



**Empire State
Development**

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

ENTREPRENEUR AI TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Issued: November 7, 2025

Designated Contacts for this Procurement:

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All contacts/inquiries shall be made by email to the following address:

AITARFA2025@esd.ny.gov

This Request for Applications ("RFA") is posted on the Empire State Development website: <https://esd.ny.gov/doing-business-ny/requests-proposals>

APPLICATIONS DUE DATE AND TIME:
On or before December 2, 2025, by 5PM EST.

Late applications will not be accepted

I. Introduction

The mission of Empire State Development (“ESD”) is to promote a vigorous and growing state economy, encourage business investment and job creation, and support diverse, prosperous local economies across New York State through the efficient use of loans, grants, tax credits, real estate development, marketing and other forms of assistance.

A. Project Summary

The Entrepreneur Artificial Intelligence (AI) Technical Assistance (TA) Program is an initiative designed to strengthen New York State’s small business ecosystem by equipping entrepreneurs and small business owners with AI literacy and practical applications to improve business operations, competitiveness, and sustainability. The Fiscal Year 2025 Enacted Budget includes up to \$280,000 to support one Specialist center who will be responsible for both providing technical assistance and the development and integration of an AI curriculum into the EAC Learning Management System (LMS). The Specialist center is required to provide a ten percent (10%) cash or in-kind match against the full \$280,000 grant award.

The Program will operate through New York State’s network of Entrepreneurship Assistance Centers (EAC), with one designated Specialist EAC serving as the statewide AI hub. The Specialist EAC will provide AI-focused one-on-one technical assistance for entrepreneurs and small businesses. The Specialist EAC will be responsible for the development of a standardized AI curriculum, integrating that curriculum into ESD’s Learning Management System for use by all EACs, providing statewide support through a train-the-trainer model, and developing and presenting annual entrepreneur success stories, which may be shared digitally or at existing convenings such as the EAC Conference. Curriculum development and integration will follow a phased process, to be completed within an 18-month program period.

B. Request for Application Schedule

Item	Date
Release of Request for Applications	November 7, 2025
Deadline for Submission of Questions	November 14, 2025, by 5 PM EST
Deadline for ESD to Respond to Questions	November 19, 2025
Submission of Applications	December 2, 2025, by 5 PM EST
Anticipated Announcement of Selections	December 18, 2025
Anticipated Contract Start Date	January 1, 2026

II. Project

A. Program Goals and Objectives

Under this RFA, ESD anticipates selecting one Specialist EAC to implement the Entrepreneur AI Technical Assistance Program. The selected EAC will be responsible for managing the full scope of activities, including program delivery and the development of AI curriculum modules for use by all EACs statewide.

1. Curriculum Development and LMS Integration

- The Specialist EAC will be responsible for overseeing the design, development, and integration of new AI curriculum modules into the existing EAC LMS platform. Key milestones include: (1) procurement and engagement of qualified vendors; (2) development of a curriculum outline and draft modules; (3) pilot testing; and (4) finalization and statewide launch. Applicants must submit a clear implementation plan with their application that demonstrates how these milestones will be achieved within the 18-month program period.
- ESD shall be the sole and exclusive owner of all intellectual property rights associated with the AI Curriculum developed by the Specialist EAC.

2. Entrepreneurs Served

- Target: Provide AI-focused one-on-one technical assistance to at least 150 unique entrepreneurs and small business owners during the 18-month program period.
- Definition: "Serving" shall mean direct one-on-one technical assistance, group training, or LMS module completion facilitated by the Specialist EAC.
- Reporting: All engagements must be logged in the ESD-approved reporting system, including type of service (training, TA, referral), hours provided, and outcomes.

3. Coordination and Statewide Support

- Statewide Hub: Act as the statewide hub for AI-related inquiries from all EACs.
- Referral Response: Accept and respond to referrals from EACs within five (5) business days under normal circumstances.
- Train-the-Trainer: Host a minimum of four (4) Train-the-Trainer sessions to ensure the EAC network is prepared to use the curriculum.

