



# VIRGIN ISLANDS HOUSING FINANCE AUTHORITY

Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery  
3438 Kronprindsens Gade • GERS Complex 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Suite 4  
St. Thomas, USVI 00802-6447  
Telephone: (340) 777-4432 • Fax: (340) 775-7913

## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

for

## PUBLIC RELATIONS AND MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS

### ADDENDUM 2

### RFP 004-2020-DR-STT/STX

**Issue date:**

March 3, 2020

**Submittal deadline:**

April 16, 2020

**Contact person:**

Nicole Roberts  
CDBG-DR Procurement Officer  
nroberts@vihfa.gov

 *Unlocking the Door to Affordable Housing*

# Virgin Islands Housing Finance Authority

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RFP 004-2020-DR-STT/STX

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Public Relations and Marketing Communications

## ADDENDUM 2

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This addendum consists of ten (10) letter size pages (8.5' x 11").

This Addendum is hereby made part of the RFP for Public Relations and Marketing Communications, RFP 004-2020-DR-STT/STX, dated March 3, 2020.

This addendum consists of Questions and Answers as follows:

1. *Whether companies from outside USA can apply for this?  
(like, from India or Canada)*

**Answer: Yes, the procurement is open to companies from outside the USA.**

2. *Whether we need to come over there for meetings?*

**Answer: Yes, the selected bidder may be required to attend some meetings in person.**

3. *Can we perform the tasks (related to RFP) outside USA?  
(like, from India or Canada)*

**Answer: Yes and no. Most tasks can be performed remotely. Some tasks may require in-person interaction.**

4. *Can we submit the proposals via email?*

**Answer: Proposals can be submitted by the deadline date via email and certified mailed.**

5. *Who is the incumbent?*

**Answer: There is currently no incumbent performing the requested services.**

6. **TASK 2: PROGRAM OUTREACH SUPPORT** - Conduct outreach campaigns including events to notify residents of program availability, locations of intake centers and opportunities to apply for programs in person or online.

a. *What is the planned application deadline for the Housing Recovery and Rental Recovery Programs?*

Answer: The Rental Program application period for Round 1 is closed. Round 2 is tentatively set for July 1<sup>st</sup>. It will be open for 90 days.

Yes, additional outreach will be required. It will be required paid marketing services.

b. *Is it expected that paid media will be used, in addition to traditional outreach methods, to promote the disaster recovery programs?*

Answer: Yes, paid media will be used, in addition to traditional outreach methods to promote the disaster recovery programs

7. **TASK 4: INTERNET/SOCIAL MEDIA/DIGITAL MARKETING** - Coordinate with a separate contractor(s) responsible for designing and maintaining the comprehensive recovery website and engaging in marketing to promote tourism.

a. *Is comprehensive recovery website this refers to [www.vistormrecovery.com](http://www.vistormrecovery.com)?*

Answer: No, we are currently building out the VIHFA CDG-DR website. The email address ([www.vistormrecovery.com](http://www.vistormrecovery.com)) will be a link to one of the programs listed on the website.

8. **TASK 4: INTERNET/SOCIAL MEDIA/DIGITAL MARKETING** - Recommend improvements and additions to [www.vihfa.gov](http://www.vihfa.gov) or [www.vihfa.gov/disaster-recovery](http://www.vihfa.gov/disaster-recovery) and ancillary social media.

a. *In addition to providing recommendations for improvements/additions to the [www.vihfa.gov](http://www.vihfa.gov) or [www.vihfa.gov/disaster-recovery](http://www.vihfa.gov/disaster-recovery) websites, will the contractor be expected to maintain or redesign these websites?*

Answer: No, the selected contractor will not be expected to maintain or redesign these websites

9. **TASK 4: INTERNET/SOCIAL MEDIA/DIGITAL MARKETING** - Develop search engine optimization (SEO)/search engine marketing (SEM) and website sign-up.

- a. *What is the desired function of the website sign-up? Will it function as a listserv sign-up to receive future information or is it an online application form for CDBG or CDBG-DR programs?*

**Answer:** It will house application for any CDBG-DR program. CDBG-DR and CDBG-MIT and all other Disaster Recovery funded programs.

