



**REQUEST FOR INTEREST / QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ)
Business Loan Application Assistance Services**

INTRODUCTION

The National Development Council (NDC), Washington Department of Commerce, Connect2Capital, and Calvert Impact Capital have partnered to establish the Small Business Flex Fund to support long-term business recovery across the state of Washington. NDC will manage the Fund.

COVID-19 has been devastating on the small business community, with outsized impacts on already under resourced communities of color and immigrants and other underserved communities. This \$100 Million fund will partner with local Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) to bring a loan product tailored to meet the credit needs of small businesses in these communities. The centralized, online application is easily accessed with businesses matched with lenders. The business selects their lender, and the loan process begins. We project a 2-3 week process from complete application to a lending decision and funding.

Participating lenders have decades of experience in Washington serving Indigenous, rural, and immigrant communities and communities of color

Loan Terms					
Interest rate	Repayment term	Use of proceeds	Recourse	Fees	Loan amount
3.75% fixed interest for small businesses 2.75% fixed interest for non-profits	60-month term <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0-12 months: interest only payments, paid monthly 13 to 60 months: interest and principal payments with flat payments on a 48-month schedule, paid monthly 	Working capital including payroll, operating and emergency maintenance, utilities, rent, supplies, etc.	No collateral required	No upfront fees	Lesser of (a) \$150,000 or (b) 3-6 months revenue prior to the COVID-19 outbreak

While businesses need more than capital to succeed, we want to ensure that businesses across Washington State, rural, urban, and those with BIPOC ownership have access to the Fund. That is why we are seeking to expand our partnership to include business assistance providers across Washington. We are looking for dynamic organizations, committed to business success with an understanding of capital requirements to join us.



OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE OF WORK

We are seeking an initial 12-month partnership (with potential for extension) with business assistance organizations to provide:

- **Pre-application Technical Assistance:** Provide technical support to businesses and non-profit organizations to be loan application-ready. Organizations would work with existing clients to support their application as well as work with others referred to them based on their geographic focus, business type or community. Selected business assistance providers will receive training and will work with NDC and Connect2Capital to fully understand the eligibility and application requirements and the technical process for on-line application processes.

Technical support will include an initial assessment of application readiness based on requirements, work with the business on developing materials for application and assistance in completing applications.

- **Financial Package Technical Assistance:** Business assistance partners will be matched with CDFI lending partners to fully understand financial documentation requirements for credit underwriting approach. This collaboration is intended to ensure more successful applications. If a business cannot meet lender requirements, the assistance provider will continue work with that business to help them be lending ready and, whenever possible, assist their return to the application process for underwriting whenever possible. (The business doesn't start over but returns to their place for lending determination.)

Business assistance partners will partner with NDC, other Washington State Commerce partners and lending CDFIs to periodically review Fund application requirements, Fund success metrics and advise on changes necessary to increase access to Fund resources and business application success. In addition, providers are encouraged to identify and connect prospective applicants with other partners and resources necessary to maximize the Fund's impact on the target small business and nonprofit communities.

The Fund is projecting approximately 1,100 loans to support businesses. While expected to assist existing clients, we are seeking between 5 – 7 business assistance partners to support an additional 50-75 businesses with application support. The Fund is budgeting around \$35,000 - \$45,000 per organization.

I / RFQ REQUIREMENTS

If your organization would like to be a partner with the Small Business Flex Fund, please provide:

By Monday, May 17th, e-mail interest statement to cdepew@ndconline.org Provide lead person so we can provide more information and keep you up to date.



By Thursday, May 27th, provide detail on:

- a) Organization background including Board, Key Staff, and current services provided; and
 - b) Experience working with underrepresented, and underserved business, communities related to financial literacy and business planning and principles.
 - c) Business assistance in Washington State with businesses from specific communities, business types or sectors. What is your existing assistance pipeline and identify organization needs to increase assistance capacity. Provide detail on key staff, including resumes. Identify any needs for additional staff or services required to be successful. The predominant focus of the Fund is for existing businesses so detail work with existing businesses versus start-up businesses.
 - d) Expertise providing business planning and technical assistance, from start-up to market execution, and collaborating with business lenders.
 - e) Language capabilities of your team, and experience working with diverse and/or rural populations.
 - f) Requested budget detail to support additional services along with projected clients served.
- Indicate any other relevant experience that confirms the organization's qualifications as a business or non-profit technical assistance provider.
 - Include a list of contracts and other work during the last three to five years that relate to the organization's ability to perform the services needed under this RFP. List contract reference numbers, contract period of performance, contact persons, telephone numbers, and email addresses.

EVALUATION

- Degree to which the respondent has demonstrated the requisite skills and experience to provide the needed services especially in the start-up year of this new capital access program.
- Degree to which the respondent's experience demonstrates strength in cross cultural communication and working with diverse applicants.
- Degree to which the respondent has identified personnel that have a successful track record of providing similar services and getting positive results.
- Degree to which the respondent possesses available organizational capacity to begin to provide technical assistance services in the Program's start-up timeframe.



SUMMARY OF PROGRAM CONTRACTING AND PROGRAM START-UP SCHEDULE

RFQ RELEASED	MAY 11, 2021
INITIAL SUBMISSION OF INTEREST	MAY 17, 2021
INFORMATION SESSION TO LEARN MORE <i>(Notice to be provided to interested parties)</i>	MAY 19, 2021
QUALIFICATIONS DUE	MAY 27, 2021
FINALISTS SELECTED – FURTHER DISCUSSIONS	JUNE 8, 2021
CONTRACTS FINALIZED	JUNE 18, 2021
APPLICATION TRAINING BEGINS	JUNE 22, 2021
PROJECTED PROGRAM LAUNCH	JUNE 30, 2021

The schedule is quick and may adjust as needed. Questions can be directed to Chuck Depew, Senior Director, NDC at the above e-mail.

CDFI Partners

National Development Council
www.ndconline.org

Ascendus (formerly Accion East)
<https://www.ascendus.org/resources/financing-a-small-business/>

Business Impact Northwest
<https://businessimpactnw.org/>

Craft3
<https://www.craft3.org/>

Evergreen Business Capital
<https://www.evergreen504.com/>

Northwest Native Development Fund
<https://thenndf.org/>

OTHER SIMILAR FUNDS

New York State
<https://www.connect2capital.com/partners/new-york-forward-loan-fund/>

Southeastern United States (13 States)
<https://www.connect2capital.com/p/soar-fund/>

State of California
<https://www.connect2capital.com/p/californiarebuildingfund/>