

State of Oregon



Oregon Housing and Community Services Department

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (RFI)

OregonBuys Bid Number: 914-6221-21

Seeking Information About:

House Bill 2100 Task force on Homelessness and Racial Disparities Facilitator

Date of Issue: July 14, 2021

Responses Due Date/Time: July 26, 2020 at 3:00 PM PST

Issuing Office: Oregon Housing and Community Services Department

Contact Name: Alisha Schultz, Senior Procurement Specialist

Address: 725 Summer Street NE, Suite B, Salem, OR 97301

Phone: 503-986-6894

E-mail: OHCS.Contracts@oregon.gov

Please review the attached RFI. If you are interested in submitting information, you may send your response to the RFI to OHCS.Contracts@oregon.gov by the Responses Due Date/Time.

1.0 Introduction

The State of Oregon acting by and through Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS) Department is issuing this Request for Information (RFI) to solicit information from entities **actively engaged in providing Task Force Facilitation related to Homelessness and Racial Disparities**. This RFI may or may not result in a Request for Proposals (RFP), direct award, or similar solicitation to procure a Contractor to assist in the creation, implementation and administration of the Task Force on Homelessness and Racial Disparities.

2.0 Background

In the last three biennia, the Oregon Legislature has dramatically increased resources to address Oregon's homeless crisis. However, it has been more than 30 years since Oregon has examined the homeless services system. House Bill (HB) 2100 [B-Engrossed](#) makes key reforms to the system and establishes the Task Force on Homelessness and Racial Disparities to examine the system's funding structure and make recommendations for the 2022 legislative session. HB 2100 does not create a new homeless service system, but it opens the door to reimagine our system in response to Oregon's current homelessness crisis.

HB 2100 represents the first major statutory modernization for Oregon's homeless services system in more than 30 years. The Statute:

- Advances racial equity in homeless services programs: Defines culturally specific organization, culturally responsive organization, and culturally responsive services, sets performance standards for grantees to engage Oregon's diverse communities and allows access to state dollars for the purpose of addressing disproportionate homelessness amongst black, indigenous and other people of color (BIPOC) communities.
- Confirms and clarifies the roles of community action agencies and OHCS in administering federal antipoverty programs and distinguishes these from homeless assistance resources.
- Codifies the State Homelessness Assistance Program (SHAP) and Emergency Housing Assistance (EHA) program as programs under the Emergency Housing Account and confirms a focus on outcomes for both programs.
- Establishes SHAP as a program to serve people experiencing homelessness, explicitly naming unsheltered homelessness as a priority for the first time.
- Expands partners advising OHCS as we collectively address and end homelessness.
- Requires OHCS to administer federal programs with the advice of the Housing Stability Council (HSC).
- Establishes the Task Force on Homelessness and Racial Disparities to make recommendations on an optimal funding structure for homeless services resources, leveraging the expertise of people with lived experience, urban and rural homeless service providers, community action agencies, culturally specific organizations, local governments, and more.
- Reflects the need for a homeless system that reflects best practices and outcomes-orientation, specifically highlighting the practices unique to serving rural communities.

Homeless services funds will continue to flow to community action agencies while the Task Force on Homelessness and Racial Disparities meets to develop recommendations on funding processes.

The Task Force will explore funding processes and structures with the explicit direction to ensure minimal disruption to service delivery.

3.0 Objectives

The Task Force shall:

- Identify and investigate methods by which OHCS and HSC may modify the **funding process and eligibility** for providers of services for individuals experiencing homelessness and housing insecurity maximize efficacy to state homeless and housing stabilization funds.
- Identify and investigate the **state's homeless and housing stability funding structure** to address racial disparities among people experiencing homelessness and housing insecurity, including consideration of how housing transition of services delivery could be implemented to avoid service disruptions among people experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity.
- Consider existing methods and recommend additional methods by which OHCS and HSC may **receive advice and information about needed services** for individuals experiencing homelessness and housing insecurity.
- Identify and investigate methods by which the state may **decrease rates of racial disparity** among people experiencing homelessness and receiving services.
- **Recommend solutions** regarding the funding of services for individuals experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity, including legislation or rulemaking and modifications to:
 - The delivery and eligibility requirements for federal and state funds;
 - The receipt and distribution of information about homelessness and homelessness services by the state; and
 - Methods for addressing racial disparities.

