



REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

**SEND D D REGIONAL
ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT
LITE PROGRAM**

DUE BY: MAY 1, 2022

Prepared By :
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REQUIREMENTS

RFQ Name: SENDD Regional Economic Development Lite Program

TERMS:

The following terms will apply to this Request for Qualification (RFQ) and to any subsequent contract. Submission of a Qualification in response to this RFQ indicates acceptance of all the following terms:

- a. "Contract" means the written agreement resulting from this RFQ executed by the Southeast Nebraska Development District (SENDD)
- b. "Contractor", or "Provider" means the successful Applicant to this RFQ who enters into a written Contract with SENDD
- c. "SENDD" means the Southeast Nebraska Development District
- d. "Firm", "Proposer", "Vendor", or "Bidder" means an individual or a company that submits, or intends to submit, a Qualification in response to this "RFQ";

SCOPE OF SERVICE AND GENERAL CONDITIONS:

1. Services shall be provided as requested by SENDD in compliance with the Scope of Services as described in this RFQ
2. The Provider shall maintain such records as deemed necessary pursuant to the EDA CARES grant and SENDD rules to assure a proper accounting for all costs and funds collected. These records shall be submitted for audit purposes to SENDD. The Provider shall submit financial, program progress, and other reports as requested by SENDD.
3. Information provided by SENDD shall be used only for purposes intended and in accordance with federal and state laws and regulations

ABOUT SENDD

SENDD is a voluntary association of counties and municipalities formed under the Nebraska Interlocal Cooperation Act. SENDD's membership includes the counties (and their participating communities) of: Butler, Fillmore, Gage, Jefferson, Johnson, Lancaster, Nemaha, Otoe, Pawnee, Polk, Richardson, Saline, Saunders, Seward, Thayer, and York.

SENDD's area is over 8,300 square miles. Primarily rural, SENDD represents nearly 150 jurisdictions ranging in size from 30-10,000 residents. SENDD is dedicated to place-making. Place-making focuses on community's assets, inspiration, and potential. Through projects aimed at supporting local businesses, job creation, affordable and safe housing, education, health, and recreation, SENDD is actively engaged in place-making in Nebraska.

SENDD has a wide variety of services ranging from grant writing to financial packaging. SENDD's four departments include Community Development, Economic Development, Disaster Recovery, and Housing.

To learn more about SENDD, visit our website at www.sendd.org.

SERVICE DESCRIPTION

SENDD is searching for a Contractor to help develop an Economic Development Plan Lite Toolkit to assist communities who are considering expanding their economic development services. The project will serve all 16 counties within SENDD's region including Butler, Fillmore, Gage, Jefferson, Johnson, Lancaster, Nemaha, Otoe, Pawnee, Polk, Richardson, Saline, Saunders, Seward, Thayer, and York and their respective communities. The only stipulation is eligible counties and communities must be members of SENDD.

The Toolkit will include the following components –

1. Virtual Economic Development 101
2. Toolkit
3. Diversity & Inclusion Handbook

The Toolkit will provide community leaders with resources/guides needed in developing action and strategic plans that spur economic growth and build resiliency within our rural communities. The kit should contain a self-assessment, templates, survey examples, sample action plan pillars and initiatives, and process recommendations that could be utilized by rural communities wanting to create economic development opportunities.

The implementation of this plan addresses the need to focus efforts on rural economic development and provide communities the resources they need that might not have been readily available to them before. Specifically, the initiative calls for: 1) a Virtual Economic Development 101 for Elected Officials; 2) Economic Development Plan Toolkit; 3) Diversity & Inclusion Handbook; 4) Education workshops to ensure that the communities have the information needed to understand the curriculum and implement the toolkit in their community.

SEND D will convene a small taskforce that will consist of economic developers & elected officials across the region. These individuals will work with SEND D and the Contractor in identifying best approaches to developing all components of the initiative and serve as an advocate to other communities wanting to participate in the program. SEND D's Economic Development Specialist will serve as the Project Manager.

GOALS OF THE REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT LITE PROGRAM

SEND D's area currently has approximately 12 Economic Development Organizations (EDO) that vary from county-level to volunteer. The intent of developing this program is to increase the number of EDOs within the region who can focus on addressing current gaps and needs in our small rural communities and address the decrease in population, workforce needs, deteriorating buildings, and work to address gaps in services that were exacerbated during COVID-19 pandemic.

