NEW YORK STATE OF OPPORTUNITY. | Office for People With Developmental Disabilities

Integrated Supportive Housing 2026-27 State Fiscal Year Requests For Applications for Conditional Support Letters

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NYS Office for People With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) Capital Funding Opportunity -- Requests for Applications (RFA) for Conditional Support Letters

SECTION 1: Introduction

The OPWDD Integrated Supportive Housing (ISH) program aligns with New York State's initiatives to increase the number of affordable/supportive housing statewide. This program encourages and supports the development of new housing opportunities for people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities (I/DD) who can benefit from an independent, non-certified community-integrated residential setting. The OPWDD ISH program support includes either: (1) solely rental subsidies and supportive services once in operation; or (2) rental subsidies and capital funding (or financial development source).

The ISH program began in 2012 through a partnership with NYS Homes and Community Renewal (HCR). Through this partnership, developers of affordable housing opportunities receive application scoring incentives for partnering with an OPWDD provider agency (also known as the housing "Support Agency") and giving tenant preference for people served by OPWDD (see the section later in this document, entitled "*Role of the Provider as the Housing Support Agency*" for more information).

Under this program, OPWDD will provide funding for up to 25% of the total number of units which offer *preference in tenant selection to* individuals eligible to receive OPWDD services.

During this ISH round, in addition to capital requests, projects can specifically request solely ongoing rental subsidies to be used in a capital project application. For the projects in which OPWDD capital funding is <u>not</u> requested, OPWDD can assess whether it will issue a conditional support letter to provide ongoing rental subsidies throughout the regulatory period of the project. OPWDD's conditional support letter may be submitted to other governmental capital funding programs to demonstrate commitments for special populations units, similar to the conditional support letters for the Empire State Supportive Housing Initiative (ESSHI) program. All OPWDD programmatic requirements outlined in this RFA must be met for OPWDD to consider issuing a conditional support letter for these projects.

If a project team holds a conditional support letter for solely rental subsidies from a previous ISH application round, and the team now seeks to receive capital funding as well, the original support will be automatically revoked and deemed canceled, null and void.

Each applicant will be required to demonstrate that their proposal is consistent with OPWDD service provision expectations as well as any fiscal expectations of the primary capital funding entity. As part of this requirement, each project team is required to have a Technical Assistance session with OPWDD Home and Community Living staff before applying for their project. See section 1.7 for additional information.

Supportive Housing

Supportive Housing is a combination of housing subsidies and housing related supports designed to ensure the successful tenancy of a person residing in one of the subsidized units.

OPWDD's conditional support of a project automatically includes the required housing subsidy based upon rent levels set at the 50% Area Median Income (AMI) level for the county where the project is located and approved Home and Community Based Waiver services appropriate for the specific tenant. Applicants can apply for any number of eligible units up to 25% of the total number of units in the project; aside from this threshold, there is no minimum or maximum number of units. If there are special populations units requested for other Medicaid recipients, including, but not limited to,

individuals receiving services from the NYS Office of Mental Health, NYS Department of Health, and NYS Office of Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services, the combined number of special populations units is limited to 30% of the total number of units.

OPWDD will limit the number of units that are "subsidy only" (i.e., not requesting OPWDD capital) that it supports in a given state fiscal year to no more than sixty (60) units total for all "subsidy only" supported projects.

Additionally, capital funding can be requested for the project. Depending upon the number and quality of applications received, up to $15 million in capital funding will be allocated to support projects with preferential tenancy units for people with I/DD under the various multi-family project funding rounds in the 2026-27 state fiscal year.

The terms "application(s)" and "proposal(s)" are used interchangeably throughout this document.

All applications must be submitted by e-mail by **12:00 pm** on the date listed in Section 2.2 of this document. The application deadline is firm as to date and hour. **Applicants are advised to make early submission of their applications to avoid risks of ineligibility resulting from unanticipated delays or other computer problems.** OPWDD will confirm receipt of the application by email; if the team does not receive confirmation within three business hours of receipt, immediately contact 518-473-1973.

1.1 Funding Availability

OPWDD provides capital and rental subsidy funding to projects which it supports, and which also obtain HCR support under the Open Window RFP (4% LIHTC), the "HCR Multifamily Finance 9% RFP", or other public funding streams not managed by HCR (e.g., NYC Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) or Homeless Housing Assistance Program (HHAP)). It also provides rental subsidy funding to projects applying for a non-capital/subsidy only ISH award. As such, this funding must be linked to a housing development project that will create new housing units through new construction, the adaptive reuse of non-residential space, or the repurposing of vacant residential units. The project must be sufficiently developed to reasonably expect to meet HCR or other funder requirements for support (see section 1.6 Project Readiness). Any project which does not receive funding from one of these sources, must otherwise be funded through another HCR/HPD capital program such as the "Pro Housing Community Programs" identified in Governor Hochul's Executive Order number 30. A project with only this alternate HCR/HPD/HHAP funding is only eligible to apply for an OPWDD Housing Subsidy conditional support letter and the project is not eligible to receive OPWDD capital funding.

This OPWDD RFA allows OPWDD to issue conditional support letters which can be used as part of an application to the project's proposed primary funding entity as part of its RFP process. A conditional support letter from this RFA is not transferable to any other funding mechanism or funding round. For example, if a project receives an OPWDD conditional support letter that is submitted with its application to HCR for the 9% round and is not funded by HCR, a separate application must be submitted to OPWDD to request funds for HCR's 4% round or another funding mechanism.

Any projects which OPWDD elects to support will receive a conditional support letter outlining its level of support (e.g., rental subsidy only or capital award and rental subsidy) which must be included in the project's application to HCR, or another funder such as HPD, as applicable. Please note, that the issuance of a conditional support letter does not equate to a commitment to support the project; it is a preliminary approval only.