4. Showcase Success Stories and Presentation

- Success Stories: The Specialist EAC must develop at least five (5) entrepreneur success stories that highlight businesses adopting and benefiting from AI solutions. These may take the form of written case studies, video features, or other digital storytelling formats.
- Statewide Access: All success stories will be made accessible to the entire EAC network and their clients statewide.

5. Data Collection and Reporting

- Track all program activity, including entrepreneurs served, referrals received, LMS usage, and showcase participation.
- Submit data to ESD in accordance with the established reporting deadlines.

B. Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible to receive grant proceeds from ESD, an applicant must be in good standing with the State of New York and ESD.

C. Grant Funding and Project Timeline

i. Grant Amount and Completion Dates

Grant awards are as follows:

	Award Up To	Expected Completion Date
Entrepreneur AI Technical Assistance Program	\$280,000	June 30, 2027

ESD reserves the right to award grants in amounts greater or less than the above listed figures and/or at a varying schedule depending on the number and quality of applications received and other considerations set forth in this RFA.

There is a cost-match requirement associated with this grant. In order to be eligible to be awarded this grant, the applicant must agree to meet the following cost-match requirement: The Specialist EAC is required to provide a ten percent (10%) cash or in-kind match from sources other than the State funds against the full \$280,000 grant award.

- Cash match may include direct contributions from the applicant's budget or external funders.
- In-kind contributions may include donated space, equipment, or staff time that directly supports program implementation.

ii. Eligible and Ineligible Expenses

Eligible activities include but are not limited to:

- Salaries and fringe benefits for AI Specialist(s) and program staff.
- AI software tools, subscriptions, and licenses.
- Development and delivery of workshops, showcases, and one-on-one technical assistance.
- Outreach and marketing materials (excluding promotional merchandise such as clothing, mugs, or other giveaways).
- Travel and convening expenses related to program delivery.
- LMS content creation, curriculum testing, and integration; and
- Other costs as approved by ESD.

Ineligible Uses of Funds

- Capital construction, renovations, or improvements.
- General operating expenses not directly tied to program activities.
- Legal fees unrelated to program implementation.

- Non-program related technology purchases (e.g., laptops, phones).
- Food, beverages, or general hospitality.
- Marketing or promotional merchandise (e.g., clothing, mugs, bags); or
- Any expenses incurred outside of the program period.
- Other expenses are determined by ESD.

The following limitations apply to this RFA:

- Indirect costs are PROHIBITED.
- Expenses must be relevant and justifiable to the project(s) outcome.

A budget template is included in this RFA. ESD has the right to review all expenses and deny the reimbursement of any expenses that are deemed ineligible.

USE OF FUNDS	ESD Funds	Cash Match	In-kind Match	TOTAL Across
Salary/Fringe				
Consultant				
Technical Assistance Cost				
Administrative Costs				
TOTAL PROJECT COST				

D. Data Collection

Applicants awarded grant funding will be required to track and record information relevant to the success of this grant. Data will be made available to ESD as requested. Data points to be captured and tracked are at the discretion of ESD. Applicants must submit the following documentation:

Track all program activity, including entrepreneurs served, referrals received, LMS usage, and showcase participation.

Submit data to ESD in accordance with the established reporting deadlines.

III. Application Information

Please provide a narrative that includes the following information in the following order using the headings listed below. Submitted applications are expected to be clearly written. If applications exceed the page limits and/or include materials not requested by the RFA, ESD will remove the extra pages and/or materials prior to the review. During the review process, applicants may be requested to submit additional written documents to answer questions or provide clarification of issues raised during the review process.

Assemble the application in the following order:

1. Cover Page
2. Table of Contents
3. Glossary of Terms Used
4. Executive Summary (1 page maximum)
5. Proposal

(1). Organizational Information including completed ESD application form (through the designated submission portal) and organizational chart identifying key staff and the proposed AI Specialist.

(2). Program Proposal (10-page maximum)

- Program Description: Overview of planned AI technical assistance and training activities.
- Staffing Plan: Identification of the AI Specialist, qualifications of key staff, and staffing roles.
- Timeline: A proposed schedule for workshops, showcases, LMS integration, and train-the-trainer participation.
- Partnerships: Letters of support from community or industry partners, if applicable.
- Budget & Match: Detailed budget including requested grant funds, eligible costs, and demonstration of the required 10% cash or in-kind match.
- Metrics of Success: Proposed performance indicators beyond the required deliverables (e.g., number of entrepreneurs successfully implementing AI tools).