4.0 Tasks

If award a Contract under this RFI, Contractor will perform the following, but not limited to, tasks:

Task 1: Task Force Process Design

- Conduct stakeholder engagement and case development as necessary to develop a process design to meet the Task Force's objectives in the time allotted (recommendations due prior to the beginning of the 2022 legislative short session). At minimum, this should include an outline of intended deliberations, key stakeholders, and decision points on a timeline to ensure development of recommendations and creation of a report to the legislature by January 15, 2022. If the contractor recommends and foresees the need, this may also outline the use of secondary engagement or subcommittees to achieve the Task Force's objectives.
- This will include:
 - identifying of and establishing a working relationship with the Co-Chairs of the Task Force,
 - developing necessary process agreements and decision-making processes,
 - identifying necessary information/research to support the Task Force,
 - establishing any baseline training or information gathering exercises necessary for the committee members to have a shared language and initial understanding of the topic,

- clarifying needed support roles by OHCS staff.
- Use techniques or approaches as outlined in Section 7(4) of HB 2100 to meet the Task Force’s objectives

Task 2: Task Force Project Management

- Responsible for ensuring that tasks, timelines, and resources are appropriately designated, and progress is completed on-time. Smooth coordination, transparency, and open lines of communication with Task Force Co-Chairs and OHCS support staff is a priority.

Task 3: Task Force Facilitation & Constructive Conflict Engagement

- Responsible for designing and facilitating a creative and focused space where diverse Task Force members are able to fully contribute from their vantage point in pursuit of the common goals as outlined in Section 7(3) of HB 2100 and in accordance with the timeframe.
- To achieve this, a space where conflict and divergent opinions can be constructively and respectfully engaged with is required. As part of the process agreements and decision-making processes, the contractor should formalize a conflict engagement structure to clarify how differences will be worked through if they arise.
- Further, given the Task Force’s focus on racial disparities, the Contractor should be confident in their ability to help a racially diverse group stay constructively and compassionately engaged in challenging conversations centered around race.
- At a minimum, contractor shall be responsible for convening at least one official Task Force meeting each month from the launch to January 2022. Contractor shall be responsible for developing and distributing pre-meeting and post-meeting materials in a timely manner. A written summary of each meeting should be completed in addition to any video or audio recording. The depth of these summaries can be determined in concert with the needs of the Task Force members.

Task 4: Homelessness & Racial Disparities Report

- Draft and finalize a report laying out the findings and recommendations of the Task Force to be submitted to the legislature by January 15, 2021. The report shall cover all points outlined in Section 7(3) of HB 2100.
- Openly share with the Task Force the report as it is being drafted to ensure accurate representation of the group’s findings, deliberations, and decisions. The report should be developed in co-creation with the Task Force and should be written as the group proceeds—not all drafted at the end of deliberations.
- In addition to a written report, contractor shall create necessary visual aids, including but not limited to a final PowerPoint and a summary one-pager to be used with Legislative Assembly.

5.0 Questions

Note: Please respond in chronological order and label each response with the associated section number (e.g. 5.1, 5.2, and 5.3).

- 5.1 Given the information above please describe your firms’ relevant experiences facilitating multi-stakeholder task forces and producing reports on complex public policy topics. How do you design and support a process that ensures participants with divergent interests are able to arrive at durable decisions and produce quality deliverables under rigorous timelines?