It should be noted that, for projects designating preference in tenant selection to individuals with an I/DD, HCR requires a written conditional support letter from OPWDD which both demonstrates

OPWDD's support for the project and designates any applicable capital funding that is awarded. If your project does not receive an OPWDD conditional support letter because it was not selected for funding, an application was not submitted to OPWDD, or any other reason, it is recommended that the project not include reference to OPWDD preferential tenancy units in the HCR application. Submitting an HCR proposal without an OPWDD conditional support letter may negatively impact your project scoring and will likely cause your project to be denied by HCR. See the HCR application guidelines for more information.

Capital funding from this RFA is not available from OPWDD to a project which has already received primary funding approval from HCR, for example, in the previous year's HCR Multifamily Finance 9% RFP round.

Other government capital funding program agencies should be contacted directly with questions regarding the specific requirements of their funding.

1.2 Term of Award

The capital funds awarded in response to this RFA will typically be transferred and included as part of the applicable HCR agency's subsidy loan, or transferred through another government payment mechanism, and will only be provided at the time of conversion from construction financing to permanent financing; however, the earliest a transfer of funding for projects that receive OPWDD support under this RFA will be April 1, 2028. OPWDD reserves the right to provide funding through debt service or another mechanism, if needed. The transfer of funding to other governmental funding mechanisms, such as HPD or HHAP, will be at OPWDD's sole discretion.

OPWDD will also award ongoing rental subsidies through its Housing Subsidy program if rental subsidies are not identified through another source. If the project obtains housing subsidies through another mechanism for any or all of the OPWDD units (e.g., through ESSHI or HUD/Section 8), then the OPWDD housing subsidy will not be available for those units. The OPWDD housing subsidy is administered by the applicant as the housing services provider for the project, which must be authorized by OPWDD to administer housing subsidy funds.

OPWDD's funding, both solely for rental supports and capital funding with rental supports, is protected by the terms and conditions of the regulatory agreement associated with the project as well as other OPWDD-specific requirements outlined in this RFA and other project documents. The regulatory period is typically at least thirty (30) years.

1.3 Eligible Applicants

Only OPWDD providers in good standing can be awarded a conditional support letter from OPWDD for ISH projects. This includes, but is not limited to, each applicant passing a due diligence review comprising of fiscal and programmatic reviews of the provider's OPWDD and/or Medicaid-funded programs. Applicants who fail this portion of the review process will have their proposals disqualified from funding consideration.

Threshold items include, but are not limited to, demonstrated Financial Integrity and Programmatic Quality which includes:

1. The provider will be disqualified if it is on "Early Alert" at the time that the application is submitted, or if it has been on "Early Alert" at any time during the twelve (12) months prior to the issuance date of this RFA.
2. The provider must be current in the submission of Consolidated Fiscal Reports (CFRs) at the time that the application is submitted. Applicants must provide the most recent CFR schedule

2A for the purpose of demonstrating overall financial viability. Applicants may be asked to provide an interim CFR, including CFR schedule 2A, and interim financial statements. OPWDD retains the right to make the final determination of financial viability, including after reviewing the provider's fiscal information/documents during the application evaluation process.

3. Any issues identified by OPWDD or another governmental agency during a fiscal audit, which remain unresolved in the twelve (12) months prior to the issuance of this RFA.
4. An agency that has more than one (1) unresolved Adverse Action upon submission of application will not be considered.
5. OPWDD will review applicant's history of compliance for the last three (3) years and reserves the right to disqualify any agency that has demonstrated significant issues with performance during that period. As part of the ongoing performance issues assessment, OPWDD will consider the following items:
    - The number of Adverse Actions is considered in comparison with the number of sites/programs managed by the provider.
    - Any fines, Immediate Jeopardy declarations, systemic issues or other complaints.
    - If the Housing Services provider has withdrawn from an existing Integrated Supportive Housing project. This action will be viewed as disqualifying for any ISH application round for the three-year period from the date the RFA closes.
6. Any other information that OPWDD finds that may affect the provider's ability to fulfill its obligations.

It should be noted that any application which receives an OPWDD conditional support letter requires that the provider remain in good standing throughout the entire application and development process as well as for the entire length of the regulatory period, which is often thirty (30) years or longer.

Projects may be constructed by the OPWDD provider submitting this application, or in partnership with a private or not-for-profit housing developer.

It is important to note that although a partnership with a housing developer may exist, the official applicant of this RFA must be the not-for-profit OPWDD provider organization that will serve as the housing Support Agency for the project, not the housing development partner. Eligible applicants partnering with a housing developer should identify their capital project team.

1.4 Eligible Target Population

OPWDD is responsible for determining whether an individual is eligible for services based upon the definition of "developmental disability" in NY Mental Hygiene Law §1.03(22) and in accordance with OPWDD's eligibility advisory guidelines. For the purposes of this RFA, a person must be determined eligible for services by OPWDD and be at least eighteen (18) years old. It should be noted that an ISH project cannot be dedicated to a sub-population of individuals eligible for OPWDD services (e.g., only people on the Autism Spectrum or those with Down Syndrome).

If the proposed OPWDD Units will be part of a senior housing project (e.g., available to people 55 and older or 62 and older), additional information will be required from the project team (see pages 13-14 for requirements).

The applicant should work with the relevant OPWDD Regional Field Office to identify the specific housing needs of the local population. In an effort to assist OPWDD's long term goals to support marginalized communities, ISH project's that actively engage and support potential tenants with a variety of backgrounds, including but not limited to, those with diverse racial, ethnic, cultural, linguistic, LGBTQIA+ and other identity groups among people with developmental disabilities may receive priority.

1.5 Reporting and Operating Requirements

Provider agencies participating in the ISH program play a critical role as the housing Support Agency (SA). Expected responsibilities include, but are not limited to, the following areas:

- The SA is expected to develop and maintain a strong relationship with the developer throughout the entire process (i.e., from the initial application through the end of the regulatory period).

- ISH units are expected to be non-certified housing environments and, as such, no unit will be certified at the time of initial occupancy by a resident; potential tenants for the OPWDD units should be expected to be able to live independently for the foreseeable future. On a case by case basis, OPWDD will consider certification of a unit if the person already residing in the OPWDD unit requires a higher level of care to remain in his/her current living arrangement (i.e., to allow for continuity of care). Under this circumstance, the ISH unit will only be certified at a less than 24/7 level (i.e., Supportive Individualized Residential Alternative (IRA)). If the person for whom the apartment was certified moves out of the unit, the unit will once again become non-certified.

