2021 REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL – 20210322
Denver Workforce Services - Pandemic Response Program

PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

SECTION A. GENERAL INFORMATION

A.1. INTRODUCTION

The Denver Workforce Services on behalf of Denver Economic Development & Opportunity (DEDO) is seeking proposals from experienced organizations capable of providing workforce development solutions to assist Denver residents from targeted populations gain skills and credentials that assist them in gaining employment.

Many of our neighbors are facing tremendous hardships, an unfortunate trend that is expected to increase in the coming months. Some populations, particularly those experiencing significant inequities, are more vulnerable to the effects of the pandemic and are therefore disproportionately impacted. In Denver, business leaders report significant decreased revenue, reduced workforce, and increased expenses due to COVID-19 related closures and safety precautions.

The ability to find employment that generates a self-sustaining wage can be challenging in a healthy economy. In the current environment it is important that we support workforce development programs and wrap-around supports to help individuals make progress towards their employment and career goals.

A.2. BACKGROUND

The purpose of this Request for Proposal (RFP) is to support agencies with adapting and responding to our region’s workforce development needs during the COVID-19 pandemic. We are looking for proposals that advance:

- Programs and services designed to reskill individuals displaced from COVID-19 affected jobs into career pathways in high growth industries and in-demand occupations
- Programs and services designed to improve digital literacy and reskill displaced and/or unemployed workers into middle-skill, middle-high wage occupations Wrap-around supports that remove barriers to making progress on employment and career goals
- Programs and services aimed at placing Denver residents from priority populations on a continuum of quality education, training, workforce development, and economic security programs.
- Programs and services offering employment in a job along a career pathway, education/training, and economic security as a continuum with an integrated approach, where individuals can take advantage of multiple services to help them become economically self-sufficient.
The intent of this grant is to serve individuals who have been adversely and disproportionately affected by COVID-19 which include, but are not limited to individuals experiencing the following conditions:

- Low-income
- Unemployment related to COVID
- Disability
- Residing in one of DEDO’s targeted neighborhoods
- Receiving public assistance
- Veterans
- Experiencing Homelessness
- Basic skills deficient
- Justice involved
- Other significant barriers to employment

Additionally, it is important that these investments are guided by the understanding that some populations are disproportionately impacted by this pandemic and an equity lens should be used to focus efforts, increase access, and support those who need it most.

A.3 ANTICIPATED FUNDING AND PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE

DEDO will be using funds from Federal Community Development Block Grant Coronavirus (CDBG-CV). DEDO may award funding to one or more entities that demonstrate an ability to effectively deliver and manage services as described within this RFP at the best value.

Award amounts will vary based on several factors, such as the scope of the proposed response and the number of grant requests received. To provide guidance for applicants, the suggested size of awards is anticipated to range from $150,000-$500,000. Proposals that demonstrate a coordinated effort among two or more partners may be considered for larger grant awards.¹

The agreement is anticipated to have a contract term effective July 1, 2021, through June 30, 2022. DEDO reserves the right to renew the agreement for up to one additional one-year period based on contractor performance, achievement of benchmarks, funding availability, ability to leverage funds, compliance with all applicable regulations and other program requirements. Funding is expressly contingent upon final budget approval, and approval by the Mayor and City Council of the City and County of Denver. The City and DEDO reserve the right to negotiate the final contracts.

A.4 ELIGIBLE RESPONDENTS

Eligible respondents include governmental, 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organizations or agencies engaged in a public service. Governmental agencies serving the listed population focus:

- Priority will be given to community-based organizations with a track record of providing services to targeted populations of the city while maintaining high standards of program management and accountability.
- Priority will be given to proposals that incorporate partnerships and collaborations under this RFP. Partnerships focusing on seamless integration of services are strongly encouraged to ensure that

¹ While the proposer may partner with another organization, one entity must serve as the fiscal agent.
there are no gaps in the continuum of programs and services. Partnerships are urged to include a broad spectrum of stakeholders, including but not limited to employers, higher education, adult basic education providers, and community-based organizations.

