

2020 Integrated Physical Needs Assessment (IPNA) and Technical Assistance Service Provider Request for Qualifications (RFQ) Frequently Asked Questions

Questions asked during IPNA RFQ Webinar (12/11)

Please click [here](#) to view the full recorded webinar.

Program Eligibility and Requirements

What is the definition of Multifamily?

Buildings with the following characteristics are considered multifamily:

- *Buildings with 3+ units*
- *Buildings where at least 50 percent of the building's gross heated footage is residential space*

Would college dormitories count as Multifamily?

Yes. Assisted living facilities could also qualify.

Will there be a published list of IPNA Providers?

Yes. The list will be posted on the [HDP](#), [HDC](#), and [HCR](#) websites after the process is completed.

What is the sunset date for the old IPNA tool?

The old tool sunsets when the new tool comes into effect; this will happen once the new list of IPNA Providers are published. Until then, continue using the existing tool.

For firms that are currently listed as an IPNA provider, do they need to re-submit to this current RFP?

Yes.

Are sub-contractors to a qualified IPNA Provider required to also maintain an IPNA Provider designation?

No, sub-contractors to an IPNA Provider do not need to maintain an IPNA Provider designation. The Team Lead submits one application on behalf of an entire team, which includes sub-contractors.

Can a provider just specialize in Energy Savings or do they also need to have an Architect on staff to address the Physical Needs aspects?

It is expected that the qualified IPNA Provider be able to complete the entire IPNA Tool, which includes both the energy and Physical Needs assessments. If you do not have the capability to do both assessments, then you may partner with another firm that can deliver the Physical Needs component. However, both the energy auditing team and the architect team must submit one application to qualify as an IPNA Provider, with either the energy auditing team or the architect team as the Team Lead.

To clarify, is this RFQ for work within the City of New York only, or IPNA's across New York State?

The RFQ pertains to IPNAs across the state. For example, projects financed by HCR may require an IPNA and HCR operates state-wide.

Do upstate projects performing an IPNA require a solar assessment?

No. Solar assessments are only a requirement for the NYC agencies - HPD and HDC.

Can FlexTech funds be used to offset the cost of an IPNA Report?

Yes.

How do you ensure NY Diversity standards with this contracting approach?

There are EEO and MWBE compliance requirements in Appendix A of the RFQ.

How many teams will be accepted for this cycle of applications?

As many as are qualified.

Is there an estimated number of IPNA studies expected on a yearly basis?

It varies.

Do agencies assign providers on a project basis in some order?

No. The agencies will not dictate which providers should be used for given projects. Building Owners select whichever IPNA Provider from the pre-qualified list they wish to work with.

Can the agencies match and connect businesses looking to fill-out an IPNA team that addresses each area of expertise?

No. This is not a service area that the agencies provide.

Application Specifics

What does "Organizational History" mean?

Please provide background on your company, including your experience and reference completed projects relevant to the multifamily sector.

In the IPNA application, are 3 case studies required for each experience area or 3 total?

Please submit 3 total, but try to demonstrate your full range of experience and services in the case studies.

What if the company financial statement is not audited?

Please submit any financials that you do have.

Do all case studies need to be Multifamily in an IPNA application?

For projects in NYC, IPNA case studies must be Multifamily. Outside of NYC, this is not a requirement.

How should one approach an application for a project that involves multiple buildings?

For multiple building projects, the IPNA Provider could submit a separate IPNA per building type or aggregate building data and identify which building that data applies to per the instructions in the IPNA Tool. All information for existing conditions and energy measures should pull from an aggregate total based on square footage rather than breaking things down by individual building. The IPNA Standard does have details on how to account for multiple building projects. Please see Appendix B of the IPNA Standard for those details.

Questions asked by E-mail

Program Eligibility and Requirements

What is the driver to pursue IPNA Studies? Local Law 97 Compliance?

The IPNA process was first launched in 2017, with the Green Physical Needs Assessment preceding the IPNA tool (2015-2017), which at least preceded LL97. The development of the IPNA was a collaborative effort among affordable housing agencies and NYSERDA to combine physical needs assessments and energy audits. This latest release is to share the updated IPNA Tool and Standard with the market and to update the IPNA Provider list. The IPNA was not developed solely to comply with LLs, but we certainly took LL97 into account in this latest release of the IPNA.

Are the IPNA Providers given assignments by housing agencies or NYSERDA?

No. Owners/developers/managers will select provider of their choosing from the Pre-Qualified list.

If a company submits an IPNA study before the end of January 2021, should they use the current IPNA tool?

Yes. Continue to use the current tool. The new tool will not be in effect until the new IPNA providers list is published. There is not a specific date set for the release of the list. The agencies will likely post the list sometime in February or March.