- During the rent-up period of the project, as well as when a unit becomes vacant after the initial rent-up, the SA will work with its respective OPWDD Regional Field Office (RFO) to identify individuals who can be appropriately served in an ISH residential setting; prospective tenants can be individuals served by the SA for their non-housing supports and services or by other OPWDD approved providers. Additionally, the SA is expected to include the Care Coordination Organizations (CCOs) within their OPWDD region in the tenant selection process.

- The SA is also expected to assist with the process of transferring rental subsidies (OPWDD, HUD, etc.) to the appropriate authority (i.e., pay the rent) and work in collaboration with the landlord/property manager to resolve any tenancy issues. This includes ensuring that the individual pay their share of the rent in a timely manner.

- The SA is expected to remain in “Good Standing” (see Section 1.3) throughout the Regulatory Period of the project.

- Project teams are expected to coordinate with the respective OPWDD Regional Field Office (RFO) around any changes to the project’s structure from the approved project design. This includes, but is not limited to, changes in rental amounts, changes in ownership structure, and adjustments to the design of units (e.g., upgrades).

- Project teams will agree to and fully cooperate with potential project reviews over the lifespan of the assigned Regulatory Period. This may include desk audits of project finances, reviews of tenant files and on-site visits.

Additional requirements of the SA are identified in the Housing Services Agreement (HSA). A sample template of this document is included as an attachment to this RFA. The HSA must be signed and executed by all relevant parties as soon as reasonably possible and at least 60 days in advance of the project conducting its real estate closing on construction financing. Additionally, OPWDD should be notified as soon as possible when discussions around the Real Estate Closing for Construction Financing are scheduled to begin.

Residents of ISH units are not required to receive OPWDD non-housing supports and services from the SA. The individual can receive housing supports from the SA and still choose to receive other supports

and services from any other qualified OPWDD provider or self-direct their services, without jeopardizing their tenancy.

OPWDD may require periodic reporting to confirm the names of residents of the OPWDD units at specific points in time. The requested information may include TABS IDs, Medicaid ID numbers (CIN) and where the resident formerly lived along with other information as required by OPWDD.

1.6 Project Readiness

When the application is submitted, the expectation is that the project being proposed is near "shovel readiness." Although OPWDD's application is due sooner than most other capital funding applications, OPWDD is also expecting that the project has all elements in place so that construction can begin soon after any funding award. This includes having a specific project site identified and secured in order to close on Construction Financing within 12 months of receipt an ISH support letter. The "Project Readiness" requirement is also applicable to projects applying for funding through the HFA 4%RFP, NYC's HPD, or any other public/government source. Priority will be given to projects that expect to close within twelve (12) months of the application due date. If a project fails to close as represented in its application under its "Project Readiness" timeline, the failure could potentially result in the revocation of an OPWDD ISH conditional support letter.

1.7 Technical Assistance

Prior to a provider agency's submission of an ISH application to OPWDD, the project team must contact the Office of Home and Community Living to schedule a Technical Assistance (TA) call, even if the agency has previously participated in an ISH project. OPWDD staff will review a brief (one page) overview of the project and provide comments on any aspects of the project that may need to be revised prior to formally submitting the application to OPWDD in response to this RFA. To schedule a TA call, please contact the Office of Home and Community Living at 518-473-1973 or email the unit mailbox at housing.initiatives@opwdd.ny.gov . **Failure to receive technical assistance prior to submitting an application will result in the disqualification of your application**.

SECTION 2: General Requirements

2.1 Desired Outcomes and Program Requirements

The intended outcomes for this RFA are to:

- Increase the availability of supportive housing to provide less restrictive housing options for people currently residing in certified residential settings as well as people who are unable to locate other affordable housing opportunities;
- Increase the availability of supportive housing in locations that allow people full access to the community and which do not create isolating settings for the people living there;
- Provide housing stability for individuals receiving OPWDD services, in a supportive environment, to increase the person's self-sufficiency; and
- Provide housing to underserved areas of the state.

2.2 Key Events/Timeline

RFA Release Date	June 16 , 2026
Proposals Due (must be received by 12:00 pm)	July 17, 2026

2.3 Questions and Answers

Written questions regarding this RFA will be accepted until June 25, 2026 at 4:00 pm. No telephone inquiries will be accepted. Answers to all questions will distributed by July 3, 2026 to all project teams who have requested a TA call (see section 1.7 above). Questions may be submitted via email to: housing.initiatives@opwdd.ny.gov.

All questions must be typed and include the RFA section the question is about. Along with the question(s), provide your name, organization, mailing address and email. No questions regarding the ISH application process will be answered outside of the required Technical Assistance call and the formal Question and Answer period.

2.4 Selection Criteria

All proposals will be reviewed by OPWDD staff including, but not limited to, representatives from Central Office and the appropriate Regional Office.

Proposal Completeness Review

After the proposal opening, each proposal will be screened for completeness and conformance with the RFA requirements. Incomplete responses, the failure to complete as specified, and/or the failure to provide any of the required functionality may result in a proposal being deemed non-responsive and the disqualification of the application, and the applicant will be notified accordingly. Only proposals that pass the Minimum Qualifications Evaluation will proceed to the Technical Evaluation.

Due Diligence Review

Each OPWDD provider applying for ISH funding, whether rental subsidy only or capital with rental subsidy, will be subject to a Due Diligence review (see section 1.3 for more information). Feedback will be solicited in the areas of Consolidated Fiscal Reporting, Office of Audit Services, Division of Quality Improvement, and any other areas that may be deemed necessary in order to attain an accurate representation of the provider's fiscal and programmatic strength and possible weaknesses prior to awarding funding. Applicants who receive a negative Due Diligence review in one or more areas may be disqualified from funding consideration.

