

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

Urban Matters Pilot Program - Project Coordinator

RFP Issued: January 28, 2014

RFP Due: February 18, 2014 at Noon

Goal of the RFP

The Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh (URA) is soliciting proposals from individuals and organizations to serve as a Project Coordinator to assist with the design and development of a project-based summer program with high school age youth for its Urban Matters Pilot Program (UM). (See "Exhibit A" for program description and guidelines). The Project Coordinator will be hired as an independent contractor to work with URA staff, the selected neighborhood community organization, project teaching artist and other UM program stakeholders.

Background Information

The URA is the City of Pittsburgh's economic development agency. Our goals are to create jobs, increase the City's tax base and improve the vitality of businesses and neighborhoods, and the City's livability as a whole. The URA offers a variety of programs and financing products that range from assisting low-income clients to achieve homeownership to reclaiming brownfields for new development and helping communities reinvent themselves.

Program Description

Urban Matters is an arts- and design-based program designed to teach youths in Pittsburgh's distressed neighborhoods how to examine and communicate URA and other key civic processes in order to gain an understanding for themselves, and to be able to communicate them to their peers, community residents and other stakeholders. The goals are to:

1. Demystify urban policy and planning issues that impact their communities; and
2. Increase participation in decision-making processes that shape their communities.

Urban Matters is a pilot program of a larger URA initiative aimed to empower residents in low-income communities and historically under-served populations to participate in policy-making, planning, design, and development activities in their respective neighborhoods. Urban Matters will adopt much of the civic engagement methodology created by the Center of Urban Pedagogy (CUP). Through its Urban Investigations program, CUP engages young people between 15 and 18 years of age in after-school and summer programs, asking the basic question about how the city works and then answering it over the course of a summer or semester. From CUP:

“[Students] gain the skills to investigate their own communities. They gain access to the decision-makers that affect the world around them, and engage in active citizenship. Students learn how to creatively communicate their ideas through design. Project-based learning allows students to shine in multiple ways: from interviewing to illustration, from audio production to writing. Students see the city as the product of a decision-making landscape and are empowered to participate in it. The products that students create with a visual artist find real audiences and impact communities outside of the school in arts and social justice fields.”

You can visit the CUP website for more information about its methodology at www.welcometocup.org/projects/urbaninvestigations.

Program participants will make site visits and conduct interviews while working with URA staff and other partners to produce a visual representation of what they learned to their peers, community groups and other stakeholders. A teaching artist will be hired by the URA to work directly with the students. The final product could be a video, brochure, poster, website, etc.

RFP Timeline and Contacts

RFP Issued: January 28, 2014

RFP Due: Tuesday, February 18, 2014 at Noon

*Applicant Notification: Friday, February 28, 2014

Primary Contact: Karen Abrams - 412-255-6425; kabrams@ura.org

Inquiries Contact: LeTaj Tinker - 412-255-6689; ltinker@ura.org

Addenda Contact: If the applicant has an interest in or an intention of submitting a proposal, please contact LeTaj Tinker at ltinker@ura.org to ensure receipt of any changes that are made to this RFP. This in no way obligates the applicant to formally respond to the RFP.

*Applicant Selection: Only the selected applicant will be contacted. The selected applicant will be notified of their status by Friday, February 28, 2014.

Following this, the selected applicant will be required to attend an all day workshop on Wednesday, March 5, 2014.

Project Coordinator Role

The Project Coordinator will work as an independent contractor with the URA for approximately eight months, beginning in early March 2014 and ending late October 2014. The Coordinator's role will be to coordinate the activities of the UM-dedicated URA staff, teaching artist and community partner organization to ensure the final project is completed. The duties and responsibilities of each are outlined below:

Project Coordinator (in consultation with URA staff and UM Advisory Group)

- Develop curricular goals and content for Urban Matters project;
- Conduct background research for youth education projects;
- Coordinate meetings with project staff;
- Source materials and technology for classroom use;
- Report on meetings;
- Manage volunteers;
- Work with teaching artist on in-class activities;
- Aid in the production of curriculum guides with teaching artist;
- Aid in the production of final product with teaching artist;
- Plan and market presentation of final product to community stakeholders;
- Manage the evaluation, archiving and documentation of project; and
- Provide other operational support as needed.

URA

- Select guiding questions/topic;
- Conduct topic research;
- Conduct interviewee research;
- Develop interview list;
- Manage curriculum development;
- Arrange interviews;
- Manage the final product process;
- Write content;
- Art direct;
- Edit text;
- Bring in other collaborators as necessary; and
- Plan final presentation event.

Teaching Artist

- Conduct topic research;
- Develop curriculum;
- Develop activities;

- Lead project in-class; and
- Create final product.

Community Partner Organization

- Provide/recruit students (minimum of 10, but no more than 15);
- Provide classroom space with work tables;
- Provide meals and snacks;
- Provide secure storage space;
- Provide access to printing facilities;
- Provide computers and internet access;
- Manage attendance;
- Communicate with students' families; and
- Take on liability – insurance and waivers.

