REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS: HVAC Training Program for PowerCorps Boston

City of Boston
Workforce Development

Trinh Nguyen, Chief of Worker Empowerment

IMPORTANT DATES:

EVENT	DATE
RFP Issue Date	**August 10, 2026 EST**
Pre-Proposal Q&A Conference Call Location | Zoom link	**August 17, 1:00 PM EST** **Registration Link** https://www.zoomgov.com/s/1602988266
Proposal Due Date	**August 24, 12:00 PM EST**

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Peggy Hinds-Watson | peggy.hinds-watson@boston.gov

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RFP TIMELINE

Request for Proposals Issued Website: boston.gov/owd-grantmaking	**August 10 2026**
Submittal of Questions E-mail: peggy.hinds-watson@boston.gov	**August 17, 2026, by 5:00 PM**
Response to RFP Due	**August 24, 2026, by 12:00 PM**
Notification of Selection	**September 18, 2026**
Anticipated Contract Start Date	**September 21, 2026**

Section I. Overview

PowerCorps Boston (PCBOS), in partnership with the City of Boston's Office of Workforce Development (OWD), invites qualified training providers to submit proposals to design and deliver a comprehensive Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration (HVAC/R) training program. The initiative is designed to serve young adults aged 18 to 30 from Boston's underserved communities by providing technical instruction, safety training, and industry-recognized certifications required for entry-level employment in the HVAC field. This program supports PowerCorps Boston's mission to create equitable green career pathways by integrating workforce training, professional development, and environmental stewardship.

PowerCorps Boston operates as a partnership between the Office of Workforce Development and the City's Environment, Energy, and Open Space Cabinet. The program's model is grounded in a Conservation Corps service structure, offering participants hands-on, field-based experience through environmental and infrastructure projects conducted at partner sites across Boston. This HVAC training component will expand the organization's workforce development offerings into the building operations and energy efficiency sectors, providing participants with practical technical skills and a pathway into stable, well-paying green jobs.

Program Goals

The primary goals of this training initiative are to equip participants with foundational and applied HVAC/R skills; prepare them for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Section 608 Certification; introduce them to Building Automation Systems (BAS) and A2L refrigerant technologies; and strengthen their job readiness skills to promote successful entry into high-demand HVAC career pathways.

Program Context

PowerCorps Boston is a green workforce development program dedicated to providing underrepresented Boston residents with training, support, and access to sustainable careers. Through hands-on service projects, career readiness training, and direct connections to employers, the program seeks to advance workforce equity and climate resilience throughout the city.

The HVAC/R industry plays a crucial role in enhancing energy efficiency, promoting sustainability, and facilitating climate adaptation in buildings. The growing demand for qualified HVAC technicians, coupled with the industry's shift toward environmentally responsible refrigerants and smart building automation technologies, presents strong career opportunities for Boston residents. The proposed training program will prepare participants to meet this

demand by emphasizing technical proficiency, safety, and certification readiness through a structured, hands-on learning experience.

Section II. Project Scope & Deliverables

Scope of Work:

The selected training provider will be responsible for delivering a structured HVAC/R training program composed of 55 lessons over a 26 to 27-week period. The program will balance classroom-based instruction with hands-on laboratory and shop practice to ensure that participants gain both theoretical understanding and applied technical skills.

The training will focus on foundational lessons that will define HVAC principles and cover the functions of heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems powered by gas, oil, and electricity, as well as heat pumps. Instruction will highlight the importance of proper design, sizing, and installation to ensure comfort, safety, and indoor air quality.

Safety will be a central component throughout the training. Participants will learn about personal protective equipment (PPE), fall and ladder safety, electrical safety protocols, confined space precautions, and the safe handling of refrigerants and high-pressure cylinders. The course will introduce the essential tools of the HVAC trade, including multimeters, manifold gauges, leak detectors, and measurement tools, emphasizing correct handling, calibration, and use.

