

Housing Action Illinois
RFP for Fundraising Planning Consultant
April 2, 2014

Summary

Housing Action Illinois seeks an experienced consultant to work with them to conduct a fundraising audit and develop a fundraising plan that will incorporate existing and new revenue sources. We would prefer to begin work immediately after a consultant is selected and be completed within 6 months of the start date. The proposal deadline is April 30, 2014.

Organizational Overviews

Housing Action Illinois is a statewide coalition formed to preserve and expand the availability of quality, affordable housing throughout Illinois. Our mission is to strengthen communities through the pursuit of a safe and affordable home for all. We advance this mission by creating a network of resources, including community stakeholders, residents, businesses, government and housing experts, to increase the supply and availability of affordable housing throughout Illinois, while strengthening the capacity of community-level organizations to serve those in need.

Housing Action works through three (3) program areas: Public Policy Advocacy; Public Education and Organizing; and Training and Technical Assistance (primarily for nonprofit housing developers and counselors). We are a membership-based coalition, with over 170 nonprofit organizational members, including nonprofit affordable housing developers, housing counseling agencies, and homeless and supportive service providers, among others.

Housing Action's Board of Directors consists primarily of Executive Directors and senior program staff of our member organizations. Currently, Housing Action is funded through a mix of government, corporate and foundation grants, with some additional revenue coming from other sources such as membership dues and our annual housing conference. We do not currently have a separate fundraising event or conduct significant individual donor solicitation.

During the past 27 years, Housing Action has enjoyed notable success, including leading significant public policy campaigns to establish resources for affordable housing and providing necessary capacity building support to other affordable housing non-profit organizations. During the past 5 years, the organization experienced a growing demand for its services, particularly relating to foreclosure-mitigation initiatives. However, as Housing Action has been confronted with ever-increasing demands on its expertise and staff, funding has fluctuated or stopped altogether. Despite uncertainty caused by these external factors, Housing Action seeks to strategically position itself to continue its leadership role for affordable housing throughout Illinois, which includes strengthening its traditional fundraising efforts and developing entrepreneurial funding strategies in order to sustain the organization over the long-term. Our goal is to thrive, and not merely survive, during these uncertain times, and to continue to be a meaningful resource for our membership, which is trying to do the same.

Housing Action recently completed a strategic planning process that identified three strategic priorities to guide our work for 2013-2015:

Priority #1: Expand affordable housing opportunities and stabilize communities throughout the state.

Priority #2: Foster collaborations and partnerships among our members and other statewide housing organizations to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of Housing Action Illinois, its members and its partners.

Priority #3: Create a financially sustainable organization that has diverse revenue streams.

The consultant selected through this RFP process is to assist Housing Action realize Priority #3.

Project Description – Desired Outcomes

Housing Action seeks an experienced consultant to work with its Resource Development Committee and identified members of staff to conduct a fundraising audit and to develop a fundraising plan for its financial resource development activities.

The fundraising audit should comprehensively assess Housing Action’s current fundraising efforts in order to identify strengths and weaknesses, and to identify areas that Housing Action should focus on for the greatest potential return. In addition, the fundraising audit should assist Housing Action with setting fundraising goals and objectives, including identifying the infrastructure (staffing and systems) necessary to realize them. Housing Action does not currently have staff devoted to its fundraising/resource development efforts, which makes setting realistic staffing recommendations critical. Finally, all of this must be integrated into a fundraising plan that includes milestones and a timeline by which Housing Action can measure the progress and success of its fundraising efforts.

A key measure of success of this engagement will be that it results in a clear fundraising plan that Housing Action can implement.

During this same time frame, we will also be working with a consultant to assist us with developing a communications plan, which will support our fundraising efforts as well as generally raise Housing Action’s public profile. Please consider submitting a combined proposal to address both this RFP for Fundraising Planning Consultant and our concurrently issued RFP for Communications Consultant if you believe you have the skill sets necessary to accomplish both.

A. Proposal Requirements

A. Project Approach & Work Plan: In this section, please describe how you would approach a project such as this, including suggested plan components, research required, etc. Housing Action anticipates working closely with the selected consultant in order to provide background information and to develop the final work plan and timeline, so we are most interested here in learning what you believe are important and necessary steps for a thorough fundraising audit and development of an implementable fundraising plan.

B. Qualifications: Provide a description of your specific skills related to this project, including a discussion of any similar projects undertaken. In addition, include:

- Name and direct contact information
- Education

- Work experience
- Significant accomplishments

If there will be other members of your staff or affiliated persons providing services on this project, please include the information specified above for each team member. Preference will be given to those who have substantial prior experience conducting fundraising audits and developing fundraising plans for non-profit organizations.

C. References: List names, address, telephone numbers, and e-mail addresses of three to five business references for whom fundraising audits and fundraising planning work has been completed and briefly describe the type of services provided. The consultant must grant permission to Housing Action Illinois to contact the references and others who may have pertinent information regarding the consultant's qualifications and experience to perform the services required by the project.

D. Budget: The proposal must provide a comprehensive, itemized project budget with narrative and time period over which funds will be expended. Our budget for these consultant services is no more than \$10,000.

Due Date: April 30, 2014

Please submit proposals by email only to rfp-response@housingactionil.org, with "Fundraising Proposal" in the subject line. Please note that no one will be able to respond to your submission (or for additional information or clarification) prior to April 23, 2014.