

Date received by RI Office of Veterans Affairs: _____

Grant #: _____



Rhode Island Office of Veterans Affairs **Veterans Service Grant Proposal Application**

Questions concerning this solicitation must be received by the Rhode Island Office of Veterans Affairs at vets.info@vets.ri.gov no later than **August 6, 2018, 12:00 p.m.** Questions should be submitted in a *Microsoft Word* attachment. Please reference the RFP # 072018 on all correspondence. Questions received, if any, will be posted on the Rhode Island Division of Purchasing website as an addendum to this solicitation. It is the responsibility of all interested parties to download this information.

Note to Applicants:

- Applicants must register on-line at the Rhode Island Division of Purchasing at www.purchasing.ri.gov.
- Proposals received without a completed RIVIP Bidder Certification Cover Form attached may result in disqualification.

July 23, 2018

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SECTION 1. INTRODUCTION

The Rhode Island Office of Veterans Affairs (RIOVA) is soliciting proposals from qualified vendors to provide programs or services for unmet needs of the Veterans community, in accordance with the terms of this Request for Proposals (“RFP”) and the State’s General Conditions of Purchase, which may be obtained at the Division of Purchases website at www.purchasing.ri.gov.

This is a Request for Proposals, not a Request for Quotes. Responses will be evaluated on the relative merits of the proposal, in addition to cost; there will be no public opening and reading of responses received by RIOVA pursuant to this solicitation, other than to name those offerors who have submitted proposals.

SECTION 2: INSTRUCTIONS AND NOTIFICATIONS TO OFFERORS

1. Potential vendors are advised to review all sections of this RFP carefully and to follow instructions completely, as failure to make a complete submission as described elsewhere herein may result in rejection of the proposal.
2. Alternative approaches and/or methodologies to accomplish the desired or intended results of this RFP are solicited. However, proposals that depart from or materially alter the terms, requirements, or scope of work defined by this RFP may be rejected as being non-responsive.
3. All costs associated with developing or submitting a proposal in response to this RFP or for providing oral or written clarification of its content, shall be borne by the vendor. The State assumes no responsibility for these costs even if the RFP is cancelled or continued.
4. Proposals are irrevocable for a period of not less than 180 days following the opening date, and may not be withdrawn, except with the express written permission of the State Purchasing Agent.
5. All pricing submitted will be firm and fixed unless otherwise indicated in the proposal.
6. It is intended that an award pursuant to this RFP will be made to a prime vendor, or prime vendors in the various categories, who will assume responsibility for all aspects of the work. Subcontracts are permitted, provided that their use is clearly indicated in the vendor’s proposal and the subcontractor(s) to be used is identified in the proposal.
7. **The purchase of goods and/or services under an award made pursuant to this RFP will be contingent on the availability of appropriated funds.**

8. Vendors are advised that all materials submitted to RIOVA for consideration in response to this RFP may be public records as defined in R.I. Gen. Laws § 38-2-1, *et seq.*, and may be released for inspection upon request once an award has been made.

Any information submitted in response to this RFP that a vendor believes are trade secrets or commercial or financial information which is of a privileged or confidential nature should be clearly marked as such. The vendor should provide a brief explanation as to why each portion of information that is marked should be withheld from public disclosure. Vendors are advised that RIOVA and/or the Division of Purchases may release records marked confidential by a vendor upon a public records request if the State determines the marked information does not fall within the category of trade secrets or commercial or financial information which is of a privileged or confidential nature.

9. Interested parties are instructed to visit the RIOVA and Division of Purchasing websites on a regular basis for additional information relating to this solicitation that may be released as an addendum to this RFP.
10. By submission of proposals in response to this RFP, vendors agree to comply with R.I. Gen. Laws § 28-5.1-10 which mandates that contractors/ subcontractors doing business with the State of Rhode Island exercise the same commitment to equal opportunity as prevails under Federal contracts controlled by Federal Executive Orders 11246, 11625, and 11375.