- b. *Does VIHFA expect that the contractor will create and code a sign-up form within the existing framework of the [www.vihfa.gov](http://www.vihfa.gov) website?*

**Answer:** No, the contractor is not expected to create and code a sign-up form within the existing framework of the [www.vihfa.gov](http://www.vihfa.gov) website

10. **SECTION 6.0 PRICING and PAYMENT** - *Is it expected that all Key Personnel will be on-site employees or is it permissible to have an on-site Account Coordinator who is supported by off-site staff that fill the other Key Personnel roles? Would you consider a different labor mix where the Account Coordinator is on-site, and supported by off-site staff serving in the other Key Personnel roles?*

**Answer:** It is not expected that all Key Personnel will be on site. A labor mix is permissible.

11. **SECTION 6.0 PRICING and PAYMENT** - *Please clarify what is meant by "on-site." Is it expected that the selected contractor will be located in the VIHFA offices or will the contractor be expected to maintain their own office space in the USVI? If VIHFA offices, will on-site staff be located in the St. Thomas or St. Croix offices?*

**Answer:** Contractor is expected to maintain its own office space within the USVI.

12. **SECTION 4.2. – REQUIRED MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS OF RESPONDENT** - *Respondent must provide a full listing of all pending and resolved litigation, failure to provide information will deem the proposal disqualified.*

- a. *May Proposers limit their responses regarding "resolved litigation" to only matters resolved within the past year, and litigation that directly bears on the work to be performed in the subject RFP?*

**Answer:** Proposers are expected to list both "pending litigation" and "resolved litigation", irrespective of whether the litigation bears directly on the work to be performed in the subject RFP.

13. **ENCLOSURE DOCUMENT G: PRIOR PERFORMANCE CERTIFICATION** - *Has the Proposer or any of its Team Members been notified with a "Letter of Concern," which refers to any written communication from a Government entity notifying the Proposer or any of its*

*Team Members, wariness or caution about the performance under a contract to provide services? If yes, provide a copy of every "Letter of Concern" received from and as a contractor of a Government entity.*

- a. May Proposers limit their responses regarding any "Letter of Concern" to only notices received within the past year, which relate to work that is directly the subject of the referenced RFP?*

**Answer:** Proposers may limit their responses to notices received within the last two (2) years; however, all "Letter(s) of Concern" should be disclosed and provided, irrespective of whether the "Letter of Concern" bears directly on the work to be performed in the subject RFP.

**14. SECTION 16.0 DELIVERY OF BID PACKAGE** - All responses to this RFP are to be received by VIHFA no later than 4:00 PM AST on April 2, 2020.

- a. Will the Virgin Islands Housing Finance Authority ("VIHFA") consider extending the response due date given current social distancing measures and mandatory telework restrictions in many locations related to COVID-19?*

**Answer:** Yes. The new date will be Thursday, April 16, 2020 at 4:00 p.m.

**15. ENCLOSURE DOCUMENT H** - "Depending on the structure of the winning bidder's response, not all costs may ultimately be included in the final contract"

- a. Will VIHFA please confirm Contract type? Will this be T&M or FFP type? Are you expecting offerors to propose a contract type when they submit?*

**Answer:** No, offerors are expected to propose a contract type. The contract type will most likely be a fixed price contract.

**16. Section 4.1** states respondents shall attach **Certificate of Good Standing** with proposal response; however, **Section 16.2** Required documents states, "The Successful respondent shall have ten (10) days from the day the notice of selection is received to submit **Letter of Good Standing.**"

- a. Will VIHFA please confirm if a Letter of Good Standing is required with submission due on April 2, 2020, or only after a notice of successful award?*

**Answer:** The Certificate of Good Standing should be submitted on the submission due date of April 16, 2020.

**17. SECTION 16.0 DELIVERY OF BID PACKAGE** - Bids may **not** be submitted via email or fax.

Virgin Islands Housing Finance Authority  
Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery Program  
3438 Kronprindsens Gade

*GERS Complex 1st Floor, Suite 4  
St. Thomas, VI 00802  
Attention: Nicole Roberts*

- a. Given the current concerns regarding the transmission of COVID-19, will VIHFA consider allowing electronic submissions instead of hard copy submissions?*

