



Request for Proposals for MACDC Housing Quality and Health Equity Initiative Evaluation
Date: August 12, 2024

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Introduction

The Massachusetts Association of Community Development Corporations (MACDC) is seeking proposals from qualified applicants, for consideration for selection as the consultant (“the Consultant”), to conduct an evaluation (“the Evaluation”), of Years 1 and 2 of the MACDC’s Housing Quality and Health Equity Initiative (“HQH Equity Initiative”).

Section 1: MACDC’s Housing Quality and Health (HQH) Equity Initiative

MACDC’s HQH Equity Initiative is supported through a grant from the Massachusetts Community Health and Healthy Aging Funds (“MA CHHA Funds”), which were created in January 2017 when the MA Department of Public Health (DPH) completed a landmark revision of its Determination of Need (DoN) regulation, which authorized the creation of these Funds. DPH provides overall guidance to the Funds and Health Resources in Action, Inc. acts as a fiduciary and implementing partner. The Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder Affairs (EOEA) partners with DPH to support the Healthy Aging Fund. To learn more about the MA CHHA Funds, please visit www.mahealthfunds.org.

The overriding goal of the HQH Equity Initiative is to tackle poor housing quality and associated housing instability, and address the corresponding racial health inequities, in [Massachusetts’ Gateway Cities](#). The root causes of poor housing quality and associated racial health inequities include racist policies and practices that limit where households of color can live and that have created income and wealth

disparities that limit choices for people of color, combined with long-standing underinvestment in the maintenance of older properties and the high cost to rent or buy safe, healthy housing.

Section 2: Progress to Date on the HQH Equity Initiative

The HQH Equity Initiative is a 5-year initiative, with Year 1 having commenced on October 1st, 2022, and Year 5 concluding on September 30th, 2027. Please refer to the attached overview for details. In the first two years of the Initiative, we have:

- Regularly engaged Community Partners, including through quarterly meetings, in three Gateway Cities (Brockton, Holyoke, and Springfield).
- Commissioned a Report, produced by the Green and Healthy Homes Initiative, entitled “Advancing Housing Quality and Health Equity in Massachusetts: A Path Toward Addressing Lead Paint and Indoor Air Quality.”
- Organized a Statewide Kickoff Event, attended by close to 100 participants, at which we presented the Report findings, celebrated local work and leaders, and launched the work going forward.
- Introduced legislation to create the Massachusetts Healthy Homes Program (MHHP), and advocated for its passage, mobilizing a coalition of more than 50 organizations in support. In August, MHHP was enacted into law as part of the Affordable Homes Act

Section 3: The Evaluation

Our Work Plan (to be provided to the Consultant) under the MA CHHA Funds includes an Evaluation of the progress of the HQH Equity Initiative, according to the goals that were set for years 1-2, led by a contracted third-party evaluator. The Work Plan states that the third-party evaluator will consult with the Community Partners, to evaluate the extent to which they were engaged in the process and to improve engagement going forward.

The selected third-party evaluator will contract with MACDC, and, as the Consultant, will complete and deliver the Evaluation, on the terms and conditions described in this RFP. The Evaluation will include the following sections:

- Progress in Completing the Activities in the Work Plan for Years 1 and 2
- In-Depth Evaluation of the Local Community Engagement Work

A. Progress in Completing the Activities in the Work Plan for Years 1 and 2

Activities in work Plan Include:

- Commission a Report to provide an in-depth analysis, including a documentation of the extent of housing quality problems linked to lead paint and poor indoor air quality statewide; a scan of programs, resources and policies that address the housing quality problems that impact health, specifically those related to lead paint and poor indoor air quality; an analysis of how well these current programs and resources address the disproportionate impacts on households of color, and where gaps exist; and an analysis of the relationship between poor housing quality and housing stability.

- Advocate for state and local policies and resources that support housing rehabilitation that addresses unhealthy characteristics of housing.
- Local Community Engagement: Improve housing quality in 3 selected Gateway Cities (Brockton, Holyoke, and Springfield), through several Activities, including the following in each of the cities:
 - Identify and engage Community Partners. *
 - With the Community Partners, identify the housing quality problems, their health manifestations on households of color, and their impact on housing stability.
 - With the Community Partners, establish rehab goals for improving a specific number of homes, and funding needs.
 - Identify local institutional partners; capacity of systems needs to be able to scale up efforts to improve housing quality more broadly when resources allow; and build up capacity and establish systems to address these needs.