Vendors are required to ensure that they, and any subcontractors awarded a subcontract under this RFP, undertake or continue programs to ensure that minority group members, women, and persons with disabilities are afforded equal employment opportunities without discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, national origin, or disability.

Vendors and subcontractors who do more than \$10,000 in government business in one year are prohibited from engaging in employment discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, national origin, or disability, and are required to submit an "Affirmative Action Policy Statement."

Vendors with 50 or more employees and \$50,000 or more in government contracts must prepare a written "Affirmative Action Plan" prior to issuance of a purchase order.

For these purposes, equal opportunity shall apply in the areas of recruitment, employment, job assignment, promotion, upgrading, demotion, transfer, layoff, termination, and rates of pay or other forms of compensation.

For further information, contact Vilma Peguero at the Rhode Island Equal Employment Opportunity Office, at 222-3090 or via e-mail at ODEO.EOO@doa.ri.gov.

11. In accordance with R.I. Gen. Laws § 7-1.2-1401 no foreign corporation has the right to transact business in Rhode Island until it has procured a certificate of authority so to do from the Secretary of State. This is a requirement only of the successful vendor(s). For further information, contact the Secretary of State at 222-3040.
12. Under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA), a “business associate” is a person or entity, other than a member of the workforce of a HIPAA covered entity, who performs functions or activities on behalf of, or provides certain services to, a HIPAA covered entity that involves access by the business associate to HIPAA protected health information. A “business associate” also is a subcontractor that creates, receives, maintains, or transmits HIPAA protected health information on behalf of another business associate. The HIPAA rules generally require that HIPAA covered entities and business associates enter into contracts with their business associates to ensure that the business associates will appropriately safeguard HIPAA protected health information. Therefore, if a Contractor qualifies as a business associate, it will be required to sign a HIPAA business associate agreement.

SECTION 3. SCOPE OF WORK AND ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

1. You must request funding under one of the 14 categories:
 - **Veterans Living in Poverty.** Includes basic needs, food security, housing, goods and services, emergency financial services, and substance abuse and support programs. The Veteran poverty growth rate is less than that of non-Veterans; however, the overall Veteran poverty rate is rising. The poverty rate for Veterans between the ages of 18 to 34 is higher than all other age groups. Disabled Veterans have higher poverty rates than disabled non-Veterans for all age groups except those over age 65.ⁱ Programs should focus on reversing these poverty trends.
 - **Veterans Homelessness.** Includes basic needs, goods and services, emergency financial services, rental assistance, home ownership, homeless services, and transitional and permanent housing. There are over 400 chronically homeless Veterans in Rhode Island and a significant number who are at-risk of homelessness.ⁱⁱ Programs should focus on solutions to address needs not met through existing programs.
 - **Veterans Employment and Employment Training.** Includes job training, job search and preparation services, and business ownership counseling. Programs should focus on preparing Veterans and transitioning service members for meaningful

careers, providing entrepreneurship resources and expertise, and protecting re-employment rights.