- Each applicant may apply as the lead applicant for only one proposal. Applicants may be members of more than one partnership under this RFP. Applicants may also serve as a fiscal agent for more than one organization.

A.5. SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

- **2021 PANDEMIC RESPONSE RFP APPLICATIONS ARE AVAILABLE**
  
  Wednesday, July 17, 2019 4:00 p.m. (MDT)
  
  https://app.wizehive.com/apps/2021_Pandemic_Response_Program

- **RFP ISSUED**
  
  Monday March 22, 2021 4:00 p.m. (MDT)

- **PRE-PROPOSAL QUESTIONS**
  
  Wednesday March 24, 2021 4:00 p.m. (MDT)

  All general questions regarding the RFP must be submitted in writing by e-mail to DEDO_BusinessDevelopment_Proposals@denvergov.org. Additional questions may be asked at the Pre-Proposal Conference.

- **PRE-PROPOSAL CONFERENCE**
  
  Wednesday March 31, 2021 1:30 p.m. (MDT)

  This will be a TEAM LIVE EVENT to discuss the 2021 Pandemic Response RFP. Representatives from Denver Workforce Services and other staff will share the city’s guiding principles, priorities, and regulatory requirements, and will address questions about the 2021 Pandemic Response RFP and this process. Please use link to JOIN LIVE PRE-PROPOSAL CONFERENCE.

- **QUESTIONS ON RFP GUIDELINES DUE**
  
  Monday, April 5, 2021 4:00 p.m. (MDT)

  DEDO_BusinessDevelopment_Proposals@denvergov.org.

- **ADDENDUM TO RFP RELEASED**
  
  Wednesday April 7, 2021 4:00 p.m. (MDT)

  Answers to all questions and any significant changes to the RFP will be made available through an addendum published on the bit.ly/DEDOFundingOpportunities.

- **COMPLETED PROPOSAL SUBMISSION DEADLINE**
  
  Monday April 12, 2021 4:00 p.m. (MDT)

A.6. APPLICATION PROCESS

DEDO is using the grant management system WizeHive for this RFP application process. All proposals must be submitted via the WizeHive system. Any application materials submitted outside the WizeHive application will not be accepted nor reviewed. WizeHive allows all program areas to use one document to gather general data and information; applicants must answer specific questions and requirements related to the proposed project.

The application contains helpful background and clarifying information in yellow highlighted text boxes, while yellow highlighted question marks indicate that additional information is available. All uploads except
budgets must be in .pdf format; budgets must be uploaded as an Excel file (.xls or .xlsx).

Data entered by organizations must be clear, concise, and reflect measurable performance objectives. Organizations may submit more than one project proposal. Additional proposals for different projects can be accessed after the first proposal has been submitted through the WizeHive system.

Three documents have been created to assist you in the application process and are posted on the Funding Opportunities page as part of this RFP. The Proposal Guidelines provide background and instructions about the RFP.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

General questions regarding the 2021 Pandemic Response RFP will be addressed at the Pre-Proposal Conference on March 31st. Technical questions specifically regarding use of the WizeHive system must be submitted in writing by email to DEDO_BusinessDevelopment_Proposals@denvergov.org.

A.7. FUNDING SOURCES AND APPLICABLE FEDERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

The CDBG-CV program has specific federal rules and regulations and applicable laws. Applicants are strongly advised to become familiar with specific and appropriate program eligibility and overall requirements before submission of a proposal. The CDBG-CV program closely follows the same federal rules and regulations as the traditional CDBG program. A limited list of sources includes:

- CDBG-CV Program Guidance: [https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/cdbg-cv/](https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/cdbg-cv/)
- System for Award Management (SAM): [https://www.sam.gov/SAM/](https://www.sam.gov/SAM/)
  Do Not Pay for this Service; it is FREE
- Colorado Secretary of State: [http://www.sos.state.co.us/pubs/business/businessHome.html](http://www.sos.state.co.us/pubs/business/businessHome.html)

Application reviews and awards are also contingent upon applicants being current to the city on any loan, contractual, or tax obligation as due, or with any rule, regulation, or provision on existing or past city contracts.