Hands-on shop lessons will reinforce classroom learning. Participants will identify HVAC system components and perform copper piping operations such as cutting, flaring, bending, soldering, and brazing. These skills will culminate in assembling and pressure testing systems to ensure integrity and workmanship. The curriculum will also explore heat transfer principles, temperature scales, BTU measurement, and the distinction between latent and sensible heat.

Participants will gain an understanding of the refrigeration cycle, including the functions of compressors, condensers, and evaporators. They will examine metering devices such as thermostatic, automatic, and electronic expansion valves and learn to measure superheat and subcooling for optimal system performance. Electrical system instruction will cover basic circuits, voltage types (120V, 240V, and 480V), transformers, contactors, relays, and schematic reading, supported by shop-based electrical projects to apply diagnostic and troubleshooting techniques.

Through the program, participants will review key concepts that will align them to progress to lessons on electric motors and control systems. Topics will include split-phase, capacitor start,

permanent split capacitor (PSC), electronically commutated (ECM), and three-phase motors. Participants will also practice diagnosing thermostats, relays, contactors, and motor start components.

Lessons will focus on airflow analysis, duct design, and system evaluation. Students will learn how air moves through evaporator and condenser coils, identify causes of restricted airflow, and perform system performance tests, including refrigerant recovery and leak detection. The training will culminate in comprehensive preparation for the EPA Section 608 Certification Exam, including review sessions and practice tests for the Core and Type I–III certifications.

Participants will earn their Hot Work Safety Certification through a safety review and exam covering brazing and soldering procedures. The course will conclude with an introduction to Building Automation Systems (BAS), providing an overview of how HVAC systems integrate with modern control technologies and sustainable building management.

Deliverables:

The selected training provider will design and implement a 55 lesson HVAC **curriculum** that combines classroom instructions and hands-on lab learning.

Training will progress from foundational topics to advanced applications, covering:

- Introduction to HVAC/R**:** Overview of heating, ventilation, air conditioning, and refrigeration systems; system types (gas, oil, electric, heat pump); and comfort factors (temperature, humidity, air movement).
- Safety and Tools: PPE, ladder and electrical safety, confined space procedures, refrigerant safety, and tool handling (multimeters, manifold gauges, leak detectors).
- Hands-On Learning**:** Copper piping operations, soldering, brazing, and pressure testing.
- Refrigeration Science: Heat transfer, BTU measurement, refrigeration cycle components (compressor, condenser, evaporator), and refrigerant properties.
- Electrical Systems: Circuits, voltages, contactors, transformers, and schematics.
- Motors and Controls: Motor types, diagnostics, and control components.
- Airflow and System Evaluation**:** Duct design, airflow measurement, condensate removal, and system charging.
- EPA Section 608 Exam Preparation**:** Comprehensive review of core and Types I–III certifications.

- Advanced Topics: Hot Work Safety Certification, introduction to Building Automation Systems (BAS), and emerging refrigerant technologies.

The training provider shall:

- Deliver all classroom and hands-on instruction.
- Provide qualified, certified instructors.
- Supply all instructional materials, tools, and safety equipment.
- Administer the EPA 608 Certification Exam onsite.
- Maintain attendance and performance records.
- Submit a final report detailing participant outcomes, certifications earned, and recommendations.

Program Duration

The HVAC Training Program will be delivered over a period of 26 to 27 weeks, consisting of 55 total lessons that integrate theory with applied technical exercises.

Section III. Proposal Guidelines

Proposal Submission Guidelines

Interested training providers must submit a proposal including a one-page executive summary that demonstrates understanding of the project goals, proposed approach, and relevant experience. Applicants must also provide a brief agency background summarizing their organizational history, experience delivering HVAC/R or similar technical training, and any relevant partnerships.

Proposals should include a staffing plan identifying all key personnel, their qualifications, and their roles on the project. Instructor credentials, licenses, and teaching experience must be included. Applicants should submit a detailed curriculum plan that outlines course structure, instructional hours, and teaching methodology, along with a comprehensive budget and cost proposal.

