

## **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

### **Community Needs Assessment – State of Rhode Island**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

**Rhode Island Community Action Association** is a comprehensive statewide network of seven agencies with reach to over 200,000 Rhode Islanders providing a safety net in all 39 cities and towns throughout the state. Community Action Agencies link preventative, educational, emergency assistance and direct supportive services that help vulnerable populations meet daily needs in support of achieving self-sufficiency. Since 1992, RICAA has been a catalyst for change and a vital part of a coordinated effort to eliminate poverty in our state. The Association with its separate designation as a 501 (c) 3 organization actively partners with other state community associations across the nation, the national community action partnership, and regional associations to support the mission of community action. As the public continues to be affected by many challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, it is now a more vital time than ever to audit and determine the true needs of communities in Rhode Island.

#### **BACKGROUND**

The Rhode Island Community Action Association enables communication and coordination among the seven (7) member Community Action Program agencies in Rhode Island, and facilitates common projects. RICAA also assists in linking the activity and mission of the member agencies with the State CSBG Administrator in the RI Department of Human Services. RICAA will collaborate with representatives of all the CAP agencies on the statewide Community Needs Assessment Committee alongside the project manager to complete the Community Needs Assessment.

#### **PURPOSE**

The Community Needs Assessment will evaluate poverty in Rhode Island and its causes. What are people's needs, what resources exist to meet those needs, and are the resources adequate? A completed Needs Assessment and policy brief will guide strategic planning, develop targeted investments strategies, identify funding priorities, inform on service distribution and the allocation of resources from the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG). Unduplicated local data will inform our state plan and the response of our communities for strategic and future planning. State level data will aid in introducing legislation and advocacy for the work our individual agencies do and community action collectively.

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## **INVITATION**

The Rhode Island Community Action Association invites interested parties to submit a proposal to provide project management services in preparation and completion of a statewide policy brief and Community Needs Assessment. This strategic assessment will give each Community Action Agency a vehicle for evaluating needs in the community, and will serve as the means for addressing and coordinating areas where there is a gap in service needs.

## **SCOPE OF SERVICES**

- Reviewing and analyzing existing data
- Collecting relevant data from:
  - CAP data sources
  - U.S. Census Bureau
  - DHS and other State Departments: DOH, BHDDH, DCYF, OHA
  - Homeless Management Information System
  - Digital/Email Surveys, Mail Surveys, Social Media
  - Social Services Providers & Community Based/Nonprofit Organizations
  - Stakeholders: city/town halls, public safety/infrastructure, libraries, churches
  - Community Input: Interviews/Surveys/Focus groups via Case management, Food Pantry, Health Care Facilities, DHS customers/RI Works, other non-profits
  - Advocates such as the Economic Progress Institute; Coalition for the Homeless; RI Kids Count
- Conducting pre-assessment activities including the organization and creation of assessments and tools
- Regularly meet and work with CAPs and RICAA to plan collection and use of data
- Engage higher education researchers and/or students to assist
- Work with representatives of the CAPs and DHS to prepare survey tools and analyze data and responses
- Delivering a flexible needs assessment
- Identifying priorities and issues for the CAP agencies
- Prepare a final report with complete data and analysis

## **FOCUS AREAS**

The key areas addressed by all Community Action Programs and that would be areas of concern for the Needs Assessment would include but not be limited to:

- Family/Community impact and burden due to COVID-19
- Housing /Rental burden indicators
- Nutrition/ Food Assistance
- Income/Accessing Earned Income Tax Credit/Financial Literacy
- GED/Job Education Supports/RI Work recipient work/education supports

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- Income/Employment
  - Family stabilization supports
  - Health/Behavioral Wellness/Dental
  - Childcare/Headstart
  - Transportation needs
  - Poverty levels and sustainability thresholds
  - Existing services and resources to meet needs
  - Gaps in services/insufficient to meet needs
  - Community experience having needs met by existing services
  - Safety in neighborhoods and communities
  - Critical needs of isolated/vulnerable folks
  - Solutions to meet needs/New emerging needs

Proposals must be received by this office on or before February 12, 2021 by 4:00 pm.  
Proposals received after the deadline will not be considered.

## **TIMELINE**

Release of RFP:	January 15, 2021
Deadline for Submission:	February 12, 2021
Notice of Selection:	Last week of February 2021

## **INQUIRIES**

Questions regarding this RFP are to be submitted by email to [ematrille@ricaa.org](mailto:ematrille@ricaa.org) with  
“Community Needs Assessment Questions” in the subject line.

