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McKee Administration issues request for proposals for R.I. Dept. of Health State Health Laboratories and additional private lab space

November 12, 2021 - Rhode Island



Rhode Island governor
Daniel McKee

Providence, RI The McKee Administration issued a request for proposals (RFP) seeking qualified entities to provide a site and develop a new facility for the Rhode Island Department of Health State Health Laboratories (RISHL) and additional private laboratory space. The RFP, issued by the Rhode Island Commerce Corp. on behalf of the state of Rhode Island, seeks qualified developers to propose projects that would advance the state's key public health goals and bolster the state's emerging biosciences sector.

"As we emerge from the current pandemic, it is so important that we make strategic investments in both the near-term recovery and the long-term economic and public health of the state," said governor Dan McKee. "Rhode Island is among the leaders nationally in testing, vaccination rate, and a safe economic reopening. This effort would simultaneously advance our important public health goals and catalyze significant economic development opportunities."

"The state was in need of a new laboratory building prior to the COVID-19 crisis and the pandemic has only emphasized the criticality of being prepared for increasingly complex threats to public health, including future pandemics that we know are inevitable," said R.I. Department of Health director Nicole Alexander-Scott, M.D., M.P.H. "A new health lab is needed to keep pace with emerging scientific technologies, deliver state-of-the art public health services and testing, and to better protect all Rhode Islanders."

The current state health lab suffers from significant challenges including aging infrastructure, substandard life-safety systems, and a building design unfit for a modern laboratory engaged in collaborative, competitive research.

This RFP provides an opportunity for parties to propose a suitable site that they own or control or for parties to propose a site within the I-195 Redevelopment District or another such publicly owned site. The RISHL will require approximately 80,000 s/f. Respondents must include a minimum of 25,000 s/f of additional laboratory space for private bioscience tenancies, although preference will be given to proposals that exceed this minimum (e.g., by proposing 50,000 or 100,000 s/f). Applicant teams must have experience developing similar laboratory buildings. The RFP process will consist of two (2) rounds. Those who are selected as finalists will be eligible to participate in the second round, which will involve a competitive negotiation process.

Interested parties may secure a copy of this RFP at www.commerceri.com or www.ridop.ri.gov or from the corporation at 315 Iron Horse Way, Suite 101, Providence, RI 02908. Responses to the first round of this RFP are due no later than December 10, 2021, at 2 p.m. An online informational session will be held on Monday, November 15, 2021, at 12 p.m. Registration information is provided in the RFP. No phone calls or late submissions will be accepted.

"We need to move beyond worrying about our health lab's state of repair and instead ensure that this crucial facility is state of the art. It's time to develop a new, high quality State health lab to meet Rhode Islanders' public health needs going forward," said Rhode Island secretary of commerce Stefan Pryor. "Building this facility presents another opportunity: the State's project can serve as the

anchor for a larger lab complex that offers needed space to commercial and institutional tenants. There is significant demand for such private lab space in our state and this complex therefore has the potential to enable growth in Rhode Island's increasingly vibrant bioscience sector."

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