

March 2, 2022
Rhode Island Commerce Corporation

Project Name: RI Rebounds Take it Outside Small Business Assistance
Solicitation Number: RFP-2285

Addendum No. 2

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

RI Rebounds Take it Outside Small Business Assistance

To support the small businesses in the state that have been negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Rhode Island Commerce Corporation (“Corporation”) seeks proposals from eligible proposers (“Proposers”) to receive funding under the “Take it Outside” initiative (“TIO Initiative”), a state-wide effort designed to encourage and increase outdoor activities in an effort to reduce the transmission rate of COVID-19.

Prospective Proposers and all concerned are hereby notified of the following questions and answers regarding the Request for Proposals document for the above-listed RFP. These questions and answers shall be incorporated in and shall become an integral part of the RFP documents.

Federal Procurement

- 1) If we provide more than \$5,000 in eligible expenses, do we have to go through the same procurement process as normal?**

All awardees—inclusive of local governments--under this program will need to follow federal procurement guidelines. These can be found here: <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/subtitle-A/chapter-II/part-200/subpart-D/subject-group-ECFR45ddd4419ad436d?toc=1>

- 2) Are we able to do a straight cash reimbursement for expenses incurred?**

Intermediaries may provide monetary reimbursements to eligible small business beneficiaries for Eligible Expenses through the Take It Outside program. However, there are additional compliance requirements that will need to be met to allow for this, including: Beneficiaries receiving reimbursements must be registered on SAM.gov and have an active DUNs number.

3) I was told the application process is more complicated since federal money involved. Is that true and how does the process differ from the last TIO grant process?

There are added requirements for federal procurement and monitoring due to the funding source enabling this program. These are detailed in the RFP, the Uniform Guidance referenced and linked therein, and the Terms and Conditions for Subawards attached to the RFP as Exhibit A.

4) What does "certification" of availability of individuals in proposal mean?

This is meant to ensure that the individuals listed as staff to support the Proposers' implementation efforts are indeed available to do this work and not required/obligated to other projects during the project timeframe.

Technical Assistance

5) I think Commerce said it would provide technical assistance to help intermediaries determine eligibility for small businesses. What does that entail?

Technical assistance will be provided to selected proposers through the provision of reporting templates and staff time to help ensure reporting is understood by any funding recipients. Small business eligibility has been spelled out in the RFP and pasted below for reference:

To be eligible to receive funding or support from a selected Proposer under the Take it Outside program, a small business must (i) have less than \$1 million in annual gross revenues in either 2020 or 2021, (ii) not be disbarred in the federal System of Account Management ("SAM") and (iii) demonstrate a negative impact from the COVID-19 health pandemic by attesting to one of the following: it was forced to close or curtail its operations due to the pandemic or a government order pertaining to the pandemic; it experienced a material supply chain delay or disruption that negatively impacted its operations; it experienced increased cost as a result of the pandemic, it was forced to lay off workers as a result of the pandemic, or was impacted by the pandemic in some other way. The maximum allotment of grants or assistance a small business may receive under the TIO Initiative is \$10,000. Twenty percent of all awards must be reserved for awards to assist women and/or minority business enterprises.

Proposer and Business Qualifications

6) Does the \$1 million limit on annual gross revenues also apply to nonprofit organizations?

To be eligible to receive assistance, a small business must have less than \$1 million in annual gross revenues in either 2020 or 2021. This limit applies to for-profit or nonprofit program beneficiaries and does not apply to intermediaries. Nonprofits and other Proposers to the RFP with more than \$1 million in annual gross revenues are not excluded from submitting proposals.

7) If a small business receives support from this program does this disqualify them from future awards?

The State's FY22 Amended Budget (H6494A) requires that no small business receive more than \$10,000 each for the following programs: (i) The Small Business Grant Program, (ii) the Take It Outside and Ventilation Programs (collectively), and (iii) the Technical Assistance Program. In the aggregate, no business may receive more than \$20,000 between these three programs.