- **Veterans Education.** Includes GI Bill assistance, financial aid counseling, loans, scholarships, tuition programs, learning skills preparation, and student Veterans organization support. Education is essential for Veterans' career and life goals attainment. Programs should focus on promoting educational opportunities and supporting student Veterans currently enrolled in schools.
- **Veterans Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)/Agent Orange Effects/Burn Pits.** Includes healthcare services, mental health counseling, and recreational and spiritual programs. Programs should focus on promoting wellness and improving outcomes for Veterans facing unique, military-related health challenges caused by PTSD, Agent Orange, and burn pits.
- **Veterans Disability Benefits.** Includes the federal VA entities, Veteran Service Organizations, state agencies, and nonprofit organizations serving individuals with disabilities. Programs should focus on assisting Veterans navigate the benefit application process or improving quality of life.
- **Veterans Long-Term Care.** Includes VA programs and services, caregiver support, palliative care, and nursing home care. Programs should focus on enhancing shared decision making, advance care planning, and related long-term services and supports.
- **Veterans Transportation.** Includes transportation to and from the Providence VA Medical Center locations, other health-related facilities, the VA Regional Office, and places serving basic life needs. Programs should focus on increasing transportation options such as through special public transportation fares for Veterans, joint dispatching, service contracts, feeder services, ride-share, driver training drivers, or other innovative modes of transport.ⁱⁱⁱ
- **Veterans Family Members/Caregivers.** Includes counseling and support, family readiness groups, education and information services, wellness programs, crisis programs, peer monitoring programs, and substance abuse and support programs. Family Members and caregivers provide crucial support in maintaining households and caring for aging and disabled Veterans. Programs should focus on supporting and assisting those who undertake this important role.
- **Veterans Financial Planning/Services.** Includes compensation, consumer protection, budgetary, pension and tax counseling, unemployment services, and emergency assistance. Programs should focus on preparing transitioning military members for financial success and helping all Veterans obtain financial security.

- **Veterans Legal Services.** Includes legal assistance, pro bono programs, legal clinics, judicial system programs, service records, identification cards, and military awards and discharge review. Programs should focus on access to legal resources to assist with medical challenges, disability benefits, reemployment rights, debt collection, housing, criminal matters, license restoration, and family law.
 - **Veterans Mortuary Affairs.** Includes RI Veterans Memorial Cemetery and other forms of bereavement and memorial assistance. Programs should focus on assisting Veterans plan for end-of-life and supporting families as they cope with the process of death and dying.
 - **Veterans Transitional Assistance.** Includes housing, jobs, basic needs, disability assistance, and retirement. Programs should be designed to provide comprehensive services to our service members as they transition from the military to civilian life after their service.^{iv}
 - **Other.** Any social services, programs, or other resources provided to Veterans, family members, and/or caregivers not covered in the other 13 categories.
2. Applicants must be a government agency, non-profit organization, Veteran service organization, a program for the benefit of its Veterans, families, or survivors, or a non-Veteran-related agency that wishes to expand its programming to Veterans.
 3. Applicants that do not have a program or does not seek to develop a program that meets the requirements described above are not eligible to apply for this grant.
 4. The applicant must be able to articulate performance measures. Performance measures are assessable indicators of a program's performance as it relates to providing services to Veterans and their families. Performance measurement is a process of regularly assessing the services provided by the organization's program and the effect the program has in Veteran communities or in the lives of members or community beneficiaries. The main purpose of performance measures is to strengthen Veteran service programs, foster continuous improvement, and identify effective practices and models that merit replication.
 5. Applicants must be based in Rhode Island and use funds awarded solely for the benefit of Veterans who are residents of Rhode Island.
 6. No grants will be awarded for the purchase, lease, or rent of office space, buildings, or land.

SECTION 4. PROPOSAL

1. The 14 funding categories listed on this RFP are the only categories under which programs can be funded. For every block checked, applicants must submit a separate application.
2. *Narrative and format.* The proposal should address each of the following elements specifically:
 - a. Staff Qualifications – Provide staff resumes/CVs and describe qualifications and experience of key staff who will be involved in delivering the services.
 - b. Capability, Capacity, and Qualifications of the Offeror – Please provide a detailed description of the Vendor’s experience as a provider of the services offered.
 - c. Work Plan – Please describe in detail the framework within which services will be performed.
 - d. Cost Proposal – Please provide a cost proposal with a detailed budget and budget narrative.
3. Review the Project Narrative on pp. 13-15 and use it as a checklist for the documents required for the application. All information listed in the Project Narrative is required for the application to be considered. If the applicant does not have or cannot produce the documentation requested, an explanation must be provided.
4. Awards expire at the end of the state fiscal year. For this FY 2019 grant period, monies must be spent by June 30, 2019.
5. The RI Office of Veterans Affairs will conduct announced and unannounced site visit inspections of all awardees.

