

Request for Qualifications: A Plan for a City-Wide Cultural Resources Survey

QUESTIONS RECEIVED DURING THE 6/3 Q&A SESSION

- **Can non-profits qualify?**
- **Is this correct: If “non-profits” want to respond to the RFQ, they should they apply as a “firm/entity” (not as a group of individuals).**

Non-profits are eligible to qualify. We use the terms “individuals” and “firms” simply to demonstrate that an individual may qualify without being affiliated with a larger entity. We use the term “firm” loosely in this regard, and it can apply to a non-profit organization. A non-profit would not need to qualify their members individually.

Can one firm be awarded the contract for all five categories?

There is nothing that would preclude one firm from be awarded the contract for all five categories.

Do we have to meet all aspects of an “area of qualification”? For example, if a company does archaeology but not physical preservation, can we qualify under “Historic or Cultural Preservation”?

The suggestions provided under each “area of qualification” were meant to highlight a range of services or abilities that an individual or organization may have; it was not intended to suggest that applicants must demonstrate that they have capacity in all of them. We provided examples to help explain that we are looking for skills that can be broken down into five main categories or buckets, and within each of these buckets, an applicant may have one or more of these specialties.

Nothing would preclude assembling a project team by selecting several individuals/firms from the same category in order to accomplish their proposal.

Could you spend a moment distinguishing between Advocacy/Outreach and Community Engagement?

Community engagement suggests that there are people who have worked specifically around organizing within communities to gain input around a specific project. So for example, have you [the applicant] been in charge of working with a project where you made sure that a community had a voice in the project.

Advocacy is focusing more on where an individual/firm has started an initiative on their own, or are working within an area of expertise within a community but not necessarily within an organized fashion. An example might be a person/organization that has started a project that aligns with cultural heritage but not within a formal planning or preservation context.

We see advocacy as working with a community on a topic/subject-specific project while community engagement may be an individual/firm who specializes in collecting input from communities across issues.

Are there certain evaluation metrics considered more valuable than others?

While we have not determined the specific weight of each metric, applicants can assume that expertise will be weighed most heavily followed in order by upholding guiding principles, demonstrated project understanding, and creative solutions.

Will being competent in more than one area of the qualifications improve your chances of being qualified?

No.

- **Are landscape architecture services needed in this planning study?**
- **Can a highly qualified teacher with business experience and education apply to start a program.**

Though landscape architecture, teaching or business are not specified in the categories that we listed in the RFQ, we leave it up to the applicants to make the case how these specialties could be of service to the project.

Will consultants be chosen to complete all phases of the project, or can consultants be chosen to fulfill certain aspects of the future RFP?

The hope is to contract with a team that can complete the entire project, however we understand that things may come up, particularly during the pilot phase, that may require additional expertise. This means that though we are looking to contract with a single team with whom to work over the course of the entire project, there may be opportunities for that team to grow if it is determined that additional vendors need to be brought on later on in the project as it takes shape.

If we employ someone who worked as an intern with the City of Philly/PHC, can we still qualify?

Yes.

Could you speak to who is reviewing the RFQ responses?

We have an Advisory Team that is made up of both City and State employees who possess expertise in community engagement, historic preservation and cultural heritage.

Can you expand on the question about the grant money? Is the \$250k the total available for the selected team?

The \$250,000 is the total available for the project. Some of that money has been and will be spent on other project areas. The Request for Proposals (RFP) will provide further information about the budget.

Can you speak to what the size of the final team is expected to be? Thank you.

We cannot speak to the size of the final team just yet because it will be influenced by what the list of qualified individuals and firms looks like, as well as how teams responding to the RFP configure their teams.

Can you give an example of a “multi modal methodology” for a project? I see that wording is used as a way to qualify individuals/firms.

Our use of this term is to ask, “Are there multiple ways to achieve this objective?” Currently, the City has a singular way to approach preservation which is through the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. This project is looking for multiple solutions for how to accomplish preservation and documentation differently from how we do so currently. In addition, multi-modal refers to communicating with the public across a wide range of approaches to ensure inclusivity.

Hello, I have a question. Regarding pre-qualification, are you specifically referring to M/WBE qualification through the City of Philadelphia or State of PA? Or can a firm we certified in another state?

