

Office of Economic Development Small Business Consulting Services Request for Qualifications

The City of Seattle's Office of Economic Development (OED) works to maximize Seattle's potential as a thriving hub for businesses, jobs, robust neighborhoods and economic opportunity for everyone in our city. We are committed to supporting a diverse economy which benefits the whole city by promoting access to economic opportunities for all of Seattle's communities.

OED provides services to businesses through advocacy, retention and expansion assistance, and workforce development. In addition, the office provides business development assistance for companies who are looking for strategies to enhance the daily operations of their business. OED provides these services directly and in collaboration with other organizations.

OED seeks partners to provide services in the Small Business Consulting program area. We strongly encourage leveraging existing business support programs and industry expertise to create innovative and new partnerships between organizations and firms with complementary skills to deliver these services.

Program Area

Small Business Consulting: Small businesses are vital to Seattle's healthy and thriving economic development, providing pathways to opportunities for diverse communities at all income levels. OED is seeking partners to provide 1-on-1 consulting to small businesses. For purposes of this RFQ, "small business" refers to businesses with fewer than 50 employees and under \$5 million in annual revenue. OED is seeking partners to provide consulting services in one or more of the following areas:

- Business Plan Development and Operational Management
- Marketing
- Financial Management

Respondents interested in this program component should share their qualifications and experience in providing 1-on-1 consulting for small businesses. OED is seeking consultants with expertise in assisting early stage (1-3 years of operations) and established small businesses; however, priority will be given to assist early stage small businesses, particularly WMBEs.

If your organization/firm is interested in competing for Small Business Consulting, please prepare a proposal of no more than 5 pages outlining qualifications and experience including examples of relevant work showing your outcomes and successes as it relates to your experience/expertise. Additional attachments can be provided to include: resumes of key personnel, joint venture or partnering firm profiles, letters of recommendation. Submissions should specifically address the following:

- Identify the consulting services described above that your organization will provide
- Experience in providing consulting services to early stage and/or established small businesses, particularly WMBEs
- Expertise in providing assistance regarding initial business plan development, changes to business plan to accommodate 2nd stage growth, and operational management issues

- Expertise in providing traditional and social media marketing assistance
- Expertise providing financial management assistance including issues such as maintaining financial statements, financial ratios, and cash flow management
- Describe what resources and assistance you will provide, estimate the number of businesses you could serve, and a dollar amount for doing the work
- Provide qualifications and background for key staff and their responsibilities as it relates to this proposal
- If you plan to partner with other organizations/firms in delivering this service, please describe how this partnership will work and the role and background of all partners.

Reporting

Outcome measurement is a critical part of this work. Respondents will work with OED to generate quarterly and annual reports that shall include data for Seattle specific business assistance activity such as:

- Name, type and size of businesses visited
- Number of business connected with resources and issues solved
- Number of WMBEs connected with resources and issues solved
- Type of issue(s) solved and/or resources provided for each business served
- Examples of assistance that led to the growth and expansion of a business.

Budget

Total budget for this work is \$50,000 and will be allocated among successful respondents. OED anticipates selection of up to 2 qualified consultants.

Submissions

Your response must arrive no later than **5:00 p.m. (PST)** on **6/6/2017** to:

Ken Takahashi
 City of Seattle
 Office of Economic Development
 700 Fifth Avenue, Suite 5752 (deliveries)
 P.O. Box 94708 (postal mail)
 Seattle, WA 98124-4708

The City of Seattle retains the right to reject any responses and is not required to award any funds if, in its opinion, the response failed to meet its requirements. Electronic submissions are requested.

Schedule

Proposals due to the Office of Economic Development: **6/6/2017 (5:00 PM PST)**

Finalist interviews: **Week of June 12th, 2017**

Notification of selection: **Week of June 19th, 2017**

Contract executed by: **7/10/2017**

Contracts

OED will develop contracts with the successful organization(s). The contracts will include a scope of work and project milestones and outcomes. Reimbursement will be based on achievement of project

milestones and outcomes. OED retains the right to revise budget requests to reflect funding availability.

Protest Procedures

In the event that an unsuccessful RFQ respondent wishes to protest the selection of a successful respondent, they must do so by submitting in writing the reason for the protest to the Director of OED. Any such protest must be received within three (3) business days of receipt of notification of the successful respondent.

The decision of the Director will be final and conclusive unless the respondent affected makes a written request for reconsideration by the Director. Such a request must be received within three (3) business days after receipt of the Director's decision. A request for reconsideration will be denied unless the respondent affected shows the request is based on information that was not available prior to the protest. The Director shall consider all the facts available and issue a decision within five (5) business days after receipt of the request for rehearing, unless additional time is necessary, in which case, the affected respondent will be notified of the delay.

Women and Minority-Owned Business Use Requirements

There will be no Women and Minority-Owned Business (WMBE) set-aside requirements on the resulting contract. However, in accordance with the Seattle Municipal Code 20.46A, the selected contractor will be required to make affirmative efforts to utilize WMBEs in performing the contract, whether as subcontractors, suppliers, or in any other capacity. The selected contractor must also comply with affirmative action and equal employment opportunity provisions mandated by SMC 20.44.

Fair Contracting Practices Ordinance

The selected contractors will be required to comply with the Fair Contracting Practices Ordinance of the City of Seattle (Ordinance 119601), as amended. Conduct made unlawful by that ordinance constitutes a breach of contract. Engaging in an unfair contracting practice may also result in the imposition of a civil fine or forfeiture under the Seattle Criminal Code as well as various civil remedies.

If you have any questions about this RFQ please contact Ken Takahashi, City of Seattle's Office of Economic Development, (206) 684-8378 or ken.takahashi@seattle.gov.