

Vermont Better Places Program

Crowdfunding Project Management RFP

ADDENDUM 1

September 14, 2021

TO ALL BIDDERS OF RECORD:

This Addendum consists of 4 page(s).

Acknowledge receipt of this Addendum by entering its number and date on the Proposal Form. This Addendum forms a part of the Contract Documents and modifies them as follows:

Questions and Answers:

1. I'd like to submit a question on the Better Places application. We understand that communities receiving Better Places grants can use a limited portion of the grant funding for technical assistance/contract services in designing or creating the project. If a vendor (or subcontractor) is selected for the Better Places RFP, would conflict of interest issues make that entity ineligible to provide contract technical assistance to any grantees? (for example, could a grantee community hire the selected vendor to do landscape design or a public art commission under a separate contract?)
Any use of state grant funds and matching dollars would have to go through a competitive procurement process, follow [Bulletin 3.5](#) and [Bulletin 5](#), and adhere to the scope of work in the applicant's grant agreement. Applicants may use their own funds to procure any vendor services, but at no time, can the selected vendor solicit or market its services through the Better Places program, website, and supporting outreach efforts.
2. Do you anticipate that the winning team will be responsible for helping individual communities develop ideas and craft plans for successful placemaking projects (identify spaces, develop ideas, plan and budget for implementation) or that the staff at the Vermont Department of Housing and Community Development and its other area partners will be more integrally involved in that portion of the program and winning team will primarily be there to support after a project concept has been developed with the grant program application and crowdfunding coaching and support?
The Vendor will not be responsible for helping communities develop ideas and plans for placemaking projects. Applicants will need to have an idea and plan before applying. DHCD and its partners will help applicants develop their project concepts prior to applying. The Vendor will deliver the services to support the applicant as describe in Phase 3 – Project Management of the RFP.

3. Is there any flexibility in meeting the technical design and access provisions identified in the RFP, or must these be met exactly? In other words, is there room for a vendor to propose certain reporting standards or capabilities even if they are not able to meet these requirements or are these considered essential as written?
(2.2.1. System design should include analytical tools, exportation of metadata into MS Excel, and reporting capabilities able to illustrate individual and aggregate project data and selected metadata. 2.3. Vendor will provide the State real-time, full administrative access to the platform for ongoing project management, including access to....)
Yes. The Vendor may propose a reporting standard that alters slightly but must still meet the reporting standards as stipulated in the RFP, including Phase 1 2.2 and 2.3 and Phase 3 2.29.
4. What is the maximum annual budget for this work?
The Vermont Legislature stipulated that the Department of Housing and Community Development may use up to 15 percent of any appropriation to the Fund from the General Fund to assist with crowdfunding, administration, training, and technological needs of the Program. The Vermont Legislature appropriated \$1.5M with up to \$225,000 (15%) used for crowdfunding, administration, training, and technological needs of the program. We anticipate holding back some of these funds for training activities and to support Vermont Community Foundations role in the program.
5. What type of contract will be awarded (ex. time and materials or fixed fee)?
The Payment Provisions of the resulting contract will be structured in accordance with the Price Proposal of the RFP (page 16).
6. How many applicants are expected per year?
Unknown, as Better Places is a new program. In 2020, we administered the Better Places pilot grant program that required no local match or crowdfunding and we received 63 applications from 54 Vermont communities. We anticipate robust demand for the Better Places program.
7. How many awards are expected per year?
Unknown as Better Places is a new program. Project grant request can range from \$5,000 to \$40,000. The program could award up to 255 grants at \$5,000/each or 31.8 projects at \$40,000/each during the 2.5 years we have to expend the grant dollars according the State Statute and enabling program language.
8. Would there be one or multiple application deadlines throughout the year or will applications be accepted on a rolling basis? Or will this be for the Vendor to determine as part of Project Management?
Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis. We are having some initial conversations about having two rounds and distributing the funds on rolling basis during those two rounds of funding opportunities. DHCD will work with the selected vendor to determine the best approach to allocate funding.
9. Reference: Pg. 5, Task 2.1 - Would the content for the website be provided to the Vendor or would content creation be a part of the scope of work?
DHCD will work in partnership with selected vendor to develop content for the website. DHCD will provide imagery, draft copy, and web content to support selected vendor's build out of the website and crowdfunding platform.
10. Reference: Pg. 5, Task 2.1 - Would the Vendor be required to develop/provide any imagery or graphics for the website?
DHCD will provide imagery and graphics for the website in partnership with selected vendor. The

selected vendor may need to modify existing state imagery and create new or modify existing graphics for website. DHCD has created program material, graphics, and imagery to use for the Better Places program roll-out and will be incorporated into the Better Places website.

