

Request for Proposals for Part-Time Consultants for Start-up Assistance & Business Expansion

The Alabama Small Business Development Center (SBDC) Network is a state-wide program that provides management and technical assistance for business start-ups, growth, and access to capital. The Alabama SBDC is seeking qualified business consultants with experience and background to provide advising and training to SBDC clients interested in starting a business or growing an existing business.

Scope of Work

The SBDC provides technical assistance to a wide variety of businesses across the state including operations in retail, hospitality, medical, food products, personal care, agriculture, science and engineering services, recreation, housing, marketing, and technology-related businesses. The SBDC is seeking business consultants to serve as independent contractors to assist the SBDC to:

Consultants to Assist with Business Start-up:

- 1) Identify and assess the needs of pre-venture clients interested in starting a new business;
- 2) Provide individual advising to guide SBDC clients through the business start-up process;
- 3) Provide training in group settings via webinars on the process of starting a business and the resources available to assist in business start-up and growth.
- 4) Provide services on a virtual basis, given pandemic-related restrictions on face-to-face meetings and travel.

Consultants to Assist Existing Businesses with Growth Opportunities:

- 1) Identify and assess the needs of existing businesses and growth opportunities;
- 2) Provide individual advising to guide SBDC clients on a variety of business topics including strategic planning, customer segmentation, marketing, payroll and money management, and other business processes and expansion challenges;
- 3) Provide services on a virtual basis, given pandemic-related restrictions on face-to-face meetings and travel.

Qualifications

- 1) Experience in operating or working in a small business;
- 2) Experience in small business consulting;
- 3) Knowledge of specific industry sectors, rural/urban demographics, or regional area of the state;
- 4) Experience with SBDC programs and or SBA lending programs are a plus.



Selection and Guidelines

Consultants will be evaluated based on relevant experience, proposed costs, and interviews. Selection of consultants will be made at various times during the year based on demand for services.

Consultants must meet the requirements to be qualified to work as independent contractors for Troy University and comply with all regulations governing independent contractors. All consultants are required to review and sign the SBDC Conflict of Interests Statement and adhere to client confidentiality and standards of conduct.

The consultant's labor fee is reimbursed based on a cost per hour. Travel expenses are reimbursed separately from the labor fee and are based on Troy University's travel policy. Consultants submit invoices to the SBDC at Troy University based on work completed. Appropriate case documentation must accompany each invoice and include narratives to support work activities completed for each project.

Response Requirements (minimum requirements)

For ease and efficiency of review, the SBDC at Troy University has specified the numbering protocol below for bidders. Please follow this numbering protocol correctly, and do not re-number, insert numbers, or otherwise modify the sequence.

1. Profile

- a. Name of the contact person, and contact information: Provide telephone, mobile telephone number, email address, and web address, as applicable.

2. Qualifications

- a. Provide a brief description of your experience and work history.
- b. Describe your work process.
- c. Special consideration: Describe why and how your experience is uniquely positioned to serve as an advisor.

3. Experience and ability to perform this work

- a. Describe area(s) of expertise.
- b. Provide examples of relevant work and/or case studies.
- c. Provide a minimum of three (3) references.

4. Pricing

- a. Provide an **all-inclusive hourly rate** for work related to Small Business Consulting.



Award

The SBDC at Troy University reserves the right to contract with more than one vendor for services described within this RFP. The SBDC at Troy University reserves the right not to award a contract for this RFP and will not reimburse the cost incurred by bidders who respond to this notice.

Anticipated Selection Schedule

- RFP Distributed May 25th, 2021
- **Proposal Due Date June 25th, 2021**
- Contractor Selection June 2021
- Commencement of Contract TBD

Protocols for Preparing and Delivering Responses to this RFP

Responses to this RFP must be delivered electronically to the SBDC at Troy University by **3:00 pm CST June 25th, 2021**. Responses must be submitted electronically via email to jbolivar@troy.edu with **"RFP Submission for Consulting Services"** in the subject line.

Submissions should consist of one (1) PDF document containing all the requested information in the same order as the numbered Response Requirements listed above.