

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ) 2015-06

PUBLIC RELATIONS, MEDIA PLANNING AND BUYING SERVICES

for

FLORIDA HOUSING FINANCE CORPORATION

September 18, 2015

SECTION ONE INTRODUCTION

Florida Housing Finance Corporation (“Florida Housing”) is soliciting competitive, sealed responses from qualified firms to provide public relations and media buying strategies as well as placement for its programs in accordance with the terms and conditions set forth in this Request for Qualifications (RFQ), and any other term and condition in any contract subsequently awarded. Respondents will be selected and determined through Florida Housing’s review of each response, considering the factors identified in this RFQ. Florida Housing expects to select one or more Respondents that propose to provide all of the services specified in this RFQ.

SECTION TWO DEFINITIONS

For purposes of this document, the following terms will be defined as follows:

“Board”	The Board of Directors of Florida Housing Finance Corporation.
“Committee”	The review committee composed only of employees of Florida Housing that is established pursuant to Rule 67-49.007, Fla. Admin. Code.
“Contractor”	A person or entity providing the professional services described in Section Four of this RFQ.
“Days”	Calendar days, unless otherwise specified.
“Effective Date”	The date the last party signs the contract that is awarded as a result of this RFQ.
“Florida Housing”	Florida Housing Finance Corporation, a public corporation and public body corporate and politic created by Section 420.504, Fla. Stat.
“Respondent”	Any person or entity who has the capability in all respects to perform fully the requirements contained in this RFQ, and submits a response to this RFQ.
“Response”	The written submission by an Respondent to this RFQ.
“RFQ”	This RFQ, including all exhibits referenced in this document and all other documents incorporated by reference.

“Website”

The Florida Housing Finance Corporation website,
the URL of which is www.floridahousing.org.

SECTION THREE PROCEDURES AND PROVISIONS

A. The Respondent must submit an original and three copies of the Response to the Contracts Manager in a sealed envelope marked “RFQ 2015-06.” Each envelope or package containing Responses must clearly state the name of the Respondent. The Response that is the original must be clearly indicated on that Response. An electronic copy of the Response must also be submitted on a CD or flash drive. Florida Housing will not accept a faxed or e-mailed Response. Florida Housing must receive any Responses on or before 2:00 p.m., Eastern Time, on October 20, 2015. Responses will be opened at that time.

Contracts Manager
Florida Housing Finance Corporation
227 North Bronough Street, Suite 5000
Tallahassee, FL 32301-1329
(850) 488-4197
Email: Contracts.Manager@floridahousing.org

B. This RFQ does not commit Florida Housing to award a contract to any Respondent or to pay any costs incurred in the preparation or mailing of a Response.

C. All services under the contract awarded are to be performed solely by the Contractor, unless subcontracted or assigned with the prior written approval and consent of Florida Housing.

D. Florida Housing reserves the right to:

1. Waive minor deficiencies and informalities;
2. Accept or reject any or all Responses received as a result of this RFQ;
3. Obtain information concerning any or all Respondents from any source;
4. Request an oral interview before the Board from any or all Respondents;
5. Select for contract negotiation or for award a Response other than (or in addition to) that with the highest score in order to serve the best interests of Florida Housing and the public; and
6. Negotiate with the successful Respondent with respect to any additional terms or conditions of the contract.

E. Any interested party may submit any question regarding this RFQ in writing via mail or

e-mail to the Contracts Manager at the address given in Section Three, Item A. All questions must be submitted no later than 2:00 p.m., Eastern Time, on October 6, 2015. Phone calls will not be accepted. Florida Housing expects to respond to all questions in writing by 5:00 p.m., Eastern Time, on October 13, 2015. Florida Housing will post a copy of all questions received and the corresponding answers on Florida Housing's website at:

<http://www.floridahousing.org/BusinessAndLegal/Solicitations/RequestForQualifications/>.

Only written responses or statements from the Contracts Manager that are posted on our website will bind Florida Housing. No other means of communication, whether oral or written, may be construed as an official response or statement from Florida Housing.

F. Between the release of the solicitation and the end of the 72-hour period following the posting of the notice of intended award, respondents to this solicitation or persons acting on their behalf may not contact any member of Florida Housing's Board of Directors or any Florida Housing employee concerning any aspect of this solicitation, except in writing to the Contracts Manager. Violation of this provision may be grounds for rejecting a response.

