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## Request for Candidates

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### *Open Call for Hospitality and Live Events Vendors*

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World Business Chicago

June 2022

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## SECTION I - BACKGROUND INFORMATION

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### WHO WE ARE

World Business Chicago (WBC) is Chicago's public-private economic development agency. Our mission is to drive inclusive economic growth and job creation and to promote Chicago as a leading global city. Our vision is to ensure that all Chicagoans prosper.

As a public-private partnership between the City and the business community, WBC's Board of Directors is composed of business and civic leaders who guide the progression of Chicago's business climate. Working in partnership with the City of Chicago, WBC strives to ensure that all Chicagoans can prosper and participate in the economic growth of our city. With consistent efforts to nurture Chicago neighborhoods and foster the city's tech and innovation ecosystems, WBC consistently creates opportunities for economic growth.

This Request for Candidates (RFC) serves to identify hospitality and live events vendors across Chicago that would be interested in working with WBC to service corporate-style events. WBC is looking to create a vendor pool of small, local, diverse, and qualified vendors from all areas of the city. WBC hopes to provide business opportunities to as many hospitality and live events businesses as possible through conducting this open call and RFC.

### KEY CONTACTS

Lia Kapani, Director of Public Sector Investment Strategy  
Nicolette Peters, Project Coordinator for Public Sector Investment Strategy

## SECTION II. - OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE OF SERVICES

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### OBJECTIVE

This Request for Candidates (RFC) serves to identify hospitality and live events vendors across Chicago that can provide event services such as audio & visual, décor, event planning, event staffing, food & beverage, and transportation services.

Through this RFC, WBC will compile a pool of diverse, qualified hospitality and live events vendors that are interested in servicing corporate-style events convened by WBC. As WBC starts planning an event, WBC will review this pool of vendors to source quotes and bids depending on the event size and services needed. Businesses who respond to this RFC are not guaranteed a contract with WBC. WBC commits to offering qualified vendors from this pool an opportunity to bid on events, but WBC reserves the right to solicit bids from additional vendors if necessary.

This RFC also serves to provide business opportunities to as many local hospitality and live events businesses as possible. WBC commits to contracting with diverse vendors across Chicago's neighborhoods, so business opportunities can be equitably distributed across the city. WBC also hopes to utilize its events as opportunities to highlight Chicago's local businesses and facilitate them in making connections with corporate and industry leaders.

When reviewing proposals, WBC will evaluate the candidate's capacity to service professional, corporate-style events. Candidates must also meet the following criteria:

1. Must be located within Chicago
2. Must be a small business with under 500 employees (as defined by the Department of Treasury)
  - a. <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2022-01-27/pdf/2022-00292.pdf> (pages 39-40)
3. Must have existed before March 12, 2020
4. Must have been significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic (i.e., closure dates, staff layoffs, significant revenue decrease, etc.)

### SCOPE OF SERVICES

All services must be performed with professional skill, care, planning, and diligence. Services must also be competitively-priced. WBC has outlined examples of the types of services needed below under "Scope of Services." This RFC serves to identify vendors for various event types and sizes, so the scopes below are intentionally broad.

#### Experience Requirements

- Experience working professional and corporate-style events
- Experience working small to medium-sized events (**examples** below)
  - Tier 1: Workshop for 10 people with light snacks and drinks
  - Tier 2: Reception for 50 people with passed hors d'oeuvres or full meal
  - Tier 3: Party for 200 people with heavier snacks and drinks or full meal
- Experience coordinating with other event businesses (examples below)
  - A catering company coordinating with a staffing agency for service staff

- An audio company coordinating with a production agency
- Ability to keep detailed and organized records
- For event planners and A/V companies – Preferred experience with live broadcasting and filming events

### Scope of Services (Examples)

We expect the ability to...

- Audio/Visual
  - Livestream and record events
  - Provide necessary production equipment or partner with an equipment rental company
  - Support hybrid meetings using Teams, Zoom, etc.
  - Support Q&A, panelists, or speakers with microphones and presentation technology
  - Troubleshoot challenges onsite
- Event Planner
  - Coordinate and manage across multiple vendors
  - Create a cohesive theme and design concept that aligns with WBC's vision
  - Manage within the given budget
  - Work closely with WBC's marketing team
- Event Rental
  - Deliver proposed items (e.g., chairs, tables, stage, podium)
  - Manage décor or coordinate with a décor company to deliver a visually appealing space in line with WBC's vision
  - Provide stage set-up and tear-down when requested
- Food and Beverage (E.g., restaurants, caterers)
  - Accommodate dietary restrictions and allergies
  - Coordinate with venue to ensure smooth service delivery
  - Deliver proposed food and/or beverage items
  - Professionally serve items or partner with a staff service organization
  - Provide flatware, linens, etc. or partner with an organization that provides this service
  - Set up and clean up
- Staffing Company
  - Be responsible for filling in staffing gaps if this issue arises
  - Provide staff for set up or clean up if required
  - Provide staff for duration of the event
  - *Preference given to staffing businesses that hire locally*
- Transportation
  - Provide accessibility accommodations or support for those with mobility challenges
  - Provide ushers or onsite staff to direct attendees to buses
  - Transport individuals via car or bus service
  - *Must be a professional transportation company (not looking for gig workers, i.e. Uber/Lyft drivers)*

If there is a reason you cannot meet all of the expectations, please explain why in your submission and include solutions you have found in the past. We will not disqualify candidates who cannot address the full scope, but it may factor into final vendor selection for an event.

