



## **REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS**

### **A Plan for a City-Wide Cultural Resources Survey Delivered to the City of Philadelphia Department of Planning and Development (DPD)**

#### **Issued by:**

The Mayor's Fund for Philadelphia

On behalf of The City of Philadelphia, Department of Planning and Development (DPD), and the Philadelphia Historical Commission (the Commission)

The Fund and DPD are currently seeking Letters of Interest (Applications) from individuals, organizations, or entities that are interested in being qualified to submit a proposal for a multi-year contract to plan and pilot a city-wide cultural resources survey.

A Q&A period will take place prior to the deadline for Application submission and is summarized on page 7 of this RFQ. The Q&A session will take place virtually on June 3, 2021 from 10:00 AM to 11:00 AM EST on Zoom. You may register at:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_d35VFQ2BQRSJbVSaYqqP4Q](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_d35VFQ2BQRSJbVSaYqqP4Q)

Attendance at this session is encouraged, but not required.

Applications are due June 21, 2021 by 5 PM EST. A PDF of the Application must be emailed to: [mayorsfund@phila.gov](mailto:mayorsfund@phila.gov) and [preservation@phila.gov](mailto:preservation@phila.gov). Submission emails must contain the subject line "Plan for a City-Wide Cultural Resources Survey RFQ Submission."

An RFP will be sent to qualified applicants to submit a full proposal.

The Fund and DPD reserve the right to modify specific requirements stated herein based on changed circumstances, the proposal selection process, and contract negotiations with the Applicant(s) selected for negotiations, and to do so with or without issuing a revised RFQ or RFP. Additionally, we reserve the right to continue to qualify applicants until the appropriate competencies are acquired.



## **SECTION I – INTRODUCTION**

### **A. Statement of Purpose**

Philadelphia is a city rich in history; full of diverse, dynamic stories worth recognizing and preserving. Woven into the everyday fabric of our community, these stories reveal themselves through cherished traditions, passed down from one generation to the next. They imprint themselves on the spaces we gather—to celebrate and mourn, to honor and protest. They speak to our personal and collective past, tell of experiences shared throughout our neighborhoods, and provide context for the communities in which we live today. When we travel around Philadelphia neighborhoods, we see these stories represented in the architecture, the landmarks, the shops, public spaces, sculptures, public art, bridges, districts, and streetscapes. Yet the current process our City uses to document and designate these histories has left many voices unheard and some of our most valuable cultural resources unprotected.

What's more, some of these stories are not marked by visible, physical objects—their memories persist on a street corner where a parade stops, in a park where a pop-up market takes place, or by objects that are buried, out-of-sight. Institutions, traditions, language, songs, stories, food, and folklore are no less important than ones represented by centuries' old architecture and help shape and form the identity of the City. There are so many examples of these cultural resources across Philadelphia—events that bring people together like the Philadelphia Flower Show, Odunde Festival, Penn Relays, Cambodian Food Market in FDR Park, and el Carnaval de Puebla; music and musicians that mark important places and memories like The Sound of Philadelphia, Marian Anderson, Sun Ra, Hall and Oates, and the Roots; and cuisines that keep family traditions alive like the Eastern European restaurants of the Northeast, African restaurants of the Southwest, and the South Philly Italian cafes. All of these, and so many more, represent stories that are important to the identity of the City.

To help us celebrate, protect, and conserve our City's cultural history, The Mayor's Fund for Philadelphia (the Fund) and the City of Philadelphia Department of Planning and Development (DPD) seek a consultant team to develop and test a community-led process for identifying, surveying, and documenting the stories and spaces that represent Philadelphia's rich and varied past.

The goal of this project is to provide DPD with a plan, tested in a pilot project, that enables Historical Commission staff to engage in an ongoing partnership with community members throughout the City to: 1) inventory cultural resources, 2) identify resources at risk that may require priority attention, and 3) improve the City's processes for documentation, designation, and protection.

### **B. Department Overview**

The Mayor's Fund for Philadelphia (the Fund) works in close partnership with the City of Philadelphia and private sector partners to develop and run initiatives that reflect Mayoral priorities and seek to improve the quality of life for all Philadelphians. The Fund will serve as the fiscal administrator for this contract opportunity. The Philadelphia Historical Commission will serve as the project manager for this effort on behalf of the Fund.

As part of the Department of Planning and Development, the Philadelphia Historical Commission (the Commission) protects the City's historic resources. Together with its advisory committees, the Commission:

- Identifies and designates historic landmarks
- Maintains the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places

- Hosts public meetings about historic properties
- Works with property owners to protect landmarks

The Commission staff reviews building permit applications for work to the designated properties and nominations to the register. When needed, they forward applications to the appropriate committee. The staff:

- Approves over 90% of building permit applications without referral to a committee
- Informs the public about the commission's rules and processes
- Provides advice on preservation techniques
- Helps the public research the history of their properties

### **C. Project Background**

In April 2019, the Mayor's 33-member Historic Preservation Task Force released a set of recommendations based on their 18-month process to expand preservation efforts in Philadelphia (available at <https://www.phlpreservation.org/>). One of the primary recommendations of the report was to establish an ongoing, city-wide survey to help to identify cultural and historic resources throughout Philadelphia. In February 2020, The William Penn Foundation agreed to assist the City with its efforts through funding a cultural resource survey plan and pilot project, awarding the city a \$250,000 grant to explore ways to expand the existing understanding of preservation to include a wider range of tools, and a more comprehensive understanding of cultural heritage.

