

ZEOS Program Description

ZEOS

Zero Energy for the Ocean State (ZEOS) Project Request for Proposals

Through this Request for Proposals (“RFP”), the Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation (“RIHousing”), the Rhode Island Office of Energy Resources (“OER”) and Rhode Island Energy, (“RI Energy”) (collectively, the “Program Partners”) seek proposals from qualified teams (“Project Teams” or “Project Team Members”) to design and construct affordable¹ energy efficient Zero Energy Building (“ZEB”) housing unit(s) to serve low-and moderate-income² (“LMI”) residents in Rhode Island.

Approximately \$1,524,000 of grant funding (subject to availability of funding) has been allocated by the Program Partners for the development of these units. Project proposals must include heat pump technologies and onsite (or if available community) solar in pursuit of Zero Energy Buildings status. The units include new construction and/or renovation projects as detailed in the Project Requirements and outlined Scope of Work.

A ZEB is an energy-efficient building, where, on a source energy basis, the actual annual delivered energy is less than or equal to the annual on-site renewable exported energy (based on the US Department of Energy’s ZEB definition³).

The Zero Energy for the Ocean State (“ZEOS”) program is the result of a collaborative approach by the Program Partners to expand ZEB housing to LMI sectors. The Program Partners seek demonstration projects that encompass four primary elements – design, explore, inform, and assess – meant to create a pathway for scaling ZEBs in LMI residential sectors as a means of reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

The program is in response to the recommendations included in the Rhode Island Zero Energy Task Force’s Zero Energy Building Pathway to 2035 white paper⁴. The white paper established a goal to create ZEB demonstration projects across building sectors. Grant funds are to be used for eligible hard costs that directly improve energy efficiency measures. ZEOS assisted projects must be completed within three years of commitment date or funds will be recaptured at the discretion of the Program Partners.

The ZEOS grant awards will be limited to \$18,200 per unit for 1-4 family developments and \$7,500 per unit for multifamily developments. The total award cannot exceed \$300,000 for any individual project. Buildings must qualify as ZEB (according to US Department of Energy’s ZEB definition) and participate in RI Energy’s Residential New Construction Program.

Projects must be located within Rhode Island and may include:

- 1-4 family new construction, or townhouses
- 1-4 family significant rehab, or townhouses
- Multi-family new construction
- Multi-family significant rehab

¹ In general, housing for which the occupant(s) is/are paying no more than 30 percent of their income for gross housing costs, including utilities.

² Low- and Moderate-Income Family: families whose [combined] income does not exceed 60 to 120 percent of the median family income for the area.

³ https://energy.gov/sites/prod/files/2015/09/f26/bto_common_definition_zero_energy_buildings_093015.pdf

⁴ https://www.nationalgridus.com/media/pronet/ri-ee-task-force/cm6459-ri-zne-white-paper-12_16.pdf