Appendix B: Model RFI Template

For assistance in creating a Request for Information (RFI) for a human services procurement, please refer to the model template below to help begin the process.

Model RFI Template

This template is intended for use in conjunction with the RFI Guide as a tool to improve human services outcomes by increasing collaboration between governments and human services providers at their primary point of intersection: the human services contracting process. This template serves as a user–friendly extension of the RFI Guide to provide governments with a ready–made format for applying the recommendations from the RFI Guide. Specifically, this template is part of a larger procurement process (detailed in the Steps to Effectively Integrate an RFI into the Procurement Process section of the RFI Guide) and designed to be completed using the recommended RFI questions from the Collaborative Procurement Questions section of the RFI Guide.

[COVER PAGE]

Government Logo

RFI Title

Submission Instructions
Limit to short table or paragraph, more detailed instructions and limitations can be added at the end.
- Contact Information
- Deadline
- Format
- Who to Contact with Questions

Brief Clarification of Purpose
Include information on the purpose of the RFI, including that "no funding will be awarded based on responses to RFI."

Brief Introduction (1 to 3 sentences)
- Who is soliciting information?
- From whom is information being solicited?
- Why is information being solicited and how will it be used?

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[BODY OF RFI]

Purpose and Background: Clarify Goals for RFI
Brief reiteration of who is soliciting information and target stakeholders; summarize why information is being solicited and how it will be used.

About Organization
Brief summary of mission and background information on agency issuing RFI. Emphasize organizational goals and priorities that are relevant to RFI.

About Program
Description and statement of purpose of any program(s) (e.g. Pay-for-Success model, preventive health initiative, etc.) within the agency that are specifically covered by the RFI. Include information about specific program authorities to be utilized and the anticipated funding levels available.

Statement of Opportunity
Describe the outcome goals, changes, and opportunities the government agency is hoping to address as a result of this RFI and overall procurement process. Describe specific challenge(s) the agency seeks to solve. This should provide more details on the goals briefly summarized in the first section above.

Information Solicited
Use the information gathered through the pre-discussion with human services providers and community stakeholders (based on the Collaborative Procurement Questions outlined in the RFI Guide and below) to clearly articulate the feedback and information being solicited. In some cases, questions are described as guidelines and respondents are encouraged to share any additional information they deem relevant. Many RFIs include approximately 5 to 12 questions addressing topics. Use the Collaborative Procurement Questions listed below to select the specific areas where feedback is being solicited.

Collaborative Procurement Questions:

1. **Overall Goals:** How will this human services procurement help achieve the desired outcome goals?
    a. What are the outcome goals for this procurement?
    b. How was community input used to define these outcome goals?
    c. What is the identified target population?

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    d.   What interventions address the target population's challenges? Are these proven, promising, or not–yet–evaluated programs? Do these interventions address the foundational components that contribute to this challenge in the life, home, and community of the target population? What are the likely impacts and quantifiable measures if the intervention works as intended and the outcome goals are achieved?

    e.   What is the realistic timeframe for achieving these outcome goals?

    f.   How are the outcome goals aligned with similarly situated programs or contracts?

    g.   What support can the government provide to improve the human services providers' likelihood of success (including referral streams, physical space, or other in–kind support)?

2. **Budget**: Is the overall budget sufficient to achieve the desired outcome goals?

    a.   Does the budget cover the full cost to deliver the services? If not, what program requirements or activities will not be met due to fiscal constraints? If not, can the government suggest alternative revenue streams to address any funding gap?

    b.   Are there government guidelines or restrictions on use of funds that may interfere with service delivery?

3. **Government Procurement Process Improvement and Simplification:** Is the proposed procurement process inclusive and accessible to allow the best positioned vendor across objective selection criteria to be chosen?

    a.   Does the procurement process pose any barriers to achieving the outcome goals?

    b.   Are there redundant paperwork requirements, duplicative data collection requirements, or other barriers that can be removed in order to simplify the contracting process?

    c.   Can the government use a standardized contract with uniform provisions and timelines?

    d.   How much time is sufficient between the release of the RFI, the release of the RFP, and the response deadlines? How much time is needed to finalize implementation plans between the contract award and start date?

4. **Competition:** Are the procurement and contracting processes and timeframes set up to increase the quality, number, and diversity of potential human services providers?

    a.   Does the procurement process engage a wide range of potential providers

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across various dimensions (size, geographic footprint, community connections, program models, experience)? Will the procurement-related outreach engage potential providers from underrepresented populations and those not currently within the government's portfolio?

b. Does the procurement process consider providers' demonstrated performance across key service domains, past experience in the area(s) of service, and evidence of effectiveness rather than, or in addition to, price per service?

c. Does the procurement process preference evidence-based interventions (such as extra points or a funding set-aside for proposed solutions with moderate or strong evidence of effectiveness)?

