



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Consulting Services: HUD CoC NOFO Annual Projects Competition, Year-Round Performance Review and Other NOFO- Related Support

RFP Released on: February 17, 2023

Voluntary Letter of Interest Form Requested by: March 27,
2023

RFP Closes on: April 25, 2023

Sacramento Steps Forward (SSF) is a private non-profit organization committed to ending homelessness in the region through collaboration, innovation and connecting people to services.

I. BACKGROUND

A. Purpose/Intent

The purpose of this Request for Proposals (RFP) is to solicit proposals from interested and qualified consultants to support the Sacramento City and County Continuum of Care (CoC) to prepare and submit the annual CoC Consolidated Application to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and to work with the CoC Board and its Project Review Committee to develop all materials for the annual NOFO competition and to establish and conduct year-round processes for system and project performance review. **Please see Page 3 for Scope of Work.**

The RFP may result in a single award. This RFP seeks consulting services for an initial term of three years, with the option for two one-year extensions and a maximum term of five years before a new RFP must be released for additional services.

THIS RFP SOLICITATION REQUIRES ALL PROPOSALS TO BE SUBMITTED ELECTRONICALLY VIA EMAIL. NO PAPER, EMAIL OR FAX SUBMISSIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED AND MAY BE DEEMED NONRESPONSIVE.

B. Minimum Applicant Experience and Qualifications

- Registered with the State of California as a non-profit, for-profit, or educational institution.
- No outstanding audit or monitoring findings with funders or governmental oversight organizations.

C. History

Sacramento Steps Forward (SSF) has been the Sacramento City and County CoC's Lead Agency and Collaborative Applicant since incorporation as a nonprofit organization in 2011. The Sacramento CoC Board has been responsible for the annual HUD CoC Program NOFO competition review and rank/Project Priority List since 2012. In pursuit of a more robust review and ranking process informed by system-level analysis and a more in-depth understanding of projects by reviewers, the CoC Board established a year-round Performance Review Committee in 2015.

The CoC Performance Review Committee is responsible for the projects competition component of the annual HUD CoC NOFO Consolidated Application. The Performance Review Committee develops all competition policies and procedures, review and ranking

scoring criteria, and its non-conflicted members serve as the Review Panel. Materials developed by the Performance Review Committee are presented to the CoC Board for approval. The Project Priority List developed by the non-conflicted Review Panel is also presented to the CoC Board for approval.

In addition to NOFO-specific activities, it is the goal of the Project Review Committee to use its year-round meeting schedule to understand the CoC system as a whole and each HUD CoC Program project within it. Since its formation in 2015, the Project Review Committee's primary focus has been the NOFO competition. In the upcoming consultant contract term, the CoC Board seeks support to implement the year-round elements of the Project Review Committee's goals beyond the HUD CoC Program NOFO.

The NOFO competition and year-round Project review consultant supports the entire process in coordination with Sacramento Steps Forward, the CoC Board, and the Project Review Committee.

D. Key Participants

- **Sacramento Steps Forward** - Sacramento Steps Forward is a nonprofit organization, the issuer of this RFP, and the subsequent entity with whom the successful proposer will contract. Sacramento Steps Forward is also the HUD CoC Lead Agency, Collaborative Applicant, and HMIS Lead Agency.
- **Sacramento City and County Continuum of Care (CoC) Board** - The Sacramento CoC Board fulfills the HEARTH Act requirements, including the annual NOFO competition.
- **Project Review Committee** - The Project Review Committee is a standing committee of the CoC Board charged with developing all the tools, policies, and procedures for conducting the annual NOFO competition for approval by the CoC Board.

II. Scope of Work

The following scope of work provides the essential expertise and skills of the ideal proposer, as well as a description of services to be provided.

A. Essential Expertise and Skills

- HUD CoC Program expertise
- Strong facilitation skills
- Professionalism
- Neutrality

- Ability to communicate clearly with a variety of stakeholders
- Excellent customer service

B. Description of Services

1. Support for CoC NOFO Projects Competition

Serve as the neutral, third-party facilitator of the CoC NOFO projects competition. The ideal consultant will work supportively with CoC Program providers to offer training and technical assistance that prepares them to submit high-quality applications for the local and federal NOFO competition. The ideal consultant will support the Review and Rank panel in its development of the Project Priority List independently and efficiently.

