

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
ECONOMIC FEASIBILITY STUDY ASSISTANCE**

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Region Nine Development Commission (RNDC) desires to solicit qualifications for assistance with four separate components of a feasibility study pertaining to a Manufacturing Resource Center. The project will increase Region Nine's capacity to provide technical assistance to economic development stakeholders across the nine counties of south-central Minnesota and build upon the network created by MedTech Connect and other projects in the region. To achieve this goal, this project focuses on needs assessments pertaining to the feasibility study.

SECTION II: SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

RNDC is soliciting proposals for four areas of contractual work: 1) cost assessments for building renovations/ construction, 2) outreach/marketing to private enterprises, 3) assessments for training/educational needs, and 4) investment assessments. All tasks must be completed no later than April 15, 2020. The contracts will be administered by RNDC.

The issuance of this Request for Proposal (RFP) constitutes only an invitation to submit proposals to RNDC. It is not to be construed as an official request for bids, but as a means by which RNDC can acquire information related to the purchase of services. Any proposal submitted as provided herein constitutes a potential invitation to negotiate and **IS NOT A BID**.

RNDC reserves the right to determine, in their sole and absolute discretion, whether any aspect of the proposal satisfactorily meets the criteria established in this RFP, the right to seek clarification from any Proposer(s), the right to negotiate with any Proposer(s) whether or not they submitted a proposal, the right to reject any or all proposals with or without cause, and the right to cancel and/or amend, in part or entirely, the RFP.

The RFP does not commit RNDC either to award a contract or to pay for any costs incurred in the preparation of a proposal. Submission of a proposal as provided herein shall neither obligate nor entitle a prospective Proposer to enter into an agreement with RNDC.

It is understood that any proposal received and evaluated by RNDC can be used as a basis for direct negotiation of the cost and terms of a contract between RNDC and the proposer and/or firm submitting such a proposal. RNDC reserves the right to negotiate pertinent contract terms concurrently with any number of firms as they deem in their best interest, whether or not such firm has submitted a proposal. In submitting this proposal, it is understood by the Proposer that RNDC reserves the right to accept any proposal, to reject any and all proposals and to waive any irregularities or informalities that RNDC deem are in its best interest and align closely with the project workplan.

Evaluation of proposals by staff, advisory committees, or by any other group is advisory only. RNDC may consider or reject such evaluations or recommendations for any or all proposals. Such evaluations are for the sole benefit of RNDC, and as such, they are not binding upon RNDC nor may they be relied upon in any way by a Proposer.

RNDC reserves the right to request additional information, oral discussion, or a presentation in support of the written proposal. RNDC is not obligated to respond to any proposal submitted nor are they legally bound in any manner whatsoever by the submission of a proposal. It is the intention of RNDC to enter into a contract with the proposer and/or firm(s) with which RNDC can make the most satisfactory arrangements for its needs.

RNDC has broad rights with respect to the proposal detailed in this RFP. RNDC may decide to contract with more than one entity to develop the services contemplated herein.

SECTION III: PROPOSAL SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Each Proposer must submit one (1) original copy of the proposal.

Each Proposer shall also supply one (1) electronic copy of the proposal in .pdf format.

Proposals must be received no later than 4:30 p.m., Central Standard Time (CST), Friday, December 13, 2019 at the following address:

Region Nine Development Commission
3 Civic Center Plaza, Suite 310
Mankato, MN 56001
ATTN: Kristian F. Braekkan, Senior Regional Planner

Proposals submitted by facsimile will not be accepted. RNDC is not responsible for delays or losses caused by the U.S. Postal Service or any other carrier or delivery service. RNDC reserves the right to accept proposals after the date specified above.

SECTION IV: DEFINITIONS

A. CONFLICT OF INTEREST: A situation in which a person or entity presently has, or has previously had, a duty or obligation to more than one person or organization, and consequently cannot fairly maintain obligations to the actual or potentially adverse interests of one or more parties. A conflict of interest exists where an individual owes a duty of loyalty to another party, which is or can be compromised, directly or indirectly, by the pursuit of personal interests by a person or entity, or the pursuit by that person or entity of obligations to another person or party. A conflict of interest includes any financial interest by the proposer or related parties in potential projects or property to be considered in the course of this project.

B. RNDC. Region Nine Development Commission is a Federally Designated Economic Development District by the Federal Economic Development Administration.

C. PROPOSER. An individual or firm which submits a proposal to provide the services requested by this RFP. A Proposer can include a joint venture, partnership, or other organizational structure, including a proposal team.

SECTION V: RULES GOVERNING REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

A. INSTRUCTIONS FOR PREPARING AND SUBMITTING PROPOSALS

1. Proposal Signature - Each proposal shall be signed by a principal of the Proposer firm, or another person, who is fully authorized to act on behalf of the Proposer(s).

2. Extension of Time - RNDC reserves the right to extend the proposal due date. If a Proposer needs an extension of time to prepare the proposal a written request should be forwarded no later than five (5) days prior to the due date of this RFP and explain the circumstances necessitating the request. The request should be directed to the address noted in Section V(C)(1), Contact between Proposer and RNDC - Questions. Extensions may be granted in the sole discretion of RNDC. In the event an extension request is granted, prospective Proposer(s) will be notified immediately.

3. Addenda - Right to Withdraw RFP - RNDC reserves the right to add to, amend, withdraw and/or cancel, in part or entirely, this RFP for any reason and at any time with no liability to any prospective Proposer for any costs or expenses incurred in connection with the RFP or otherwise. If any part of the RFP is revised, addenda to the RFP will be provided to all Proposers provided a copy of the RFP.