We do not require any kind of certification.

A key deliverable is ‘implementation’ which includes an organization and systems design piece that enables operationalizing (staffing and maintenance) the effort to scale City-wide. Its not clear how or where these skills fit under the existing buckets of expertise A.) project mgt B.) Historical & Cultural Preservation C.) D.) & E.) etc. Thank you.

These skills will likely come from throughout the members of the team and the areas of expertise they bring with them to the project.

Will a qualified individual have a competitive chance alongside qualified entities when project teams are formed?

This will be addressed in more detail in the RFP document. We have not yet decided how the RFP will articulate guidelines around team composition, however, we are conscious of the need to create opportunities for qualified individuals on project teams. Once we have the list of qualified individuals and firms, we will have a better sense of how to create this guidance.

How will the pilot process look like?

A lot of this will be determined once the project gets underway. Currently, our sense is that the pilot will involve either a geographic or a thematic area that the project team will engage with through the help of community partners that are already working there.

Is the expectation that the project will not use NRHP criteria but determine our own criteria through public meetings? Or will the NRHP criteria be used with additional criteria developed through public meetings.

Whether or not to use established criteria for significance (either local, national or international) will be decided upon through the input the project team received from community members. There is no requirement to use traditional historic preservation standards, however if they prove helpful in moments of the project, they can certainly be incorporated.

Would all of those potential community partners need to be pre-qualified?

We are asking that any and all individuals and firms who would like to submit a proposal do so at this point. We acknowledge, however, especially once we reach the pilot stage of the project, there may be additional community partners that we want to bring on to the project. If/when this arises, the City will pursue a process to connect those entities with the project team.

To put it another way, teams responding to the RFP will not be expected to specify their proposed pilot area and community partners in their proposals. There will be time once the process begins to address the details of that component.

Will qualified firms/individuals be contracted through the City, and does the City determine the makeup of the team? Would this affect how firms would take on subconsultants?

There will be one contract with the prime consultant who would potentially subcontract with others from the pre-qualified list.

Re: the RFQ doc - will you discuss how the ability to “analyze power” will play a role in qualifications review?

Reviewers will be looking at the application materials to see if the applicants has experience in or recognizes the importance of analyzing power, examples of how they do that in their work and a demonstration of why that is an important component of this project.

Is the intent that the results of collecting data/information will capture all cultural representation in the City? How will you ensure that the selected team will do so.

The intent is to develop effective ways to collect information about cultural heritage within a pilot (again, either a geographic or thematic area) that can be replicated in an on-going manner by the staff of the Philadelphia Historical Commission. In addition, the intent is not to create a top-down methodology but rather a community-driven approach to engagement and survey.

Does an applicant’s geographic or thematic expertise add to their likeliness to qualify? I.e. should we highlight geographic or thematic expertise in the Letter of Interest?

If an applicant believes that this information supports their expertise, they should include it.

What is the outcome for this RFP for the city?

The outcome for the RFP is for the City to be able to contract with the head of a team of practitioners who will be able to instruct and prepare City staff on how to conduct on-going community-based survey work that documents and/or preserves cultural heritage using approaches that have been identified as relevant and effective to communities.

Please repeat the heading for submission: Plan for a City wide cultural....

“Plan for a City-Wide Cultural Resources Survey RFQ Submission”

Will contracts for all phases of the project be awarded this summer? Or will they be awarded at various times over the next couple of years?

One contract will be awarded to a team.

Do we have to form our own teams? Or will the City potentially put a team together?

Qualified individuals/firms are responsible for forming their own teams with whom to respond to the RFP.

QUESTIONS RECEIVED PRIOR TO THE 6/3 Q&A SESSION

How is “risk” defined for “resources at risk” (p. 2) for the purposes of this survey?

Those resources that are in danger of being lost without any planned efforts for documentation and/or preservation.

When will in person meetings begin and what will be the frequency?

It is unknown at this time when in person meetings will resume.

Is the committee planning to select a single team to provide services, or is the committee planning to select multiple firms to provide services? If multiple firms are selected, would the \$250,000 budget be split across firms, or would \$250,000 be allocated for each team?