(3). Financial Documentation

- Three (3) most recent audited financial statements or tax returns.
- For nonprofits: most recent IRS Form 990 (if audited statements are unavailable).
- Budget narrative supporting all proposed expenses.

(4). Compliance Documentation

- Confirmation of prequalification in the NYS Statewide Financial System.

IV. Review Criteria and Process

ESD will balance individual application scores.

For the review of eligible applications, ESD has established the following criteria to be applied in accordance with the review process set forth in Section IV. C. In addition to addressing the review criteria stated below, refer to the application instructions in Section III of this RFA for specific items that must also be addressed.

A. Review Criteria

Applicants seeking designation as a Specialist EAC under the Program must submit the following documentation:

1. Organizational Information

- Completed ESD application form (through the designated submission portal).
- Organizational chart identifying key staff and the proposed AI Specialist.

2. Program Proposal (10-page maximum)

- **Program Description:** Overview of planned AI technical assistance and training activities.
- **Staffing Plan:** Identification of the AI Specialist, qualifications of key staff, and staffing roles.
- **Timeline:** A proposed schedule for workshops, showcases, LMS integration, and train-the-trainer participation.
- **Partnerships:** Letters of support from community or industry partners, if applicable.
- **Budget & Match:** Detailed budget including requested grant funds, eligible costs, and demonstration of the required 10% cash or in-kind match.
- **Metrics of Success:** Proposed performance indicators beyond the required deliverables (e.g., number of entrepreneurs successfully implementing AI tools).

3. Financial Documentation

- Three (3) most recent audited financial statements or tax returns.
- For nonprofits: most recent IRS Form 990 (if audited statements are unavailable).
- Budget narrative supporting all proposed expenses.

4. Compliance Documentation

- Confirmation of prequalification in the NYS Statewide Financial System.

B. Selection Criteria

Applications will be reviewed and scored by an internal review committee composed of Empire State Development staff. Proposals will be evaluated based on the following weighted criteria, prioritizing the applicant's ability to manage the full scope of the program:

1. Curriculum Development & LMS Expertise (35 points)

- Strength and realism of the proposed curriculum development work plan and timeline.
- Demonstrated subject matter expertise in AI and educational experiences for adult learners.

2. Program Readiness & Capacity (30 points)

- Demonstrated ability to simultaneously manage the grant and deliver both the curriculum development and technical assistance objectives within the program period.

- Clear staffing plan that demonstrates access to a qualified AI Specialist with relevant technical and training credentials, either through existing staff, a new hire, or a contractual partnership. If hiring or contracting is planned, applicants must submit a position description or scope of work and a recruitment/engagement plan to demonstrate readiness.
- Past performance in successfully delivering EAC programming and meeting contractual obligations.

3. Statewide Support & Outreach (15 points)

- Strength and feasibility of the Train-the-Trainer plan (minimum four sessions).
- Ability to act as the statewide hub and effectively support the entire EAC network.
- Outreach strategy to engage underserved communities across New York State.

4. Budget & Cost Effectiveness (10 points)

- Alignment of the \$280,000 budget with the proposed activities.
- Reasonableness and efficiency of costs.
- Ability to meet the required 10% cash or in-kind match.

5. Past Performance & Strategic Alignment (10 points)

- Track record of innovation and responsiveness in delivering technical assistance.
- Demonstrated alignment with ESD's mission to support entrepreneurship, innovation, and small business growth.
- Evidence of commitment to equity, accessibility, and inclusion in program design.

C. Review Process

Reviewers may include ESD staff, staff from federal or other State agencies, and individuals selected from the science, business, and academic communities. The reviewers will adhere to the process described in this section and will apply the review criteria detailed above. ESD may limit the number of proposals a reviewer is required to evaluate. Each proposal will be reviewed and scored by at least three reviewers.