B. PROPOSAL CONDITIONS

1. Public Record/Confidentiality - Proposals submitted become a matter of public record. Information supplied by the Proposer to RNDC is subject to the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 13. Such information is public unless it falls within one of the exceptions in the Act, such as security information, trade secret information, or labor relations information pursuant to Minnesota Statute Section 13.37. If the Proposer believes any non-public information will be supplied in response to the RFP, the Proposer shall take reasonable steps to identify and provide reasonable justification to RNDC regarding which data, if any, falls within the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act exceptions.

However, the Proposer agrees as a condition of submitting a proposal that RNDC will not be held liable or accountable for any loss or damage which may result from a breach of confidentiality as may be related to the responses submitted. The proposer agrees, by submitting a proposal, to indemnify RNDC and their members and employees from any liability resulting from any and all third party claims and / or losses which may arise as a result of this process.

2. Award - RNDC reserves the right not to award a contract to any Proposer(s). If RNDC decides to award a contract(s), RNDC will award a contract(s) to the qualified Proposer(s) whose proposal RNDC determines best meets the needs of RNDC. RNDC reserves the right to award a contract(s) other than to the lowest priced proposal.

3. Ownership of Materials Submitted - All material submitted is the property of RNDC and will not be returned.

4. Proposers' Costs - RNDC shall not be responsible for any costs incurred by Proposers in connection with this RFP. Proposers shall bear all costs associated with proposal preparation, submission and attendance at presentation interviews, or any other activity associated with this RFP or otherwise.

5. Use of Proposal Ideas - RNDC reserves the right to use any or all Proposer service ideas

presented. Selection or rejection of the proposal does not affect this right.

C. CONTACT BETWEEN PROPOSER AND REGION NINE DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION.

1. **Questions** – Formal inquiries concerning any aspect of this RFP and contract award should be submitted, in writing to:

Region Nine Development Commission
3 Civic Center Plaza, Suite 310
Mankato, MN 56001
Attn: Kristian F. Braekkan, Senior Regional Planner
kristian@rndc.org

The closing date for receipt of written questions will be on Monday, December 9, 2019 by 4:30 p.m., CST.

2. **Errors** - Should the Proposer believe that an error appears in the RFP documents, Proposer shall notify RNDC at the address noted above.

SECTION VI: SELECTION OF PROPOSAL

A. SELECTION PROCESS

1. **Criteria Compliance** – RNDC reserves the right to determine, in their sole and absolute discretion, whether any aspect of a proposal satisfactorily meets the criteria established in this RFP.
2. **Submission of Alternatives** - Although this RFP specifies minimum requirements for completion of the proposal and should be responded to in all respects, Proposers are invited and encouraged to submit alternative concepts of project development and that may be of interest to RNDC.
3. **Additional Information Requests** – RNDC reserves the right to request additional information from Proposers during any phase of the proposal evaluation process. During the evaluation and selection process, RNDC may request the presence of Proposer’s representatives to make presentations and answer specific questions. Notification of any such requirements will be given as necessary.

SECTION VII: CONTENT OF PROPOSAL

Proposals must include the following information, preferably in the following order:

A. QUALIFICATIONS (KNOWLEDGE, EXPERTISE, CAPABILITIES)

1. Please state your firm’s name, including its organizational form (i.e. partnership, corporation, etc.), address, and date of formation or establishment of firm, or as appropriate, similar information for each member of the proposal team.
2. Please identify:

- a. The expertise of the firm or proposal team in the area of project development.
- b. The name of the project manager that will be assigned to the work as well as any other key individuals, their academic credentials, resumes and experience.
- c. Similar or related projects undertaken by the project manager within the past five (5) years. For each Project, identify the client's name, address and telephone for a contact person currently available who is familiar with the project.
- d. The knowledge, understanding and experience of the firm or proposal team in working with regional development organizations, local units of government and federal agencies.
- e. Any and all insurance which will be applicable to the proposers work, including but not limited to general liability and professional liability.

B. SCOPE OF SERVICES

The proposal is intended to establish the credentials of the proposer or proposal team regarding previous work in the areas of expertise sought and the ability to successfully analyze and shepherd a project to conclusion.

Request for proposal 1: cost assessments for building renovations/ construction of existing building located in the City of Waseca, MN for the purpose of operating a Manufacturing Resource Center in said building.

Request for proposal 2: in partnership with RNDC's Senior Regional Planner conduct outreach/marketing to private enterprises to promote the proposed Manufacturing Resource Center and conduct demand analysis

Request for proposal 3: conduct assessments for training/educational needs and/or conducts needs assessments for workforce wellness and mental health services to be provided

Request for proposal 4: conduct investment assessments for proposed manufacturing resource center and overall operating costs.

C. RATES

Please list your fee proposal, including either a lump sum for all services or a not-to-exceed total price guarantee. In addition, state the normal hourly rates charged by the persons who will or may be assigned to perform services for RNDC and the discounted rate which will be charged to RNDC if applicable.

D. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

You must disclose any conflicts of interest or the appearance of conflicts that your firm or key individuals that will work on the project may have in performing the work described in this RFP. Please refer to *Definitions*, Section IV. Also, in your proposal please make a statement certifying that if any future conflicts become known to your staff that they will immediately be disclosed, in writing, to the Senior Regional Planner.