Since this is a pilot program, the Project Coordinator will also be required to participate in a one-day training workshop that will outline the UM pilot program dynamics. The UM pilot will include three months of preplanning work once a community partner is selected, and eight weeks of in-class work with project participants, and some time for project completion and final presentation preparation.

Compensation

The Project Coordinator will receive \$25,000 for approximately 35 weeks of work. Compensation structure will be determined.

The Project Coordinator will receive a 1099 from the URA.

RFP Selection Criteria

The URA is seeking a wide range of qualities from each applicant. The ideal candidate will meet most of the following qualifications:

- A strong commitment to Urban Matters work and to social justice;
- Work with distressed communities, communities of color, traditionally under-represented groups;
- Experience in visual media arts and/or design environments;
- Excellent verbal and interpersonal skills and ability to effectively communicate with people of varied backgrounds;
- Experience and/or interest in youth programming, specifically youths ages 14-18;
- Experience and/or interest in arts education;
- A high level of organization and attention to detail;
- Excellent computer skills, including Microsoft Office, Adobe Creative Suite a plus;
- Experience in social media particularly Facebook and Twitter; blogging a plus;

- Event planning and coordination; and
- The dedication and wherewithal to establish a long-term relationship with the URA for future projects, programs and events related to Urban Matters and other like-URA programming.

Selection Process

A selection committee made up of URA staff and members of the UM Advisory Group will review each proposal submitted and shall recommend a short list of applicants to be interviewed based upon their response to this Request for Proposals. Final selection of the applicant shall be made by the Urban Redevelopment Authority Board of Directors.

The URA intends to make a decision based upon information in the response to the RFP submitted by the applicant, performance in previous undertakings and other pertinent factors. The selected applicant will be chosen on the basis of applicant's qualifications and experience.

During the selection process, the URA reserves the right, where it may serve the URA's best interest, to request additional information or clarifications from applicants, or to allow corrections of errors or omissions. At the discretion of the URA, applicants submitting proposals may be requested to make oral presentations as part of the selection process.

The URA shall be the sole judge of which proposal best meets the selection criteria. The URA reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received, to waive any submission requirements contained within this RFP, or to waive any irregularities in any submitted proposal.

Proposal Submission

The proposal should be sent digitally to Karen Abrams, manager, Diversity and Community Affairs, at kabrams@ura.org, or one (1) hard copy of the proposal may be submitted to:

Karen Abrams
Manager, Diversity and Community Affairs
Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh
200 Ross Street, 12th Floor
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Inquiries

All inquiries related to this RFP are to be directed, in writing, to LeTaj Tinker, Urban Matters program intern, at ltinker@ura.org.

Closing Date

All responses must be received on or before Tuesday, February 18, 2014, at Noon.

Submission Requirements

Please complete and sign the Applicant Acknowledgement Form found in "Exhibit B".

Proposal Format

Please respond according to the following sections, clearly marking them accordingly. If you are unable to provide a response to a particular question, simply leave the section blank. Please do not provide any information other than what is specifically requested.

RFP Summary Page

Please include applicant's name and contact information.

Experience and Profile

Provide a brief profile of yourself or your organization including information regarding agencies for which you or your organization have provided similar services.

Biography of Assigned Principal Personnel

Provide a short biography of each person who will serve on the team that your organization will assign to work with the URA.

References

Provide three (3) references and include the reference's name, title, address and direct telephone number.

Primary Qualification

Provide a brief narrative that explains why you or your organization are best qualified to serve as the URA's Urban Matters Project Coordinator. Please limit your response to no more than one (1) page.

Additional Information

Please provide any other information which you believe is pertinent to the URA's consideration of you, as an individual applicant, or your organization. Please limit your response to this section to no more than two (2) pages.

Legal Information

URA shall have the right to verify the accuracy of all information submitted and to make such investigation, as it deems necessary, to determine the ability of a proposer to perform the obligations in the response.

URA reserves the right to reject any response where the available evidence or information does not satisfy it that the proposer is qualified to carry out properly the obligations of the response, is a person or firm of good reputation or character for strict, complete and faithful performance of business obligations, or if the proposer refuses to cooperate with and assist URA in the making of such investigation.

Miscellaneous

1. All proposals will be retained by URA. Rejected proposals will not be returned.
2. The applicant will not discriminate against or segregate any person or group of persons on any unlawful basis.
3. The URA shall be the sole judge as to which proposals best meet the selection criteria. The URA reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received, to waive any submission requirements contained within this RFP or to waive any irregularities in any submitted proposal.
4. It is the responsibility of all parties submitting responses to the RFP to make inquiry as to any Addenda issued and to ascertain prior to submitting a response that all Addenda have been received. All such Addenda shall become part of the RFP documents and all applicants shall be bound by such Addenda, whether or not received by the applicants. To ensure receipt of any addenda to the RFP, please email LeTaj Tinker for inclusion on the list at ltinker@ura.org.

Attached Exhibits

- A. [Urban Matters Program Guide](#)
- B. [Acknowledgement Form](#)