Scoring: Reviewers will independently evaluate and assign a preliminary score to proposals that have been accepted by ESD. The *preliminary scores* for a proposal will be combined to provide an *initial average score* for that proposal.

After the initial average scores are calculated, reviewers will convene as a group to review these preliminary scores and discuss the proposals in accordance with the review criteria. At the conclusion of the discussions, each reviewer will individually provide a *final score* for each proposal based upon the panel's discussions.

In the event that two or more proposals have the same final score, and the score is high enough for the applicants to be considered for funding, the review panel will hold an additional session to review only those affected proposals. The review panel will deliberate until there is a consensus regarding the selection. At times, it may be necessary to conduct interviews in order to determine the selected applicant.

ESD reserves the right to reject any and all applications. ESD may recall this RFA at any time prior to award announcement and may also reject proposals for deficiencies; waive technicalities, irregularities, and omissions; or solicit new proposals. ESD reserves the right to act in accordance with the best interests of the people of New York in its interpretation of this RFA.

Applicants and/or their surrogates are prohibited from contacting any ESD staff to advocate on behalf of a proposal submitted in response to this RFA. Violation of this restriction will disqualify an applicant's proposal from the competition.

V. SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS

All applications should be submitted via email to AITARFA2025@esd.ny.gov no later than 5PM EST on December 2, 2025. Your subject line should state: “[Name of Applicant] – RFA, Entrepreneur AI Technical Assistance Program”.

VI. QUESTIONS

All questions, comments, requests for clarification or any other communication regarding this RFA must be submitted by email to AITARFA2025@esd.ny.gov no later November 14, 2025 by 5 PM EST. Your subject line should state: “[Name of Applicant] – RFA Inquiry, Entrepreneur AI Technical Assistance Program”.

VII. GENERAL PROVISIONS

The issuance of this RFA and the submission of a response by an applicant or the acceptance of such a response by ESD does not obligate ESD in any manner. ESD reserves the right to:

- i. amend, modify, or withdraw this RFA;
- ii. revise any requirement of this RFA;
- iii. require supplemental statements or information from any responsible party;
- iv. accept or reject any or all responses hereto;
- v. extend the deadline for submission of responses hereto;
- vi. negotiate potential contract terms with any Respondent;
- vii. communicate with any Respondent to correct and/or clarify responses which do not conform to the instructions contained herein;
- viii. cancel, or reissue in whole or in part, this RFA, if ESD determines in its sole discretion that it is its best interest to do so; and
- ix. extend the term of any agreement on terms consistent with this RFA.

ESD may exercise the foregoing rights at any time without notice and without liability to any responding firm or any other party for its expenses incurred in preparation of responses hereto or otherwise. All costs associated with responding to this RFA will be at the sole cost and expense of the Respondent.

All information submitted in response to this RFA is subject to the Freedom of Information Law (“FOIL”), which generally mandates the disclosure of documents in the possession of ESD upon the request of any person unless the content of the document falls under a specific exemption to

disclosure. In addition, Proposals may be discussed at meetings of the ESD Directors, which meetings are subject to the Open Meetings Law.

ESD reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to retain and use all the materials and information, and the ideas and suggestions therein, submitted in response to this solicitation (collectively, the "Response Information") for any purpose. By submitting an application, each Respondent waives any and all claims against ESD relating to ESD's retention or use of the Response Information.

A. NON-DISCRIMINATION AND CONTRACTOR & SUPPLIER DIVERSITY

Pursuant to New York State Executive Law Articles 15-A and Article 3 of New York State Veterans' Services Law, ESD recognizes its obligation under the law to promote opportunities for maximum feasible participation of certified minority and women-owned business enterprises (MWBEs) and service-disabled veteran-owned businesses (SDVOBs) in the performance of ESD projects. The Recipient shall be required to use Good Faith Efforts (pursuant to 5 NYCRR §142.8 and 9 NYCRR § 252.2(n) to achieve MWBE and SDVOB participation. In addition, ESD's MWBE and SDVOB Participation/Equal Employment Opportunity Policy will apply to this program. Specific goals related to the total value of ESD's funding will be established on a grant-by grant basis.