SECTION B. SCOPE OF SERVICES

B.1 PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

The intent of this RFP is to place Denver residents from targeted populations who may have been disproportionately affected by COVID-19 on a continuum of services in employment, education and economic security. For certain occupations, temporary jobs, part-time jobs or subsidized jobs may be a strategic first step – these interim/intermediate outcomes will be considered successful short-term or mid-term outcomes. Applicants proposing such strategies must make a compelling argument to demonstrate a continuum of career pathways. Placement into post-secondary education/training, with a strong likelihood of it leading to jobs, will
be considered a successful outcome. Applicants are not required to produce all of the outcomes listed in section B.3, however applicants must demonstrate how their programs will eventually lead to long-term outcomes of attaining jobs at livable wages. Minimally employment and training programs will be required to track and report on entered employment, employment retention and average wages. Education programs will be required to track and report the number of individuals who successfully enroll and complete programs, as well as the credentials to be obtained.

Public Service awards will assist organizations to build community wealth and capacity by funding new or existing public service programs that address community needs. Funding must be used to create, enhance and or expand these services.

Program areas to be considered for funding are:
- Nonprofit organizing for community capacity building to impact neighborhood revitalization;
- Economic Development: Business assistance for financial empowerment;
- Youth and Adult Services focused on increasing self-sufficiency, including literacy, independent living skills and job training;
- Economic Development: technical assistance for cooperative business models; and
- Outreach efforts to promote available forms of assistance for economic development, employment, housing services and technical assistance.

The successful Public Service application provides programs or services that achieve one of the following objectives:
- Understanding of, and increase in, community participation in public processes that affect their daily lives.
- Creation of business plans; establishment of Individual bank accounts and savings accounts; debt reduction and increase in personal or business credit rating.
- Assistance in educational, financial, and business capacity of community residents.
- Training, support and technical assistance for establishing cooperative business models.
- Enhanced use of available forms of assistance.

Contracts will be awarded to support direct service responses and are not intended for general agency stabilization purposes. All applicants must demonstrate the ability to deliver services in a high-quality manner that adheres to safety protocols associated with social distancing and other public health recommendations.

We encourage collaborations among agencies/organizations that work closely with displaced or underemployed workers to help identify careers that pay wages achieving the living wage and above in high-demand occupations that require two years or less of post-secondary education.

We also request that individuals served by these grant awards be referred to Denver Workforce Services for possible services when applicable and appropriate. Coordination with this collaborative is important in helping to create a more integrated and holistic regional workforce system.

B.2 PROGRAM QUALIFICATIONS

Programs under this RFP must qualify as meeting the CDBG/CDBG-CV National Objective of benefiting low- and moderate-income persons. This requires that each proposed program or activity meet specific tests for benefiting low- and moderate-income (LMI) persons (households with an annual income at or below 80% AMI). Applicants are required to collect and maintain documentation used to determine the eligibility of
program beneficiaries based on income and household size. The FY 2020 HUD CDBG Income Limits are posted on the following site: https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/5334/cdbg-income-limits/.

The criteria for how an activity or program may be considered to benefit LMI persons, as determined by program design, are divided into the following two subcategories:

1) **Area Benefit**

This is an activity that benefits all the residents of a primarily residential area, in which at least 51 percent of area residents are LMI persons. Areas of Denver that qualify as low-and moderate-income for area benefit purposes are available here:

https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/cdbg/cdbg-low-moderate-income-data/

http://hud.maps.arcgis.com/apps/Viewer/index.html?appid=9642c475e56f49efb6e62f2d8a846a78