## **PROCESS FOR SUBMITTING PROPOSAL**

Proposals must be submitted to RICAA via email with “Community Needs Assessment Proposal” in the subject line by 4:00 PM on February 12, 2021. Proposals received after the deadline will not be considered. This proposal offer acknowledges the right of RICAA to accept or reject any or all proposals and to waive any informality in any proposal received.

**Deadline:** By 4:00 PM on February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2021  
NO LATE PROPOSALS ACCEPTED

**E-Mail to:** [EMatrille@ricaa.org](mailto:EMatrille@ricaa.org)

**Subject:** Community Needs Assessment Proposal

## **INFORMATION REQUIRED WITH PROPOSAL**

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Bidder's response must include the following information in the same order and format sequence:

- Cover Sheet
- References
- Cost to complete the project
- Vendor Disclosure Form
- Written description of the anticipated process for completing the project based on the Scope of Services and Project Phases sections of the RFP
- Prior experience and qualifications
- A work sample(s) or a web-link of a related piece(s)

**Qualifications:**

The qualified consultant must satisfy the following requirements:

- Experience in providing a comprehensive Community Needs Assessment
- Familiarity with Community Action and Rhode Island demographics, human services, and the community development industry
- Expertise in gathering qualitative and quantitative data, interpretation, analysis, and communication of findings
- Experience in surveying and conducting focus groups
- Experience writing policy briefs/public policy documents

**Evaluation and Selection:** A contract will be awarded to the responsive bidder whose proposal represents the combination of merit and cost most advantageous to RICAA whom reserves the right to determine which proposal demonstrates the requisite competence and offers the greatest value. The proposal should include a description of project design and methods to be used to achieve the objectives and needs described in "Scope of Services." The following criteria will be considered to evaluate each proposal:

- Methodology and rationale
- Quantitative data identifications and analysis
- Approach to working collaboratively with various groups
- Qualitative assessment for community and government engagement
- Comprehensive findings and recommendations
- Knowledge, demonstrated competence and prior experience in similar projects
- Cost, commitment to project and time frame
- Completeness of RFP response per instructions

**Implementation Plan:** Proposal should describe an implementation plan which includes, tasks, any additional staff, milestones, completion dates, and deliverables.

**Timetable:** Please include a detailed timetable to accommodate project's timeline.

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**Meetings:** At least three meetings with the CAP agencies representatives, two virtual research sessions, and one open forum with agencies and public stakeholders.

**Deliverables:** Collected data and source materials; Final Report: Rhode Island Community Action Agencies (CAPs) Community Needs Assessment

**Modifications:** Should any changes be made to this RFP, an addendum will be issued by RICAA. It is the responsibility of each bidder to check with RICAA and verify that he/she has received all addenda prior to submitting a proposal. All addenda issued prior to date of receipt of Proposals shall become a part of these specifications, and all proposals are to include the work therein described.

**Cost Proposal:** Provide an understandable and clearly delineated fee structure, and include any estimated costs for assessment approaches and options. Specify any ongoing consulting and/or professional fees and all related expenses that will be covered under a contract. Break down pricing per options described, and list any key tasks or any purchase of external resources that may be required. Note any services limitations per pricing options.

**Errors, Omissions, and/or Discrepancies:** Bidder shall not be allowed to take advantage of errors, omissions, and/or discrepancies found in these specifications.

**Conflicts of interest:** Please describe any potential conflicts of interest that may be pertinent to this contract. Please disclose if either you, or anyone involved with you (company or firm) has a business or personal relationship with a director, or employee of Rhode Island Community Action Agencies (or its affiliates: Its Association) that may create a conflict of interest.

## **EXECUTION OF CONTRACT**

RICAA reserves the right to consider proposals based on their relative merit, risk, and value to the organization, and reserves the right to negotiate with all service providers. Contracted service offers will be based upon the bidder's responsiveness to the RFP and total price quoted for all items covered by the RFP. The successful bidder may be asked to participate in negotiations and may be asked to make revisions to their proposals based on negotiations. In submitting a proposal, each Vendor acknowledges that they have read and understand these requirements.

## **TERM OF SERVICE**

The term of contract will begin on upon the bidder's acceptance of the terms and conditions of the project (on or about February 26, 2021) and end on October/November 2021. The successful bidder is expected to present findings to the RICAA Board of Directors and representatives of each CAP, in the fall of 2021.

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## **SALES AND EXCISE TAXES**

Rhode Island Community Action Association (RICAA) and the Community Action Agencies (CAA's), as a 501(c) (3) nonprofit agencies, are exempt from sales and federal excise taxes.

## **RESOURCE**

Interested parties are encouraged to view the following resources:

2017 Community Needs Assessment - <https://www.ricommunityaction.org/agency-services/>