ESD has an agency-wide goal of 30% for MWBE participation, 15% for New York State-certified Minority-owned Business Enterprise ("MBE") participation and 15% for New York State-certified Women-owned Business Enterprise ("WBE") participation (based on the current availability of MBEs and WBEs). ESD has an agency-wide goal of 6% for SDVOB participation, based on the current availability of qualified SDVOBs.

B. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Procurement Forms and Requirements

Additional requirements for this RFA are described below. Relevant forms, where required to be submitted, must be executed, and included in the submission in the same order as listed below:

1. Conflict of Interest
2. State Finance Law Sections 139 J&K
3. Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire
4. Compliance with State Finance Law Section 139-m
5. Insurance Certificate
6. Organization's W-9

Other Required Organizational Documents

7. Most current audited financial statements – three years
8. Current financial pro-forma statements
9. List of Board of Directors
10. Resumes of proposed EAC Program staff

1. Conflicts of Interest

Respondent must attest it has read, understood and will comply with the following provisions <https://esd.ny.gov/sites/default/files/Conflict-of-Interest-Attestation-June-2019.pdf>. ESD shall have the right to disqualify any respondent to this RFA or terminate any contract entered into as a result of this RFA should ESD determine that the Respondent has violated any of these

requirements.

- A. Gifts and Offers of Employment:** Respondent has not and shall not during this procurement and during the negotiation of any contract resulting from this procurement, offer to any employee, member or director of ESD, any gift, whether in the form of money, services, loan, travel, entertainment, hospitality, thing or promise, or in any other form, under circumstances in which it could reasonably be inferred that the offer was intended to influence said employee, member or director, or could reasonably be expected to influence said employee, member or director, in the performance of the official duty of said employee, member or director or was intended as a reward for any official action on the part of said employee, member or director. Respondent may not make any offers of employment or discuss the possibility of such offers with any employee, member, or director of ESD who is involved in this procurement and/or resulting contract negotiation within at least 30 days from the time that the employee's involvement in this matter closed.
- B. Disclosure of Potential Conflicts:** Respondent shall disclose any existing or contemplated relationship with any other person or entity, including relationships with any member, shareholders of 5% or more, parent, subsidiary, or affiliated firm, which would constitute an actual or potential conflict of interest or appearance of impropriety, relating to other clients/customers/employers of the Respondent or former officers and employees of ESD, in connection with your rendering services enumerated in this RFA. If a conflict does or might exist, Respondent must describe how it would eliminate or prevent it.
- C. Disclosure of Ethics Investigations:** Respondent must disclose whether it, or any of its members, shareholders of 5% or more, parents, affiliates, or subsidiaries, have been the subject of any ongoing investigation or disciplinary action by the New York State Commission on Public Integrity or its predecessor State entities (collectively, "Commission"), and if so, a description must be included indicating how any matter before the Commission was resolved or whether it remains unresolved.

2. State Finance Law Sections 139J and 139K forms

State Finance Law Sections 139-j and 139-k (collectively, the "Procurement Requirements") apply to this RFA. These Procurement Requirements: (1) govern permissible communications between potential Respondents and ESD or other involved governmental entities with respect to this RFA; (2) provide for increased disclosure in the public procurement process through identification of persons or organizations whose function is to influence procurement contracts, public works agreements and real property transactions; and (3) establish sanctions for knowing and willful violations of the provisions of the Procurement Requirements, including disqualification from eligibility for an award of any contract pursuant to this RFA. Compliance with the Procurement Requirements requires that all communications regarding this RFA, from the time of its issuance through final award and execution of any resulting contract (the "Restricted Period"), be conducted only with the designated contact persons listed above; the completion by Respondents of the Offeror Disclosure of Prior Non-Responsibility Determinations, and the Offeror's Affirmation of Understanding and Agreement pursuant to State Finance Law (each form is accessible at the Required Forms for Vendors link at the ESD website under "RFPs"); and periodic updating of such forms during the term of any contract resulting from this RFA.

