



Rhode Island Coalition for the Homeless' New England Conference on Poverty and Homelessness RFP Questions and Answers

Note: Further details will be determined within conversations during the interview process or with the selected vendor.

TIMELINE

1. *Will the deadline for proposals be extended because of COVID-19?*
 - a. Yes, the revised deadline for proposals is May 15th, 2020.

PLANNING & BUDGET

1. *With the onset of Covid-19, we know that there has been a huge work slowdown in the event market for 2020. Are you still moving forward with this event? If so, then initial meetings should be taking place in the near term for the strategy and planning to ensure success. Are you prepared to start planning meetings by May/June 2020 for a conference taking place in 12 months?*
 - a. The conference event timeline will be amended to follow any regulations in-place that may restrict in-person gatherings. The Coalition will select a date that will best support the desired in-person experience. Vendor services will not be engaged until 12 or 14 months prior to the selected event date.
2. *What metrics will you use to choose a partner for this event? Have you prioritized on what is most important in an event partner: Strategy/Communication/Experience/Logistics/Budget?*
 - a. The chosen vendor for this event will possess all or most of the qualifications outlined in the RFP. Particular attention will be paid to experience in event planning and experience in working with a set budget.
3. *Name your 3 top qualities in an event partner.*
 - a. The chosen vendor for this event will possess all or most of the qualifications outlined in the RFP.
4. *What are 3 critical success factors in working with a partner?*
 - a. A successful event would be one where people in our industry have an opportunity to engage with and learn from one another, regional silos are broken down, money is raised for our mission, knowledge-gaps are filled, and people can come together post-COVID-19.
5. *The RFP states, "The goal is to cover all expenses through sponsorships and exhibitors..." Do you have a budget in mind for the initial planning stages of the event before sponsors and exhibitors commit to participating?*

- a. The Coalition will work with the selected event to develop a final budget. Since we've not hosted an event like this before, we are unsure of the budget and size. Our goal for attendance would be between 200-300 for a multi-day conference, with a preliminary budget between \$60,000-\$100,000.
- 6. *Regarding budget, the RFP asks for rate and cost information. We can provide costs for the core team that plans and executes on the initial outline of overall strategy, creative direction, design and executive production. Once we begin the design process, we can provide a budget for the actual implementation of the event with options for venue/logistics/hotel/transportation/technology, etc. It is difficult to provide budgetary numbers for a conference that does not have those parameters in place as of yet. Would you be interested in a conversation to further discuss these parameters?*
 - a. Further details will be discussed during the interview process and in conversations with the chosen vendor.

AUDIENCE AND OBJECTIVES

- 1. *Does the Coalition have a list of potential sponsors and exhibitors now?*
 - a. The Coalition has a draft list of potential sponsors and exhibitors, but the chosen vendor will be expected to provide additional prospecting and outreach as stated in the RFP.
- 2. *There is a wide variety and myriad specialties represented in your membership ranks. How do you see members participating in this conference?*
 - a. The Coalition values member and constituent participation in our events. Members will be valued attendees and will be offered to host breakout sessions and serve as panelists depending on the event structure.
- 3. *The Coalition has devised some objectives for this conference. Are they prioritized and how do you see measuring these goals with a look toward the future?*
 - a. The major goal for this conference is to organize an event that will provide a variety of comprehensive professional development trainings, networking events, and educational opportunities to homeless service providers and partners throughout the region on best practices and important policy initiatives.
- 4. *What does success look like?*
 - a. An engaging event where people in our industry have an opportunity to engage with and learn from one another, regional silos are broken down, money is raised for our mission, knowledge-gaps are filled, and people can come together post-COVID-19.
- 5. *Who is the audience? Have you prioritized your audience as to "must have", "would be good to have", "nice to have"? How do you see government's role? How do public and private partners get involved? What makes the community complete for the best outcome?*
 - a. The audience for this event includes service providers, state agencies, constituents, and direct service providers. The audience categories are not prioritized because a successful event will include representatives from each in

order to ensure communication and participation from top-to-bottom in the housing sector.

IMPLEMENTATION AND LOGISTICS

1. *We understand that the venue should be in RI, but have you considered location in terms of Providence vs. other parts of the state? How much does the venue matter as far as the quality of the event?*
 - a. The venue should be able to fit the needs of the event structure and provide an enjoyable environment for attendees. Location of the event will be discussed further with the selected vendor.
2. *There are many components that make up a successful event. The scope of work mentions quite a few event elements, but are you also looking for us to handle the technology piece of the conference including pre-event invites, web design, digital media, video? Will we also provide name tags at the event, programs, signage, welcome packages, social integration and follow-ups with the audience?*
 - a. The Coalition does expect that the selected vendor will coordinate the presence of the technology needed for a successful event. Additionally, the selected vendor will work in conjunction with the Coalition communications staff that will provide communications work for the event; including press releases, graphic design, and content for collateral, website, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and Instagram. Additional event components will be discussed with the selected vendor.
3. *The bigger question is how large is your staff that will be managing this event, and is your expectation that our team will integrate with yours and divide tasks?*
 - a. The Coalition expects that the selected vendor will work in collaboration with Coalition staff in the design and execution of all aspects of the regional conference. Further details regarding the nature of the partnership will be discussed within the interview process and with the selected vendor.

WELLNESS & VITALITY

1. *Due to the nature of our “new normal” after Covid-19 is mitigated to where we can hopefully meet in groups again, our organization believes that wellness & vitality will play a key role in future events and how people will interact. Do you see value in infusing some ideas around wellness & vitality to the conference, such as meditation, reiki healing, and/or yoga to add to the social interactions of the audience?*
 - a. The Coalition understands the significance that large events will have following the COVID-19 crisis. Therefore, the Coalition would like to use this opportunity to highlight best practices regarding wellness and vitality for constituents as well as service providers. As for in-event interactions regarding wellness and vitality, further discussion will happen with the selected vendor.