2) **Limited Clientele**

This is an activity that provides benefits to a specific group of persons rather than everyone in an area, in which at least 51 percent of beneficiaries are LMI persons based on annual household income. Applicants are required to collect and maintain documentation regarding the household size and income of program beneficiaries to demonstrate the limited clientele criteria has been met. Here is the link for current income limits (select Colorado and then Denver):

https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/5334/cdbg-income-limits/

Some groups presumed to be limited clientele include:

- Abused children
- Disabled adults
- Elderly persons
- Illiterate adults
- Battered spouses
- Persons living with AIDS
- Homeless persons
- Migrant farm workers

CDBG-CV funds cannot be substituted for any recent city, state, or federal funds that were supporting public services. The service must be a “new service” or a "quantifiable increase in the level of service" above that provided by or on behalf of the city through city, state, or federal funds. Successful applicants will also be required to complete a Duplication of Benefits Attestation form prior to contract execution to certify the entity(ies) has not received any additional federal funding that has been or will be used for the same services. Ineligible uses of CDBG-CV funding include:

- Acquisition, construction, or reconstruction of buildings for the general conduct of government;
- Political activities, including lobbying (see https://www.hudexchange.info/onecpd/assets/File/IDIS-for-CDBG-Entitlement-Manual-Appendices.pdf);
- Purchase of equipment;
- Certain income payments; or
- Ongoing grants or non-emergency payments to individuals for food, clothing, rent, utilities or other income payments.
B.3 OUTCOMES
Denver Workforce staff will work with successful proposers to develop measurable outcomes specific to the funded program which may be based on the following structure.

Employment Outcomes
- Number and percentage of participants who obtain employment in high growth industries and in-demand occupations
- Number and percentage of participants who retain their jobs for at least 60 days
- Average wage of employment placements

Education Outcomes
- Number and percentage of participants who obtain high school diploma or GED.
- Number and percentage of participants who obtain post-secondary degrees and industry-recognized certificates.
- Number and percentage of participants who are placed into skills training programs, such as occupational training, pre-apprenticeship, and apprenticeship programs.
- Number and percentage of participants who are placed into post-secondary education, including community colleges and universities.

B.4 REPORTING
DEDO staff will work with successful proposers to develop measurable outcomes specific to the funded program which may be based on the following structure.

This includes but is not limited to;
- Achievement of objectives in accordance with proposal and contract
- Integrity of administrative systems and eligibility determination
- Quality of service evaluation through observation, customer feedback and informal interviews

Applicants must demonstrate the capacity to perform administrative responsibilities including maintaining records of participant eligibility, attendance and progress, tracking participation, and submitting program reports and invoices on a timely manner.

DEDO will conduct site visits and regularly scheduled check-ins to monitor compliance and quality of services. Site visits and regularly scheduled check-ins will also occur to monitor financial compliance with CDBG-CV and other applicable regulations.

SECTION C. ADDITIONAL APPLICABLE REGULATIONS

C.1 ACCOUNTING SYSTEMS AND AUDITS
Organizations awarded funds will be required to provide accounting system and audit-related information based upon the amount of the DEDO grant and the expenditure of federal assistance in the entity’s annual fiscal year.

C.2 SECTION 504
Recipients will be required to complete a Section 504 Self-Assessment furnished by HUD via DEDO. However, a recipient is not required to take steps that it can demonstrate will cause an undue financial and administrative burden or change the fundamental nature of the program.
C.3. CONTRACT REQUIREMENTS

As part of the City contracting process, there are several requirements that are mandatory for all contractors:

- All contractors receiving an award of funds will be required to execute a contract with the City. Sample contracts are listed below by funding type.
  - CDBG Part I:
  - CDBG Part II Addendum:
  - All Proposers are strongly advised to seek legal counsel to review the agreement.
  - The city reserves the right to accept or reject in its sole discretion any proposed modifications to the sample contract. The city reserves the right to modify any term or condition of the draft Agreement, and to add, delete or modify terms and conditions as deemed necessary, prior to execution of a final agreement. Applicants will be presumed to have submitted their applications based upon all the information set forth in the contract and in a manner fully cognizant of the requirements of the contract. The city reserves the right to contemporaneously negotiate the final terms of the proposed contract with the selected contractors. If the city is unable to reach an agreement as to final contract terms with any selected contractor, the city expressly reserves the right to terminate negotiations and enter into contract negotiations with one or more of the other applicants. As the best interests of the city may appear in the city’s sole judgement, the city reserves the right to reject any or all applications at any time during this selection process or terminate, cancel or modify this selection process.