Minimum Qualifications Evaluation

Proposals submitted by applicants will be evaluated on a Pass/Fail basis to determine whether they satisfy the Minimum Qualifications identified in this document. Proposals that fail to meet the minimum qualifications will be deemed non-responsive, will not be further evaluated, and the applicant will be notified accordingly. Passing proposals next proceed to the Technical and Financial Evaluations. Applicants may still be disqualified if it is later determined that the applicant did not meet all of the Minimum Qualifications and should not have qualified to move on to the Technical and Financial Evaluations stage. The following are the minimum qualifications for this application:

a. Applicant is an approved OPWDD Service Provider.

b. Applicant is a provider in good standing as identified in section 1.3 above.

c. The percentage of Integrated Supportive Housing units for people with I/DD is at or below 25% of the total units in the project. As a reminder, units are expected to be dispersed throughout

the entire project; any deviation from this expectation needs to be fully explained in the application and may not be accepted by the scoring team.

d. The percentage of combined Integrated Supportive Housing units for people with special needs (i.e., I/DD, SMI, SUD, etc.) is at or below 30% of the total units in the project. As noted above, units are expected to be dispersed throughout the entire project; any deviation from this expectation needs to be fully explained in the application and may not be accepted by the scoring team.

e. Application is received on or before the proposal due date in section 2.2.

f. All required sections of the application are complete, including the required cover sheet and a copy of the Applicant's ESSHI application (if applicable).

g. Application meets formatting requirements.

Proposals that have not been disqualified during the above reviews will be independently reviewed and evaluated by representatives using an objective review process, with computed scores based on the following criteria:

Scoring Criteria Category	Maximum Number of Points Available
Applicant Experience	**20**
Project Features/Location	**35**
Need	**10**
Project Budget	**10**
Services Provided, Integration, and Individual Choice	**25**
TOTAL	**100**

- **Applicant Experience:** This section will require applicants to provide a detailed overview of their experience with supports, services and procedures related to Integrated Supportive Housing projects. These include, but are not limited to, experience with overseeing affordable housing development, providing services to people with I/DD in non-certified residential settings, and administering rental subsidy payments and providing other housing related services. Applicants will be asked to provide recent examples of their experience. If the applicant is working with a developer or consultant, they will be required to detail their experience with developing affordable and supportive housing.

- **Project Features/Location:** Applicants will be required to provide an overview of all of the pertinent features of the project, including the safety of the location, the total number of units, the total number of supportive housing units. OPWDD will assess this section to assure that the project is located on a site that is safe and within a reasonable distance of community-based features and public transportation and that the number of supportive housing units are within OPWDD's requirements (≤25% of the total project). The applicant will also need to describe in detail how housing related services will be provided to people served by OPWDD, how rental payments will be administered, and how the agency will handle any tenancy issues that may arise. Additionally, applicants will need to describe how the project does not create an isolating setting and how tenants will be able to access the community around the project site such as via public transportation, particularly if they do not have access to a vehicle or need to travel somewhere during non-peak periods (e.g., nights and weekends).

- **Need**: Applicants will need to document the need for supportive/affordable housing for the

OPWDD supported population within the County in which the project is located. Applicants should work with their respective OPWDD RFO to obtain data on the number of housing subsidy requests and OPWDD-eligible individuals interested in living independently in that area.

- **Project Budget:** Applicants will be required to provide a narrative overview of the project budget, along with a line-item development budget detailing the total project costs, total capital commitment requested from OPWDD (which should also be included on the cover sheet), and the development cost per unit. Agencies will also need to provide figures for the anticipated rents of the supportive housing units and the percentage of project county's AMI that was used to calculate the rent. OPWDD will assess these figures to determine the reasonableness and feasibility of the budget. It should be noted that OPWDD housing subsidies are not covered by an automatic escalator and any increase to the rent level for the OPWDD units must be requested from, and approved by, OPWDD at least sixty (60) days in advance of new leases being issued.

- **Services Provided, Integration and Individual Choice:** Applicants will be required to describe in detail all the *non-housing* services they intend to offer once the project is operational (NOTE: These should not include services covered under the HCBS Waiver). Applicants will be required to provide a detailed narrative on the intended target population of the project (e.g., people leaving certified residential settings, people aging out of residential schools), any outreach/marketing methods that will be used to solicit tenant referrals, and information on how the supportive housing units will be integrated throughout the project (i.e., not clustered in one section of the project). Applicants will also need to provide attestations that they will work with their respective RFO on referrals and that tenants of the supportive housing units will have the freedom to receive non-housing services from any OPWDD-approved service provider they choose. Additionally, applicants will be required to describe how the project proposes to serve/assist underserved areas of NYS (please see Section 3: Application Instruction Requirements for more information).

For further information on selection criteria see Section 3: Application Instructions Requirements

All applications will be reviewed and scored by OPWDD's Central Office and staff from the respective Regional Field Office of the project location. Awards will be based on the overall score of the proposal, funding availability and regional priorities.

An applicant's past and current performance in State programs and contracts, will be considered in reviewing, rating, and ranking its application. OPWDD reserves the right not to issue an award to any applicant if it has been determined that the applicant is not in compliance with existing State contracts and has not taken satisfactory steps to remedy such non-compliance. When evaluating applications, OPWDD will take into consideration its experiences with a project's development team (including the project owner, housing SA, developer and/or housing consultant) on previously-awarded projects, including, but not limited to, projects that were delivered with significant delays, cost increases, changes in project scope from what was presented at the time of application, change in role/involvement in a project (i.e. choosing to discontinue housing services at an operational ISH project) or other project modifications which would have impacted the scoring for that project.

OPWDD reserves the right to award funds to achieve the objectives of the State's overall Housing Initiative for supportive housing, including by geographic region to reach underserved areas. OPWDD also reserves the right to receive feedback from other public entities within NYS (e.g., NYS HCR, NYC HPD, local authorities) on the performance of applicants in other affordable/supportive housing projects. Negative feedback may have an impact on a project's ability to receive an ISH award.