SECTION 5: EVALUATION AND SELECTION

1. Proposals shall be reviewed by a technical evaluation committee (“TEC”) comprised of staff from State agencies.
2. Proposals must receive a minimum of 60 (85.7%) out of a maximum of 70 points to advance to the cost evaluation phase. Any proposals scoring less than 60 points will be dropped from further consideration. Technical proposals scoring 60 points or higher will have the cost proposals evaluated and assigned up to a maximum of 30 points in cost category bringing the total potential evaluation score to 100 points.

3. RIOVA reserves the right to select the vendor(s) that it deems most qualified to provide the goods and/or services as specified herein; and, conversely, reserves the right to cancel the solicitation in its entirety in its sole discretion.
4. Proposals shall be reviewed and scored based upon the following criteria:

Criteria	Possible Points
Staff Qualifications	15 Points
Capability, Capacity, and Qualifications of the Offeror	15 Points
Work Plan	40 Points
Total Possible Technical Points	70 Points
Cost proposal	30 Points
Total Possible Evaluation Points	100 Points

5. *Cost Proposal Evaluation.* The vendor with the lowest cost proposal shall receive one hundred percent (100%) of the available points for cost. All other vendors shall be awarded cost points based upon the following formula:

(lowest cost proposal/vendor's cost proposal) x available points

For example: If the vendor with the lowest cost proposal (Vendor A) bids \$65,000 and Vendor B bids \$100,000 and the total points available are thirty (30), Vendor B's cost points are calculated as follows: $\$65,000/\$100,000 \times 30 = 19.5$

6. *General Evaluation.* Points shall be assigned based on the vendor's clear demonstration of the ability to provide the requested goods and/or services. Vendors may be required to submit additional written information or be asked to make an oral presentation before the TEC to clarify statements made in the proposal.

SECTION 6. QUESTIONS

1. Questions concerning this solicitation must be e-mailed to vets.info@vets.ri.gov no later than August 6, 2018, 12:00 p.m. No other contact with State parties is permitted.
2. Please reference RFP # 072018 on all correspondence.
3. Questions should be submitted in writing in a Microsoft Word document in a narrative format with no tables.

4. Answers to questions received, if any, shall be posted on the RIOVA and Division of Purchasing websites as an addendum to this solicitation. It is the responsibility of all interested parties to monitor the RIOVA and Division of Purchasing websites for any procurement related postings such as addenda.
5. If technical assistance is required, call RIOVA at (401) 921-2119.

SECTION 7. PROPOSAL CONTENTS

1. Proposals shall include the following:
 - a. One completed and signed RIVIP Bidder Certification Cover Form (included in the original copy only) downloaded from the Division of Purchases website at www.purchasing.ri.gov. Do not include any copies in the Technical or Cost proposals.
 - b. One completed and signed Rhode Island W-9 (included in the original copy only) downloaded from the Division of Purchases website at <http://www.purchasing.ri.gov/rivip/publicdocuments/fw9.pdf>. Do not include any copies in the Technical or Cost proposals.
 - c. Technical Proposal – use the enclosed application form to describe the qualifications and background of the applicant, proposed scope of work, and all information described in this solicitation.
2. Formatting of written documents.
 - a. For clarity, the project narrative shall be typed, single-spaced, with 1” margins on white 8.5”x 11” paper using 12-point Calibri font or 12-point Times New Roman font.
 - b. All pages on the project narrative are to be sequentially numbered in the footer, starting with number 1 on the first page of the narrative (this does not include the cover page or table of contents) through to the end, including all forms and attachments. The Vendor’s name should appear on every page, including attachments. Each attachment should be referenced appropriately within the proposal section and the attachment title should reference the proposal section it is applicable to.
 - c. The budget and narrative shall be typed using the formatting described above.
 - d. Printed copies are to be only bound with removable binder clips.

