

**Office of Economic Development
Integrated Business Retention and Expansion Services
Request for Qualifications**

Seattle's Office of Economic Development's (OED) new business model is based on the premise, widely supported among economic development experts, that retaining and growing early-stage and existing businesses is the most effective way of supporting entrepreneurs and economic growth. To best accomplish the goal of growing Seattle-based companies, OED has prioritized direct support to individual businesses by helping businesses access capital, expand into new markets, and navigate government.

A critical component for OED's approach is meeting with at least 700 businesses annually. OED's staff will be responsible for over 200 of the 700 business visits, focused on growth companies (in addition to the industry sectors listed below) and businesses in Seattle's neighborhoods. For the remaining target of nearly 500 business visits, OED will enter into formal partnerships with direct service providers.

It is estimated that 350 of the 700 business visits will require some form of follow-up service. Typical follow-up business services to be provided by our partners will include connecting businesses with opportunities to expand their markets, advice and referral on financial and management challenges, support for grant applications and assistance in site location. OED will lead case management on issues regarding navigating government regulations.

OED seeks partners with strong industry expertise and the capacity to support the retention and growth of companies in targeted sectors. Interested organizations/firms are requested to provide an outline of their qualifications for assisting companies in one or more of the targeted business areas outlined below.

CORE WORKPLAN

Business Retention and Expansion Assistance and Case Management

- Counsel existing companies on business growth opportunities and to leverage competitive advantages
- Connect target industry businesses with other companies, organizations, and resources in the region essential to growing their businesses
- Visit Seattle businesses in targeted industry and business sectors listed below
- Identify issues and trends impacting businesses, such as permitting, regulations, workforce development, and general business climate issues
- Coordinate with OED staff on results of their business visits to Seattle-based companies and identify strategies to assist these companies and address broader issues in the targeted sectors.

TARGETED INDUSTRIES

Seattle's Basic Industries: Manufacturing, Logistics, Maritime, and Shipbuilding

Seattle's industrial and maritime base continues to be critical to our economic diversity and represents approximately 20% of the city's economy. A national real estate forecast recently noted that Seattle will be the nation's fifth-best industrial market for investors in 2010. We invite respondents to address how they would support existing industrial and maritime companies, with particular focus on business retention and expansion.

Targeted company profile and expected number of company visits:

- Seattle-based **manufacturing, logistics, maritime, and shipbuilding** companies with \$1MM – 50MM in revenues, 10 -100 employees and potential for growth
- Target 200 visits annually with a majority fitting company profile above

Desired qualifications of respondent

- Capacity to identify new markets for businesses
- Corporate strategy and research expertise
- Ability to help businesses access capital
- Real estate and site selection expertise
- Effective business outreach capability
- Evidence of deep industry relationships

Emerging Industries: Clean Technology/Energy and Life Sciences/Global Health

Supporting emerging sectors is critical to the city's economic diversity and long-term health. Because of Seattle's competitive advantages in clean technology/energy and life sciences/global health, we invite respondents to address how they would support the businesses in each sector, with particular focus on expansion and commercialization.

Targeted company profile and expected number of company visits:

- Early-stage and established companies poised for growth in **clean technology/energy** and **life sciences/global health** sectors.
- Target 200 visits annually with a majority fitting company profile above

Desired qualifications of respondent

- Corporate strategy and research expertise
- Ability to help firms access capital, especially early-stage companies
- Real estate and site selection expertise
- Ability to identify promising early-stage companies
- Helping companies translate research ideas to commercial phase
- Evidence of deep industry relationships

TARGETED GEOGRAPHY

Central Business District: Retail, Professional Services, and Information Technology

Seattle's central business district is a major economic engine for the region and has a broad mix of employers and business sectors and is home to the region's most

successful retailers, financial institutions and information technology companies. Respondents are asked to focus on helping retain and attract retail, professional services, and information technology companies to downtown.

Targeted company profile and expected number of company visits:

- Medium to large regional, national, and global **retail, professional service** (i.e. financial services, legal, etc.) and **information technology** (i.e. web services, digital gaming, mobile device applications, etc.) companies
- Target 80 visits annually with a majority fitting company profile above

Desired qualifications of respondent

- Demonstrated relationships with downtown real estate brokerage community and property owners
- Marketing expertise
- Knowledge of downtown retail/office business needs
- Effective business outreach capability

REPORTING

Outcome measurement is a critical part of this work. Successful respondents will be required to use a City-selected business contact management system. Respondents will work with OED to generate quarterly and annual reports that shall include economic impact data for Seattle specific business assistance activity, including:

- Descriptions of the Seattle-based businesses visited
- Number of business issues identified and resolved
- Business sales growth (annual reporting)
- Businesses adding jobs (annual reporting)
- Identification of issues and trends impacting businesses in these sectors
- Number of businesses accessing debt or equity capital and amount of capital

BUDGET

Total budget for this work is approximately \$500,000 over a two-year period and will be split among the targeted areas listed above.

- \$200,000 in 2010 (work will be performed from May through December of 2010)
- \$300,000 in for 2011; this funding level will be subject to future City budget authorization.

PREPARING A LETTER OF QUALIFICATIONS

Respondents can focus their submissions on one or more of the above targeted areas. We are especially interested in leveraging existing business support programs and industry expertise to create innovative and new partnerships between organizations/firms with complementary skills to deliver these services.

After review of responses, OED may request collaboration between organizations in order to achieve the highest impact.

If your organization/firm is interested in competing for this work, please prepare a letter of no more than 10 pages outlining qualifications.

Submissions should specifically address the following:

1. Identify the targeted area or industry (or industries) of focus
2. Address desired qualifications outlined above for that sector(s)
3. Describe business outreach strategies
4. Discuss your firm's experience and relationships in this industry
5. Describe how this scope of work will leverage existing programs and funding sources
6. Provide qualifications and background for key staff
7. If you plan to partner with other firms/organizations in delivering this service, please describe their role and background
8. Proposed budget and level of service (for example, the estimated number of business contacts)

SUBMISSIONS

Your response must arrive no later than 5:00 p.m. on March 5, 2010 to:

Brian Surratt
Office of Economic Development
City of Seattle
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. Faxes will not be accepted.

SCHEDULE

Proposals due to the Office of Economic Development: March 5, 2010

Finalist interviews: March 15, 2010 (week of)

Notification of selection: March 26, 2010

Contract executed by: April 16, 2010

A selection committee will review the responses to this Request, followed by conversations with finalists, and selection of one or more organizations.

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 RFP 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 Request please contact Brian Surratt, City of Seattle's Office of Economic Development, (206) 684-8591 or brian.surratt@seattle.gov.