

Responses to Written Questions Received

Might the State consider an extension to the May 27, 2021 deadline for proposals?

Yes. An extension to June 3, 2021 will be granted. An addendum to the RFP will be posted with additional details.

What will be the relationship between the engagement being described here and that being conducted by the Rhode Island Foundation and RIPEC?

This strategic planning process is separate from the Rhode Island Foundation's "Make it Happen: Investing for Rhode Island's Future" initiative (additional details [here](#)). We anticipate this effort will consult with a range of stakeholders and groups including those involved in the referenced initiative.

How many project examples and client references would you like to see?

We do not have an exact number of project examples or references in mind; however, we encourage respondents to include project examples and references that can speak to your experience working on similar projects.

Should we supply a budget line item associated with the hosting of in-person meetings or will those costs be handled separately?

If proposers believe that hosting in-person meetings is an important component of this project, they should include this budget line item in their proposals.

Does Commerce RI maintain a directory/ list of MWBE firms that we may consider as collaborators?

For proposers seeking MWBE firm collaborators, we encourage reaching out to the State of Rhode Island's Office of Diversity, Equity and Opportunity (ODEO). Proposers can contact and find additional information on ODEO [here](#).

To deliver on the 4 core areas of focus, is the intent of this RFP to have 1 report each for tasks 1-3 and a plan/vision that integrates findings/recommendations from the 3 reports?

Each task will have deliverables to be specified in the Scope of Work. Deliverables may include internal- and/or external-facing documents or reports. The deliverables associated with Task 4 (*Developing actionable strategies that synthesize the information collected and prepared through this project to guide Rhode Island's short-term recovery and longer-term future*) should be informed by the findings of tasks 1-3.

What level of access will the consultants have to data/documents/papers across the state of Rhode Island being considered in this strategic planning process?

We expect department heads and staff to approach this process collaboratively and to share relevant information, which may include department-specific strategic plans, relevant agency documents, and relevant agency data (provided that there are not confidentiality, privacy, or other concerns).

I understand department heads are currently providing input as part of this process. Can the State provide a list of the departments that have already undergone a similar planning process, when these were conducted and will vendors have access to these past findings?

Not at this time. However, we expect department heads and staff to approach this process collaboratively and to share relevant information, which may include department-specific strategic plans and related past findings.

Referencing page 2, can the State clarify what is meant by "Commerce is partnering with the Department of Administration to guide the 2030 strategic planning process?" Will the chosen vendor(s) report to officials in both entities?

Likely yes.

Will Commerce and/or Department of Administration staff be assigned to support this project?

Yes. We intend to collaborate closely with the selected proposers throughout this effort.

Referencing page 11, can the State clarify who will implement the outcome monitoring and evaluation plan -- vendor(s) or the State?

Selected proposer(s) and supporting staff from Commerce, the Department of Administration, and/or other departments would most likely implement the outcome monitoring and evaluation plan jointly. This would be negotiated and agreed upon in an actual scope of work.

Does the State have process, output and outcome measures already in place and if so, can the State share these measures?

We expect output and outcome measures would be defined during the exercise.

Are there any legislative deadlines or milestones that need to be considered in the project timeline?

The legislative deadline to produce a plan and vision that satisfies the statutory requirements of Rhode Island's long-term economic development plan (details available [here](#)) is December 31, 2021. Interim deadlines will be required.

Given the urgency of supporting a strong recovery from the global pandemic and the time sensitivity of deploying federal stimulus funds, certain interim work product and deliverables (e.g., frameworks, reports, briefs, presentations) will be needed sooner. These deadlines would be agreed upon in the scope of work.

Should COVID-19 see a resurgence and restrictions return, would the State of RI be open to conducting some portions of the process through virtual means, if not all portions?

Yes, with the shifting public health landscape (as well as for scheduling and other purposes), it may—at times—be appropriate to conduct portions if this process virtually.

Does the State have a preference for in-state (Rhode Island-based) vendors?

Not per se; however, familiarity with Rhode Island's economic drivers and community needs is one of the criteria considered in the evaluation process.

How many references are required for the technical proposal?

We do not have an exact number of project examples or references in mind; however, we encourage respondents to include project examples and references that can speak to your experience working on similar projects.

Is there an estimated budget for this roughly 6-month project?

The budget will be informed by the agreed-upon work of the selected proposer(s). Proposers should use their best judgment in submitting proposal budgets and may wish to provide a range of options.

On the project timeline, is the December 31, 2021 a hard completion date?

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Can the State share a list of firms that were in attendance during the proposer's conference and their contact information?

No, we do not plan to.

Is the funding for the project in place? If so, where does funding come from? If not, how will the project be funded?

It is anticipated that federal ARP funds, among other sources, will be used to support this initiative. The final dollar figure has not been determined.

Has a budget been established for the project? If so, what is it? If not, what have been the budgets for other similar strategic planning projects that the Corporation has undertaken in the past?

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