G. Any person who wishes to protest the specifications of this RFQ must file a protest in compliance with Section 120.57(3), Fla. Stat., and Rule Chapter 28-110, Fla. Admin. Code. Failure to file a protest within the time prescribed in Section 120.57(3), Fla. Stat., will constitute a waiver of proceedings under Chapter 120, Fla. Stat.

H. The term of the contract will be for three years, subject to satisfactory performance at the sole discretion of Florida Housing. If the parties mutually agree in writing, the contract may be renewed once for an additional three years.

I. Florida Housing is not required to use the services of any selected Contractor or to assign any work to such provider, and may terminate the contract with any selected Contractor without cause and without penalty.

J. Pursuant to Fla. Admin. Code R. 67-49.004, Florida Housing may modify the terms of the RFQ at any point prior to the due date for Responses. A notice of such modification will be posted on Florida Housing's Website and will be provided to potential Respondents who requested copies of the RFQ. Any Respondent will have at least seven days from the date of the posting of the notice of the modification to submit or modify its Response.

K. The terms of this RFQ, and any modifications thereto, will be incorporated into any contract offered as a result of this RFQ. Failure of a successful Respondent to accept these obligations in the final contract may result in cancellation of the award.

SECTION FOUR SCOPE OF SERVICES

Florida Housing uses public relations plans and/or buys print, broadcast, display and/or online advertising to promote its housing programs and/or other housing-related programs. Florida Housing seeks to implement research-based public relations campaigns and media-buying strategies that maximize reach within its target markets, and that demonstrate an effective use of public relations and advertising dollars. Contractor(s) will be asked to provide public relations planning, media planning and media buying strategies that focus on mainstream and minority media, including Hispanic, African-American and Creole markets, and produce methods of evaluating the effectiveness of the public relations and/or advertising campaigns.

The Contractor will develop research-based public relations campaigns, media planning and/or media buying strategies that include print, broadcast, display, and/or online advertising to promote Florida Housing's programs and/or other housing-related programs to potentially eligible consumers within mainstream and minority communities. With the submission of each invoice, the Contractor will also provide Florida Housing with a report that provides a breakdown of the campaign, to include items such as types of media used, how/when it was disseminated to the target audience, etc.

SECTION FIVE CERTIFICATION

Do not reproduce the language of Section Five in the Response. By inclusion and execution of the statement provided in Section Six, subsection I, of this RFQ, each Respondent certifies that:

A. The Respondent submits this Response without prior understanding, agreement, or connection with any person or entity submitting a separate Response for the same services. However, any agreement with a person or entity with whom the Response is jointly filed and such joint filing is made clear on the face of the Response will be an exception so long as the Response is in all respects fair and without collusion or fraud.

B. Any material submitted in response to this RFQ is a public record pursuant to Chapter 119, Fla. Stat., and subject to examination upon request, but only after Florida Housing provides a notice of decision pursuant to Section 120.57(3), Fla. Stat., or within 30 days after the Response is opened, whichever is earlier.

C. The Respondent, if awarded a contract under this RFQ, will comply with Section 420.512(5), Fla. Stat. For the purpose of Section 420.512(5), Fla. Stat., "Prohibited Business Solicitation Communications" is defined by Section 420.503(32), Fla. Stat.

D. The Respondent is in compliance with Section 287.133(2)(a), Fla. Stat.

E. The Respondent understands and agrees to cooperate with any audits conducted in accordance with the provisions set forth in Section 20.055(5), Fla. Stat.

F. Pursuant to Section 119.0701(2), Fla. Stat., the Respondent, if awarded a contract under this RFQ, will be required “to comply with public records laws, specifically to:

- a. Keep and maintain public records that ordinarily and necessarily would be required by the public agency in order to perform the service.
- b. Provide the public with access to public records on the same terms and conditions that the public agency would provide the records and at a cost that does not exceed the cost provided in this chapter or as otherwise provided by law.
- c. Ensure that public records that are exempt or confidential and exempt from public records disclosure requirements are not disclosed except as authorized by law.
- d. Meet all requirements for retaining public records and transfer, at no cost, to the public agency all public records in possession of the contractor upon termination of the contract and destroy any duplicate public records that are exempt or confidential and exempt from public records disclosure requirements. All records stored electronically must be provided to the public agency in a format that is compatible with the information technology systems of the public agency.”

Notwithstanding anything contained herein to the contrary, the provisions and requirements of this paragraph will only apply if and when the Contractor is acting on behalf of Florida Housing.

