract instructions in February, 2015. Contracts will be effective April 1, 2015, which is the start of the next budget period for current weatherization subgrantees. Please be advised that allocation of funds to subgrantees is subject to the annual state plan process. This RFQ does not make funds available, it is solely for the purpose of designating subgrantees.

Q7: Can I get assistance in completing the application from my HCR representative?

A: No. Applicants are permitted to ask questions of the designated HCR contacts only – do not approach any other HCR staff with questions regarding this RFQ.

Q8: If I have more questions on the application, who should I ask?

A: Questions were due by November 5, 2014. Inquiries received after that date will not be responded to.

Q9: Who is eligible to apply for designation as a subgrantee?

A: Not-for-profits, including existing weatherization subgrantees and units of local government, are eligible to apply.

Q10: Will applicants be notified of selection decisions by HCR?

A: Yes. All applicants for the RFQ will be notified of review outcomes by HCR.

Q11: Will unsuccessful applicants have an opportunity to receive feedback on their applications?

A: Yes, applicants not selected for an award may request a debriefing to discuss the evaluation of their application within ten business days of the notice of contract award. See Section IX(M) of the RFQ for details.

Exhibit and Attachment Forms

Q12: Is Exhibit C required?

A: No, Exhibit C is not required. Do not submit Exhibit C.

Q13 : Is Exhibit L required?

A: No, Exhibit L is not required.

Q14: Please clarify the Exhibit I requirements.

A: Applicants must submit a Certificate of Insurance evidencing their General Liability insurance coverage. The minimum acceptable limit is \$1,000,000 . However, contrary to the application instructions, errors and omissions insurance is **not** required.

Q: Please clarify the Exhibit J requirements.

A: For Exhibit J, applicants should submit the most recent two years of audited financial statements or tax returns.

Q16: Please clarify the Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire requirements. Which version of the questionnaire should we use?

A: Applicants should use the version of the Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire included with the application. Applicants must complete all applicable questions for their organization on pages 1-7. Do not submit pages 8-10. Applicants that use the on-line Vendrep system should refer to question 17.

Q17: Our Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire was submitted online, using the OSC Vendrep system. Is it still necessary to submit a paper copy of the vendor questionnaire with the application?

A: Applicants that use the Office of the State Comptroller's Vendrep system need only print the certification page from Vendrep, showing the date the questionnaire was

submitted. If the date is more than six months before the RFQ deadline, a new questionnaire must be entered into Vendrep, and a current certification page submitted with the application.

Q18: Please clarify the Exhibit K requirements.

A: Exhibit K consists of statements indicating whether performing services for DHCR would create any potential conflict of interest or appearance of impropriety relating to other clients or customers of the applicant, or former or current officers or employees of DHCR, and disclosing whether the applicant, its members or officers or members or officers of any of its intended subcontractors, partners or employees has been the subject of any investigation or disciplinary action initiated by the Joint Commission on Ethics (JCOPE) or its predecessor agency, and subsequent resolution.

Q19: Is Exhibit A (Quarterly MWBE Contractor Compliance Report PROC-6) required?

A: This form is not required to be submitted with the application since it refers to reporting activity after a subgrantee has started work. Successful applicants will receive instructions on submitting this form. It is included with the RFQ to make applicants aware of post-award requirements. Applicants must submit the EEO Staffing Plan, M/WBE Utilization Plan, M/WBE – EEO Policy Statement Form, Company Demographic Profile and EEOC Statement as Exhibit A.

Q20: When must the annual employment report be submitted to Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)?

A: Successful applicants and their sub-contractors must submit the annual employment report no later than 10 days after the end of each program year. The completed report must include information for all employees that have provided services under the contract, whether employed by the subgrantee or by a subcontractor.

Q21: What are the M/WBE requirements for this RFQ?

A: For purposes of this RFQ, the overall goal of twenty percent (20%) of total contract expenditures for MWBE participation, ten percent (10%) for MBE and ten percent (10%) for women-owned business enterprises WBEs. However, it is anticipated that the requirement will be increased to thirty percent (30%) and applicants should be prepared to meet that goal when required

Program Narrative

Q22: Is the operational budget required in Section X(L) of the RFQ for weatherization operations only, or is a budget for the entire organization required?

A: The operational budget must reflect all funding for the entity applying for designation as a subgrantee.

Q23: Will HCR use documentation on file for current weatherization subgrantees, or must we resubmit requested documents?

A: Each applicant must provide all requested documentation with application.

Q24: Can joint applications be submitted?