The total proposed budget should not exceed $130,000 and must include all costs for instruction, materials, certification fees, and equipment. The fee proposal must be submitted as

a separate sealed document labeled “Attachment A.” Proposals must also include at least two professional references from organizations for which similar services have been provided.

Section IV: Terms of Procurement

APPLICATION DEADLINE

Responses to this RFP must be received by OWD on or before **12:00 PM on August 24, 2026**. All proposals must be submitted to:

Peggy Hinds-Watson, Director of Operations and Data, PowerCorps Boston
peggy.hinds-watson@boston.gov
Office of Workforce Development
43 Hawkins Street
Boston, MA 02114-2907

It is the sole responsibility of the applicant to ensure their proposal is complete and submitted on time. Proposals not received by 12:00 pm on August 24, 2026, will be disqualified from the competitive process.

SUBMISSION OF INQUIRIES

Questions regarding this Request for Proposals should be submitted in writing to Peggy Hinds-Watson, Director of Operations & Data, via email: peggy.hinds-watson@boston.gov. Phone calls will not be accepted. The deadline to submit questions is **August 17, 2026, by 5:00 PM.**

Responses to questions received during the procurement process will be posted on the OWD website at **boston.gov/owd-grantmaking**. It is the bidders’ responsibility to check the website for updates and postings.

OWD is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.

PROPOSAL SPECIFICATIONS

Applicants should ensure their proposals comply with the following requirements:

- A response to each section of the RFP is required and should follow the guidelines and sequences as specified in the Proposal Guideline section (Section IV). Each section should be labeled.

- Every section of the Request for Proposals should be completed in full. If funded, the proposal will provide the basis for contract negotiations, and final negotiated terms will be incorporated within the contract as the Statement of Work.
- Proposals should be typewritten, double-spaced, in 12-point Arial font with one-inch margins.
- The proposal narrative may not exceed 10 pages. The page limit does not include the cover sheet, budget forms, or any required attachments.
- Some sections require appended material. All forms should be completed in full.
- **Separate fee and technical proposals must be submitted in sealed envelopes.** Absolutely no responses will be accepted after the due date and time. OWD reserves the right to reject any or all bids. The award of a contract for services requested by this RFP shall be subject to the approval of the EDIC Board.

EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS

OWD will form an Evaluation Committee for the purposes of evaluating responses to this RFP The Committee will be responsible for determining whether any or all proposals should be rejected in the best interest of OWD, and for recommending to the EDIC Board of Directors, which proposal, in its collective opinion, is the most advantageous proposal.

The following criteria will be used to rate the proposals:

1. Overall completeness and quality of the proposal:

   A. Highly Advantageous: The proposal presents a clear, comprehensive, and well-structured plan that fully addresses and complies with all core elements and required submissions stated in this RFP. It demonstrates a strong understanding of PowerCorps Boston's mission, the HVAC/R industry context, and the objectives of the training initiative, including alignment with workforce development and green job pathway goals.
   B. Advantageous: The proposal presents a clear plan that addresses and complies with most of the core elements and required submissions stated in the RFP. It demonstrates a general understanding of PowerCorps Boston's goals and the HVAC/R training objectives.
   C. Not Advantageous: The proposal lacks a clear and comprehensive plan, does not address or comply with most of the required elements stated in the RFP, and/or fails to demonstrate a sufficient understanding of the project objectives.

2. Curriculum Design and Instructional Approach

A. Highly Advantageous: The proposal demonstrates an exceptional understanding of the HVAC/R industry and a creative, detailed approach to meeting the scope of services outlined in this RFP. The proposed curriculum includes a comprehensive and well-organized lesson plan that integrates theory, hands-on practice, safety, and certification readiness. Innovative instructional elements or supplemental components that enhance participant learning are included.
B. Advantageous: The proposal demonstrates a solid understanding of the HVAC/R industry and an organized approach to meeting the scope of services. The curriculum is clearly structured and addresses the core training components required under this RFP.
C. Not Advantageous: The proposal demonstrates a limited understanding of the HVAC/R training scope, lacks detail in its curriculum plan, and/or presents an unorganized or incomplete instructional approach.

