

GRANT COMPLIANCE AND MONITORING SERVICES JOINT REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (“RFQ”)

ISSUE DATE: August 28, 2026

DUE DATE: **10:00 a.m. on September 4, 2026** (the “Submission Deadline”)

SUBMIT TO: Respondents are to submit their Statement of Qualifications by email to bids@houstonfirst.com. Any submittal received after the Submission Deadline will be rejected without further review or consideration.

CONTACT INFO: Questions concerning this RFQ must be sent bids@houstonfirst.com any will be answered collectively, in the form of a Letter of Clarification, and made available on the HFC website. Questions may be combined or edited for clarity or length at the discretion of HFC.

OVERVIEW

Houston First Corporation (“HFC”), a Texas local government corporation, and Houston National Convention Host Committee 2028 (“Host Committee”), a Texas nonprofit corporation request Statements of Qualifications (“SOQs”) from qualified and experienced accounting firms to provide state grant compliance and administration services, including monitoring, fund tracking, and reporting in connection with grant funds awarded in furtherance of and connection with the design, construction, and capital improvement of venue infrastructure. The selected firm will be tasked to ensure all grant activity and related expenditures are undertaken and completed in accordance with Texas Grant Management Standards (TxGMS), relevant agreements, entity policies and procedures, and applicable law and regulation.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

Respondents must have significant audit experience with grants issued by the State of Texas, including single audits, and be acutely familiar with TxGMS requirements. To be considered responsive, the Respondent must be able to demonstrate the ability to implement effective controls and protocols, examine submittals, and meet reporting requirements in connection with the management of state grant funding.

BACKGROUND

HFC is a local government corporation formed in 2011 through the consolidation of the City of Houston, Convention & Entertainment Facilities Department and the Houston Convention Center Hotel Corporation. HFC endeavors to foster economic growth through the promotion of the Greater Houston area and the business of conventions, meetings, tourism, and the arts. The entity is also responsible for the operation of the George R. Brown Convention Center, Avenida Houston, Partnership Tower, Wortham Theater Center, Jones Hall for the Performing Arts, Miller Outdoor Theatre, an array of outdoor venues, landscaped properties, and parking facilities.

The Host Committee was organized to carry out charitable purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, including lessening and alleviating the burdens of government, and assisting both state and local governments (including any local government corporation formed by a local government, as provided by Subchapter D, Chapter 431, Texas Transportation Code) within the Greater Houston, Texas region in carrying out their public purposes; including, without limitation, the promotion, encouragement and maintenance of

employment, commerce and economic development in the greater Houston, Texas region, which has been determined and declared by the Texas Legislature to lessen the burdens of government.

SCOPE OF SERVICES

While the full scope of services will be more fully developed with the Respondent selected as a result of this RFQ process, HFC and Host Committee anticipate a scope of services similar to the following overview:

I. Compliance Monitoring

- Ensure compliance with:
 - Grant agreement terms and conditions
 - Applicable state regulations
 - Cost principles and allowability requirements
- Review expenditures for:
 - Allowability
 - Allocability
 - Reasonableness
 - Proper documentation
- Monitor deadlines and compliance milestones.

II. Reimbursement and Drawdown Management

- Prepare and submit reimbursement requests or payment draws
- Compile supporting documentation required by the granting agency
- Track outstanding receivables from the state
- Follow up on delayed reimbursements
- Reconcile reimbursements to accounting records

III. Documentation and Record Retention

- Maintain organized electronic grant files
- Retain all financial records in accordance with grant and state requirements
- Maintain documentation supporting:
 - Expenses
 - Allocations
 - Procurement activities
 - Reimbursements
 - Time and effort reporting (if applicable)

IV. Subrecipient Monitoring

- Review subrecipient invoices and supporting documentation
- Monitor subrecipient compliance
- Maintain records of monitoring activities
- Assist with corrective action plans when needed

V. Audit Support

- Prepare schedules and supporting documentation for auditors
- Respond to auditor requests
- Support state agency monitoring reviews
- Assist with Single Audit preparation, if applicable
- Help resolve audit findings and develop corrective actions