**Answer: In light of COVID-19, VIHFA will permit electronic submissions; and a hard copy certified mail.**

**18. ENCLOSURE DOCUMENT E CONFLICT OF INTEREST - (a) Unequal access to information. A potential respondent, subcontractor, employee, or consultant has access to non-public information through its performance on a government contract for disaster recovery services in the Virgin Islands.**

*(b) Biased ground rules. A potential respondent, subcontractor, employee, or consultant has worked, in one government contract, or program, on the basic structure or ground rules of another government contract for disaster recovery services in the Virgin Islands.*

- a. Many government and/or quasi government agencies in the USVI have issued storm related contracts since 2017. To what government contracts or government contracting agencies does this prohibition apply?*

**Answer: There is not a known prohibition at this time; however, potential respondents are expected to list the government contracts to determine if a conflict of interest does exist.**

**19. Given the national emergency and shutdowns in many jurisdictions which may cause closures, disruption or delays with some federal and/or local agencies and/or businesses including FED/Ex and notary services that Respondent s may need to complete in RFP, will you be considering extending the deadlines? If so, when will this decision be made?**

**Answer: Yes, see response to Question #14.**

**20. Some of the requirements (page 20, Section 16.2) such as the Certificate of Existence are not applicable to Sole Proprietorships. What are the list of documents that are specifically required for Sole Proprietorships?**

**Answer: The list of required documents specifically for Sole Proprietorship are Trade Name Certificate, Liability Insurance, Workman Compensation and Employee Identification Number (EIN).**

**21. ENCLOSURE DOCUMENT C** - asks for a Copy of Trade Name Certificate for Sole Proprietorships, but the USVI Division of Corporations and Trademarks only registers. Given names for Dentists and Doctors as trade names and not for those who operate other types of businesses in the USVI under their given name. Can you give guidance on this?

**Answer:** Contractors are expected to provide the legal documents that applicable to the legal entity and are required by the USVI government agency.

**22.** Since a Letter of Good Standing from the Lieutenant Governor's Office requires an entity to be registered as a Corporation or LLC, what is the equivalent for Sole Proprietorships (who have both long-time business licenses in the USVI, have Duns numbers and are registered with SAM)?

**Answer:** Contractors are expected to provide the corporate documents that are applicable to their business entity structure.

**23.** What type of Financial Statements are required from Sole Proprietorship? Are Schedule C P&L documents sufficient?

**Answer:** Yes, a IRS Schedule C P & L documents will suffice for audited financial statements.

**24.** Because of the national emergency and social distancing recommendations to prevent the spread of infection, it may be difficult to fly and do any in-person presentations during the RFP selection process. Will Skype or other types of online presentations be considered?

**Answer:** Yes, other types of online presentations will be considered and the selected respondents will be advised accordingly

**25.** Do you foresee an extension of the submission date as a result of the COVID-19 crisis and the potential impact it will have on the government of the VI and its operations?

**Answer:** Yes, see response to Question # 14

**26. Section 4.0 Qualifications:** *What if a company has existed for under two years and cannot provide two years of audited financial statements? What other documentation would be accepted?*

**Answer:** VIHFA will accept the one year of audited financial statements.

**27. Section 4.0 Qualifications:** *What if the current audit is still in process?*

**Answer:** VIHFA will accept the most recent years audited financial statements.

**28.** *What contacts locally and nationally does VIHFA already utilize?*

**Answer:** Locally, VIHFA utilizes all available local media contacts. Nationally, VIHFA utilizes the Associated Press, Wall Street Journal and New York Times.

**29.** *Will HFA provide office space?*

**Answer:** No, see response to Question # 11

**30.** *Which island should the awardee be primarily based?*

**Answer:** The awardee should be based in St. Croix.

**31.** *Should the cost of ad buys be factored into the cost or is the VIHFA covering such cost separately? If VIHFA is not going to cover such cost, how many ad buys should the respondents be prepared to procure?*

**Answer:** Yes, the cost of ads should be factored in as a separate cost. See Addendum 1, with the adjusted bid sheet. Respondents should be prepared to procure ads in print, radio and television.

**32.** *Should the cost video production be included into the cost or is the VIHFA cover such cost, how many productions should the respondent be prepared to produce?*

**Answer:** The cost of video production should be included in the overall cost. The respondent should be prepared to produce a maximum of 10 videos, with minimum of 5.