2.5 OPWDD Rights

OPWDD reserves the right to:

1. Place a monetary cap on the funding amount made in each contract award, make awards for less than the amount requested, or up to the maximum unit amounts specified in the RFA.

2. Change any of the scheduled dates stated in this application document.

3. Request all bidders who submitted proposals to present supplemental information clarifying their proposal either in writing or by formal presentation.

4. Require bidders demonstrate, to the satisfaction of OPWDD, any feature(s) present as a part of their proposal which may include an oral presentation of their proposal and may be considered in the evaluation of the proposal.

5. Direct all bidders who submitted proposals to prepare modifications addressing amendments to this document and / or amend any part of this application document with notification to all bidders. These actions are without liability to any bidder or other party, for expenses incurred in the preparation of any proposals or modifications submitted in response to this application process.

6. Make funding decisions that maximize compliance with and address the identified outcomes of this application.

7. Eliminate any requirements outlined in this document which are unmet by all applicants, upon notice to all parties that submitted proposals.

8. Waive procedural technicalities, or modify minor irregularities, in proposals received, after notification to the bidder involved.

9. Correct arithmetic errors in any proposal, or make typographical corrections to proposal, with concurrence of the applicant.

10. Make awards to more than one applicant.

11. Fund any or all proposals received in response to this application round. However, issuance of this document does not commit the OPWDD to fund any or all proposals. The OPWDD can reject any and all proposals submitted and reserves the right to withdraw or postpone this application process, without notice, and without liability, to any bidder, or other party, for expenses incurred in the preparation of any proposals submitted in response to this funding opportunity and may exercise these rights at any time.

12. Awardees may be requested to provide additional budget and program information for the final award agreements.

13. Make additional awards based on the remaining proposals submitted in response to this RFA and/or to provide additional funding to awardees if additional funds become available.

14. Make inquiries of third parties, including but not limited to bidders' references, with regard to the applicants' experience, or other matters deemed relevant to the proposal by the OPWDD. By submitting a proposal in response to this funding opportunity, the applicant gives its consent to any inquiry made by the OPWDD.

15. Negotiate with the selected bidder(s) prior to contract award.

16. Require that all proposals be held valid for a minimum of one hundred eighty (180) days from the closing date for receipt of proposals, unless otherwise expressly provided for in

writing.

17. Require awardees to participate in a formal evaluation of the program to be developed by OPWDD. Awardees may be required to collect data for these purposes. The evaluation design will maintain confidentiality of participants and recognize practical constraints of collecting this kind of information.

18. Consider statewide distribution and regional distribution within New York City, in evaluating proposals.

19. Provide letters of conditional support to projects based on meeting the objectives outlined in this document and OPWDD's overall supportive housing goals.

20. The right to withdraw the conditional letter of support if there has been a change of circumstances since the submission of the conditional letter of support by OPWDD.

21. Deny issuing a conditional support letter due to a negative review in the fiscal and/or programmatic areas of the required Due Diligence review.

22. Deny issuing support letters due to problems with the overall feasibility of the project or the provider.

SECTION 3: Application Instruction Requirements

The entire OPWDD Integrated Supportive Housing application, along with the completed cover sheet and ESSHI application (if applicable), must be submitted directly to OPWDD's Office of Home and Community Living to the following email address, Housing.initiatives@opwdd.ny.gov in the timeframes identified in section 2.2 of this application.

PROGRAM SPECIFIC INFORMATION

If your agency is intending on, or has already applied for, service and operating funding through ESSHI, then you must inform OPWDD's Program Implementation, Office of Home and Community Living in writing and submit it along with this application for Integrated Supportive Housing (ISH) capital. Failure to do so may result in an application not being considered for ISH funding, reconsidered or denied.

Additionally, awarded applicants must adhere to the requirements of a provider performing the role of a Housing Support Agency (SA).

Expected responsibilities include, but are not limited to, the following areas:

- The SA is expected to develop and maintain a strong relationship with the developer throughout the entire process (i.e., from the initial application through the end of the regulatory period which is typically thirty (30) years or more).
- During the rent-up period of the project, the SA will work with its respective OPWDD Developmental Disability Regional Field Office (RFO) to identify individuals who can be appropriately served in an ISH residential setting; prospective tenants can be individuals served by the SA for their non-housing supports and services or by other OPWDD approved providers. The RFO has the right to utilize any percentage of the units for people at high or emergency need for housing who are able to live in a non-certified setting with appropriate supports.
- When units become vacant, the SA will work with the RFO to identify potential replacement tenants. In addition, the SA will conduct outreach and marketing activities to maintain a waitlist of potential replacement tenants.

- The SA is also expected to assist with the process of transferring rental subsidies (OPWDD, HUD, etc.) to the appropriate authority (i.e., pay the rent) and work in collaboration with the landlord/property manager to resolve any tenancy issues.
- As mentioned in the "OPWDD Expectations and Requirements" section, residents of ISH units are not required to receive OPWDD *non-housing* supports and services from the SA. The individual can receive housing supports from the SA and still choose to receive other supports and services from any other qualified OPWDD service provider. ISH units are expected to be non-certified housing environments and, as such, no unit will be certified at the time of initial occupancy by a resident. On a case by case basis, OPWDD will consider certification of a unit if the person already residing in the OPWDD unit requires a higher level of care to remain in his/her current living arrangement (i.e., to allow for continuity of care). Under this circumstance, the ISH unit will only be certified at a less than 24/7 level (i.e., Supportive IRA). If the person for whom the apartment was certified moves out of the unit, the unit will once again become non-certified.

The items below identify how information will be scored.

The " ISH RFA Response Ssheet" is the required format to record responses to the required sections of the application. Each section has a character limit (including spaces and punctuation).If a particular question does not apply to your project use "Not Applicable" in the response section for that question. Applicants may only use the respective response section to provide answers to the required areas and cannot utilize other sections as "overflow" space. Failure to adhere to the formatting requirements may result in the application being removed from funding consideration.
NOTE: The Rating Factor Sections and Sub-Sections serve as the framework for the minimum information required in your agency's ISH application. OPWDD will be looking for additional information that makes projects "stand out," such as projects located in emerging areas of (re)development, projects that address a need for affordable housing in a certain area, or factors that contribute to a project sustaining its appeal 10-15 years after its opening date.