The City's Preservation Ordinance is strong and comprehensive and includes the ability for the Commission to designate buildings and places to the local register. However, when the designation is less about the physical building and more about the events that took place or the people that inhabited the building, a significant challenge lies in regulating change in culturally significant designated places. The William Penn Foundation encouraged DPD to bring outside expertise related to cultural resources to the project from the onset, acknowledging PHC's strength in preservation of traditional historic resources. To reduce bias in crafting the RFP, a facilitation consultant was brought on to ensure that the RFP conveyed the project and the required competencies of a consultant team appropriately.

Creating an equitable plan for this survey plan project was an important component of the Task Force's recommendation. The consultant team was conscious of its own experience and potential bias and was sensitive to ensuring that BIPOC members of the Advisory Team were not required to do the work of framing the project with an equity lens. Accordingly, a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion consultant was brought on to assist a team of DPD staff and the facilitation consultant as they established core values and guiding principles, convened an Advisory Team, compiled insights and best practices, and drafted this RFP.

Through this groundwork, the following principles were developed as the underlying criteria and commitment to guide the work of the City-Wide Cultural Resources Survey.

1. Analyze Power: Power is exercised in the social, economic, and political relations between individuals and groups. It is also unequally distributed – some individuals and groups having greater control over the sources of power and others having little or no control.
2. Never a failure, always a lesson: We acknowledge that we will make mistakes; we commit to enhance our learning through productive failure.



3. Adaptable and Flexible: We commit to quickly reconfigure capabilities, infrastructure, and resources as needed.
4. Transparency/Accountability: To work with integrity requires that we be accountable to the communities we serve paying particular to those struggling with racist and class oppression.
5. Move at the speed of trust: We believe we must increase trust and reduce fears that create barriers to the kind of participation, experimentation, and passion that is so crucial to community engagement.

As a separate effort, at the request of DPD, the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) staff are currently working on a project to evaluate the efficacy of introducing Cultural Heritage Districts in Philadelphia. DVRPC Staff are examining best practices as well as mapping important indicators of cultural heritage across the City. This project will conclude in June of 2021 and its results will be made available to the selected consultants.

**D. General Disclaimer**

This RFQ and forthcoming RFP does not commit the Fund or the City of Philadelphia to award a contract. This RFQ and the process it describes are proprietary to the Fund and the City and are for the sole and exclusive benefit of the Fund/City. No other party, including any Applicant, is intended to be granted any rights hereunder. Any response, including written documents and verbal communication, by any Applicant to this RFQ, shall become the property of the Fund/City and may be subject to public disclosure by the Fund/City, or any authorized agent of the Fund/City at the sole discretion of the Fund/City.



## **SECTION II – REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS**

### **A. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

**Submissions at this time are only to qualify you or your organization to submit a proposal in response to the forthcoming RFP at a later date.** As such, they should be submitted by an individual person, firm or organization, not a collaborative consultant team, and should not include a proposed scope of work or budget. To access the full scope of work intended for the multi-year contract to plan and pilot a city-wide cultural resources survey, please see Appendix A (Proposed Services).

An application should contain the following two sections of information:

#### **1. Letter of Interest (2-pages max per Applicant)**

Please submit a Letter of Interest to be qualified to bid on this project that provides a brief Applicant profile including the type of entity (whether an individual, a firm, nonprofit organization,) description of business, etc.

The Letter should address your understanding of and interest in this project.

The Letter must also specify the area(s) in which you are seeking qualification:

#### AREAS OF QUALIFICATION

The following competencies will be needed to complete this project. An applicant may submit to be qualified in more than one area.

- a) Project Management
  - Skilled with facilitation, communication, organization, and experienced in leading teams of consultants, managing budgets, and project schedules.
- b) Historic or Cultural Preservation
  - Expertise in the field(s) of historic and/or cultural preservation including but not limited to physical preservation and rehabilitation, archaeology, cultural heritage preservation (including intangible resources).
  - Experience in Philadelphia or comparable cities.
- c) Advocacy/Outreach
  - Experience voicing support for equity and diversity within historic or cultural fields.
- d) Community Engagement
  - Proven experience making connections and building relationships with communities including utilizing innovative methods or new technologies.
  - Experience working in multi-lingual communities.
  - Willingness to incorporate and honor community feedback.
- e) Survey Work
  - Experience with planning for and/or conducting resource surveys in Philadelphia or comparable cities.