SEND D defines addressing economic development needs with the following qualities –

1. Resiliency
2. Availability
3. Reliability
4. Quality

The program will pursue this goal by addressing and answering:

1. Does my community currently have an EDO?
2. Are my community's elected officials informed/educated on what economic development means and its value?
3. Have community leaders involved community residents?
4. Is my community prepared to welcome diverse backgrounds?

SCOPE OF WORK

The Vendor shall draft and submit a Scope of Work that outlines what will be required to accomplish the project. At a minimum, the Scope of Work will address their firm's ability to provide the following items:

ED Curriculum –

Providing communities an ED 101 training course that is virtual and interactive. A piece of it will include how to prepare and respond to natural disasters and pandemics, such as a fire in the business district or COVID-19. The curriculum would need to be embedded on SENDD's website and be available for all communities who are looking to expand their knowledge on economic development. The curriculum should address the following components, including but not limited to –

- Overall definition of economic development & terms
- Business Retention & Expansion
- Business Attraction
 - Site development
 - Confidentiality & Non-Disclosure Agreements
- Workforce Development
- Quality of Life
 - Education
 - Healthcare
 - Housing
 - Talent
- Marketing
- Economic Development financing
- Interactive games & quizzes (goal is for communities to apply the information they learned into real life situations)
 - IE – card game
 - Simulator (similar to the Poverty simulator)
 - Board game
- Resources

Toolkit - the toolkit itself has been created by SENDD staff. Additional templates are needed to make the toolkit well rounded and simplistic for communities to use.

1. ED Plan Lite Guide & Flowchart
2. Self/windshield-assessment templates
3. Ready-assessments (what is the community's overall goal)
4. Community surveys
5. Action/Strategic Plan Components

D&I Handbook (how to be a more diverse & inclusive community)

1. Recruiting immigrant workers
2. Recruiting diverse businesses
3. Translating community website in more than 1 language
4. Translating community marketing in more than 1 language

5. Hiring a bi-lingual individual

RFQ REQUIREMENTS

Vendor must respond with the following:

1. A cover letter stating the name, address, and telephone number of the proposing Vendor. This letter must bear the signature of the person having the authority to make the qualification for the firm.
2. Individual or Company Overview
3. Qualifications/Professional/Competence/Training
 - Vendor must provide qualifications as well as experience & information on key personnel.
 - Vendor should list any similar projects
 - Vendor must submit a list of all employees that will be associated with the contract.
4. References:
 - Vendor must provide the names and telephone numbers of at least three references
5. Familiarity
 - Vendor will provide a general overview of familiarity of what economic development could look like in rural communities.

INNOVATION & COMMENT

Vendor may include any other information that is believed to be relevant but is not specifically asked in this RFQ. Vendor may explain in detail any innovation, alternatives, or more cost-effective approaches available in any area of the RFQ. Vendor may provide suggestions of other products or services available that may assist the Region.

PAYMENT

SENDD will approve all payment of funds for this project upon receipt of invoices. The chosen Contractor will invoice SENDD 50% of the total invoice after the contract has been approved. The remaining 50% will be invoiced on or around December 1, 2022. SENDD shall not be billed for, and reimbursement shall not be made for, time involved in activities outside of those defined in the Cost Per Service.

KEY TARGET DATES

Listed below are the key target dates associated with the project described in this RFQ. Dates are approximate and vary:

4/15/2022 – Issue Date of RFQ

4/15/2022 – 4/30/2022 – Question Period

5/1/2022 at 5:00pm – RFQ Due Date and Time

5/8/2022 (anticipated) – Vendor Selection

5/15/2022 (anticipated) – Tentative Contract Award Date

6/1/2022 (anticipated) – Begin gathering data

12/1/2022 (anticipated) – Completion and presentation of the initiative

12/31/2022 (anticipated) – Contract end date/grant agreement expiration date

VENDOR QUALIFICATIONS

Qualifications will be considered only from Vendors who have experienced personnel and necessary equipment to provide the required services. SENDD may request information substantiating the requirements. Failure to provide this information by a given deadline may result in a Vendor's Qualification being declared non-responsive.