Section I: Experience (20 Points)– In this section, outline the experience relevant to this project of both your agency and, if applicable, the housing developer with whom you have partnered. Please include specific project/site names, data, and time periods to support claims made in this section.

1. Describe any ISH projects that the SA has participated in, along with the project's name, address, number of units for people served by OPWDD, and if the project is currently operational. If it is no longer operational, the reason it is no longer operational.

2. Describe any experience the SA has in providing housing and non-housing services for people with I/DD, including a brief overview of the services provided, the length of time they have been offered and information on the total number of people served.

3. Describe any experience the SA has in providing services in non-certified settings, including any experience with coordinating services in apartments, houses, and other non-certified sites, and administering housing subsidies through ISS and/or Self Direction.

4. If the Support Agency has ever appeared on the OPWDD Early Alert list, indicate the time period that they appeared on the list and what corrective actions were taken to remove the Early Alert designation. This response will be reviewed by OPWDD's Division of Quality Improvement and Performance Management for accuracy.

5. Provide information regarding the developer's experience in completing projects funded through Housing Tax Credit, including their most recent application for either the Multifamily Housing 9% RFP, the HFA4% RFP, or NYC Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) application and information on projects that were successfully funded and developed.

6. Provide information regarding the developer's experience in developing projects with a special needs component including the project location, target population served, service provider partnership, and the total number of units given tenant preference.

7. Provide information regarding any experience the developer has in developing other projects in the region where they plan to build, including a description of the project(s).

8. Does the project have site control and/or approval to build on the desired site? Include information on permits and variances that have been filed and approved, information on environmental reviews conducted by NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, and other pertinent information regarding site approval. If your project involves the rehabilitation of a currently standing structure, provide information on what pre-construction steps will need to be taken (e.g., asbestos abatement, roof repairs, etc.) with an estimated timeline for these steps and/or impact on the overall project development.

9. Comment on any issues with previously awarded projects, including, but not limited to, projects that were delivered with significant delays, cost increases, changes in project scope from what was presented at the time of application, or other project modifications which would have impacted the scoring for that project. These comments should apply to the developer and the SA.

10. Provide information demonstrating that the SA is fiscally viable according to its state fiscal year 2024-25 Consolidated Fiscal Report (CFR). This should include, at a minimum, the total annual revenue and other relevant information. Additionally, the applicant should provide an attestation to support this claim (e.g., As demonstrated in the CFR for year 20XX, the agency had a surplus of $XXX). This information will be verified through OPWDD's CFR unit.

Section II: Project Features (35 Points) – Describe your proposed project. Include specific information on the number of total units and the number of ISH units, the proximity of the site to necessary community features, and information on the housing related services provided in the ISH units. Include a site map, if one is available. At a minimum, be sure to comment on the following items (additional information is encouraged):

1. Provide information regarding the transportation that is available to the proposed project, focusing on its proximity to existing public transportation lines, the likelihood of having routes diverted (if needed), the presence of bus stop shelters at the apartment complex, etc. Additionally, provide information on transportation accessibility during non-peak times (e.g., nights and weekends).

2. Provide information regarding community accessibility, focusing on the ease in which a resident can access shopping areas, work opportunities, places of worship, libraries, and other public facilities, etc. List the community activities and the proximity to the project site. OPWDD will verify the walkability of the proposed project using walkscore.com. Additionally, comment on the overall walkability of the project site by highlighting areas such as sidewalks, curb cuts and designated street crossings. If possible, describe any features within the project's area that may assist someone with an ambulatory-related disability access the community.

3. Describe the proximity of the project site to hospitals, emergency medical services, police stations and fire stations; include actual distances from each of these services.

4. Describe the exterior features, including the availability of parking, sidewalks, or easy access from the buildings to main public streets.

5. Provide information regarding any features that would make the project uniquely attractive in terms of building a community (e.g., located in an economic redevelopment zone, close to emerging job opportunities, part of a residential/commercial investment area, etc.).

6. Describe any procedures/protocols the agency has in place to address tenancy issues as soon as they arise, including information on procedures that will be enforced in order to resolve tenancy issues and any safeguards that will be put into place to prevent issues from occurring or re-occurring.

7. Describe available transportation opportunities and other ways that the tenants will access the community around the site. In particular, highlight how tenants without access to reliable transportation will be able to travel within the community including during non-peak times (e.g., night, weekends).

8. Provide a proposed timeline of your project, from the initial application submission to the rent-up period. Include target dates (month and year), objectives to be completed, and any potential barriers which may delay/extend the timetable. Comment on any additional benefits to people served by OPWDD, other than the increase in residential resources, as a result of this project.

9. Provide any information relating to secondary benefits in the area of community/economic development that result from this project.

10. Provide information regarding any challenges the project location may have relative to HCR, HPD, HHAP funding, etc. This can include, but is not limited to, feedback from the primary funding agency around brownfield concerns, flood plain concerns, cost of construction, other challenges to construction, etc.

11. **OPWDD limits the number ISH units for special populations units, including preferential tenancy units for people with I/DD.** Does the number of ISH units meet OPWDD guidelines (up to 25% of the total number of units in the project)? If there are other special population groups being designated to reside in the complex, provide information regarding what other special population groups will be included, the number of units designated for other special population groups, and the total number of units will be designated for special populations. Senior Housing project may have additional unit limitations (see "Senior Housing" section below). **Failure to adhere to OPWDD's requirements for the percentage of ISH units in a project shall lead to a proposal being removed from funding consideration.**

12. Comment on the design of the special population units, specifically how they meet Universal Design Standards, as well as any accessibility/adaptability features which may allow a person with a disability to live comfortably (e.g., doorframe widths, countertop heights, bathroom accessibility features, etc.).