3. Agency Background and Organizational Capacity:

a. Highly Advantageous: The proposal clearly demonstrates that the training provider has extensive experience delivering high-quality HVAC/R or similar technical training programs. The organization possesses the administrative capacity, staffing, and resources necessary to effectively implement all program components.

b. Advantageous: The proposal demonstrates that the training provider has experience delivering technical training programs and possesses adequate organizational capacity to implement the proposed HVAC/R program.

c. Not Advantageous: The proposal demonstrates limited or insufficient experience delivering HVAC/R or similar technical training and lacks evidence of adequate organizational capacity to fulfill the program requirements.

4. Staffing

a. Highly Advantageous: The proposal demonstrates that the instructional team possesses significant experience and credentials in the HVAC/R field, including appropriate licenses, technical certifications (such as EPA Section 608), and experience delivering workforce development or vocational training. Instructor résumés reflect deep expertise and a proven track record of success with similar programs.

b. Advantageous: The proposal demonstrates that the instructional team possesses relevant HVAC/R experience, credentials, and instructional capacity to effectively implement the training program.

c. Not Advantageous: The proposal demonstrates limited HVAC/R experience among key staff and lacks evidence of necessary instructional or technical qualifications.

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2. Fee Proposal (TO BE SUBMITTED IN A SEPARATE, SEALED ENVELOPE MARKED AS EXHIBIT A) and Required Forms/Attachments (SEE EXHIBITS B, C, and D).

    a. Highly Advantageous: The fee proposal is between $120,000 and $123,500, with a detailed narrative. Resumes of all staff included. Required form(s) are filled out and signed.
    b. Advantageous: The fee proposal is between $123,550 and $126,500, with an adequately detailed narrative. Resumes of key staff are included. Required form(s) are filled out and signed.
    c. Not Advantageous: The fee proposal is between $126,500 and $130,000, with a narrative. Required form(s) are filled out and signed.
    d. Not Acceptable: The fee proposal exceeds $130,000. Required forms not submitted are incomplete and or unsigned.

OWD reserves the right to reject any proposals, to waive or modify any requirement contained in this RFP, to amend without consultation any proposal, and to effect any agreement deemed to be in the best interest of the City of Boston and its residents. OWD will determine the most advantageous proposal from a responsible and responsive proposer, taking into consideration price and all evaluation criteria outlined in the RFP.

EXHIBIT A: CONSULTANT FEE PROPOSAL FORM

EXHIBIT A: CONSULTANT FEE PROPOSAL FORM	

This form must be submitted in a separate sealed envelope labeled FEE PROPOSAL and addressed as follows:

Peggy Hinds-Watson, Director of Operations & Data
PowerCorps Boston
Mayor's Office of Workforce Development
43 Hawkins Street
Boston, MA 02114-2907

SUBMITTED BY:

NAME	
FIRM	
ADDRESS	
TELEPHONE / FAX	

Under the conditions set forth by the OWD, the accompanying proposal is submitted to provide Consultant Services.

The total fee proposal is $ _____

CONSULTANT FEE PROPOSAL FORM (cont.)

Consultant Level	Name/Job	Hourly Rate	Estimated Number of Hours

Total Estimated Expenses $ _____

EXHIBIT B

CERTIFICATION OF NON-COLLUSION

The undersigned certifies under penalties of perjury that this bid or proposal has been made and submitted in good faith and without collusion or fraud with any other person. As used in this certification, the word “person” shall mean any natural person, business, partnership, corporation, union, committee, club, or other organization, entity, or group of individuals.

_____
(Signature of individual submitting proposal)

_____
(Name of business)