Respondents must submit the Offeror Disclosure of Prior Non-Responsibility Determinations, and the Offeror's Affirmation of Understanding and Agreement pursuant to State Finance Law as part of their submittal. Copies of these forms are available at: <https://esd.ny.gov/sites/default/files/media/document/SF-Law139-JK-2025.pdf>

The Procurement Requirements also require ESD staff to obtain and report certain information when contacted by Respondents during the Restricted Period, make a determination of the responsibility of Respondents and make all such information publicly available in accordance with applicable law. If a Respondent is found to have knowingly and willfully violated the State Finance Law provisions, that Respondent and its subsidiaries, related or successor entities will be determined to be a non-responsible Respondent and will not be awarded any contract issued pursuant to this solicitation. In addition, two such findings of non-responsibility within a four-year period can result in debarment from obtaining any New York State governmental procurement contract. The designated contact account for this solicitation is referenced on the cover of this RFA.

This is not a complete presentation of the provisions of the Procurement Requirements. A copy of State Finance Law Sections 139-j and 139-k policy can be found at: <https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/laws/STF/139-J>. All potential Respondents are solely responsible for full compliance with the Procurement Requirements. Both the prime consultant and any sub-consultants complete the forms required above.

3. Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire

All Respondents to this RFA must be "responsible," which in this context means that they must have the requisite financial ability, organizational capacity, and legal authority to carry out its obligations under this RFA, and in addition must demonstrate that both the Respondent and its principals have and will maintain the level of integrity needed to contract with New York State entities such as ESD. Further, the Respondent must show satisfactory performance of all prior government contracts. Accordingly, the contract to be entered into between ESD and the Respondent, if any, shall include clauses providing that the Respondent remain "responsible" throughout the term of the contract, that ESD may suspend the contract if information is discovered that calls into question the responsibility of the contracting party, and that ESD may terminate the contract based on a determination that the contracting party is non-responsible. On request, model language to this effect will be provided to any Respondent to this RFA.

To assist in the determination of responsibility, ESD requires that all Respondents to this RFA register in the State's Vendor Responsibility System ("Vend-Rep System"). The Vend-Rep System allows business entities to enter and maintain their Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire information in a secure, centralized database. New York State Procurement Law requires that state agencies award contracts only to responsible vendors. Respondents are to file the required Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire online via the Vend-Rep System or may choose to complete and submit a paper questionnaire. Please include a copy of your Vend-Rep submission receipt or paper questionnaire with your proposal.

To enroll in and use the Vend-Rep System, see the System Instructions available at www.osc.state.ny.us/vendrep or go directly to the Vend-Rep system online at <https://www.osc.ny.gov/state-vendors/vendrep/vendrep-system>. For direct Vend-Rep System user assistance, the Office of the State Comptroller's Help Desk may be reached at 866-370-4672 or 518-408-4672 or by email at helpdesk@osc.state.ny.us.

Respondents opting to file a paper questionnaire can obtain the appropriate questionnaire from

the Vend-Rep website (http://www.osc.state.ny.us/vendrep/forms_vendor.htm) and execute accordingly pertaining to the company's trade industry. Per the website, Respondents are to "Select the questionnaire which best matches the business type (either For-Profit or Not-For-Profit) and business activity (Construction or Other)."

4. Compliance with State Finance Law Section 139-m

Section 139-m of the New York State Finance Law requires that all vendors bidding or otherwise submitting a proposal for a competitive procurement must implement and attest (via written certification) to a Gender-Based Violence and the Workplace policy. This policy must be in place at the time for bid or proposal submission set forth in Section V above for a bid or submission to be considered.

The model policy published by the New York State Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence can be found at: [opdv-gbv-workplace-bidder-model-policy_2025.08.28_0.pdf](#). The required Gender-Based Violence and the Workplace Certification can be found at: <https://esd.ny.gov/sites/default/files/media/document/GBVandtheWorkplacePolicyAttestationTemplate-103125.pdf> and must be signed and included with all bids, proposals or other submissions.