* For each of the Cities selected to participate in the initiative, we engaged with Community Partners. The Work Plan differentiated between Community Leaders and other Community Representatives, identified collectively as Community Partners. Over the course of our local engagement work, we have discovered that this distinction is not helpful or relevant- all of those we engage are community leaders. Therefore, in this Evaluation, and in our ongoing work, we refer to all those involved locally as Community Partners.

- Plan and hold a Kickoff event, to launch the Report and assess what must be done going forward.

For each of the four categories above, the Evaluation should include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Report: who completed it; the date of completion; the extent to which the Report addresses the parameters described in the Work Plan; the extent to which the Report's authors complied with the stated requirements on presenting at the Kickoff Event; the extent to which MACDC has publicized the Report and its findings.
- Advocacy: what advocacy has MACDC done in support of resources to support housing rehabilitation that addresses unhealthy characteristics of housing; what mobilization has MACDC done in support of such advocacy; what progress has been achieved.
- Local Engagement: See in-depth description below
- Kickoff Event: was the Kickoff event held; what participation was achieved; what goals were established by MACDC for this event, and to what extent were they met.

B. In-Depth Evaluation of the Local Community Engagement Work

Other than the advocacy for policy change, the local community engagement (in Brockton, Holyoke, and Springfield) is the only one of the HQH Equity Initiative activities that is ongoing. While evaluating the success of the advocacy component is straightforward and relatively easy to measure, evaluating the

local community engagement is more complex-- due to our work in multiple communities, with a large group of stakeholders, through regular meetings--and requires both qualitative and quantitative measures.

Therefore, the bulk of the Evaluation will focus on evaluating the HQH Equity Initiative's local community engagement in Years 1-2.

Quantitative Evaluation Factors:

For each of the three cities:

- Number of Community Partners recruited, including in the categories described in the Work Plan
- Number of meetings held
- Number of total participants in the quarterly meetings
- Number of unique participants in quarterly meetings
- Number of conversations with local stakeholders outside of quarterly meetings
- Establishment of rehab goals for improving a specific number of homes, and funding needs.

For the three cities overall:

- Number of Community Partners recruited, in the categories described in the Work Plan
- Number of meetings held
- Number of total participants in the quarterly meetings
- Number of unique participants in quarterly meetings
- Number of conversations with local stakeholders outside of quarterly meetings

Qualitative Factors:

For each of the three cities:

- What insights were gained from the conversations, in the meetings and in individual conversations, in general and related to the following:
 - The extent and severity of housing quality problems
 - The impact of these problems on resident and community health
 - Racial disparities in housing quality problems and resultant health problems
 - Impact of housing quality problems on housing stability
 - Potential programmatic solutions
 - Potential policy solutions
- How has local capacity to address housing quality problems been increased? Has there been success in the following:
 - Identifying local institutional partners
 - Identifying capacity of systems to be able to scale up efforts to improve housing quality more broadly when resources allow
 - Building up capacity and establishing systems to address these needs.
- Has the process been engaging and inclusive? Has there been success in the following:
 - Engaging diverse stakeholders in the conversations
 - Achieving clarity in understanding and interpreting local stakeholder input

- Responding to concerns expressed with practical, short-term strategies to improve housing quality in the city

For the three cities overall, has there been success in the following:

- o Achieving clarity in understanding and interpreting local stakeholder input
- o Responding to concerns expressed with practical, short-term strategies to improve housing quality in the city
- o Identifying statewide policy solutions

Section 4: Note on Data Sources

The Consultant should have discretion in identifying and utilizing data sources, consistent with the following guidelines:

For background purposes, Consultant shall:

- o Read and review the application submitted by MACDC to MA CHHA Funds, including the amended Work Plan
- o Read the Executive Summary of the Report referenced above
- o Become familiar with the MA Healthy Homes Program legislation
- o Interview stakeholders in each of the three Gateway Cities (Brockton, Holyoke, and Springfield), making sure to interview stakeholders in all of the key categories: local residents, community-based organizations, and municipal officials
- o Interview representatives of at least six stakeholder organizations (outside of the stakeholders identified above) identified by MACDC, and interview key MACDC staff