Activities include:

- Pre-competition training or workshops for newcomers
- Analysis of NOFO upon release
- Mandatory kick-off conference and materials
- Risk assessment of all NOFO applicant agencies
- Technical assistance to competitors
- Review and rank panel facilitation
- Develop project priority ranked list
- Debrief process

Consultant Services and Responsibilities include:

- a. Provide clear and accurate guidance on project requirements set forth in the CoC Program NOFO and in regulations.
- b. Provide clear, accurate, transparent, and easily understood guidance on the local competition application requirements and process.
- c. Work with CoC Program providers in a supportive and collaborative fashion.
- d. As part of the application review process, the contractor will conduct a risk assessment of each applicant, which will include evaluating their fiscal and administrative capacity, organizational capacity to carry out or oversee the project.
- e. Conduct the annual training/Kick Off Conference on the HUD NOFO and local competition requirements as soon as possible after the release of the NOFO to allow maximum time for preparing applications.
- f. Provide 1:1 technical assistance to providers that address project-specific challenges requiring custom guidance.

- g. Create and publish FAQs based on individual technical assistance requests to ensure consistent guidance and efficient sharing of information on common inquiries.
- h. Design a provider interview methodology that adds value to the review and ranking of projects and enables providers to sufficiently prepare.
- i. Conduct a thorough debrief of the NOFO competition process with CoC Program providers after each competition.
- j. Provide independent facilitation of the two-day review and rank process by the non-conflicted members of the Project Review Committee who constitute the Review and Rank Panel.
- k. Provide web-based or otherwise easily accessible tools designed to maximize the efficiency of the review and rank process.
- l. Design a provider interview methodology that adds value to the review and ranking of projects and enables providers to sufficiently prepare.

2. Support the Project Review Committee and CoC Board

Prepare and present at monthly PRC meetings and CoC meetings, as necessary. The ideal consultant will provide the Project Review Committee and the CoC Board with expert guidance on HUD requirements and expectations, research and analysis on how other CoCs are responding to HUD and will possess superior facilitation and consensus-building skills to move the committee and board through the review and ranking process in a meaningful and efficient manner.

Activities include:

- Annual PRC work planning
- PRC Agenda development
- Prepare all materials and coordinate with other presenters
- PRC meeting coordination
- PRC membership
- Present NOFO materials and NOFO ranked list results at CoC Board
- Additional presentations at CoC Board are possibility

Consultant Services and Responsibilities include:

- a. Provide the research, information, and expertise required to lead the Project Review Committee in its work to develop NOFO competition scoring criteria and policies.
- b. Provide clear and accurate guidance on project review and ranking requirements set forth in the CoC Program NOFO annually and in regulations.

- c. Serve as the expert on HUD expectations as gleaned from sources supplemental to NOFOs and formal regulations, such as webinars, conferences, FAQs, trainings, etc.
- d. Provide examples of best practices for Project review from other CoCs, especially high performing CoCs.
- e. Provide meeting materials in advance.
- f. Conduct a thorough debrief of the NOFO competition process with the Project Review Committee and CoC Board after the completion of each competition.

III. Pre-proposal Information

RFP Questions, Answers, and Clarifications

Questions and requests for clarification will be accepted on a rolling basis by email to RFP@sacstepsforward.org through April 17, 2023, at 5 PM. Responses will be published on the Sacramento Steps Forward website on Tuesdays throughout the competition: www.sacramentostepsforward.org.

It is the responsibility of each proposer to check the Sacramento Steps Forward website for any RFP addenda, Question & Answer postings, and other updates posted regarding this RFP. While this responsibility lies with the proposer, Sacramento Steps Forward will send electronic reminders and updates to any proposer that requests them via email to RFP@sacstepsforward.org.

IV. Proposal Requirements

A. RFP Timeline & Submission Requirements

RFP Timeline	
Activity	Date(s)
RFP Release	Friday, February 17, 2023
Voluntary Interest Form Requested by	Monday, March 27, 2023
RFP Questions Accepted	Continuous, through Monday, April 17, 2023
RFP Answers & Clarifications Published	Weekly, March through Friday, April 21, 2023
Proposals Due Date	Tuesday, April 25, 2023
Proposals Review (Threshold Review, Review Panel Independent & Group Review, Interviews with Finalists)	Wednesday, April 26 - Friday, May 12, 2023
CoC Approval	May 2023
Contract Start Date	May/June 2023

B. Submission Requirements

Proposers shall submit one electronic PDF of the proposal package to the RFP. The

electronic file name should include the Proposer Name followed by the RFP Title. The file must be submitted via email to RFP@sacstepsforward.org no later than 5:00 PM on the proposal due date of Tuesday, April 25, 2023. Any proposal attachments that cannot be combined into a single PDF should be appropriately named and numbered (e.g., Proposer Name RFP Title Attachment 1 of __). An email confirming receipt of the proposal will be provided. Late submissions will not be considered. Supplemental documents or revisions sent after the proposals deadline will not be accepted.