A: No. Each application must identify a single entity that is the applicant. If the applicant chooses to partner with other entities, the relationship must be clearly described in the narrative. However, the entity that is the applicant must provide all certifications and all other organizational information, and HCR will only designate that entity as the subgrantee, if selected.

Q25: Will inclusion of a partner to provide additional capacity to an applicant be considered a positive factor in the selection process?

A: Applications are rated on the demonstrated capacity of the applicant. If the applicant has a partner that can fill gaps in the applicant's capacity, partnering may be in the applicant's favor. However, the role of the partner must be clearly described and documented.

Q26: Is cost-effectiveness a consideration in the selection process?

A: Efficient delivery of high quality services is a goal of HCR in administering the Weatherization Assistance Program. However, since the purpose of this RFQ is to establish capacity and integrity of applicants, cost effectiveness is not a formal selection criterion.

Q27: If an award is made to an existing subgrantee, will a new contract be issued?

A: No. If an award is made to an existing subgrantee it will be incorporated into their current contract.

Q28: What is SAM? Is SAM registration required? What evidence is needed as proof of SAM registration?

A: SAM (System for Award Management) is a Federal depository and database that combines several Federal databases and interfaces into one usable system. Entities (contractors, federal assistance recipients, and other potential award recipients) must register in SAM to do business with the government, look for opportunities or assistance programs, or report subcontract information.

If an entity is not registered, they can go to the SAM website and register. Submit the e-mail notification received from SAM with the application to provide proof of registration. Annual renewal of registration is required.

Q29: The RFQ requires that the information supplied in the application be certified by the applicant as true and accurate. Can the written certification be self-certified by the executive director of the applicant?

A: The application must contain a board resolution which authorizes a specific individual to submit the application.

Q30: Can experience prior to five years ago be included in the application?

A: Applicants should list relevant experience for the past five years only.

Q31: What should be included in the Current Capacity and Qualifications section of the narrative?

A: Each applicant must submit resumes and professional qualifications of key staff, an organization chart that show how the applicant will staff the program, and must also address each of the requirements listed that section.

Q32: What key personnel must be identified in the application?

A: Applicants must identify those executive, management and technical positions that are essential for operation of a weatherization program.

Service Areas

Q33: Where should an applicant describe the proposed service area?

A: Applicants will describe their proposed service area in the narrative section.

Q34: What happens if an applicant applies for just one community district and that area is determined to be too small an area?

A: HCR reserves the right to make adjustments to service area boundaries.

Q35: How will HCR decide whether an applicant's service area is large enough to run a program?

A: HCR will consider capacity and the needs of the service area when making the award decisions to ensure that a selected applicant will be able to administer an effective program.

Q36: Must the application identify which community district it is applying for?

A: Each applicant must state clearly what community districts it is applying for.

Q37: Is an applicant allowed to rank the order of preference for the community districts for which they're applying?

A: Applicants may rank their preference of districts for award.

Q38: Since each district will be scored separately, how will HCR determine which community district will be awarded to whom?

A: HCR will follow the process described in Section XII(B) in making decisions about awards to individual community districts. HCR reserves the right to configure service territories in any manner it deems to be in the interest of the State of New York.

Q39: Is additional selection consideration given for existing subgrantees with service areas contiguous to the community districts they are applying for?

A: Consideration will be given to existing subgrantees that are applying for community board districts which are contiguous to their existing service area, provided that the applicants can demonstrate a history of serving the communities for which they are applying and have sufficient capacity to administer an effective program in the area.

Q40: Why is a subgrantee being solicited for only the Greenpoint section of Brooklyn Community District 1?

A: The majority of Community District 1 is assigned to an existing subgrantee.

Q41: Our agency is currently designated as a Weatherization Assistance Program subgrantee. Part of a community district for which services are being solicited is in our existing service territory. Must our organization apply to continue to serve that area?

A: Subgrantees with existing service areas do not need to reapply to continue serving the area currently assigned to them. That portion of the community district currently assigned to an agency will remain assigned to that agency. However, subgrantees applying for designation to serve the remaining portion of the community district will receive consideration if they can demonstrate a history of serving the community and are currently administering effective energy efficiency programs in the remaining portion of the community district. Applicants must demonstrate technical, financial and management capacity to provide services in the entire community applied for.

In making decisions on the selection of subgrantees and the service areas assigned to that subgrantee HCR will respect existing service territories and give preference to existing subgrantees working in adjacent areas. However, HCR reserves the right to make adjustments to service areas to provide coverage in an efficient manner.