33. **Section 16.0 Delivery of Bid Packages:** *Does the 25-page limitation only apply to Section M or the entire package?*

Answer: Yes, the proposal should be limited to 25 pages and is not inclusive of the form documents and enclosures.

34. **Section 2.2 Contractor Responsibilities:** *What are all the divisions of VIHFA?*

Answer: Please visit our website [www.vihfa.gov](http://www.vihfa.gov).

35. **Section 2.1 Scope of Work:** *Please elaborate on VIHFA's role in promoting tourism as referenced in Task 4, bullet 3.*

Answer: VIHFA's role in promoting tourism would be assisting in delivering key messages about the recovery to inform a global audience that we are open for business. The awarding contractor will be asked to work with the Department of Tourism for the exact language and messaging.

36. **Section 2.1 Scope of Work:** *Will the awardee be responsible for making edits to the live comprehensive recovery program website per the second bullet under Task 4. Or will they only be responsible for providing content and layout options?*

Answer: No; however, recommendations are welcome.

37. **Section 2.1 Scope of Work:** *If the awardee will be responsible for making actual changes to the website, will a staging environment/testing website be available to test changes before delivery to the production environment?*

Answer: Awardee will not be responsible for making actual changes to the website, see response to Question #9.

38. **Section 2.1 Scope of Work:** *Are changes or recommendations being made for an entirely new site or the re-designing of an existing one?*

Answer: A new website is underway.

39. **Section 2.1 Scope of Work:** *From a marketing standpoint, what KPI's or metrics does your organization believe are important for measuring the success of this project?*

Answer: Media impressions, brand awareness, message saturation in the community and participation in eligible programs are some of the important KPI(s) and metrics for measuring a project's success.

40. *How many members are on your Communications team currently? What are their titles?*

Answer: There are currently three (3) members on the Communications team. The titles are Communication Manager, Public Information Officer and PR Consultant.

41. **Section 2.1 Scope of Work:** *Is the website content currently managed and updated in house or externally?*

Answer: Both. It is managed externally but our IT department has access to update.

42. *What technology is your website built on?*

Answer: The current website is built on a CMS (Content Management System) called "Drupal". The new upcoming website is built on a CMS called "WordPress".

43. *Do you currently utilize any marketing analytics tools? Is so, which ones?*

Answer: No.

44. *What are PR and Marketing software and/or technology do you currently utilize?*

Answer: We do not currently utilize any PR & Marketing software.

45. *Are there any changes to the method of submission based on the COVID-19 crisis?*

Answer: Yes, see Response #17.

46. Are there any notes available from the pre-proposal conference?

**Answer: No.**

47. Has the government formulated its own independent government cost estimate (IGCE)? If so, is the government going to disclose to the Respondents?

**Answer: An independent cost estimate is required to be completed with all RFP, which is not shared with respondents to the RFP.**

48. On page 13, Section 12, there is an M/WBE encouragement. However, if an SDB (Small Disadvantage Business) under federal small business regulation at 13 C.F.R 124 or a (ED)WOSB under federal small regulations at 13 C.F.R 127 were to submit a proposal, would this also be encouraged by the agency? If so, would the RFP be amended as such?

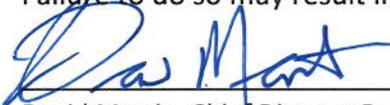
**Answer: The RFP is open to all types of business.**

49. On page 7, Section 4.2(i) allows for unincorporated partnership (perhaps "paper partnership") to submit an offer along with any other form of legal entity. Sole proprietorships are taxed as unincorporated entities by both federal and state government as are unincorporated partnerships. Can you give further guidance on this section?

**Answer: Our taxing authority might be a better source for guidance on taxation of certain types of legal entities.**

All other requirements and provisions of RFP-004-2020-DR-STT/STX, Public Relations and Marketing Communications, shall remain in full force and effect.

Each proposer shall make reference in his Proposal to Addendum 2 to the RFP Documents. Failure to do so may result in the Proposer's disqualification.

  
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David Martin, Chief Disaster Recovery Officer  
Community Development Block Grant-  
Disaster Recovery

04/01/20  
Date