C. Proposal Submission Format

Proposers must submit a proposal narrative in accordance with stated requirements set forth in Section IV.C. below. Two templates have been provided and must be used: (1) Experience Tables and (2) Budget Worksheet. **Proposal narratives must be double-spaced, use 12-point Arial font, and not exceed the page limits listed.** Proposals that do not follow all format requirements will not be considered.

Proposal Contents

1. **Proposal Cover Page** (1 page) - Provide a cover page that includes the following: Organization Name, Address, Director/President/CEO and Contact Name, Email, Phone Number, Annual Proposed Budget Amount, Subcontractor Information (if applicable)
2. **Minimum Qualifications** (2 pages) - Proposals shall document minimum qualifications by completing the Funding Competition Experience template outlining experience with HUD CoC Program, other federal, and state funding opportunities and via a narrative not to exceed two pages. Minimum qualifications include items a-c below.
 - a. Experience with federal and/or state grants, including:
 - i. At least three years of federal and/or state grant writing and submission experience, including successful federal and/or state grant award applications.
 - ii. At least three grant writing and submissions to funders resulted in an award in the last five years.
 - iii. At least three years of experience providing technical assistance to provider agencies on federal and/or state funding stream regulations.
 - b. Experience with collaborative decision-making processes:
 - i. At least three years of experience working within a committee decision-making structure to accomplish goals.
 - c. Commitment to participate in specific annual activities in person, including:
 - i. Two CoC Board meetings, including support for the presentation by the Project Review Committee Co-Chairs to approve HUD CoC Program NOFO competition tools, policies, and procedures and the presentation of the Project Priority List, the ranked list of projects developed by the review and rank panel, for approval the CoC Board.
 - ii. The annual NOFO competition Kick Off Conference for all new and renewal project applicants.
 - iii. The two-day convening of the ranking panel to review all project

applications and develop the recommended Project Priority List for approval by the CoC Board.

3. **Organizational Capability** (3 pages) - Proposers shall describe organizational capability to deliver the consultant services requested via an organizational chart, job descriptions and resumes associated with the staffing plan in item (d), a sample CoC NOFO Review Tool if available, and via a narrative not to exceed three pages.

Organizational Capability includes items a-d below.

- a. Describe the agency's experience developing and implementing NOFO application processes. Experience with HUD CoC Program NOFO application processes is of particular interest. The applicability of experience with other NOFOs to the HUD CoC Program NOFO should be explained. Proposers that have experience with HUD CoC NOFOs should provide a sample Projects Scoring Tool for review.
 - b. Describe the agency's experience providing technical assistance to providers regarding regulations governing federal and/or state funding streams and the application requirements and processes associated with them. Technical assistance to HUD CoC Program providers is of particular interest. The applicability of experience with other federal funding streams and applications to the HUD CoC Program should be explained.
 - c. Describe the agency's experience providing technical assistance and analysis regarding regulations governing federal funding streams. Experience providing assistance and analysis on HUD CoC Program regulations to committees and/or advisory bodies and collaborative applicants is of particular interest. The applicability of experience with other federal program regulations should be explained.
 - d. Describe the agency's experience in facilitating collaborative processes with meaningful, trauma-informed, equity-oriented engagement of people with lived expertise/ experience of homelessness.
 - e. Describe the staffing plan for this project. Attach the job descriptions for key program positions and provide resumes for the staff who will fill those positions. Provide a written commitment to provide notice to and seek input from Sacramento Steps Forward, the CoC Board, and the Project Review Committee before individuals listed as occupying the key project positions are reassigned to another project or substituted with other personnel.
4. **Approach** (3 pages) - Proposers shall describe the approach to delivering the consulting services sought, including the key components of the scope of work, measurable objectives and reporting, and program quality improvement via a narrative not to exceed three pages. Approach includes items a-e below.
- a. Describe the agency's plan to prepare and develop an annual HUD CoC Program NOFO projects competition application process and year-round performance review.
 - b. Describe the agency's approach to ensuring that people with lived expertise/ experience of homelessness participating in NOFO and year-round performance review are equal partners with other participants and that their engagement is