8) If we were awarded funds from the 1st round of Take It Outside that was more than \$10k cap per business, then are we still eligible to apply for this round?

Yes. The previous rounds of Take It Outside are not considered against a business's \$10,000 cap for this RI Rebounds Take It Outside program.

9) If someone has received funding in the last Take It Outside grant are they not eligible for this grant?

Those who received funding from the 2020-21 Take It Outside program *are* eligible to receive awards under this program.

10) Can for-profit businesses operate as intermediaries?

Yes, eligible Proposers include (1) nonprofit organizations, chambers of commerce, municipalities, merchant associations, arts/cultural organizations, tourism regions; and (2) businesses that are registered with the Rhode Island Secretary of State that conduct operations within the State of Rhode Island and are proposing to serve as intermediaries to businesses or other entities.

However, any approved entity is required to follow the Uniform Guidance including procurement requirements that include competition in the pricing and selection of goods and services provided to the ultimate beneficiaries of the program. Under 2 CFR **§ 200.318** the entity must, among other things, maintain written standards of conduct covering conflicts of interest and governing the actions of its employees engaged in the selection, award and administration of contracts. No employee, officer, or agent may participate in the selection, award, or administration of a contract supported by a Federal award if he or she has a real or apparent conflict of interest. Such a conflict of interest would arise when the employee, officer, or agent, any member of his or her immediate family, his or her partner, or an organization which employs

or is about to employ any of the parties indicated herein, has a financial or other interest in or a tangible personal benefit from a firm considered for a contract. The officers, employees, and agents of the non-Federal entity may neither solicit nor accept gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value from contractors or parties to subcontracts. However, non-Federal entities may set standards for situations in which the financial interest is not substantial or the gift is an unsolicited item of nominal value. The standards of conduct must provide for disciplinary actions to be applied for violations of such standards by officers, employees, or agents of the non-Federal entity.

11) Do beneficiaries/small businesses need to be identified prior to the application?

Specific beneficiaries do not need to be identified prior to submitting the RFP. We do, however, ask that Proposers explain in their responses how they will identify, engage and screen eligible small businesses.

12) Under eligible entities and eligible expenses: These are the items that we would be requesting from the small business applying with us correct? As an intermediary, we would submit is a proposal to Commerce identifying us as an intermediary to help distribute the funds to small businesses in our community. Could you please tell me exactly what items we need in our proposal?

Proposal requirements are listed within the RFP on pages 4 and 5. Definitions of eligible entities and eligible expenses can also be found within the RFP on page 2.

13) Are public K-12 schools eligible to apply?

No.

14) I understand the cap per business of \$10,000 in assistance under the Take It Outside program. What are the three programs that are referenced for the \$20,000 cap? The awardee is responsible for ensuring that a small business does not exceed this cap?

The State's FY22 Amended Budget (H6494A) requires that no small business receive more than \$10,000 each for the following programs: The Small Business Grant Program, the Take It Outside and Ventilation Programs (collectively), and the Technical Assistance Program. Collectively, no business may receive more than \$20,000 between those programs. Selected Proposers should be prepared to submit reports at regular intervals in relation to the program which will help Commerce track the \$20,000 cap per beneficiary.

Take It Outside Vendors

15) So to clarify, if I was a tent company, could I use this grant to give tents for impacted small businesses? How would I assess how much I was giving to a business under this format? Materials or retail cost?