Is Healthy Homes NYC training or DOH training required?

Yes. Here is the language from the IPNA Standard under the "Qualifications for Needs Assessor": 'Additionally, for assessments that take place in New York City, at least one member of the Needs Assessor team shall have taken, or plan to take within 6 months of becoming a pre-qualified provider, the DoHMH Healthy Buildings Trainings for HPD-financed projects. The DoHMH Healthy Buildings Training Certificate is valid for three (3) years.'

Will IPNA studies usually result in a gut rehab of a building?

No, you should not assume the IPNA results in a gut rehab, as most projects are not gut rehab projects; most projects are moderate rehab projects.

Are owners of HPD/HDC properties required to do these IPNA studies?

The IPNA is required for almost all programs at HPD and HDC. All programs except the Multifamily Housing Rehabilitation Program require the IPNA (Updated Jan 22, 2021). Depending on what programs the properties fall under, they may be required to complete these IPNAs. Program requirements may be found in their respective term sheets.

Application Specifics

If a Provider is a Professional Engineer (PE), can they state that they reviewed the report or do they have to stamp it?

A PE stamp is not required for the IPNA. You will sign and state the accuracy of the report based on your professional experience.

When assessing a mid/high-rise building, is visual inspection from ground and roof levels acceptable?

Observations should be made along the ground level, roof level, and any other areas (like balconies or plazas) so that you can best perform your existing conditions assessment.

Is there HPD/HDC cost guidance based on the revised tool?

Pricing and cost guidance are at the discretion of the Providers' team.

There is "incremental cost per unit" referenced in the IPNA tool. Please elaborate what this entails.

In terms of the incremental cost per unit, we are looking for the incremental cost for conducting your services on a per dwelling basis.

Are there any limitations on using LL87 reports from 2 years ago for the energy audit?

The following language is taken from the revised IPNA Standard: "Please be aware that a LL87 energy audit will not be sufficient to meet all the requirements for the IPNA. For example, the IPNA requires that minimum energy savings be identified, but there is no minimum savings required by LL87. Conversely, the LL87 energy audit requires some data that is not required by the IPNA. If you are completing an IPNA and a LL87 audit for the same building, make sure that you obtain all the data required for both reports when you do your field visit." Additionally, energy audits from more than 2 years ago may not accurately reflect current energy consumption patterns.

Is 10% still the sampling figure required for large buildings given pandemic guidelines?

Access as many unoccupied units possible, and coordinate with ownership/management to be provided specific pictures of occupied units.

Can we request that visits only be conducted when units are unoccupied?

Access as many unoccupied units as possible, and coordinate with ownership/management to be provided specific pictures of occupied units.

Are carbon monoxide tests of ovens and measurements of exhaust/supply airflows still required given the pandemic?

For unoccupied units - yes.

It is mentioned on page 5 of the RFQ the respondent must include “Disclosure and Conflict of Interest Forms: Forms are required for the firm itself, its employees, and anyone acting on its behalf.” Please provide more detail regarding these forms?

~~The Disclosure and Conflict of Interest Forms are in <http://nychdc.com/Forms> under “Disclosure Documents”. You should use the same form a General Contractor would fill out.~~

Update – January 8, 2021: Disclosure and Conflict of Interest Forms do not need to be completed and submitted in the response to this RFQ.

Q&A Added Week of January 4 – 8, 2021

If we are assessing multiple 1-3 family buildings that are all nearly identical, can we use a sampling figure? If so, what would the figure be?

The IPNA Standard does have details on how to account for multiple building figures. Please see Appendix B of the IPNA Standard for those details.

After the IPNA, what may be required there-after from the property owner?

In some instances, the owner proceeds to hire the IPNA provider to be their architect/engineer of record for the production of plans and specifications for the determined scope of rehab.

In regards to the organizational history, please provide some clarification on what the team would like for this. Would it just be date of founding and articles of organization?

Regarding information for your organizational history, please provide background on your company, including your experience and reference completed projects relevant to the multifamily sector.

How can we get the 90-day waiver to apply for the Multifamily Building Solutions Network?

The 90-day waiver will be granted upon completion of our RFQ review process. We will inform providers who have been granted a conditional approval, that they have 90 days to complete the MPP provider application process.

Does the Disclosure Compliance Package form need to be completed only by the lead IPNA firm, or will it also need to be completed by our partner firm?

According to HDC’s legal team, consultants are not required to submit disclosure, neither for HPD.

The Case Studies section calls for the proposer to demonstrate experience in 8 areas. Do each of the 3 case studies need to cover all of the areas or can the areas be covered by some combination of the 3 case studies?