5. **Outcomes- and Performance-Based Contracts:** Does the contract and payment structure incentivize outcomes (rather than strictly outputs) and strengthen evidence-building and learning?

a. Is outcomes-based funding a realistic option for the programmatic goals and, if so, how could it strengthen the evidence for the particular intervention type and achieve better results for the target population?

b. For any outcomes-based contract, are there clearly delineated outcomes, strong governance structures, training and technical assistance resources, and other supports in place to sustain the outcomes-based delivery and reporting over the contracting period?

c. Are performance-based incentives appropriate for this type of contract (instead of, or in addition to, cost-based contracting)? What are the potential unintended consequences and incentives of paying for performance?

d. Will a portion of funding be exempt from performance-based payments to ensure that providers without immediate access to working capital can participate?

e. What other kinds of government incentives and support would be most meaningful to encourage provider participation and interest in outcome and performance funding?

6. **Contract Structure and Flexibility**: Is the contract and payment structure flexible enough to build evidence while also allowing for improvement in the service delivery model?

a. Are the contracting provisions flexible enough to allow providers to build and strengthen evidence about what works, refine their service delivery model, or make other modifications to better achieve the desired outcomes?

b. Can the government offer a multi-year contract (with relevant intermediate

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     milestones) to allow for outcomes measurement and increased evidence building? If not, would a pilot period be a viable way to adjust the service delivery model, incorporate participant feedback, and inform a longer–term contract?

    c. Are there broader policy reforms, waivers, or other changes to procedures, regulations, or laws which the government might consider modifying to increase the effectiveness of the service delivery model?

    d. Are the contracting provisions flexible enough to mitigate any impact on the services under contract created by future changes in policy or practice?

    e. Does the contracting structure allow the provider to expand programs that have generated evidence of success?

7. **Metrics**: What metrics are used to capture short–term process outputs and longer–term outcomes to track the success of the program?

    a. Do the government and human services providers have a shared agreement about the relevant metrics, how they will be collected, how they will be assessed, when they will be reviewed, and how they will be acted upon?

8. **Data**: What types of data can be shared between government and human services providers to track program participants, identify implementation challenges, and evaluate the results over the course of the service contract?

    a. Will real time administrative data be shared with human services providers?

    b. What data infrastructure or policies are necessary to allow for the real time sharing of administrative and other data?

    c. What data will human services providers share with the government? Do human services providers have the systems and processes to collect this data?

    d. Is the data collection (and cleaning) process conducive to tracking the key elements necessary to measure the implementation and results of the program?

9. **Shared Governance:** Is there a collaborative shared governance body in place that is empowered to regularly access key performance indicators, monitor performance, address any service delivery challenges, make relevant changes to implementation plans, update contract provisions, and/or modify regulations?

    a. Is there a process in place to address the impact of future changes to federal/state/local policy that could impact service provider's ability to meet the outcome goals or metrics?

    b. Is there a process in place to address the potential impact of future changes

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in the baseline incidence of an outcome across a target population that could make it more difficult for a provider to meet a contracted-for outcome metric?

10. **Continuous Improvement**: Do the structure of the project, the procurement process, and the contract provisions support continuous program improvement by the human services provider and the government?
    a. Does the budget include the costs of continuous quality and program improvement, such as adapting and improving services over time to meet changing participant and human services provider needs?
    b. If the budgeted funds do not include the costs of continuous program improvement, are there other public funds that can be blended or braided to support this function?
    c. If the publicly budgeted funds do not include the costs of continuous quality and program improvement, what other resources are available (including for supporting collaboration, enhanced analytics, or data sharing with similar programs)?

11. **Evidence-Building and Evaluation**: Does the project support performance monitoring, program evaluation, and other ways to build evidence about the effectiveness of the program?
    a. Is there a plan in place to build and strengthen the evidence base about what works for which target population(s) and under what conditions?
    b. How is the evaluation paid for? Does government cover all or most of the cost of the evaluation?
    c. If the government cannot provide adequate funding for an evaluation, what other resources can it make available for a program evaluation (including data, expertise, staff support, connections to outside partners, and access to third party sources of funding or support)?

Detailed Submission Instructions & Disclaimer
Include instructions on how to submit the RFI response. Insert any legal disclaimers about the non-binding nature of this request for information and that entities responding to this notice will not receive preference (or be excluded) in the RFP process. If possible, allow for response to be submitted electronically (via email or uploaded to a portal) rather than requiring the delivery of paper copies which may be burdensome for community stakeholders. As noted above, the RFI may take the form of verbal comments at a meeting rather than formal written responses.