5. Insurance Requirements

The prospective will be expected to show evidence of the following insurance requirements, (at a minimum and to the extent applicable) as listed below:

- Commercial General Liability of \$1 million per occurrence and \$2 million in the aggregate;
- In the event that you are using a vehicle in business, Commercial Automobile insurance with a limit of not less than \$1 million;
- Umbrella/ Excess Liability – \$3 million;
- Cyber Liability – \$2 million;
- Sexual Abuse and Molestation Insurance - \$2 million;
- Must show evidence of Worker's Compensation & Employer's Liability insurance at State statutory limits;
- Must show evidence of Disability insurance coverage at State statutory limits;

NYS Urban Development Corporation d/b/a Empire State Development (ESD) must be named as additional insured on a primary and non-contributory basis on all of the following policies: Commercial General Liability and Auto Liability. All policies above should include a waiver of subrogation in favor of ESD.

6. W-9 Form

Provide a completed W-9 form (<https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/fw9.pdf>), submit with proposal

APPENDIX A: ESD IT Security Standard Brief

<https://esd.ny.gov/sites/default/files/ESD-Security-Standard-Brief.pdf>

Glossary of Terms Used Throughout the RFA

The following definitions apply to the terms used in this RFA. Terms defined herein are capitalized throughout the text of the RFA. Terms used within a definition that are also defined in this appendix are noted in italics.

AI Technical Assistance: shall mean training, advisory services, workshops, and demonstrations that help entrepreneurs and small businesses understand and implement generative AI tools, strategies, and practices to improve their operations.

Applicant: An eligible Entrepreneurship Assistance Center (EAC) applying for designation as the Specialist EAC under this Program.

Authorized Organizational Representative: The institution's duly authorized representative with authority to enter legal agreements on behalf of, and commit resources of, the organization.

Award Recipient/Grantee: An Applicant that is selected for award by ESD under this RFA.

Cost Share Funds: A non-reimbursable component of a project's total cost that is reflective of the Applicant's and industry's commitment to the program. Refer to Sections I.A & II.C of this RFA for specific Matching Funds requirements.

Curriculum Milestones: shall mean the phased deliverables required for the design, development, pilot testing, and launch of the statewide AI curriculum, including vendor procurement, curriculum outline, draft content, pilot-ready modules, and final integration into the ESD-approved Learning Management System.

Entrepreneurship Assistance Centers (EACs): shall mean nonprofit organizations designated by ESD to provide training, technical assistance, and support services to entrepreneurs and small business owners across New York State.

ESD: Empire State Development is the umbrella organization for economic development activity in New York State involving both Department of Economic Development (DED) and a public authority in the form of Empire State Development Corporation.

Indirect Cost(s) or Indirect Cost Rate: Defined by Federal OMB Circular A-87 as the rate used for allocating those common costs that cannot be specifically allocated to a particular project or activity. A cost may not be allocated as an Indirect Cost if any other cost incurred for the same purpose in like circumstances has been assigned as a direct cost.

Learning Management System (LMS): shall mean the centralized online training platform used by the EAC network to deliver standardized curriculum modules to entrepreneurs and small businesses statewide. Under this Program, the Specialist EAC will oversee the development of new AI-focused modules for integration into the existing LMS.

Match Requirement: shall mean the minimum ten percent (10%) cash or in-kind contribution required from Specialist EACs toward the Program, as further described in Sections I.A & II.C of this RFA

New York State Company, New York Company or Company in New York: A for-profit enterprise with a permanent place of business located in New York State employing a full-time workforce. The company's New York facility must either be (1) the intended recipient of the Center's assistance or (2) directly benefit from the Center's assistance. The Center's assistance must also demonstrably enhance the company's economic activity in New York.

Small New York State Company: A New York State Company with its principal place of business in New York that employs 100 or fewer persons in total, including any parent companies or subsidiaries.

Specialist EAC: shall mean a current EAC designated by ESD to serve as a statewide hub under the Entrepreneur AI TA Program. The Specialist EAC will provide advanced AI-focused programming, train-the-trainer support to other EACs, and integration of AI curricula into the statewide LMS.

Train-the-Trainer: shall mean structured programming delivered by Specialist EACs to build the capacity of staff at EACs. This includes monthly virtual sessions and an annual in-person convening to ensure consistent delivery of AI literacy and technical assistance across the statewide EAC network.