- 5.2 What experience does your firm have in supporting challenging conversations around race, equity, and social justice? What methods or approaches does your firm use when designing and supporting these types of conversations?
- 5.3 What experience does your firm have with large systems change? Particularly regarding state and local systems. Please provide examples.
- 5.4 What additional information, data, context, or stakeholder engagement would you need to acquire/complete in order to design and launch this Task Force? How much time would you spend on case development and process design before bringing the Task Force together for a launch meeting?
- 5.5 How would you recommend sequencing the many tasks and objectives laid out for this Task Force? If unforeseen circumstances forced the Task Force to focus on just 1-2 objectives, which would you recommend the group pursue?
- 5.6 This Task Force is one key step in a longer effort to reimagine, modernize, and continually improve Oregon's homeless services system. How would you set up and facilitate this space to encourage continued momentum within the system and among the stakeholders after the creation of this Task Force's report?
- 5.7 If a group is at risk of getting lost in the proverbial trees and losing sight of the forest, what strategies do you employ to help keep them focused on the bigger picture and broader objectives? How do you ensure comprehensive consideration of the topic while minimizing the potential for scope creep?
- 5.8 Please describe your work/experience with people and entities mentioned in Section 7(2)(e)(A) HB 2100 in Oregon or otherwise.
- 5.9 In terms of logistics, would you recommend hosting these Task Force meetings in-person, virtually, hybrid, or some mix of options? Why? What are the potential gains or losses of your chosen convening set-up?
- 5.10 Much of successfully facilitating a space like this is in articulating and knowing when to ask the right questions. What additional question(s) should we have asked on this RFI? And how would you answer that question?

6.0 Responder Submission

Information and responses to questions should be succinct. Responders are encouraged to provide answers to the questions in Section 5.0; however, OHCS will accept a partial response to Section 5.0.

Identify the RFI name and number. Responses must be emailed to OHCS.Contracts@oregon.gov by the deadline listed on page 1. Include your entity name and contact information.

All responses and any accompanying documentation become the property of the State of Oregon, subject to the Oregon Public Records Law, and will not be returned.

OHCS will not be responsible for any error or omissions from downloading the RFI. The official RFI document is the one held at OHCS.

7.0 Costs and Fees

All costs associated with responder’s preparation and submission of this RFI is the sole responsibility of the Responder and shall not be borne by OHCS or the State of Oregon.

8.0 General Process Information

8.1 SCHEDULE

The following are key dates specific to this RFI:

RFI Issued	July 14, 2021
Questions/Requests for Clarification Due	July 19, 2021
Answers to Questions/Requests for Clarification Issued (approx.)	July 21, 2021
RFI Closing	July 26, 2021

8.2 QUESTIONS

All inquiries must be sent electronically to OHCS.Contracts@oregon.gov by the deadline published in section 8.1 Schedule. Reference the RFI name and number.

9.0 Responder Participation

Responses can be submitted by an individual or jointly by a team. Responses provided to this RFI will be used only for general information purposes and will not be considered binding on any party.

Submission of a response to the RFI does not constitute an agreement between the state and the Respondent, nor does it secure or imply that Respondent will be selected or given any preferential access or availability to future funding opportunities that may arise as a result of this RFI.

It is very important that the state support its local businesses and various socioeconomic programs, including but not limited to, the Certification Office for Business Inclusion & Diversity (COBID) registered and disabled veteran-owned businesses. A listing of COBID certified firms is available at:

<https://oregon4biz.diversitysoftware.com/FrontEnd/VendorSearchPublic.asp>

10.0 Public Record/Confidential or Proprietary Information

This RFI and one copy of each original response received in response to it shall be kept by OHCS and made a part of a file or record that may be open to public inspection. If an RFI response contains any information that is considered a trade secret under ORS 192.501(2), or is otherwise exempt from disclosure under the Oregon Public Records Law, ORS 192.410 through 192.505, if applicable, the vendor shall complete and submit the Affidavit of Trade Secret (Attachment A to this RFI) and a fully redacted version of its response, clearly identified as the redacted version.

If applicable, the Oregon Public Records Law exempts from disclosure only bona fide trade secrets, and some exemptions from disclosure apply only “unless the public interest requires disclosure in the particular instance.” Therefore, non-disclosure of documents or any portion of a document submitted as part of a response to this RFI may depend upon official or judicial determinations made pursuant to the public records laws and requirements. If applicable, OHCS may give vendor notice of any required disclosure and cooperate with vendor, at vendor’s

expense, in seeking reasonable protective arrangements. However, OHCS shall not be required to act in a manner which would result in any sanctions or other penalties.