## SECTION III. - PROCESS AND SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

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### PROCESS

**WBC is accepting applications on an ongoing basis, and preference may be given to early respondents. WBC anticipates closing our first round on August 1, 2022 and a second round on October 1, 2022.** WBC encourages candidates to submit their applications as soon as possible to be considered for the maximum number of opportunities.

Submissions should include the materials outlined below. Upon receiving a candidate's submission, WBC will contact the candidate if clarification is needed. **To provide a submission, candidates must fill out the Hospitality and Live Events Vendor Open Call Google Form (<https://forms.gle/doBT78tDFMvU5fsaA>).**

WBC will accept questions in writing via e-mail at any time. Questions should be submitted to **[vendors@worldbusinesschicago.com](mailto:vendors@worldbusinesschicago.com)**. Please expect two to three business days for a response.

By submitting a proposal, the candidate agrees to accept and abide by the terms of this RFC. WBC reserves the right to reject any or all submissions, to waive any informality or irregularity, and to accept any responsive submissions which it may deem to be in the best interest of WBC. Only submissions from entities complying with the provisions of this RFC will be considered. The submissions can be withdrawn at any time by emailing **[vendors@worldbusinesschicago.com](mailto:vendors@worldbusinesschicago.com)** with a written request. Candidates should contact WBC at **[vendors@worldbusinesschicago.com](mailto:vendors@worldbusinesschicago.com)** concerning this RFC and should not rely on representations, statements, or explanations other than those made in this RFC or in any written addendum to this RFC.

WBC will also host a webinar and live Q&A session on **Tuesday, June 28 at 3 pm CT**. It will also be recorded and uploaded to our website afterwards. For more information, please visit **[www.worldbusinesschicago.com/open-call](http://www.worldbusinesschicago.com/open-call)**.

As WBC starts planning an event, WBC will contact the candidate and provide event details to request a specific proposal with cost quotes. Section IV includes an example of this process.

### SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

1. Company information
  - a) Description and mission
  - b) Contact information (contact name, email, phone number, & location address)
  - c) Websites and social channels (if applicable)
  - d) Examples of commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion
2. Team makeup and company demographics
3. Client references *with contact information (email and/or phone number)*
  - a) Any visual examples that would help WBC better understand your relevant experience
4. General budget or range of cost for services offered
5. Statement of any relevant conflicts of interest in relation to WBC
6. Upon Request - Ability to provide documentation that your businesses satisfies requirements outlined in Section II

### Submission Information Details

*Please ensure the following information is included in your Google Forms submission.*

- Which of the event size tier(s) (described in Section II) the candidate is best equipped to serve
- Types of services that your business offers and respective pricing estimates (**examples** below)
  - A/V – Description of available audio, video, and lighting equipment and services, estimated labor costs, additional expenses, and location range
  - Event Planner – Description of available services (e.g., event styling, design, decor, event size range)
  - Event Rental – Description of available equipment (e.g., chairs, tables, décor), staffing capabilities, and location range
  - Food and Beverage - Description of potential guest capacity, event menus, bar packages, onsite staff, available equipment, and location range
  - Staffing Company – Description of staffing capabilities, available services (e.g., passed hors d'oeuvres, bartending, table service), and location range
  - Transportation – Description of available services (e.g., bus sizes, types of cars), availability for onsite services, hours, and location range
- List of references and/or past clients with contact information (email and/or phone number) and examples of past work

WBC hopes to understand each candidate's capabilities and available services through their submissions. If there is a reason you cannot provide all of the information below, please explain why. Please contact WBC via the email above, and we will do our best to assist on an individual basis. The omission of any of the requested information and failure to provide explanation may make your submission ineligible for consideration.

## SECTION IV. - EVALUATION PROCESS

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WBC intends to conduct a comprehensive and impartial evaluation of proposals received in response to this RFC.

### EVALUATION CRITERIA

WBC will review the quality, past performance, diversity and social equity, and proposed costs in candidate submissions. When reviewing proposals, WBC will also assess the candidate's responsiveness and compliance with the requirements outlined in Sections II and III. WBC will use these factors to select which candidates are eligible to be added to the vendor pool.

### EVALUATION PROCESS AND EXAMPLE

WBC will review submissions to ensure that the candidate is eligible as defined in Section II and that the submission includes the requirements outlined in Section III. When planning for a specific event, WBC will reach out to relevant candidates to request a specific proposal. After obtaining at least three specific proposals or "bids," WBC will evaluate the candidate based on the criteria described below.