Any approved entity is required to follow the Uniform Guidance including procurement requirements that include competition in the pricing and selection of goods and services provided to the ultimate beneficiaries of the program. Under 2 CFR § 200.318 the entity must, among other things, maintain written standards of conduct covering conflicts of interest and governing the actions of its employees engaged in the selection, award and administration of contracts. No employee, officer, or agent may participate in the selection, award, or administration of a contract supported by a Federal award if he or she has a real or apparent conflict of interest. Such a conflict of interest would arise when the employee, officer, or agent, any member of his or her immediate family, his or her partner, or an organization which employs or is about to employ any of the parties indicated herein, has a financial or other interest in or a tangible personal benefit from a firm considered for a contract. The officers, employees, and agents of the non-Federal entity may neither solicit nor accept gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value from contractors or parties to subcontracts. However, non-Federal entities may set standards for situations in which the financial interest is not substantial or the gift is an unsolicited item of nominal value. The standards of conduct must provide for disciplinary actions to be applied for violations of such standards by officers, employees, or agents of the non-Federal entity. Based upon the foregoing, it would appear to be a conflict of interest for an approved entity to procure goods from itself for distribution to beneficiaries.

16) If we as a small business apply to manufacture a product for direct distribution to RI small businesses for the Take It Outside program and we partner with OTHER RI non-profit orgs, trade associations, and Chambers of Commerce - would any award WE get have an impact on THEIR ability to secure their own grant awards for other programming and things they would want to directly apply for on their own? The 'partnership' with them in terms of OUR application would be simply using them for 1) Distribution Points for delivery of our product to the end recipients in different parts of the state (we would be doing the actual work - not their staff for distribution) 2) working with these partner orgs to tap their membership and contact lists to perform Outreach and Awareness of our product being available and getting those end recipients to sign up to receive those products - they would be using their social media assets and email-lists etc. as part of this partnership to get the word out. WE would be doing the actual production of the product as well as managing the end beneficiary lists and related paperwork (per the federal grant requirements).

The Take it Outside Initiative is an intermediary-driven program. Intermediaries are encouraged to create, design, and offer assistance that best meets the needs of negatively impacted small businesses in communities across Rhode Island. It is anticipated that the TIO Initiative will provide approximately \$4.5 million in total awards to intermediaries to administer in-kind programs or

programs to reimburse eligible small businesses that incur eligible expenses to encourage outdoor activities.

Any approved entity is required to follow the Uniform Guidance including procurement requirements that include competition in the pricing and selection of goods and services provided to the ultimate beneficiaries of the program. Under 2 CFR § 200.318 the entity must, among other things, maintain written standards of conduct covering conflicts of interest and governing the actions of its employees engaged in the selection, award and administration of contracts.

It would be a conflict of interest for an approved entity to procure goods from itself for distribution to beneficiaries.

17) This is a bit of a complex question. If we are applying as a private Rhode Island small business to provide a product for taking outside. And we partner with some trade organizations and chambers of commerce to help us distributing the product, does the dollar value of the award should we get it affect accumulative award that those organizations might themselves get for their own standalone applications? Basically we want to see if partnering up with somebody to assist us in deploying our product would affect their ability to also get a grant for other programs they would like to run on their own.

As an intermediary-driven program, Proposers to the Take It Outside Initiative are encouraged to provide a response to this RFP, providing the Corporation with proposals on how they will either (1) directly fund Eligible Expenses associated with increasing outdoor opportunities for small businesses in response to COVID-19; or (2) act as an intermediary by using the grant to purchase items that constitute Eligible Expenses to distribute to eligible small businesses to increase those entities' outdoor capacities and to accommodate public health measures adopted in response to COVID-19 (e.g., heat lamps to enable indoor activities to be conducted outdoors).

Rhode Island-based small businesses may serve as vendors to selected intermediaries. As discussed above, the caps on assistance apply to small business beneficiaries, but not intermediaries. Any approved entity is required to follow the Uniform Guidance including procurement requirements that include competition in the pricing and selection of goods and services provided to the ultimate beneficiaries of the program. Under 2 CFR § 200.318 the entity must, among other things, maintain written standards of conduct covering conflicts of interest and governing the actions of its employees engaged in the selection, award and administration of contracts.

18) Does the \$10k awardee cap apply to a RI small biz hoping to manufacture an item for restaurants to take it outside?