- All contractors must have a current IRS Form W-9 available. If the entity receiving the funds is new to the city contracting system, contractors must submit the W-9 to upon an award of funds in order to receive funding.

- All contractors receiving Federal funds must be registered in the System for Award Management Database [https://www.sam.gov/SAM/](https://www.sam.gov/SAM/). This requires a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number. Dun & Bradstreet issues unique nine digit DUNS Numbers without charge for all businesses required to register with the U.S. Federal government for contracts or grants. Please see [http://www.dnb.com/get-a-duns-number.html](http://www.dnb.com/get-a-duns-number.html) for more information.

- All contractors must be registered with the Colorado Secretary of State and have an active Certificate of Good Standing prior to submitting an application. For more information, see: [http://www.sos.state.co.us/pubs/business/businessHome.html](http://www.sos.state.co.us/pubs/business/businessHome.html)

- Certificates of Insurance evidencing the following coverage are required of all City Contractors. Contracts will not be executed until receives appropriate ACCORD Certificates of Insurance (COI):
  - Workers’ Compensation/Employer’s Liability Insurance: Contractor shall maintain the coverage as required by statute for each work location and shall maintain Employer’s Liability insurance with limits of $100,000 per occurrence for each bodily injury claim,
    - $100,000 per occurrence for each bodily injury caused by disease claim, and
    - $500,000 aggregate for all bodily injuries caused by disease claims. Contractor
expressly represents to the City, as a material representation upon which the City is relying in entering into this

➢ Agreement, that none of the Contractor’s officers or employees who may be eligible under any statute or law to reject Workers’ Compensation Insurance shall effect such rejection during any part of the term of this Agreement, and that any such rejections previously effected, have been revoked as of the date Contractor executes this Agreement.

➢ If the contractor is a sole proprietor, a waiver may be filed with the City for Workers’ Compensation requirements. If the contractor is an LLC or Corporation, and desires to waive Workers’ Compensation, an additional

➢ State waiver is required. Please review the waiver and all instructions here: https://dowc.cdle.state.co.us/WCCompliance/

➢ If a contractor is planning to waive Workers’ Compensation coverage, it should notify DEDO in advance.

o Commercial General Liability: Contractor shall maintain a Commercial General Liability insurance policy with limits of $1,000,000 for each occurrence, $1,000,000 for each personal and advertising injury claim, $2,000,000 products and completed operations aggregate, and $2,000,000 policy aggregate.

➢ Sexual Abuse and Molestation Exclusion (SAME) language: Any contractor working with youth and/or a vulnerable population will require SAME coverage as a part of the contractor’s commercial general liability coverage.

o Business Automobile Liability: Contractor shall maintain Business Automobile Liability with limits of $1,000,000 combined single limit applicable to all owned, hired and non-owned vehicles used in performing services under this Agreement.

➢ In certain circumstances, the contractor may be allowed to use his or her personal automobile liability coverage instead of obtaining a business specific policy. If a contractor is planning to use its personal automobile liability coverage, it should notify DEDO in advance.

o Cyber Liability, Cyber Security, Information Security, Privacy Liability, Network Security: contractor is likely to be required to maintain for any client/participant information that is collected and stored in an electronic format or system with limits of $1,000,000 per occurrence/aggregate

o Upon discretion of the City, additional coverage or changes to the above coverage language may be required upon award if needed.