VI. Grant Closeout

- Prepare final financial reports
- Reconcile all grant accounts
- Verify all expenditures have been recorded and reimbursed
- Assist with final reimbursement requests
- Prepare closeout documentation required by the state
- Archive grant records

SOQ FORMAT

To be considered responsive, Respondents are required to provide all of the following information in their SOQ in an orderly and concise manner:

- Submittal Form:** To be considered responsive, Respondents are required to complete all fields of the Submittal Form provided below. The completed form must be signed by a person authorized to make representations on behalf of Respondent.
- Firm Profile:** Provide a brief profile of the Respondent firm, including its structure, history, services, primary business location, and number of years in the business.
- Key Personnel:** Introduce the personnel who would be assigned to provide services for HFC in connection with the services. For each individual, explain their respective functions, note their years of experience, and include a brief summary of their qualifications.
- Experience:** Describe Respondent's experience in providing grant compliance and administrative services similar to the scope of this RFQ. Provide three references with governmental entities or non-profit corporations in connection with grants issued by the State of Texas.

While there is no page limit, Respondents are asked to avoid excessive graphics, title pages, or other extraneous information in their SOQ, other than as requested in this RFQ.

EVALUATION

Each responsive SOQ timely received in response to this RFQ will be reviewed and ranked based on the following weighted criteria: Firm Profile (10 points); Key Personnel (20 points); and Experience (20 points).

HFC and Host Committee reserve the right to schedule and conduct interviews with the top-ranked Respondents. If interviews are scheduled, then such top-ranked Respondents will be evaluated based on their engagement and responsiveness during the interview and awarded 1-25 points. Interview scores will not be combined with SOQ-evaluation scores.

HFC and Host Committee intends to award contracts to the top-ranked Respondent offering the best value, as measured by utilizing the foregoing evaluation criteria, subject to negotiation of fair and reasonable compensation, which may include a not-to-exceed amount. If HFC/Host Committee and such Respondent should fail to agree on such fair and reasonable compensation, then HFC/Committee reserve the right to and may conduct negotiations with the next most-qualified Respondent. If necessary, HFC/Host Committee will conduct negotiations with successive Respondents in descending order until a contract award can be made to a qualified Respondent whose price such parties believe is fair and reasonable.

LETTERS OF CLARIFICATION

Responses to all material questions timely submitted by potential Respondents, as well as revisions incorporated into this RFQ by HFC, if any, will be confirmed collectively in a letter posted online at <http://www.houstonfirst.com/do-business> ("Letter of Clarification"). When issued, Letters of Clarification become part of this RFQ and automatically supersede any previous specifications or provisions in conflict therewith. By submitting their SOQ, Respondents shall be deemed to have reviewed all Letters of Clarification on the website and incorporated them into their submittal. Verbal responses will not otherwise alter the specifications, terms and conditions as stated herein. It is the responsibility of Respondents to monitor the foregoing link and ensure they receive any such Letters of Clarification and incorporate them in their submittal.

RESTRICTIONS ON COMMUNICATIONS

Throughout the selection process, commencing with the Issue Date, Respondents are directed not to communicate with any HFC or Host Committee employee, officer or director regarding their SOQ or any matter relating to this RFQ, other than through bids@houstonfirst.com, or in response to a direct inquiry from the HFC General Counsel Department. HFC reserves the right to reject any SOQ or proposals received due to violation of this provision.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Respondents are advised they have an affirmative obligation to disclose any affiliation or business relationship with an HFC or Host Committee employee, officer, or director creating (or appearing to create) a conflict of interest. Respondents who have any such affiliation or business relationship can find the disclosure form online at <https://www.ethics.state.tx.us/data/forms/conflict/CIQ.pdf>. By submitting their SOQ, Respondents represent that they have complied with the requirements of Chapter 176 of the Texas Local Government Code.