WRITTEN AGREEMENT

The selected Vendor shall be required to enter into a written agreement with SENDD. Signature on the Qualification Cover Sheet shall serve as an acknowledgement that the Vendor is willing to enter into an agreement with the SENDD if their Qualification is accepted.

EVALUATION AND CONTRACT AWARD

SEND D will evaluate and select a Vendor to provide the required services based on the completed Qualification responses. SENDD will be the sole judge in determining how the evaluation process shall be conducted and what Vendor shall be considered for award as deemed to be in the best interest of the State.

PREPARATION OF Qualification

The Qualification must be signed by a company representative authorized to bind the Vendor contractually. Failure to read the RFQ and these instructions will be at the Vendor's own risk. Corrections and/or modifications received after the closing time specified will not be accepted.

All information submitted in response to this RFQ is public after the award and/or contract has been executed with the successful Vendor. If Vendor includes as part of the response to the RFQ any information that the Vendor believes to be a trade secret or other privileged or confidential data, the Vendor must supply under separate cover and identify as confidential. Statements that the entire Qualification is confidential will not be honored. SENDD will endeavor to keep that information confidential, separate and apart from the Qualification subject to the provisions of the Nebraska Open Records Act or order of court.

OMISSIONS

Should SENDD omit information from this RFQ that is necessary for a clear understanding of the work, or should it appear that various instructions are in conflict, then the Vendor shall secure written instructions from SENDD at least seventy-two (72) hours prior to the time and date of the Qualification opening.

DEBARMENT

By submitting this qualification, the Vendor certifies that neither the company nor its principals is presently debarred, suspended, in the process of debarment, declared ineligible or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by any federal state department or agency.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

SENDD adheres to a policy of equal opportunity and non-discrimination and will ensure that all Vendors will be treated fairly and equitably throughout the bidding process, including the advertisement, evaluation and selection stages.

COST OF DEVELOPING QUALIFICATIONS

All costs related to the preparation of the Qualifications and any related activities are the sole responsibility of the Vendor. SENDD assumes no liability for any costs incurred by Vendors throughout the entire selection process.

QUALIFICATION OWNERSHIP

All qualifications, including attachments, supplementary materials, addenda, etc. shall become the property of SENDD and will not be returned to the Vendor.

ADDITIONAL GENERAL INFORMATION & CLARIFICATION

For additional information or clarification concerning the services specified in this RFQ under Scope of Work, interested parties must submit their questions or comments, in writing via email, to Kelly Gentrup, kgentrup@sendd.org. Questions will be received,

answered in writing, and sent via email to all firms who received the RFQ or expressed interest in accordance with the dates designated in the "KEY TARGET DATES" section of this RFQ. Only one copy (paper or electronic) of the Qualification should be submitted.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Late qualifications will not be accepted or considered. It is the responsibility of the vendor to ensure that their Qualification is properly delivered to the required authority at the time and place designated in this RFQ.

SENDDD will notify unsuccessful vendors in writing or by telephone within approximately ten (10) days following the closing date for receiving qualifications. SENDDD's silence does not imply any acceptance or rejection of any qualification offer.

Issuance of this RFQ does not constitute a commitment by SENDDD or the Development Districts to award a contract. SENDDD reserves the right to reject any or all Qualifications received in response to this RFQ, to waive minor irregularities and informalities in Qualifications received, or to cancel this RFQ if it is in the best interest of SENDDD to do so.

The Vendor agrees, if a qualification is accepted by SENDDD, to furnish supplies and/or services in strict accordance with the Qualification specifications and at those prices set forth for each item in said qualification.

SENDDD is exempt from Nebraska sales tax (State sales tax exempt 05-002144921).

EVALUATION CRITERIA

SENDDD and the Steering Committee will analyze information provided by all Vendors. Criteria considered by SENDDD and the Steering Committee in ranking the proposed exercise coordination Qualifications will be as follows:

- | | |
|--|-----------|
| a) Company Overview | 10 Points |
| b) Qualifications/Professional Competence/Training | 45 Points |
| c) References | 15 Points |
| d) Familiarity | 30 Points |

TOTAL 100 Points