**2. Pertinent Skills and Experience** (max 2-pages per Area of Qualification)

Please provide a summary of skills and experiences that demonstrate you're qualified and able to do this work. (If an entity of more than one individual, please include the experience of the individuals at your entity that contribute to your qualifications).

We understand that expertise is built from a combination of lived experiences and education. The summary of skills may include relevant compensated and volunteer work experiences, testimonials, educational experiences, work samples, etc.

Consider telling us 2-3 experiences that involve or relate to one or more of the components in this project such as work that engages Philadelphia communities, community planning projects, story-telling projects, crowd-sourcing projects, historic or heritage preservation, cultural asset mapping, and so forth.

**3. Contact information.** Please include the name, email, and phone number for a contact person (if an entity with more than one individual, please include only one person). If qualified, this contact information will be included on the list of qualified applicants who are eligible to submit a proposal to the forthcoming RFP.

**B. We Encourage WBE/MBE/DBE and Individuals to Apply**

The DPD recognizes it needs to diversify in order to represent the residents of Philadelphia. We also acknowledge that, as a field, historic preservation is not as inclusive as it should be.

We know that in order to change the process, we need to acknowledge and address the power dynamics involved in the proposed project. As such, we will seek to engage a consultant team that represents the intersectionality of Philadelphia's residents and demonstrates a commitment to this work.

This project is an opportunity to promote minority businesses. We encourage minority businesses and individuals to apply. Please note it is not a requirement for businesses to be registered with the City's Office of Economic Opportunity ("OEO") in order to apply for this RFQ or the forthcoming RFP.

**C. Deadline for Submission**

Applications to the RFQ are due June 21, 2021 by 5 PM EST.

A PDF of the Application must be emailed to both: [mayorsfund@phila.gov](mailto:mayorsfund@phila.gov) and [preservation@phila.gov](mailto:preservation@phila.gov). Submission emails must contain the subject line "Plan for a City-Wide Cultural Resources Survey RFQ Submission."

An RFP will be sent to qualified applicants to submit a full proposal.

**D. Proposal review and selection process**

A panel of PHC staff, the Mayor's Fund staff, members of the Advisory Team, and outside consultants will lead the selection process.

EVALUATION METRICS

Applications will be evaluated on:

- A demonstrated interest and understanding of project goals



- Expertise – necessary skills, capacity, experience, (has experience working in cross racial teams)
- Upholding a commitment to the guiding principles
- Creative solutions, innovation, flexibility, multi-modal methodology

We will host a Q&A session to address questions on the project and contract-awarding process. The Q&A session will take place virtually on June 3, 2021 from 10:00 AM to 11:00 AM EST on Zoom. You may register at:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_d35VFQ2BQRSJbVSaYqqP4Q](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_d35VFQ2BQRSJbVSaYqqP4Q)

Attendance at this session is encouraged, but not required. A recording of this session will be made available. If you need assistance in registering or participating in the session via Zoom, please reach out to [preservation@phila.gov](mailto:preservation@phila.gov) at least 24 hours in advance.

Please submit written questions about this RFQ to both [mayorsfund@phila.gov](mailto:mayorsfund@phila.gov) and to the Philadelphia Historical Commission at [preservation@phila.gov](mailto:preservation@phila.gov) with the subject line "Plan for a City-Wide Cultural Resources Survey Question" by Tuesday, June 1, 2021 at 5 PM EST. We aim to answer as many questions live during the Q&A session as possible and will publish a full list questions and answers by June 7, 2021 by 5:00 PM EST.

The Fund and the DPD reserve the right to modify specific requirements stated herein based on changed circumstances, the proposal selection process, and contract negotiations with the Applicant(s) selected for negotiations, and to do so with or without issuing a revised RFQ or RFP. Additionally, we reserve the right to continue to qualify applicants until the appropriate competencies are acquired.

Once a list of qualified applicants has been determined, an RFP will be distributed, and qualified entities will be invited to collaborate to submit a full proposal (for the scope of work described in Appendix A) in which all competencies are represented on one team.

## **E. Timeline**

<b>Phase</b>	<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Timing</b>
<b>RFQ</b>		
	RFQ distributed	May 17, 2021
	Written questions due	June 1, 2021
	Virtual Q&A Session	June 3, 2021
	All Q&As posted on Fund website	June 7, 2021
	Letters of Intent deadline	June 21, 2021
	Qualified List of Applicants posted /Invitations for full proposals sent	July 2021
<b>RFP</b>		
	RFP Q&A	July 2021
	RFP Submission Deadline	August 2021
	Final Selection	Late Summer 2021
<b>Anticipated Project Implementation</b>		
	Anticipated Start Date	Summer 2021
	Community Outreach	Fall 2021-Summer 2023



	Research and Development	Fall 2021-Fall 2022
	Implementation and Analysis	Summer 2022-Summer 2023
	Final Report	Summer 2023

The Fund anticipates that the work required under this project will be completed by June 30, 2023.