Vendors are cautioned that cost information generally is not considered a trade secret under Oregon Public Records Law (ORS 192.410 through 192.505) and identifying the submission, in whole, as exempt from disclosure is not acceptable.

11.0 Pay Equity Compliance

As required by ORS 279B.235, Contractor shall comply with ORS 652.220 and shall not discriminate against any of Contractor’s employees in the payment of wages or other compensation for work of comparable character, the performance of which requires comparable skills, or pay any employee at a rate less than another for comparable work, based on an employee’s membership in a protected class.

Commencing on January 1, 2019, Contractor must comply with ORS 652.220 as amended and shall not unlawfully discriminate against any of Contractor’s employees in the payment of wages or other compensation for work of comparable character on the basis of an employee’s membership in a protected class. “Protected class” means a group of persons distinguished by race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, marital status, veteran status, disability or age. Contractor’s compliance with this section constitutes a material element of this Contract and a failure to comply constitutes a breach that entitles OHCS to terminate this Contract for cause.

Contractor may not prohibit any of Contractor’s employees from discussing the employee’s rate of wage, salary, benefits, or other compensation with another employee or another person. Contractor may not retaliate against an employee or another person.

Attachment A – AFFIDAVIT OF TRADE SECRET

_____ (Affiant), being first duly sworn under oath, and representing [insert Vendor Name] (hereafter “Vendor”), hereby deposes and swears or affirms under penalty of perjury that:

1. I am an employee of the Vendor, I have knowledge of the Request for Information referenced herein, and I have full authority from the Vendor to submit this affidavit and accept the responsibilities stated herein.
2. I am aware that the Vendor has submitted a submission, dated on or about [insert date] (the “Submission”), to OHCS in response to Request for Information (RFI)#914-6221-21, for the HB 2100 Task Force on Homelessness and Racial Disparities Facilitator and I am familiar with the contents of the RFI and Submission.
3. I have read and am familiar with the provisions of Oregon’s Public Records Law, Oregon Revised Statutes (“ORS”) 192.410 through 192.505, and the Uniform Trade Secrets Act as adopted by the State of Oregon, which is set forth in ORS 646.461 through ORS 646.475. I understand that the Submission is a public record held by a public body and is subject to disclosure under the Oregon Public Records Law unless specifically exempt from disclosure under that law.
4. I have reviewed the information contained in the Submission. The Vendor believes the information listed in **Exhibit A** is exempt from public disclosure (collectively, the “Exempt Information”), which is incorporated herein by this reference. It is my opinion that the Exempt Information constitutes “Trade Secrets” under either the Oregon Public Records Law or the Uniform Trade Secrets Act as adopted in Oregon because that information is either:
 - A. A formula, plan, pattern, process, tool, mechanism, compound, procedure, production data, or compilation of information that:
 - i. is not patented,
 - ii. is known only to certain individuals within the Vendor’s organization and that is used in a business the Vendor conducts,
 - iii. has actual or potential commercial value, and
 - iv. gives its user an opportunity to obtain a business advantage over competitors who do not know or use it.
 - or
 - B. Information, including a drawing, cost data, customer list, formula, pattern, compilation, program, device, method, technique or process that:
 - i. Derives independent economic value, actual or potential, from not being generally known to the public or to other persons who can obtain economic value from its disclosure or use; and
 - ii. Is the subject of efforts by the Vendor that are reasonable under the circumstances to maintain its secrecy.
5. I understand that disclosure of the information referenced in Exhibit A may depend on official or judicial determinations made in accordance with the Public Records Law.

Affiant’s Signature

State of _____)

) ss:

County of _____)

Signed and sworn to before me on _____ (date) by _____ (Affiant’s name).

Notary Public for the State of _____

My Commission Expires: _____

EXHIBIT A- AFFIDAVIT OF TRADE SECRET

Vendor identifies the following information as exempt from public disclosure:

ADD HB 2100

<https://olis.oregonlegislature.gov/liz/2021R1/Downloads/MeasureDocument/HB2100>

[Insert if applicable]