G. The Respondent acknowledges that if awarded a contract it will be prohibited from engaging in activities in connection with services related to Florida Housing transactions that produce direct or indirect financial gain for the Respondent other than for the compensation agreed upon in the contract that results from this RFQ, unless that Respondent has Florida Housing’s written consent after Florida Housing has been fully informed of such activities in writing.

H. The Respondent acknowledges that if awarded a contract it will be prohibited from engaging in any actual, apparent, or potential conflict of interest. Should any such actual, apparent, or potential conflict of interest come into being subsequent to the effective date of the contract and prior to the conclusion of the contract, the Respondent will provide notification (Notice of Conflict of Interest) to Florida Housing, through first class certified mail, return receipt requested, within ten (10) working days, seeking consent from Florida Housing’s Executive Director. If the Respondent is found to be in non-compliance with this provision, without written consent from Florida Housing’s Executive Director, any compensation received in connection with the contract will be subject to forfeiture to Florida Housing.

I. The Respondent, in submitting this Response, acknowledges and agrees that the terms and conditions of this RFQ, as well as any modifications thereto, will be incorporated into any contract offered as a result of this RFQ.

J. CERTIFICATION STATEMENT:

THE FOLLOWING WILL BE REPEATED IN THE RESPONDENT’S RESPONSE AND SIGNED BY AN INDIVIDUAL AUTHORIZED TO BIND THE RESPONDENT. THIS IS A THRESHOLD ITEM AND FAILURE TO INCLUDE THE CERTIFICATION STATEMENT BEARING AN ORIGINAL SIGNATURE WILL RESULT IN REJECTION OF THE RESPONSE.

“I agree to abide by all conditions of RFQ 2015-06 and certify that all information provided in this Response is true and correct, that I am authorized to sign this Response as the Respondent and that I am in compliance with all requirements of the RFQ, including but not limited to, the certification requirements stated in Section Five of this RFQ.”

Authorized Signature (Original)

Print Name and Title

**SECTION SIX
INFORMATION TO BE PROVIDED IN RESPONSE**

In providing the following information, restate each item and sub-item (with its letter and number), limit your Response to one bound volume. Responses to the items must be included immediately after the restated items without any reference to any appendix.

A. COVER LETTER

Each proposal must be accompanied by a cover letter that contains a general statement of the purpose of submission and includes the following information.

1. The name, job title, address, office and cellular telephone numbers, and e-mail address of a primary contact person, who will be responsible for day-to-day contact with Florida Housing, and any backup personnel who would be accessible if the primary contact cannot be reached.

2. Legal business status (individual, partnership, corporation, etc.) and address and telephone number of the Respondent.

B. BACKGROUND AND EXPERIENCE

1. Provide evidence that the Respondent is qualified to do business in the State of Florida.

2. Describe the Respondent’s presence in Florida, and ability to be accessible to

Florida Housing staff, availability for meetings, conferences, consultation, etc.

3. Provide a history of the Respondent's experience providing public relations, media planning and media buying services in Florida as well as its experience with statewide public relations and advertising campaigns targeting Hispanic, African-American, Creole, and other minority populations.

4. Provide description and sample of a statewide or targeted public relations campaign and media buy that the Respondent has implemented using a budget range \$150,000-\$500,000.

5. Provide a description of the Respondent's approach in developing targeted media buying as discussed in the scope of services, including creating communication plans (using acceptable industry methods); planning meetings with client; relying on market demonstrations and/or Nielson ratings; and other tools. (Sample may be provided as an Exhibit to the Response).

6. Discuss and provide examples of the Respondent's ability to develop key messages for target audiences, engage in targeted media relations, and negotiate media/advertising buys and additional placements with media outlets.

7. Provide any additional information explaining why your business would produce work superior to that of another business.

C. SCHEDULE

Provide the timeline of a previous public relations campaign and a media buy completed by the Respondent that best represents the business's ability to handle an all-encompassing and complete public relations campaign. This timeline should demonstrate the Respondent's ability to handle a full advertising schedule from planning, designing and placement; to verification and documentation of placements.

D. FEES

1. Provide the proposed hourly fee to be charged in connection with the services described in Section Four of this RFQ. Table A below is a fee schedule work sheet for use in itemizing fees.

2. Fees proposed must include all charges relating to the services required under the contract and all out-of-pocket expenses, such as telephone, postage and shipping, printing and/or copy costs, and travel, if any. No costs will be reimbursed under the contract.