SECTION 8. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

1. Interested vendors must submit proposals to provide the goods and/or services covered by this RFP on or before the date and time listed on the cover page of this solicitation. Responses received after this date and time, as registered by the official time clock in the reception area of the RI Office of Veterans Affairs shall not be accepted.
2. Proposals should be mailed or hand-delivered in a sealed envelope marked "RFP # 072018" to:

Rhode Island Office of Veterans Affairs
Attn: Technical Evaluation Committee Review (Veterans Service Grant)
560 Jefferson Blvd, Suite 206
Warwick, Rhode Island 02886

3. Proposals received after the above-referenced due date and time shall not be accepted. Proposals misdirected to other State locations or those not presented to RIOVA by the scheduled due date and time shall be determined to be late and will not be accepted. Proposals faxed or emailed to RIOVA shall not be accepted. The official time clock is in the reception area of the RI Office of Veterans Affairs.

SECTION 9. CONCLUDING STATEMENTS

1. Notwithstanding the above, RIOVA reserves the right to award based on cost alone, to accept or reject any or all proposals, and to award in the State's best interest.
2. Proposals found to be technically or substantially non-responsive at any point in the evaluation process will be rejected and not considered further.
3. If a Vendor is selected for an award, no work is to commence until a purchase order is issued by the Division of Purchases.
4. The State's General Conditions of Purchase contain the specific contract terms, stipulations and affirmations to be utilized for the contract awarded for this RFP. The State's General Conditions of Purchases can be found at the following URL:

<https://www.purchasing.ri.gov/RIVIP/publicdocuments/ATTA.pdf>

VETERANS SERVICE GRANT PROPOSAL APPLICATION (RFP # 072018)

Organizational Information:

Organization name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip code: _____
Contact name: _____ Title: _____
Phone number: _____ E-mail: _____

Eligibility Requirements:

Please select a funding category:

- Veterans Living in Poverty
- Veterans Education
- Veterans Legal Services
- Veterans Transitional Assistance
- Veterans Transportation
- Veterans Financial Planning / Services
- Veterans Family Members / Caregivers
- Veterans Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)/Agent Orange/Burn Pits
- Veterans Homelessness
- Veterans Disability Benefits
- Veterans Mortuary Affairs
- Veteran Long-Term Care
- Veterans Employment and Employment Training
- Other

Program Finances:

Funding Request: \$ _____

Proposed funding period:

Start Date: _____

End Date: _____

Note: A grant award will not imply continuation or priority for future awards.

Purpose of Request:

Project Narrative:

The Project Narrative contains required details and should be used as a guide and checklist for ensuring the application is submitted in the correct format and all documents requested are provided with the application. *If applicants do not complete and submit the required documents listed below, the application will be deemed incomplete and may be rejected.*

1. Background

- A. Organization’s mission.
- B. Describe current programs and activities.
- C. Describe the population that your organization serves.

2. Purpose of Funding Request

- A. Describe the program, project, or use for which grant funding is requested.
- B. Provide plans, equipment lists, and other documents as may be required to show the type, structure, and general character of the program, project, or use for which grant funding is requested.
- C. Provide cost estimates of developing, constructing, operating, or completing the program, project, or use for which grant funding is requested.
- D. Provide a program of proposed expenditures for the grant funds.
- E. Describe the geographic area in RI that your program will serve.
- F. Describe existing similar programs within the same geographic area.