If each case study demonstrates specific areas of expertise, that is fine as long as it is evident from all the case studies that the provider is qualified to perform a comprehensive IPNA.

The Fee Proposal asks for “Incremental Cost Per Unit.” Is the “Unit” a Square Foot, an Apartment Unit, or another measure?

Cost per Apartment Unit

Regarding Page 3 of the RFQ, under Additional Service, we intend to submit our qualifications for Additional Services, Part B, Items II and III. Can we submit for only those two (2) Scope of Services?

That is fine. If it is possible to show evidence that your firm is at least familiar or has an understanding perhaps in the process to assemble a scope of work with plans and specs, then I think that is sufficient. Same regarding training of maintenance staff/residents.

The IPNA Standard updated 11/30/20 requires one member of the Needs Assessor team to have taken the DoHMH Healthy Buildings Trainings. We found two trainings, “Better Buildings” and “Healthy Homes NYC.” Can you advise which is the correct training that is required? See link <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/hpd/services-and-information/healthy-homes-nyc.page>.

The correct training is the Health Homes NYC training.

A Provider has scheduled a few IPNAs coming up in February, does he have to stop working on those projects until he is re-qualified under the current RFQ and approved as a Multifamily Building Solutions Provider?

Existing IPNA projects and upcoming projects may continue using the old IPNA Standard and Tool, but once the new Qualified IPNA Provider List is released, Providers need to use the new Standard and Tool. If a Provider is only given tentative approval contingent on approval of their Multifamily Building Solutions Network (MFBSN) application, then they would not be able to start any new IPNA projects.

Q&A Added Week of January 11 – 15, 2021

If we are including a multi-disciplinary team, are we still limited to 3 case studies or are 3 case studies required per consultant?

You are only required to submit 3 total case studies for the consultant team. You are not required to submit 3 case studies per consultant.

Do we need to have a licensed architect or engineer on the team to be qualified as a full service IPNA provider? We are certified providers in the NYSERDA multifamily network, but we do not have an architect or engineer in our firm. We have the BPI MFBA certification and we do have staff with extensive construction and rehab background.

At least one member of the Needs Assessor team shall be a registered architect (RA) or professional engineer (PE) and have a minimum of three years of relevant work experience. In most cases, firms will partner with other firms with complementary requirements where one firm will service the needs assessment and the other firm the energy assessor. The submission will be as one team.

If we partner with a single architect to respond to the RFQ, would we be able to partner with a separate architect later? Or are IPNA's only allowed to be produced by entire teams that are on this pre-qualified list?

The IPNAs must be completed by a Team on the qualified Provider List. Yes, you can change the team, but HPD and HDC would need to approve of any change to a team.

Could we as energy reviewer submit with multiple architects if they want to become IPNA providers and need an energy partner? Assuming they would be the ones listed as primary in that case.

Yes, that is acceptable.

Q&A Added Week of January 18 - 22, 2021

We are a currently pre-approved IPNA vendor putting together our application for the new RFQ. We came across a request for audited financial statement and was wondering which statements are needed and for how long. Would tax filings or QuickBooks statements work for smaller firms that cannot afford a formal audit or do not get yearly formal audits?

We would want the last year's financials. Tax filings or QuickBooks would suffice.

Just to clarify when you said IPNA's must be completed by a team qualified on the provider list, is this going to be true for upstate projects as well? Will it be true that upstate projects will also be required to utilize teams from the pre-qualified list?

Not all HCR preservation programs require IPNAs. For the programs that do require IPNAs, they will refer building owners to the pre-qualified list, but at this moment we cannot confirm if they will require owners to use a team off that list.

For an approved vendor on the Pre-Qualified Firms List that is responding to this RFQ and updating the MFBSN Application, is it possible to only provide a response to Part A and not respond to Part B for Technical Assistance Services?

Unfortunately, no, we will need you to submit for both parts in your submission.

Do you know if HPD and HDC intend to continue approving additional firms on a yearly rolling basis like before?

Every 3 years, enrollment will open again for a period of time.

Can you provide clarification on what is required for the references? Is contact information for the three references sufficient, or are the references required to provide a written statement?

Yes, just contact information for the three references is sufficient.

Should replacement schedules indicate all replacements at once or should they go floor-by-floor, over a period of time?

Similar to what was done on prior versions of the IPNA, the replacement schedule will be for the immediate need, five-year, ten-year, etc.

Can you expand a bit on the level of detail expected with the new IPNA tool? In some situations, we have seen indications of good/fair/poor without other info or scale. In other situations, we have seen people write “not available” under the insulation level of recorded existing conditions. Is this all acceptable?

Use your best professional judgement. Writing “not available” should only be done if there is no logistical and reasonable method to verify an existing condition.