It is anticipated that the proposed award amount for intermediaries of this program shall range from \$50,000 to \$650,000 per Proposer. It is anticipated that most awards will be under \$250,000. There is no cap with respect to the vendors from whom an intermediary procures goods for distribution to beneficiaries, however, the maximum assistance per small business that is receiving the goods from the intermediary is \$10,000 as discussed above in more detail.

19) If we are giving this product away to RI restaurants, they would have to comply with the less than \$1mm rule and less than \$10k in "benefit" from the grant?

Proposers/Intermediaries who are selected for funding will be responsible for screening small businesses to ensure eligibility, compliance with caps on individual and aggregate amounts of awards, and ensuring sufficient funds are reserved for minority business enterprises in compliance with federal requirements.

Any approved entity is required to follow the Uniform Guidance including procurement requirements that include competition in the pricing and selection of goods and services provided to the ultimate beneficiaries of the program. Under 2 CFR § 200.318 the entity must, among other things, maintain written standards of conduct covering conflicts of interest and governing the actions of its employees engaged in the selection, award and administration of contracts. No employee, officer, or agent may participate in the selection, award, or administration of a contract supported by a Federal award if he or she has a real or apparent conflict of interest. Such a conflict of interest would arise when the employee, officer, or agent, any member of his or her immediate family, his or her partner, or an organization which employs or is about to employ any of the parties indicated herein, has a financial or other interest in or a tangible personal benefit from a firm considered for a contract. The officers, employees, and agents of the non-Federal entity may neither solicit nor accept gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value from contractors or parties to subcontracts. However, non-Federal entities may set standards for situations in which the financial interest is not substantial or the gift is an unsolicited item of nominal value. The standards of conduct must provide for disciplinary actions to be applied for violations of such standards by officers, employees, or agents of the non-Federal entity. Based upon the foregoing, it would appear to be a conflict of interest for an approved entity to procure goods from itself for distribution to beneficiaries.

A business that wishes to have its product(s) procured and distributed by an intermediary under the program would need to be a vendor for the intermediary as opposed to a Proposer under this RFP.

20) Can small businesses use their own vendors to procure TIO items or do we as proposers have to procure these vendors?

Proposers can submit proposals to administer in-kind programs where they procure and distribute take it outside items to eligible small businesses or they can submit proposals to reimburse eligible small businesses that incur eligible expenses from vendors.

Any approved entity is required to follow the Uniform Guidance including procurement requirements that include competition in the pricing and selection of goods and services provided to the ultimate beneficiaries of the program. This applies to those who receive reimbursement as well.

21) If we produce goods for distribution to support activities outside, can we distribute these to small businesses and public entities? One or the other or both?

Please see answers to questions #15 and #17 above for answers for more detail on the Federal Uniform Guidance pertaining to this question.

In addition, beneficiaries of this program must be small businesses that have less than \$1 million in annual gross revenues in either 2020 or 2021, (ii) not be disbarred in the federal System of Account Management (SAM) and (iii) demonstrate a negative impact from the COVID-19 health pandemic by attesting to one of the following: it was forced to close or curtail its operations due to the pandemic or a government order pertaining to the pandemic; it experienced a material supply chain delay or disruption that negatively impacted its operations; it experienced increased cost as a result of the pandemic, it was forced to lay off workers as a result of the pandemic, or was impacted by the pandemic in some other way. Intermediaries may not distribute items to public entities through this program.

A business that wishes to have its product(s) procured and distributed by an intermediary under the program would need to be a vendor for the intermediary as opposed to a Proposer under this RFP.

Impacted industries

22) Will there be another TIO program for "impacted industries" or is this RI Rebounds TIO program the only one that will be available?

The Take it Outside Initiative is supportive of all eligible impacted small businesses regardless of industry. There are no current plans for a Take It Outside program specifically for impacted industries. There are, however, programs planned to directly support impacted industries through the RI Rebounds initiative, including an initiative to support placemaking activities. More information will be released on specific programs related to impacted industries in the coming weeks on CommerceRI.com.