11. Reference: Pg. 5, Task 2.1 - Given that the contract start date is anticipated to be October 1st, what would be the preferred website launch date?
DHCD anticipates launching the website in December and start accepting applications in January 2022.
12. Reference: Pg. 5, Task 2.2 - Other than developing donation-based crowdfunding functionality, are there any other functions/features that the Better Places program website would be required to have?
DHCD anticipates the website to have program material and links to Better Places program website on ACCD's website. In addition, other functions we may want to consider is a project intake application form, program marketing material including program one pagers, videos, and supporting outreach material. Any program outreach material will be developed in partnership with DHCD and follow the State's Chief Marketing Office guidelines.
13. Reference: Pg. 5, Task 2.2.1 - This task reads, "System design should include analytical tools, exportation of metadata into MS Excel, and reporting capabilities able to illustrate individual and aggregate project data and selected metadata." What specific analytic data and metadata would need to be reported?
The data and reporting standards should adhere to Phase 1 2.2 and 2.3 and Phase 3 2.29 in the RFP. Specifically, as specified in 2.29 in the RPF, Vendor will track financial, project, and donation data metrics per each project and the Better Places program, including number of projects and project types; average donation; total number of donations; leveraged funds and total private investment; source of funds; square footage created, activated or revitalized; number of successful campaigns and success rates; average project costs; website activity; unique page views; and other supporting data.
14. Reference: Pg. 5, Task 2.6 - This task reads, "Vendor will develop, in partnership with the State, toolkits, webinars, and resources to train applicants in the development of projects." What is the anticipated role of the State in this task? Will the State collaborate in developing content, or will their role be limited to reviewing, providing comment, and approving materials?
DHCD will be actively involved and lead in developing content, managing webinars and outreach activity, and producing resources for the Better Places program in partnership with selected vendor.
15. Reference: Pg. 6, Task 2.11 - This task reads, "Vendor will attend up to 10 key events to promote the services and donation-based crowdfunding opportunities. The selection of the events shall be mutually agreeable between the parties and some events may be virtual. Vendor may schedule presentations upon prior written consent of the State." Is it correct that these are anticipated to be events planned and hosted by third parties? Or would the Vendor be responsible for planning and putting on these events? Can you provide some examples of what types of events these may include?
DHCD and the Better Places partners will lead and organize outreach activities and events for the Better Places program. The selected vendor will develop presentations, conduct presentations, and provide training on selected topics (marketing, crowdfunding, program overview, etc.) as determined by DHCD in partnership with Vendor. DHCD anticipates these outreach activities could be virtual through online webinars and trainings, in person at annual placemaking workshops, conferences, and other outreach activities.
16. Reference: Pg. 7, Task 2.29 - This task reads, "Vendor will track financial, project, and donation data metrics per each project and the program, including number of projects and project types; average

donation; total number of donations; leveraged funds and total private investment; source of funds; square footage created, activated or revitalized; number of successful campaigns and success rates; average project costs; website activity; unique page views; and other supporting data." Would the Vendor be required to provide analyses/synthesize the data produced? Or would data only need to be reported in the form of an Excel document?

DHCD requires data reporting and analysis to be synthesized and share the data in an accessible and easy to understand manner to illustrate the program's impact.

17. Reference: Pg. 7, Task 2.31 - This task reads, "Vendor shall procure and maintain, throughout the duration of the contract, crime/employee dishonesty insurance coverage with minimum coverage not less than \$1,000,000 per occurrence \$1,000,000 aggregate or other amount deemed appropriate by the State." If the vendor does not currently carry dishonesty insurance, is it required to bid on the proposal, or can it be added if needed following award?

Vendor is not required to procure insurance in order to submit a proposal.

END OF ADDENDUM #1