• Using the link below, the form entitled “Diversity and Inclusiveness in City Solicitations Information Request Form,” please state whether you have a diversity and inclusiveness program for employment and retention, procurement and supply chain activities, or customer service and provide the additional information requested on the form. The information provided on this form will provide an opportunity for City contractors/consultants to describe their own diversity and inclusiveness practices.

Contractors/consultants are not expected to conduct intrusive examinations of its employees, managers, or business partners in order to describe diversity and inclusiveness measures. Rather, the City simply seeks a description of the contractor/consultant’s current
practices, if any. Diversity and Inclusiveness information provided by City contractors/consultants in response to City solicitations for services or goods will be collated, analyzed, and made available in reports consistent with City Executive Order No. 101. However, no personally identifiable information provided by or obtained from contractors/consultants will be in such reports.


- All selected contractors must submit certification that no funds have been paid by or on behalf of the organization to influence funding decisions regarding this RFP. The form is available at:

- All selected contractors must submit certification that the organization will provide a drug-free workplace in compliance with the Drug-Free Workplace Act. The form is available at:

SECTION D. EVALUATION

D.1. EVALUATION TEAM
All applications will be reviewed by an Evaluation Team comprised of DEDO staff and other evaluators. All data and information from the applicant must be submitted through the online application and documents uploaded before submission of the application. No additional information, documents or inquiries pertaining to the proposal submittal, including email and phone calls, will be considered once the application has been submitted, during the selection process, or until this entire procurement process (RFP) has closed.

D.2. EVALUATION PROCESS
Proposals will be scored and ranked utilizing the WizeHive tool based upon the information contained in the application itself and uploaded attachments. The areas of review include Project Plan, Project Outcomes, Organizational Capacity, Financial Capacity, and Community Impact and Alignment with the city’s Guiding Principles.

Performance outcomes of prior contracts with DEDO will be considered in the overall rating of proposals submitted by applicants who currently have, or have previously had, contracts with DEDO. Application evaluation and awards are also contingent upon applicants being current to the City on any loan, contractual, or tax obligation as due, or with any rule, regulation, or provision on existing or past City contracts.

In addition, in accordance with 2 CFR 200.331 of the Uniform Grant Guidance, applicants will be evaluated based on the following risk factors:
- Prior experience with HUD funds or other Federal awards;
- Results of previous Single Audits;
- New personnel or new or substantially changed systems; and
- Extent and results of Federal monitoring in previous years.
Before an application is awarded, an applicant may be invited to a meeting with DEDO staff to discuss the proposed project, to review compliance required under applicable Federal regulations and to determine the eligibility of proposed costs.

D.3. FUNDING DECISIONS

Based upon the information provided by the applicants, the Evaluation Team will evaluate applications.

The evaluations will be ranked according to scores in WizeHive and forwarded to DEDO Senior Management.

Funding is limited. Applications that meet all of the RFP’s general guidelines and requirements may not necessarily receive an award. DEDO may recommend funding a project or service for the full amount requested, less than the full amount, or not at all. There are no requirements or expectations that DEDO must award all or any funds through the RFP process.

DEDO reserves the right to postpone or cancel this RFP if it deems it to be in DEDO’s best interest. DEDO reserves the right to waive any technical or formal errors or omissions, and to reject any and all proposals, or to award contracts, either in part or in whole, if deemed to be in the best interests of DEDO.

Successful applicants shall be in complete compliance with all of the specifications, terms and conditions of the proposal. DEDO shall have the right to inspect the facilities and equipment of the successful applicant to ensure such compliance. DEDO shall not be liable for any costs incurred in the preparation of proposals or for any work performed in connection therein.

Successful applicants will be invited to enter into contract negotiation and development of a final Scope of Services. Contract negotiation may involve additional requirements, such as environmental reviews. Application reviews and awards are contingent upon applicants being current to the city on any loan, contractual, or tax obligation as due, or with any rule, regulation, or provision on existing or past city contracts.

(END)

2022 PANDEMIC RESPONSE PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

March 17, 2021