- G. Describe the needs or problems of the Veteran community that will be addressed.
 - H. Describe the objective(s) of the program.
 - I. Describe the proposed number of Veterans assisted.
 - J. Describe the methods of financing the program.
 - K. Describe the methods of funding costs and expenses not covered by this grant.
 - L. Describe how the program will be supported after the termination of the grant.
3. **Performance Measures.** A quantifiable indicator used to assess how well an organization or business is achieving its desired objectives. Based on the examples of performance measures listed below, describe a detailed plan for measuring and tracking the impact and outcomes achieved with the funding provided, including effective practices and models used or identified.
- List of Performance Measures
 - Key Areas of Difference
 - Implementation
 - Impact Evaluation
4. **Finances**
- A. Provide audited financial statements for the last two fiscal years, or a Form 990. If it is not available, include unedited financial statements.
 - B. Provide a current year's operating budget to include both projected expenses and revenues.
 - C. Provide a program budget, with narrative and project costs estimates.
 - D. Provide itemization of proposed use of requested funds.
 - E. Provide a Capital budget.
 - F. Provide a detailed list of grants applied for or currently have been awarded.
5. **Other required documents**
- A. Provide verification of the organization's tax-exempt status under section 501(c)(3), 501(c)(4), or 509(a) of the IRS code.
 - B. Is the grant request for durable equipment (e.g., non-consumables) over \$1,500? If so, submit three (3) separate, competitive bids.
 - C. Does the grant request include the use of a service provider? If so, submit three (3) quotes. If three quotes are not available, provide an explanation.
 - D. Provide proof that the applicant is properly licensed to conduct service proposed.
 - E. Do you have any outstanding obligations owed to the State of Rhode Island? If so, you must provide a statement.
 - F. Provide a list of current chief officers/board members.
 - G. Do any of the chief officers/board members have a relationship with a RIOVA employee? If so, provide a statement disclosing the relationship(s).
 - H. Is the project in collaboration with other agencies? If so, include letters of agreement/understanding from the collaborating agencies.

6. If available, provide additional documentation regarding your program such as:
- A. Letters of support and/or program reviews
 - B. Media stories

7. Have you received a Veterans Service Grant(s) previously?
- A. Dates
 - B. Purpose
 - C. Amount Awarded
 - D. Amount Expended
 - E. Were you in compliance throughout the entire grant period?
 - F. If not, provide an explanation:

8. How many Veterans, including family members, will participate/benefit from your services?

9. Program Checklist. Below is the Veterans Grant Process timeline to assist the applicant with understanding the overall process and timely submittal of the application.

July 23, 2018 12:00 p.m. EDT	<i>Posting</i> <i>28 days</i>	Posting Date
August 6, 2018 12:00 p.m. EDT		Deadline for vendor questions
August 13, 2018 12:00 p.m. EDT		Post addendum with responses to questions
August 20, 2018 12:00 p.m. EDT		*Due Date of Proposals* (Bid opening date)
August 21, 2018	<i>Technical/Cost Evaluation of Proposals</i> <i>2 to 3 weeks</i>	Proposals submitted to the evaluation team chair.
August 23, 2018		Evaluation team reviews and scores combined technical and cost proposals
August 24, 2018		Evaluation team submits scoring memo to Director

August 27, 2018	<i>Tentative Award Letter Issued</i>	Agency issues Tentative Letter of Award to vendor.
	<i>21 days</i>	Vendor to submit all applicable Bonds, Insurance, MBE, EEO requirements prior to final award.
September 17, 2018	<i>Due Date for Documents.</i>	All applicable documents received from Vendor. PO requested from Division of Purchasing.
September 21, 2018 (Tentative)	<i>PO Issued</i>	All required documents received from Vendor. PO issued.

I certify that the Project Narrative is/ is not included and contains all the documents and information requested.

This information herein is certified as true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Submitted by:

Name (Printed)

Title

Signature

Date

ⁱ https://www.va.gov/vetdata/docs/specialreports/veteran_poverty_trends.pdf

ⁱⁱ https://www.va.gov/vetdata/docs/specialreports/veteran_poverty_trends.pdf

ⁱⁱⁱ http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/tcrp/tcrp_rrd_99.pdf

^{iv} <http://www.benefits.va.gov/vow/tap.asp>