- meaningful, trauma-informed, equity-oriented.
- c. Describe the agency’s plan to provide technical assistance to CoC Program providers related to the CoC application process.
 - d. Describe the agency’s plan to provide technical assistance to the Project Review Committee related to year-round performance review.
 - e. Describe at least two specific service and outcome objectives, respectively, by which success of the delivery of services will be evaluated, and how they will be met and reported.
 - f. Describe the agency’s process for ongoing evaluation and refinement of the program.
5. **Fiscal Capacity/Budget Narrative** (2 pages) - Proposers shall complete the Budget Worksheet template and provide a budget narrative not to exceed two pages. Fiscal Capacity includes items a-b below.
- a. Complete the Budget Worksheet template, providing direct expenses for all proposed costs to be supported through this contract for a three-year term.
 - b. Provide a budget narrative that clearly explains the basis for each expense listed on the Budget Worksheet template.
6. **References** - The ideal consultant will provide references from key CoC stakeholders, including one person from each of the following groups that has worked with the staff proposed. If the proposer has not worked on a CoC Program NOFO competition, similar references should be identified.
- a. CoC governing body membership
 - b. CoC provider/ recipient or subrecipient
 - c. CoC collaborative applicant

Proposal Package Checklist

	Item	Section
	Proposal Cover Page	IV.C.1.
	<i>Narrative</i>	
	Minimum Qualifications (2 pages)	IV.C.2.
	Organizational Capability (3 pages)	IV.C.3.
	Approach (3 pages)	IV.C.4.
	Fiscal Capacity/Budget Narrative (2 pages)	IV.C.5.
	<i>Templates</i>	
	Budget Worksheet Template	IV.C.5.
	Funding Competitions Experience Template	IV.C.2.
	<i>Attachments</i>	
	HUD CoC NOFO Competition Projects Scoring Tool (If applicable)	IV.C.3.
	Organizational Chart	IV.C.3.
	Job Descriptions for Key Program Positions	IV.C.3.
	Resumes for Key Program Staff	IV.C.3.
	References	IV.C.6.

V. Contractor Selection

- A. Minimum Qualifications/Threshold Review - Sacramento Steps Forward will conduct a threshold review of proposals received by the submission deadline. Proposals will be evaluated for completeness and confirmation of references, with all successful proposals transmitted to the CoC Project Review Committee for substantive review.
- B. Proposal Evaluation - Proposals will be evaluated by a panel that includes representatives from CoC Project Review Committee Co-chairs, SSF Staff, and other non-conflicted stakeholders. Proposals will be evaluated based on minimum qualifications, organizational capability, approach, and fiscal capacity. In addition to the review of written materials, the review panel will also interview the top proposer(s)/finalist(s).
1. Organizational Capacity Evaluation Criteria (20 points possible)
 - a. Agency clearly demonstrates it has the capacity to develop and implement a NOFO application process.
 - b. The agency clearly demonstrates that it has the capability to provide technical assistance to providers regarding federal regulations and NOFO processes.
 - c. The agency clearly demonstrates that it has the capability to provide technical assistance and analysis regarding federal regulations to Sacramento Steps Forward, the CoC Board, and the Project Review Committee.
 - d. The agency clearly demonstrates the ability to facilitate collaborative decision-making within a committee structure.
 - e. The proposal clearly addresses and demonstrates the agency's competency/ability to ensure meaningful, trauma-informed, equity-oriented engagement of people with lived expertise/ experience of homelessness.
 - f. The agency clearly demonstrates it has the organizational structure needed to provide the services required in the RFP and the staffing pattern is clear, reasonable, and well matched to the services required in the RFP.
 2. Approach Evaluation Criteria (20 points possible)
 - a. The proposed plan is clear, reasonable, and provides a well thought out approach to prepare and develop an annual NOFO competition and year-round performance review.
 - b. The proposed plan includes clear description of how people with lived expertise/ experience of homelessness are fully and appropriately integrated into the NOFO and year-round performance review processes, including review and rank and other decision-points.
 - c. The proposed objectives are specific, measurable, and realistic; the plan to meet, report, and incorporate data into the program is clear and reasonable.
 3. Fiscal Capacity/ Budget Evaluation Criteria (10 points possible)
 - a. The budget provided is clear and reflects good allocation of resources and

- matches the program requirements and proposed staffing structure.
- b. The budget narrative is clear and provides justification for budget line items.

C. Award Announcement – Announcement of award to the selected proposal will be made following CoC approval of the review panel’s final recommendation. The award announcement will be made in May 2023.

VI. Agreement Requirements

The proposer who is selected will need to enter into a contract agreement with Sacramento Steps Forward. Upon the award's announcement, Sacramento Steps Forward and the proposer will start negotiations for the contract to begin as soon as possible. The successful proposer will immediately begin working with the Project Review Committee to prepare for the FY2023 HUD CoC Program NOFO competition.

VII. Templates

1. [Sacramento CoC RFP Budget Worksheet Template](#)
2. [Sacramento CoC NOFO and PRC Letter of Intent Template](#)
3. [Sacramento CoC Funding Competitions Experience Template](#)

Editable versions of these documents can be found [here](#). If you have any issues accessing the documents, please email rfp@sacstepsforward.org.