#### Bid Selection Criteria

1. Quality of Submission:
  - a. Description of candidate's experience and/or examples of past work
  - b. Creativity, flexibility, and problem-solving to address unique situations
  - c. Proposal's detail of factors such as staffing plan, menu selection, equipment rental, etc.
2. Past Performance:
  - a. Previous experience working with government or corporate agencies
  - b. Ability to document and maintain cost and staffing records
  - c. Feedback obtained from references upon contacting them
3. Diversity and Social Equity:
  - a. Proven commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion
  - b. Minority or woman-owned business
  - c. Physical location in Chicago
    - i. *WBC is looking to provide opportunities to candidates across Chicago's neighborhoods.*
  - d. "Green" measures or commitment to sustainability
4. Proposed Cost Structure
  - a. Reasonableness and competitiveness of the candidate's potential costs
5. Ability to Satisfy Requirements Outlined in Section II
  - a. Must be located within the Chicago
  - b. Must be a small business with under 500 employees
  - c. Must have existed before March 12, 2020
  - d. Must have been significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic (i.e., closure dates, staff layoffs, significant revenue decrease, etc.)



For example, when WBC needs to organize a small workshop as described in Tier 1, WBC will email all candidates who indicated this as an available service that they offer. In this email, WBC will include specifics as to the venue, time, audience, etc. in order to obtain a proposal and cost information from each interested vendor. Throughout the evaluation and selection period, each candidate may be required to provide additional information, make presentations, and/or attend meetings as requested by WBC.

#### Process Example

**Step 1:** WBC starts planning a small workshop with 15 attendees. WBC will email all catering companies that indicated they are capable of doing a Tier 1 size event. WBC will include the venue, budget, date, needed services, and other relevant information.

**Step 2:** All interested candidates will submit a proposal with menu options, staffing plans, flatware, etc. along with a cost estimate and quote breakdown within a defined time period.

**Step 3:** After receiving at least three proposals or “bids,” WBC will select the best fit for the event based on a scoring system for the “Bid Selection Criteria” described above.

**Step 4:** WBC will coordinate with the finalist selected in order to sign a contract and move forward with planning for the event.

## SECTION V. - CONDITIONS, DISCLAIMERS, AND DISCLOSURES

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This RFC does not represent a commitment or offer by WBC to enter into an agreement with a Candidate or to pay any costs incurred in the preparation of a submission to this RFC. The Proposer assumes responsibility for all costs incurred in responding to this RFC. It is understood and agreed that WBC assumes no liability for the Proposer's costs incurred in responding to this RFC. WBC reserves the right to seek new submissions or bids when this is in the best interest of WBC. WBC reserves the right to reasonably request additional information or clarification of information provided in the submission without changing the terms of the RFC..

### Ownership of Proposals

The submission and any information part of the submission will not be returned to the sender. WBC reserves the right to retain all submission and any ideas in the submissions regardless of whether a Proposer is selected. Submission of a response to this RFC indicates acceptance by the Candidate of the conditions contained within the RFC document.

### Improper Practices

The Proposer shall not offer any gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value to any official or employee of WBC, WBC's evaluation team, or any other individual or organization that may have a clear interest in the outcome of the selection process, for the purposes of influencing the outcome of the RFC response selection process.

The Proposer shall not collude in any manner or engage in any practices with any other Proposer(s), which may restrict or eliminate competition or otherwise restrain trade. Violation of this instruction will cause the Proposer(s) submission(s) to be rejected by WBC. This prohibition is not intended to preclude joint ventures or subcontracts.

### Interpretation

Should any question arise as to the proper interpretation of the terms and conditions contained in this RFC, WBC's decision shall be final.

### Insurance Requirements

At all times during the term of any resulting Agreement and during the time period following final completion if the Proposer is required to return and perform any additional work, Proposer is required to maintain the minimum insurance coverage insuring all operations related to the final contract. WBC reserves the right to modify insurance requirements based on the nature of the services rendered or the projects required under the contract.

### Confidentiality

Except with WBC's approval, the Proposer shall not directly or indirectly disclose, divulge, or communicate to any person, firm, or corporation, other than WBC or its designated representatives, or as required by law, any non-public information which it may have obtained during the RFC process concerning any matter relating to the work or regular business of WBC. Proposers who are not engaged by WBC shall immediately destroy any information provided by WBC as a part of this RFC.

### Rejection of Proposals

Proposals that do not comply with the submission requirements of the RFC, or that contain omissions, erasures, alterations, additions not called for, or that are irregular in any way, may be rejected as informal and insufficient. WBC, however, reserves the right to waive any or all informalities when it considers a waiver to be in its and the public's best interest.

In addition to all other basis for rejection, any Proposer found to have falsified any information to WBC in relation to this or any other procurement, or which has been barred from doing business with WBC, the City of Chicago or State of Illinois, or which has been convicted of a felony or entered into a plea agreement related to procurement contracting with any unit of government, may be rejected.