23) To confirm, do impacted industries that would like to submit an RFP for grant money have to be or benefit small businesses?

The Take It Outside RFP seeks eligible proposers, including nonprofit organizations, chambers of commerce, municipalities, merchant associations, arts/cultural organizations, tourism regions

and businesses that are registered with the Rhode Island Secretary of State that conduct operations within the State of Rhode Island and are proposing to serve as intermediaries to eligible small business.

SAM.gov/DUNS

24) The RI Rebounds grant required small businesses to register with SAMs. However, it sounds like that isn't required for this grant? Please confirm.

Intermediaries who respond to this RFP must be registered on SAM.gov. Based on current federal guidance, the Corporation understands that small businesses who are beneficiaries of this program and receive in kind items do not need to register on SAM.gov but must not be disbarred in the federal System of Account Management (SAM) unless they are benefiting from reimbursements.

Beneficiaries who are directly reimbursed by intermediaries must be registered on SAM.gov and be able to provide intermediaries with their DUNS number for accurate tracking.

The US Department of the Treasury's Interim Final Rule to implement the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (SLFRF) established under the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) expressly provides that the Uniform Guidance applies to SLFRF: "[P]ayments from the Fiscal Recovery Funds as a general matter will be subject to the provisions of the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (2 CFR part 200) (the Uniform Guidance)."

2 CFR parts 25.100 and 25.105 of the Uniform Guidance, in turn, establish that the System for Award Management (SAM) is the repository for standard information about applicants and recipients and provides that such part applies to "grants, cooperative agreements, loans, and other types of federal financial assistance." Further, paragraph C.4 of the U.S. Department of the Treasury's Compliance and Reporting Guidelines (SLFRF Compliance and Reporting Guidance Update 2.1 final (treasury.gov) provides that, "in administering a program...[the Corporation] will need to maintain procedures for obtaining information evidencing a given beneficiary, subrecipient, or contractor's eligibility including a valid SAM.gov registration."

25) Is a DUNS number required for this grant?

Proposers to this RFP must be registered on SAM.gov, which presently requires first acquiring a DUNS number. Based on current federal guidance, the Corporation understands that having a DUNS number is not required for small businesses receiving in-kind support via intermediaries under this RFP.

For small businesses receiving reimbursements through the Take It Outside Initiative, it is required that they are registered on SAM.gov and can provide a DUNS number.

The US Department of the Treasury's Interim Final Rule to implement the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (SLFRF) established under the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) expressly provides that the Uniform Guidance applies to SLFRF: "[P]ayments from the Fiscal Recovery Funds as a general matter will be subject to the provisions of the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (2 CFR part 200) (the Uniform Guidance)." 2 CFR parts 25.100 and 25.105 of the Uniform Guidance, in turn, establish that the System for Award Management (SAM) is the repository for standard information about applicants and recipients and provides that such part applies to "grants, cooperative agreements, loans, and other types of federal financial assistance." Further, paragraph C.4 of the U.S. Department of the Treasury's Compliance and Reporting Guidelines (SLFRF Compliance and Reporting Guidance Update 2.1 final (treasury.gov)) provides that, "in administering a program...[the Corporation] will need to maintain procedures for obtaining information evidencing a given beneficiary, subrecipient, or contractor's eligibility including a valid SAM.gov registration."

Tax Questions

26) Will proceeds from this grant be subject to income/sales tax?

The IRS has published information indicating that "Some SLFR Fund recipients may have to report certain payments as income and may owe tax depending on the purpose of the payment." As such, RI Commerce Corporation anticipates issuing 1099s in most instances to intermediaries selected through the TIO initiative. Additionally, intermediaries may themselves need to issue 1099s to recipient businesses through the program. Please consult your accountant or tax professional to understand more about your particular tax situation and how this guidance applies. Additional IRS guidance for the Coronavirus State and Local Recovery Fund can be found here: [Frequently asked questions for states and local governments on taxability and reporting of payments from Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds | Internal Revenue Service \(irs.gov\)](#).