The RFQ process will determine which individuals or firms are qualified to respond to the Request for Proposals (RFP) which will be issued later this summer. Once the Advisory Team confirms which firms qualify in the five competencies listed in the RFQ, it is up to those firms to establish the make-up of the team with whom they will respond to the RFP.

The funds available for the project come from the \$250,000 grant from William Penn, however, some of those funds have been dedicated to other efforts. The forthcoming RFP will provide more information to use to create a project budget. That is not required in this phase.

Will the City form a team of individuals/organizations, or will only one entity be selected? If collaborative teams will be formed, can selected individuals/organizations jointly submit a full proposal?

The City will issue a list of qualified individuals and firms and ask that those on the list form their own collaborative teams to jointly respond to the RFP.

When a qualified firm is invited to submit a proposal, will the process be divided by the five separate areas of qualification, or will firms only be able to propose for the areas for which they were qualified and the City will form teams? Or, will firms be able to form a team with another qualified consultant(s) to prepare a proposal that covers all areas of qualification?
Firms can propose to qualify for any of the five areas they wish but will only be able to propose their services as part of the RFP in the areas for which they were qualified.

The City will not form teams based on the qualifying firms but rather encourages firms to partner with other firms across areas of services.

For project teams, will all entities on the team need to qualify or just the prime?

All entities will need to be pre-qualified.

I have attached my resume and a sample of my work. Can you please let me know if I qualify?

You must formally respond to the RFQ in order to be considered for qualification. All applications received will be evaluated by our Advisory Team. You will only be evaluated on materials you submit as part of your official application.

Can actual performers such as musicians, dancers, spoken word artists, etc. qualify for this project?

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- **I am writing on behalf of several firms that frequently work together as one team. This allows us to each bring our own unique areas of expertise to the project while working with a shared and cohesive planning philosophy.**
- **Is it possible for us to submit one response that outlines each of our firms separately but demonstrates how collaboratively we combine to fulfill all of the services in the RFQ?**

Unless all team members are associated under the same LLC, each firm must qualify individually. Should all firms be qualified during the RFQ process, you could then respond to the RFP as a team.

Will the project team be provided access to “Legacy Data” as needed for this project, including, but not limited to, the existing PHC database?

Yes.

Does the City intend to provide a pre-developed Arches system to the consultant, or will the consultant be expected to tailor program Arches to the pilot survey?

The consultant will have access to the Arches system. They will not be expected to tailor Arches to the pilot survey themselves although they may propose modifications during the course of the project. If the City requires assistance, it will contract with a vendor separately to make modifications.

Further explain how the qualifications link to the Scope of Work.

The City will not predetermine what any specific qualified individual or firm can contribute to the scope of work. Teams should determine that when preparing their proposals.

Can potential team members be discussed in the Letter of Interest (application)?

This information will not be considered in the review of your qualifications.

For clarification, is it a 2-page limit for the Letter of Interest and then a 2-page limit for each Area of Qualification? If a company is to demonstrate they are qualified in all 5 areas, then the overall submission could be up to 12 pages, is this correct?"

Yes.

The Scope of Work is extensive. Would the city consider prioritizing elements of this plan?

Team responses to the RFP may propose a prioritized scope of work based on time, cost, and overall project goals.

How many properties will be surveyed?

This will be determined by the selection of the pilot project area during the course of work.

What neighborhoods and/or themes are being considered as priorities for the pilot survey?

The City has not determined priorities for the pilot survey, that should be done through the course of the project.

What baseline data is expected to be collected for resources that are inventoried/surveyed?

This will be determined in the course of the project.

To what extent is the City interested in high-tech approaches to inventorying and/or mapping identified resources in the pilot survey?

To the extent that those approaches offer efficiency while still allowing for meeting the project's guiding principles.

Will the project team endeavor to identify all associated elements of intangible heritage (i.e. instruments, objects, artifacts, cultural spaces) as part of this survey, or simply begin to identify the presence and characteristics of that heritage?

This will be determined in the course of the project based on the results of community engagement.

How many public meetings are projected in preparation of the Community Outreach Plan?

There is no prescribed number of public meetings, a proposal for such may be included in the response to the RFP.