13. The Support Agency (SA) is expected to provide housing-related supports to the individuals living in the project even if the individual is self-directing and the SA is not the Fiscal Intermediary. Comment on the types of housing-related supports that the agency anticipates providing and how services will be documented. These services are to align with the provider expectations outlined in the Housing Services Agreement and the OPWDDD Housing Subsidy Administrative Directive Memorandum (ADM 2022-03). Affirm that the SA will provide housing-related data to OPWDD when requested (e.g., names of people residing there, summaries of any problems, etc.). As part of the program, it is expected that the SA will have an office onsite for support staff. Confirm that the project will have an onsite office for the HS provider. Describe how the proposed office will be equipped (e.g., phones, computers, secure file storage, etc.) Additionally, provide a description of staff hours in the office, including evenings and weekend times. Confirm that that there will be coverage during non-business hours. Include how people can contact the agency during non-business hours in case of an emergency (e.g., emergency phone number monitored 24/7).

14. Indicate if this project will be designated as a "Senior Housing" project or will have any age-related restrictions. The following additional information will be required as part of an application that is designated as "Senior Housing" and will be included as part of the assessment of these projects:

A. Information must be provided regarding what age restriction waiver, if any, will be requested and the anticipated process to obtain these waivers; information provided to all pertinent parties must be consistent. The age restriction on the larger project will determine if there is a restriction on the age of the tenants of the proposed OPWDD units (e.g., for buildings with a waiver for tenants 62 and older, all tenants must be 62 or older).
B. All information regarding the status of local approvals and public support must demonstrate that the proposed age limits are included in the local applications and public hearings, as well as the intent to include OPWDD Units in the project with tenants who may not be seniors.
C. The project team must provide information from the relevant RFO regarding the level of demand for the age category being proposed, even if the age level of referrals can be lower.
D. All marketing materials, including those submitted to DHR and/or HCR must clearly identify the OPWDD units and any age restrictions and must also be reviewed and approved by OPWDD.
E. Additionally, if the project is proposing 55 years and older senior housing project, the following will also be required:

- The project team must provide information regarding how they will identify appropriate potential tenants to screen for the OPWDD Units.
- Describe how tenancy issues will be resolved if issues arise based upon age differences in tenants.
- For these projects, the maximum number of OPWDD units is limited to no more than 20% of the total units.

Section III: Need (10 Points) – In this section, highlight the need for affordable/supportive housing within the project area by using data related to OPWDD-eligible individuals to explain the demand for housing.

1. Provide an overview of the supportive housing projects currently operational within the city, town, village, and/or county of the project site and which population(s) they serve.
2. Provide an overview of the number of OPWDD-eligible individuals requesting Housing Subsidies within the county the proposed project is to be located utilizing data from the respective OPWDD RFO. Additionally, provide an overview on the number of OPWDD-eligible people within the county in which the proposed project is located that have expressed an interest in living independently.
3. Provide an overview of how the project team will work with community partners (e.g., alternate OPWDD service providers, local government, other non-profits) to conduct outreach and assist with potential vacancy issues within the project once operational.

Section IV: Project Budget (10 Points) – In this section, outline and explain all of the costs associated with the development, construction and operation of the ISH project. Information in the narrative provided in this section should align with the budget worksheet.

If requesting OPWDD capital as part of your application, provide a line item development budget, including all anticipated funding sources, using an HCR approved standard budget sheet (Example: https://hcr.ny.gov/2025-hcr-multifamily-finance-9-underwriting-application). Specify the dollar amount of OPWDD capital support being requested bearing in mind that OPWDD may support debt service on permanent financing for the project or provide an outright loan or grant. For lending purposes, OPWDD's funds should be treated as though they are HCR loans, and should, for example, be represented in the cash flow as a loan with a paid interest rate that matches the rate of the HCR loan. Funds will be ballooned at the end of the regulatory period.

If OPWDD agrees to fund the project, the decision on the form of capital support will be made by OPWDD. OPWDD will consider requests for funding up to fifty (50) percent of the Total Project Cost (TPC) for the residential portion of the project prorated by the percentage of units for which a preference in tenant selection is provided to individuals with an I/DD diagnosis. **Please note that OPWDD does not provide financing for the construction closing of a project. Budgets must be underwritten to include OPWDD funds at the time of conversion to permanent financing.**

Also indicate if you have identified capital funding that could be reinvested from existing or newly funded OPWDD programs.

It is important to note that the information provided on the development budget should be consistent with the information that has been, or will be, provided in the final application submitted to HCR or HPD. If the scope or cost of the project is changed materially from the time the application is submitted to OPWDD, then the project team must notify OPWDD in writing; however, OPWDD will limit its participation to the calculations and/or requests approved through the initial OPWDD application based upon this RFA. Therefore, if the calculations and amounts are inaccurate, or in any way understate total project costs, a funding gap may result that must be covered through the deferral of developer fee.

Provide information in the narrative regarding the following:

1. If requesting capital, comment on the total project cost and the cost per unit relative to whether it is realistic/reasonable compared to other projects in that region. Provide a detailed explanation of the costs outlined on the budget sheet.

   All applicants are to provide the expected rent levels for each of the types of units being requested for special population units (e.g., 1BR, 2BR, etc.); these amounts should also be included on the cover page. OPWDD provides housing subsidies to the 50% AMI level for the county where the project is located, however, the amount can never exceed the OPWDD allowable maximum rent for apartments in the county where the project is located. Annual rental increases are approved by OPWDD independently from HCR's Asset Management approval of the non-OPWDD units and should not be assumed to have an automatic escalation rate. OPWDD must approve the rent increase at least 60 days prior to the proposed increase. Contact your local OPWDD RFO for more information on housing subsidy maximum levels.

   The OPWDD supported rent level cannot be higher than the rent level for other residents in that apartment complex at the same AMI level. The OPWDD Units must be available for individuals earning 50% AMI and must not be restricted to individuals with a lower AMI.

Section V: Services Provided, Integration and Individual Choice (25 points) – Provide information as requested under sections Va and Vb.