27) Is this considered tax exempt if we are purchasing raw materials in order to produce the finished product to give to recipients?

Proposers are encouraged to provide a response to this RFP, providing the Corporation with proposals on how they will either (1) directly fund Eligible Expenses associated with increasing outdoor opportunities for small businesses in response to COVID-19; or (2) act as an intermediary by using the grant to purchase items that constitute Eligible Expenses to distribute to eligible small businesses to increase those entities' outdoor capacities and to accommodate public health measures adopted in response to COVID-19 (e.g., heat lamps to enable indoor activities to be conducted outdoors).

Additionally, the IRS has published information indicating that "Some SLFR Fund recipients may have to report certain payments as income and may owe tax depending on the purpose of the payment." As such, RI Commerce Corporation anticipates issuing 1099s in most instances. Please consult your accountant or tax professional to understand more about your particular tax situation and how this guidance applies. Additional IRS guidance for the Coronavirus State and Local Recovery Fund can be found here: [Frequently asked questions for states and local governments on taxability and reporting of payments from Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds | Internal Revenue Service \(irs.gov\)](#).

Timing Questions

28) Is there a date by which the funds must be spent?/What is the expenditure period? How long do we have to spend the money?

This Take It Outside Initiative is being supported, in whole or in part, by federal award number SLRFP0136 in connection with State Fiscal Recovery Funds awarded to the State of Rhode Island by the US Department of Treasury. At this time, the program requires funds be spent by December 31, 2022 although this deadline may be extended.

29) What is the turnaround time for being awarded and being disbursed funds to work as an intermediary with? i.e., How soon will we receive funds to being making purchases?

The allocation timeline for funds will be described in the subaward agreements sent out to intermediaries.

Administrative Questions

30) What can be charged for admin cost?/Will funds be allowed to be used to cover costs related to administering the program?

Proposers may include reasonable Direct Administrative Costs as defined in Exhibit B of the RFP (the Pandemic Recovery office Memo that is attached to the RFP). The costs must be directly identified as necessary to the advancement of a Proposer's Take It Outside efforts, separately accounted for, and assigned to such activities relatively easily and with a high degree of accuracy. Under no circumstances will the Corporation consider any Direct Administrative costs more than 10 percent of the total cost of proposals.

Other Questions

31) As a business, we will be hosting community event partnerships from April to December, providing our site and resources to art markets, performances by small theater companies, community gatherings, celebrations of accessibility and

other events. We plan on doing this free of charge to our event partners, and waving decide rental/management fees, while still providing professional staff and assistance. We could use support for sound equipment, lighting, staffing and some other goods to support these activities. However, we are a nonprofit organization, and our budget exceeds \$1 million. Many of the small businesses that we will support through this activity are independent, sole proprietor artists, performers and crafts people. According to Americans for the arts, over 90% of artists lost significant income due to the pandemic. None of them have budgets over \$1 million, but neither do they have dun's numbers, or even business registration in many cases. Can we apply for goods and services to support them?

A nonprofit organization with annual revenue over \$1M that is serving as an intermediary to small businesses may respond to this RFP, however only as an intermediary. Small businesses that are beneficiaries of in-kind support through this program do not need to be registered with DUNS or SAM.gov, but cannot be disbarred on SAM.gov. Small businesses that are receiving support through this program via reimbursement must be registered on SAM.gov and be able to provide a DUNs number to their intermediary for appropriate reporting.

