

NYS MWBE Business Growth Accelerator Program

Questions and Answers

Q1: For Section III – Overview - Will any consideration be given to lessening the goals/impacts required for organizations in areas that do not have a high concentration of MWBEs?

A: All selected grantees must meet the minimum goals provided by DMWBD. Any proposals which anticipate challenges to meeting specific goals within an ESD Economic Development Region (“Region”) must provide a clearly articulated and supported justification and include proposed alternate goals for the region.

Q2: For Section III – Overview - If an organization does not meet the proposed level of goals/impacts during the funding period, will they be required to return a portion or all of funds?

A: It is anticipated that vendors will communicate early and regularly with ESD in regards to challenges meeting agreed upon goals and impacts to avoid a shortfall in meeting identified metrics. Non performance on this contract may subject the vendor to disqualification from any future rounds.

Q3: For Section III – Overview - We are supposed to choose three industries to focus on. If a certified MWBE participates in the cohort and is not in these three industries selected are we able to still count them towards our goals?

A: Only firms that fall within the three identified industries are able to apply for and participate in the program.

Q4: For Section VII – Applicant Information - We are a non-profit organization and EAP center, can we apply for this grant?

A: Not-for-profit organizations and prior ESD grantees are eligible to apply. However, this program is envisioned to develop a cohesive team of multi-disciplinary technical assistance providers to provide comprehensive support to MWBE cohort participants. In the proposal, RFP respondents must demonstrate/discuss the team that will be working on implementing this project or, if they intend to implement individually, how they will expect to provide the services required in this RFP to MWBE cohort participants.

Q5: Do the services outlined in the RFP have to be delivered in person or can they be delivered virtually?

A: While the expectation is for all services to be delivered in person, certain services may be delivered virtually if necessary. However, RFP respondents must identify in their proposal why they are unable to provide in-person services, and clearly articulate how they intend to provide the services necessary to MWBE applicants as required by this RFP. Proposals must discuss how they expect to address any deficiencies that prohibit in-person assistance and any deficiencies that may arise due to virtual programming. They must also demonstrate the infrastructure capability to deliver such services.

Q6: Are the selected contractor(s) able to submit monthly invoices for reimbursement?

A: Reimbursements will be made on a quarterly basis as per section VI of the RFP.

Q7: Is the area of coverage determined by the respondent or will ESD assign a region in the state in which the selected anchor is expected to deliver services?

A: The area of coverage will be proposed by the respondent, and must be within the Region the selected grantee is located in. See [ESD Regions](#) for additional information on the geographical division of NYS.

Q8: Can the selected respondents deliver services to eligible M/WBEs that are not contacted by DMWBD (as indicated on page 5 in the technical assistance section of the RFP)

A: This appears to be a question on the NYS MWBE Certification Assistance RFP. For additional information on the Certification Assistance RFP, please see the RFP and Questions and Answers [here](#).

Q9: Will the proposals be graded on best price or best value?

A: Proposals will be scored on best value.

Q10: Is the State working with a consulting firm that is providing similar work as this RFP?

A: No.

Q11: Is there an incumbent for this project?

A: No, this is a pilot initiative for ESD.

Q12: Is it the expectation that the service provider (i.e., Awardee on this project) be onsite or virtual or both to perform the services?

A: See answer to Question 5.

Q13: Is there a preference for the selected firm to be a diverse supplier?

A: Diverse firms are encouraged to respond to this RFP. Firms will be selected based on the selection criteria on page 11 of the RFP.

Q14: Is there a preference to hire a consulting firm headquartered in the State of New York?

A: New York State-based and non-New York State based firms are eligible to submit a proposal to this RFP. The Anchor Institution must be based in a NYS region, as indicated in the [ESD Regions](#).

Q15: As you move forward in your decision making process, will Bidders have an opportunity to clarify its proposals before an Awardee is selected?

A: Only shortlisted vendors will have the opportunity to clarify and discuss the proposal submitted in an in-person interview.

Q16: If an organization currently serves a high-need area within the boundaries of a region, is the organization required to serve the entire region or specific high-need areas within the region?

A: The selected awardee is expected to serve and open the program to MWBE applicants in the entire Region. MWBE cohort applicants will be selected by the selected grantee, and reviewed and approved by DMWBD, from the entire Region.

Q17: Please explain the details of the match requirement and how other private funds may or may not be used toward the match requirement (such as in-kind' or "cash")

A: Anchor Institutions must match fifty percent (50%) of the ESD grant through a cash or in-kind contribution. At least half of the match (\$37,500) must be a cash contributions and no more than half of the match (\$37,500) may be an in-kind contributions. This information must be detailed in the budget submitted with the proposal, and must identify which charges will be made to each line. Anchor Institutions are able and encouraged to match more than fifty percent (50%) of the grant. The cash match can be used for any purpose of the program, with the only limitation being overhead spending per page 9 of the RFP. The in-kind match may include goods and services given in lieu of money.

Q18: If private matched funds are allowable (such as philanthropic funds), what are ESDC's requirements on co-branding the program? Are there limitations on branding?

A: Any co-branding must be identified in responses to the RFP, and any proposed co-branding will be evaluated as part of the scoring of the respondent's Project Plan/Approach. All program branding is subject to ESD approval.

Q19: How would a contracted organization support a qualified applicant that is outside of the chosen and approved industries?

A: Program resources may only to be devoted to identified and approved industries in the RFP response.

Q20: In regards to the captioned item, is there a list of attendees from the pre-bid meeting which is available to interested parties who were unable to attend?

A: A list of attendees from the pre-bid meeting is not available for distribution.