PROTEST PROCEDURES

Any protest relating to the form, terms and conditions, selection criteria, specifications, exhibits, or any other material RFQ content must be filed by the actual or potential Respondent with HFC no later than five business days prior to the Submission Deadline. If the protest consists of a dispute regarding the Respondent recommended by the evaluation committee, or otherwise relates to the alleged misapplication of selection criteria, then HFC must receive the protest from an actual Respondent after the Submission Deadline, but at least three business days prior to consideration of a contract resulting from this RFQ by HFC.

All protests must be made in writing and delivered to Houston First Corporation, Attn: SVP, Legal Services, 701 Avenida de las Americas, Ste. 200, Houston, TX 77010. To be considered by HFC, protests must be timely received and include, at a minimum, all of the following information: (a) The name, address and contact information of the Respondent, with sufficient information to establish that a bona fide Respondent is the person or entity filing the protest; (b) The full title of the RFQ; (c) Material grounds for the protest, including the provisions of the RFQ and the applicable law or regulation that serves as the basis for the protest; (d) A statement of the specific relief requested by the Respondent; (e) Reference to and attachment of any pertinent documents or sources relied upon by the Respondent that the protesting party wishes to have HFC consider; and (f) An affidavit attached to support any factual allegations stated in the submission.

WITHDRAWAL; ERROR

Submittals may be withdrawn due to errors or for any other reason by a written request received by bids@houstonfirst.com prior to the Submission Deadline.

PUBLIC INFORMATION

HFC is subject to the Texas Public Information Act ("TPIA"). Information submitted by Respondents is subject to release under the provisions of the TPIA set forth in Chapter 552 of the Texas Government Code. Each page where confidential or proprietary information appears must be labeled as such clearly and unambiguously. Respondents will be advised of any request for public information that implicates their materials and will have the opportunity to raise objections to disclosure with the Texas Attorney General at their expense.

RFQ PACKETS

A complete copy of this RFQ, including exhibits, necessary forms and other relevant information is available on-line at www.houstonfirst.com/do-business. This RFQ provides the information necessary to prepare and submit a SOQ for consideration and ranking.

NO OBLIGATION

This RFQ does not commit HFC or Host Committee to award a contract or issue a purchase order, and submission of a SOQ shall not be construed as a contract nor indicate a commitment of any kind on the part of HFC/Host Committee. Respondents shall receive no compensation or reimbursement for any expenses incurred in preparing a submittal in connection with this request. HFC/Host Committee reserve the right to waive any irregularities in any of the responses, select one or more service providers, reject all responses, or cancel or make alterations to the entire process. HFC and Host Committee reserve the right to request clarifications and/or additional information from some or all Respondents.

GRANT COMPLIANCE AND MONITORING SERVICES

SUBMITTAL FORM

Respondents to the foregoing Grant Compliance and Monitoring Services – Joint Request for Qualifications (“RFQ”) are required to complete each field of this Submittal Form and are asked to include it as the first substantive page of their SOQ:

1. Contact Information

a. Company Name (the “Respondent”): _____

b. Address: _____

c. Contact Name/Title: _____

d. Phone: _____ e. Email: _____

2. Terms and Conditions

By completing this form and submitting a SOQ, the Respondent represents all of the following to Houston First Corporation (“HFC”) and Houston National Convention Host Committee 2028 (“Host Committee”):

a. Respondent has the necessary experience, knowledge, abilities, skills, and resources to perform the services required hereunder and is prepared to commence such services upon notice of selection from HFC/Host Committee.

b. Respondent accepts the evaluation process set forth in the RFQ and acknowledges that some subjective judgments must necessarily be made during the effectuation of such process.

c. Any contract entered into as a result of this RFQ shall be governed by the laws of the State of Texas, and neither HFC nor Host Committee shall be required to indemnify the Respondent.

d. Respondent has not, within the past five years, been party to a service contract terminated for cause, or received material, adverse findings from any governmental authority having regulatory oversight of services similar to those required under this RFQ.

3. Acknowledgment

By signing below, Respondent represents and warrants that all of the foregoing is true, correct and may be relied upon by HFC and Host Committee without exception:

By: _____ (“Respondent”)

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Name: _____

Title: _____