Section 5: Proposal Submission and Selection Process

Applicants shall submit their proposal, on or before September 6, 2024, via email, to Elana Brochin at elanab@macdc.org, addressed to:

Elana Brochin
Director of Health Equity
MACDC
44 School Street, Suite 800
Boston, MA 02108
elanab@macdc.org

Proposals, and all attachments, should be submitted via email, on or before the due date, to Elana Brochin at elanab@macdc.org. Please be in touch with Elana at least 5 business days prior to the proposal due date if you need to make alternative arrangements for submitting your proposal.

Proposals received after the submission deadline may be considered only after proposals submitted by the submission deadline have been reviewed and considered, in the event that none have been selected for the work.

MACDC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, and to issue a new Request for Proposals, if MACDC determines that such action is in the interests of the HQH Equity Initiative.

Questions about the RFP can be submitted, via email, to Elana Brochin at elanab@macdc.org, to Don Bianchi at donb@macdc.org, or to Grace Dowling at graced@macdc.org. Questions submitted fewer than 5 business days prior to the proposal due date may not receive a timely response.

Prior to commencement of work, Consultant will enter into a contract with MACDC, within 10 business days of notification of award, consistent with the terms and conditions described in this RFP.

Section 6: Timelines

Request for Proposals Issued: August 12, 2024

Proposals Due: September 6, 2024

Contract Awarded/Contract Signed: Approximately October 4, 2024

Work Commences: No later than 2 weeks after Contract signed, anticipated to be October 18, 2024

Draft Evaluation (without attachments) Due: December 13, 2024

Final Evaluation (with attachments) Due: January 10, 2025

Section 7: Applicant's Qualifications

We are interested in receiving proposals from individuals or organizations (nonprofit, for profit, public, or quasi-public) which:

- Have the experience and expertise to produce the requested Evaluation, on time and on budget
- Have experience with public health, housing, or related topics
- Have experience with evaluating, researching, or implementing local community engagement
- Have published evaluations for dissemination to diverse stakeholders
- Have a track record of excellent communication and ability to meet deadlines

Section 8: Proposal Requirements

Proposals should include:

- Confirmation that the applicant meets all of the applicant qualifications described above.
- Confirmation that the applicant can, and will, address each of the requirements detailed in Sections 3 and 4 above.
- Confirmation that, if the proposal is accepted, the applicant agrees to comply with all the conditions of this RFP to enter into a contract with MACDC within 10 business days of MACDC's selection of the applicant.
- A statement of reservations and/or conditions, if there are any reservations and/or conditions the applicant has about its ability to achieve the project scope, within the established timelines, and within the established budget. For example, if there is specific information that the applicant, if selected, will need from MACDC, please identify in the proposal.

- The Evaluation methodology that the applicant will utilize to obtain the information necessary to conduct this Evaluation, which should include the data sources that will be used, to the extent they are known at the time of proposal submission.
- Resumes of individual(s) primarily responsible for this work
- Identification of other entities the applicant will contract with for portions of the work, if any. This should include a description of what aspects of the work will be subcontracted, and the qualifications for both the entity and the individuals who will be involved.
- Any other information the applicant thinks is important for MACDC to consider in evaluating its proposal, including any work samples or previously published reports.
- You do not need to submit references with your proposal. However, we may request them before awarding the contract to the selected Consultant.

Section 9: Payments

Amount and Requirements:

The total contract amount is \$25,000. All costs incurred by the Consultant shall be the responsibility of the Consultant (except as provided in the paragraph below), including, but not limited to:

- The Consultant's time in researching and writing the Evaluation, including all interviews
- The cost of all materials used by the Consultant in researching, writing, and printing the original of the Evaluation and all attachments
- All costs associated with any subcontractors utilized by the Consultant in researching and writing the Evaluation
- Regular remote check-ins with MACDC, at least every two weeks, as well as additional remote check-ins, provided MACDC provides reasonable notice
- Submission of the original Evaluation and all attachments, to MACDC
- Participation in the September meeting of the Housing Quality and Health Task Force, via Zoom, which is scheduled for Tuesday, September 10th, at 1 p.m.