Section Va: Anticipated Services – Describe in detail all proposed *housing related* (i.e., services not covered through the HCBS Waiver or Medicaid) services that will potentially be used by individuals residing in the ISH units, including:

1. Information about how these services will evolve as people move along the residential continuum and their needs and abilities change.

2. Discuss how the housing related services and supports are expected to be funded, which may include the use of existing resources in your agency and/or a partner agency or approved new allocations for individuals from the target population(s) such as the administrative component of the OPWDD housing subsidy.

3. As a reminder, an individual may access non-housing related services and supports from any OPWDD approved provider. Applicants should include specific information that demonstrates that their agency has the capacity and capability to coordinate and administer services in an ISH project, even if some/all of the tenants select another provider or choose to self-direct their services.

4. Include a statement affirming that all individuals residing in the OPWDD units will have the option to select from any OPWDD approved service provider for non-housing (e.g., Waiver) services, and/or ability to self-direct their own services, without this choice affecting the person's tenancy.

Provide information regarding your agency's methods of selecting potential tenants of the OPWDD ISH units. At a minimum, please comment on the following items (additional information is encouraged):

5. Clearly identify a target population (e.g., people formerly residing in certified settings, individuals aging out of residential schools, people at imminent risk in their current residential arrangement, etc.). **Please note, ISH projects cannot target a specific diagnosis of I/DD. Proposals that indicate serving only a specific diagnosis or condition (e.g., Autism Spectrum Disorder, Cerebral Palsy) may be removed from funding consideration.**

6. Comment on whether the agency has contacted the Regional Field Office (RFO) for assistance in identifying this population.

7. Comment on how the agency will work with the respective RFO to establish a target population and regional priorities, including a description on procedures that involve working with OPWDD as quickly as possible to select a new tenant for a vacant unit.

8. Comment on any outreach/marketing campaign the provider may use to garner interest in the ISH units; provide additional information regarding the selection method for selecting and referring potential residents to the RFO if a large number of people are interested in a housing opportunity.

9. Comment on any secondary benefits created by selecting the identified target population that should be considered by OPWDD in assessing this project.

Section Vb: Integration and Individual Choice – Use this section to describe how your project will maintain compliance with all State and Federal policies and regulations, including Federal HCBS Settings Regulations and principles identified in the Olmstead decision, as well as your support of individuals' choice of non-housing services.

Integration

Pursuant to Federal regulations (42 CFR § 441.301(c)(1-4)), the project setting and those services delivered through the service provider(s) must adhere to the requirements under the Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Settings rule, including those pertaining to provider-owned or controlled residential settings, person-centered service planning, and tenancy rights with eviction protections.

10. Using the HCBS Settings Toolkit on the OPWDD website, provide information regarding any aspect of the site location which would trigger heightened scrutiny under the federal HCBS Settings rule; this assessment will be reviewed by OPWDD's Division of Quality Improvement. For additional guidance, see the heightened scrutiny questionnaire located on the OPWDD website in the HCBS Settings Toolkit: https://opwdd.ny.gov/providers/hcbs-settings-toolkit

11. The narrative must affirm compliance with these standards and show how the project will support full integration of the residents with I/DD into the broader community. At a minimum, the discussion must address the following: 1) the design of the supportive services to be provided to residents; 2) the layout and distribution of the set-aside units; and 3) the location of the project with respect to community resources such as public transportation, employment, and socialization opportunities. The narrative must also include detailed information describing how the location does not create an isolating setting for the residents.

12. In alignment with OPWDD's long term goals to support marginalized communities, include information on any way the project will actively engage and support potential tenants with a variety of backgrounds, including but not limited to, those with diverse racial, ethnic, cultural, linguistic, LGBTQIA+ and other identity groups among people with developmental disabilities.

13. Comment on any differences between the OPWDD units and any other units in the project (i.e., unit size, location, features). Provide an explanation, if needed.

14. It is expected that all residents of OPWDD units have an individual, enforceable lease with the same rights and responsibilities as other tenants. Provide a copy of a sample lease if available. Comment if there are any exceptions to this expectation.

Individual Choice

15. By submitting an application, your agency is agreeing to be the project's housing Support Agency (SA), which will enter into a housing/services agreement (HSA), subject to OPWDD review and approval, with the project owner or manager (see attached sample template), and agreeing to the terms of the HSA. While OPWDD ISH projects typically have a single agency that enters into the HSA, keep in mind that residents are entitled to choose to receive their non-housing services from any qualified agency and/or may choose to self-direct their non-housing services. The narrative must affirm your commitment to individuals' retaining their apartments irrespective of their decision to exercise such choice.

Section Vc: Proposing to Assist Underserved Areas

16. If applicable, describe how the project will be developed and serve an Underserved area of New York State. Applicants should utilize relevant data and information to describe how the project will best assist the proposed community in terms of providing opportunities and filling gaps in areas such as housing need and service provision,
    - Underserved Areas are defined as:
        - Zip codes which have identified less than 20% of the population identifying as "White Alone" in this survey: https://maps.geo.census.gov/ddmv/map.html or
        - Qualified Census Tracks as identified on this map: https://www.huduser.gov/portal/sadda/sadda_qct.html#:~:text=The%202022%20Qualified%20Census%20Tracts%20%28QCTs%29%20and%20Difficult,the%20federal%20Register%20notice%20published%20September%209%2C%202021; or
        - Those areas identifying as qualifying for Environmental Justice considerations based upon the following map: https://www.nyserda.ny.gov/ny/disadvantaged-communities

SECTION 4: Debriefing

OPWDD will issue award and non-award notifications to all applicants. Non-awarded applicants may request, in writing, a debriefing within fifteen (15) business days of the date of the non-award letter for the reasons that their proposal was not selected and/or disqualified. Debriefing requests must be made in writing and sent to the email address identified in section 2.3 of this document. Debriefing calls will be scheduled based on the availability of the staff of OPWDD's Program Implementation, Office of Home and Community Living and the respective OPWDD Regional Field Office in which the proposed project is located.