TABLE A FEE SCHEDULE		
	Description	Hourly Fee
A.	Research-Based Public Relations Campaigns, Media Planning and/or Media Buying Strategies – Year One	\$
B.	Research-Based Public Relations Campaigns, Media Planning and/or Media Buying Strategies – Year Two	\$
C.	Research-Based Public Relations Campaigns, Media Planning and/or Media Buying Strategies – Year Three	\$
D.	Research-Based Public Relations Campaigns, Media Planning and/or Media Buying Strategies – Optional Renewal Year One	\$
E.	Research-Based Public Relations Campaigns, Media Planning and/or Media Buying Strategies – Optional Renewal Year Two	\$
F.	Research-Based Public Relations Campaigns, Media Planning and/or Media Buying Strategies – Optional Renewal Year Three	\$
G.	CAMPAIGNS, PLANNING AND BUYING STRATEGIES AVERAGE HOURLY FEE (A+B+C+D+E+F) ÷ 6	\$

3. Provide an additional breakdown of the business’s public relations planning costs and fees.

4. Identify any reduced costs available to government, non-profit entities such as Florida Housing, and your business’ ability to negotiate these and other reductions in fees.

FINAL FEE SCHEDULE WILL BE SUBJECT TO NEGOTIATION.

E. DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE

If the Respondent has implemented a drug-free workplace program, the Respondent must submit the following certification indicating that it meets all of the requirements of Section 287.087, Fla. Stat.:

I hereby certify on behalf of the Respondent, under the terms of RFQ 2015-06, that the Respondent has implemented a drug-free workplace program pursuant to Section 287.087, Fla. Stat.

Authorized Signature: _____
 Print Name: _____
 Print Title: _____

F. MINORITY BUSINESS ENTERPRISE

If the Respondent is a minority business enterprise as defined in Section 288.703, Fla. Stat., the Respondent must submit the following certification:

I hereby certify on behalf of the Respondent, under the terms of RFQ 2015-06, that the Respondent is a “minority business enterprise” as defined in Section 288.703(3), Fla. Stat.

Authorized Signature: _____
 Print Name: _____
 Print Title: _____

G. CERTIFICATION (Mandatory Item)

FAILURE TO INCLUDE THE CERTIFICATION STATEMENT LOCATED IN SECTION FIVE OF THIS RFQ BEARING AN ORIGINAL SIGNATURE WILL RESULT IN REJECTION OF THE RESPONSE.

**SECTION SEVEN
 EVALUATION PROCESS**

The individual Committee members will independently evaluate the Responses by reviewing the answers to each of the items identified in Section Six of this RFQ and assigning points up to the maximum points allowed for each item.

For Item D.1., Fees, the Respondent with the lowest proposed average hourly rate from Table A, Fee Schedule, will receive the maximum allowable points (15 points). The remaining respondents will receive a percentage of the maximum points, rounded to the nearest whole number, based on the following formula:

$\frac{\text{Lowest Proposed Average Hourly Rate}}{\text{Current Respondent's Proposed Average Hourly Rate}}$	=	%	x	15	=	Total Points Awarded for that “Average Hourly Rate” (Rounded to the nearest whole number)
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The points available for items in Section Six are to be evaluated are as follows:

<u>Item Reference</u>	<u>Maximum Points</u>
B.2. Background and Experience	20
B.3. Background and Experience	25
B.4. Background and Experience	20
B.5. Background and Experience	15
B.6. Background and Experience	10
C. Schedule.....	15

D.1. Fees15

Total Points Available.....120

In the event of a tie, Florida Housing will give preference in the award process to the Response certifying a drug-free workplace has been implemented in accordance with Section 287.087, Fla. Stat. If a tie continues to exist, Florida Housing will give preference to minority business enterprises as defined in Section 288.703, Fla. Stat.

The Committee will conduct one or more public meetings during which members will discuss their evaluations and develop a recommendation or series of recommendations to the Board. The Committee’s recommendation will be based on the cumulative scoring and information gathered from the non-scored items. The Board may use the Responses, the Committee’s scoring, the non-scored items in the Responses, any other information or recommendation provided by the Committee or staff, and any other information the Board deems relevant in its selection of Respondents to whom to award a contract.

**SECTION EIGHT
AWARD PROCESS**

Florida Housing will provide notice of its decision, or intended decision, for this RFQ on Florida Housing’s Website the next business day after the applicable Board vote. After posting, an unsuccessful applicant may file a notice of protest and a formal written protest in accordance with Section 120.57(3), Fla. Stat. Failure to file a protest within the time prescribed in Section 120.57(3), Fla. Stat. or failure to post the bond or other security required by law within the time allowed for filing a bond will constitute a waiver of proceedings under Chapter 120, Fla. Stat.