The Consultant may request additional compensation from MACDC for the following:

- For travel approved by MACDC (for example, for an in-person meeting with a Gateway Cities official), the Consultant's mileage shall be reimbursed at 62.5 cents per mile, the current IRS mileage reimbursement rate
- In addition to the original Evaluation, the Consultant is responsible for providing 3 copies of the Evaluation, and all attachments, to MACDC. While the Consultant is responsible for printing and/or producing 3 copies of the Evaluation and attachments, and providing them to MACDC, MACDC will reimburse the Consultant for the costs of printing and/or producing the 3 copies, upon submission of receipts

- With the mutual agreement of both the Consultant and MACDC, additional compensation for work that is outside the scope of the contract

Payments Schedule:

Upon Signed Contract: \$10,000

Upon Submission of Draft Final Evaluation (without attachments): \$7,500

Upon Final Approval of Evaluation, with attachments: \$7,500

Section 10: Other Conditions

- Upon selection of the Consultant, and prior to contract execution, MACDC may consider minor changes to the scope of work, provided that such scope materially provides MACDC with the information described in this RFP.
- As a consultant, you are not an employee of the organization and are not eligible for any of the benefits of employment at MACDC.
- The Consultant will interview people in each of the three Cohort 1 Gateway Cities, and, as part of the Evaluation that will be submitted, will provide MACDC with a list of those interviewed and the date of the interviews.
- The Consultant may subcontract for work associated with the Evaluation only to those entities identified in its proposal in response to this RFP, unless MACDC consents, in writing, to allow the Consultant to subcontract to entities not identified in the Consultant's Proposal.
- If the Consultant does utilize subcontractors (those identified in its proposal and those whose involvement MACDC consents to), the contract will be between the Consultant and MACDC exclusively. The Consultant will be responsible for complying with all terms of the contract, regardless of whether the Consultant utilizes subcontractors or not.
- Upon Final Approval, the Consultant shall submit the original, plus three copies, of the Evaluation and all attachments. As noted above, the cost to the Consultant of producing the 3 copies of the Evaluation and attachments will be reimbursed by MACDC.
- The Consultant's Evaluation, along with all attachments, become the property of MACDC, which may use it in any way it determines will serve the interests of the HQH Equity Initiative
- MACDC may terminate the contract, for any reason, with 30 days' notice. In that event, MACDC will pay the Consultant for the work that we mutually agree has been completed, and provided to MACDC, up until the point that notice of termination is provided.

RFP Updates and FAQs – published 8/29/24

Thank you for your interest in submitting a proposal to serve as the consultant for the mid-project evaluation of MACDC's Housing Quality and Health Equity Initiative (The "Equity Initiative"). This document provides an update about the project timeline and answers to several questions we have received from interested parties.

Update

The RFP states that the consultant is required to attend the Housing Quality and Health (HQH) Task Force meeting on September 10th at 1pm. We recognize that attendance at this meeting will not align with the timeline for selection of the consultant. In lieu of attendance at the September HQH meeting, we request that the contracted consultant attend the November meeting of the Task Force, which is scheduled for November 12th at 1pm over Zoom. If the consultant is unable to attend the meeting on November 12th, we will work with the consultant to determine the best way for the consultant to gather the information that they would have gathered by attending this meeting.

Frequently Asked Questions

Is there a page limit for the proposal?

There is no page limit for the proposal

Will you provide data points for the quantitative measurements?

Yes, MACDC will provide these data points.

How many Community Partner interviews are expected?

We anticipate a minimum of nine Community Partner interviews - a municipal partner, community organization partner, and community member in each of the three cities in which we have been working.

How will interviewees be identified?

MACDC will suggest specific people to be interviewed based on degree of involvement, in addition to diversity of roles noted above, and will form a final list in consultation with the consultant.

What is the expected format of the evaluation?

We anticipate that the evaluation will take the form of a traditional narrative as well as a powerpoint presentation that will guide conversation with the Housing Quality and Health Task Force, Community Partners, and other potential partners. We will determine the final format(s) in conversation with the selected consultant.

Questions about the RFP can be submitted, via email, to Elana Brochin at elanab@macdc.org.

Questions submitted fewer than 5 business days prior to the proposal due date may not receive a timely response.