Through the implementation of this program, the Corporation seeks to respond to the public health emergency, stimulate economic activity and assist small businesses that have been negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic through activities that support public health adaptation for small businesses. This may include, among others: the cost of purchasing, obtaining, delivering, or installing, or otherwise enabling the use of the following: chairs, tables, heat lamps, tents, outdoor Wi-Fi systems, masks, hand sanitizer, staffing, security, insurance costs related to specific outdoor activities, lighting, power sources, relevant signage, bike racks, and other costs for purchasing or obtaining good or services that, in the Corporation's sole discretion, are deemed necessary to increase outdoor opportunities for impacted small businesses.

Commerce will be launching another program to support placemaking activities in the coming weeks as well. Please keep an eye on CommerceRI.com for more.

32) As an intermediary, we could easily produce bike racks, benches, and picnic tables to qualifying businesses, but even with significant staff increase, Delivery of these goods with likely be delayed to the fall of 2022 at the earliest. These tangible goods would last businesses many years and be made in Rhode Island, by Rhode Island, for Rhode Island, with 90% of expenses, materials and labor sourced locally. But the timelines and challenge identifying businesses in the state make me think our proposal would not be competitive.

It is expected that funds for the Take It Outside Initiative are spent by December 31, 2022.

33) We are a nonprofit membership organization. Should we apply as our organization on behalf of our members? Or is it better to have the members apply themselves.

Proposers are encouraged to provide a response to this RFP, providing the Corporation with proposals on how they will either (1) directly fund Eligible Expenses associated with increasing outdoor opportunities for small businesses in response to COVID-19; or (2) act as an intermediary by using the grant to purchase items that constitute Eligible Expenses to distribute to eligible small businesses to increase those entities' outdoor capacities and to accommodate public health measures adopted in response to COVID-19 (e.g., heat lamps to enable indoor activities to be conducted outdoors).

Any entity seeking to be a beneficiary of the program (e.g. the end recipient/user of goods that enable indoor activities to be conducted outdoors) should not submit a response to the RFP.

34) The RFP references Exhibit B - I must be missing it, but I only see an Exhibit A. Please advise.

Exhibit B is the Pandemic Recovery Office Memo, pages 18-19 within the RFP.

35) How do intermediaries connect with and/or find small businesses to assist under this program?

Intermediaries are encouraged to propose their outreach approach to small businesses in their responses to this RFP.

36) I'm hoping to apply for \$10,000 max for our restaurant. We are working on design for an outdoor patio to create an outdoor dining area in the front of our restaurant. The amount received from a potential grant would fund the expenses required for us to build out the patio. Does this proposal apply to the existing "RI Rebounds" grants?

Any entity seeking to be a beneficiary of the program (e.g. the end recipient/user of goods that enable indoor activities to be conducted outdoors) should **not** submit a response to the RFP.

Eligible Proposers for the Take it Outside Initiative include nonprofits, municipalities, merchant associations, arts/cultural organizations, tourism regions, and business cooperatives as well as businesses that are registered with the Rhode Island Secretary of State that conduct operations within the State of Rhode Island and that are serving as intermediaries for other businesses. Small businesses that are seeking to engage in their own outdoor improvements should plan to seek support from an intermediary that is selected through this RFP process.

37) We are preparing to apply as an intermediary requesting funds for enhanced safety and security services that will directly benefit small businesses in the downtown area. There was discussion during last week's webinar about intermediaries and their reporting requirements. It is my understanding that intermediaries are required to report the business name and the dollar amount of the benefit received, limited to \$10,000. My question is, given the nature of our

request which is community based, it will be difficult to determine/measure the benefit received by each business. How should this be handled?

Proposers who are selected for funding will be responsible for screening small businesses to ensure eligibility, compliance with caps on individual and aggregate amounts of awards, and ensuring sufficient funds are reserved for minority business enterprises in compliance with federal requirements. Under this proposed example, it might be possible to calculate the aggregate benefit as a total award and then divide that number by the number of documented eligible small businesses benefiting.

All other provisions in the RFP remain the same.

***End of Addendum ***