

UNITY of Greater New Orleans
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS # 14-5
Permanent Supportive Housing Project
For Homeless People with Substance Use Disorders
September 29, 2014

UNITY of Greater New Orleans, the lead agency managing the homeless Continuum of Care for New Orleans and Jefferson Parish, is seeking proposals for a nonprofit organizations to provide case management services and scattered site rental assistance in Orleans or Jefferson Parish to at least 22 formerly homeless persons with a verifiable disability of substance abuse. The selected agency will take over services from a pre-existing project sponsor and therefore must agree to provide services to clients all ready in the program. The project sponsor must begin transition of the project December 2014 and begin providing services no later than January 1, 2015.

The persons eligible to be served in this PSH project are homeless individuals/families with a substance abuse diagnosis who are in need of ongoing supportive services in order to become and remain stably housed. Clients will be referred to the program through the coordinated assessment system which prioritizes clients for placement into the program. Preference will be given to agencies that do not currently have a CoC funded PSH program. The total amount available for this contract is \$262,849, which includes funding for supportive services, administrative costs, and rental assistance. It is anticipated that this grant will be renewed annually for the project sponsor assuming that it is in good standing with UNITY regarding program and fiscal compliance.

Nonprofit or governmental agencies are eligible to apply; agencies that are currently members of the UNITY Service Providers and Professionals Association as well as those agencies not currently receiving funds through the CoC are equally encouraged to apply.

Threshold criteria:

- Non-profit 501(c)3 Organization or Government Agency
- Applicant must provide 25% match for services, administrative costs and rental assistance.
- Applicant must provide 200% leveraging.

-----**PROPOSALS ARE DUE BY OCTOBER 13, 2014 BY NOON**-----

Applications must be emailed by noon, Monday, October 13 to proposals@unitygno.org. Agencies will be notified by October 17 whether they were selected as a project sponsor for the HUD application. The project must begin January 1, 2015.

-----BACKGROUND-----

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) is affordable and permanent rental housing linked to supportive services designed to enable a homeless person to become and remain stably housed. National studies show that PSH is a cost-effective solution to chronic homelessness and that it can successfully house and stabilize vulnerable persons living on the street who previously often were believed to be beyond help. UNITY expects the selected project sponsor to follow “Housing First” principles and to persevere in providing housing and services to each client despite the difficulties of doing so.

The agency selected as project sponsor must:

- Provide ongoing rental assistance and case management services to 22 formerly homeless households (currently 15 individuals and 8 families) with a substance abuse diagnosis that are currently housed in the PSH program.
- Accept homeless persons/families referred from the UNITY Coordinated Assessment System which prioritizes homeless persons eligible for PSH based on their acuity. All participants for this project would be referred by the Coordinated Assessment System.
- Be willing to find housing for participants in either Orleans or Jefferson Parish depending on the participant’s preference and the availability of rental units. Rent amounts for the housing units must be reasonable to the rents within the area.
- Be willing to “front rents” for a period not expected to exceed 6 weeks until reimbursement is received from UNITY. This amount may average about \$17,000 per month when the program is at full capacity.
- Once receiving funds from the Continuum of Care, maintain dues-paying membership in the UNITY Service Providers and Professionals Association.
- Successful applicants will demonstrate their commitment and ability to administer a highly effective “Housing First” program in which chronically homeless and vulnerable homeless persons with complex problems are successfully stabilized and housed without being required to comply with treatment as a condition of receiving housing.

-----**PROPOSAL NARRATIVE**-----

All proposals must address the following:

- 1) **Organizational Experience-** Describe the organization’s relevant experience providing supportive services in a Housing First Permanent Supportive Housing program, particularly to persons who have substance addictions. The applicant should indicate good standing with HUD and other funders, meaning there are no open monitoring findings or a history of slow expenditure of grant funds.
- 2) **Plan for Effective Case Management and Housing Stability–** Describe the plan to provide effective case management services for the tenants so they can remain permanently housed. Include how the organization will assess and document tenant progress, assist clients to obtain benefits, and support independent living. Also describe participation in the coordinated assessment system and the organizational process to quickly house a client from the street into permanent housing. Describe the job duties and qualifications of the employees that will be hired to provide services and attach a resume of the person who will supervise staff.
- 3) **Housing First Approach-** Describe briefly how case management services would address a situation in which a dually diagnosed client is engaging in extremely challenging behaviors interfering with the rights of others in an apartment complex, threatening the essential functioning of the apartment building, such as making threats to other tenants, causing severe and permanent damage to his or her apartment, or engaging in illegal activity in the building. Outline the plan to address these and other challenging behaviors.
- 4) **Implementation Timeline –** Describe the plan for maintaining an existing program and ensuring that the agency will be prepared to take over services by January 1, 2015
- 5) **Budget –** Include a brief budget narrative describing the budget for providing supportive services, administration, and rental assistance to 22 households. The budget can be submitted as an attachment that is referred to by the budget narrative.

Available funding includes:

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|------------------------------|------------------|
| Rental Assistance | \$217,332 |
| Supportive Services | \$ 36,628 |
| <u>Administrative (3.5%)</u> | <u>\$ 8,889</u> |
| TOTAL | \$262,849 |
| Required Match | \$ 65,712 |
| TOTAL with Match | \$328,561 |

Eligible supportive services for this project includes:

- Case Management
- Transportation

- 6) **Financial Capacity -** The project sponsor will be providing rental assistance to clients in the program on a monthly basis. Because funding is reimbursement based, the project sponsor should demonstrate capacity to pay rents for 45 days prior to reimbursement.

The project sponsor must also demonstrate a commitment to provide 25% match of services or administrative costs towards the total project budget, including rental assistance. Leverage should also be provided to indicate additional 200% of project costs.

Attach documentation of match and leveraging which includes the following information for each funding source:

- Match or Leverage
- Type of Source: government or private
- Method: Cash or In-kind
- Date of Commitment
- Source of Match/Leverage
- Use for Match/Leverage

7) **Program Enhancement** – Describe what will “bring to the table” to add value to this program through the provision of other resources, programs, or volunteers.

- 8) **Other Areas To Be Considered in Scoring of Proposals (DO NOT COMPLETE THIS SECTION. This is for information purposes only.)** Each proposal is eligible for additional points to be determined by an independent Review Committee which will consider other factors in deciding which proposers would make a good project sponsor. These areas include:
- Contract compliance with previous UNITY-funded projects regarding spending, timely billing, HMIS data quality, submission of required reports, findings and concerns, etc.
 - Performance results from Annual Progress Reports and monitoring reports.
 - Participation at SPPA meetings, on CoC committees, etc.
 - Consumer Feedback and Collaboration with UNITY Welcome Home Outreach Program

The proposal narrative should be limited to no more than 6 pages. **Proposals must be addressed to Martha Kegel, Executive Director of UNITY, and submitted to proposals@unitygno.org no later than noon on Monday, October 13, 2014.** Do not submit proposals by any other method.

Submission should include:

- 1) Narrative – no more than 6 pages
- 2) Proposed Budget
- 3) Documentation of Non-Profit Status (501(c) 3 IRS letter)
- 4) Two most recent financial audits
- 5) Documentation of match and leverage

If you have questions about the RFP, please contact Valerie Coffin, Director of Continuum of Care Programs, at vcoffin@unitygno.org or 504-821-4496x112. Please visit UNITY’s homepage at www.unitygno.org periodically to see if answers to any questions submitted by you or others have been posted.