



## **REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS**

### ***Small Business Outreach Consultant***

#### **INTRODUCTION**

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The Northwest Hills Council of Governments (NHCOC) is seeking a qualified consultant to coordinate and conduct small business outreach to assist businesses in the region with economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The selected consultant will be expected to coordinate with our partner organizations on this effort including NWCT Chamber of Commerce, Northwest Regional Workforce Investment Board, CT Small Business Development Center, NWCT SCORE, NWCT Entrepreneurial Center, and others as needed.

#### **TASKS AND COMPENSATION**

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The consultant's work will include the following tasks:

- Call, email, and/or visit small businesses within the region to determine what help might be needed for economic recovery and seek to coordinate the provision of assistance.
- Call, email and/or meet with local economic development committees/commissions in the region to offer small business support and coordinate assistance efforts
- Help small businesses navigate the array of programs and services available to them from CT SBDC, SCORE, NRWIB, State and Federal programs, etc.
- Help small businesses take advantage of free marketing opportunities available on the region's events & destination website and local sites
- Coordinate "buy local" initiatives like "Take-out Tuesday" or "Shop Local Online"
- Collaborate with other NHCOC consultants and partners listed above.

Funding budgeted for this work totals \$70,000 for a 24-month period. The consultant will be compensated at a negotiated hourly rate based on experience. The consultant will be an independent contractor and as such will not receive employment benefits. The consultant will be expected to work from their own home or office and be available for in person meetings as required by the tasks listed above. The consultant must have a reliable private vehicle and be willing to travel within the region for in-person visits as needed. The consultant will use their own computer and mobile phone. Compensation for documented mileage will be provided.

#### **QUALIFICATIONS AND SELECTION OF CONSULTANT**

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A selection committee will review responses to this request for qualifications. The recommendation of this selection committee will be forwarded to the NHCOG board to approve the selection of a consultant.

The following criteria will be used in evaluating proposals:

- Previous experience in the services required and overall qualifications of the consultant
- Knowledge of the programs and services offered by Northwest Regional Workforce Investment Board, CT Small Business Development Center, NWCT SCORE, NWCT Entrepreneurial Center, State and Federal economic assistance programs (such as the Paycheck Protection Program)
- Reasonable proximity to the Northwest Hills Region and knowledge of the region.

## **PROJECT TIMELINE AND OVERSIGHT**

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The project will be initiated and completed between October 2020 and June 2022. The consultant's work will be overseen by the NHCOG's Community & Economic Development Director.

## **SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS**

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1. Cover letter including a statement of understanding of the project tasks
2. Resume of consultant
3. Hourly rate requirement to carry out tasks listed above
4. Description of similar projects/work completed and contacts for professional reference

To be considered, consultants must submit required documents by email to [jayer@northwesthillscog.org](mailto:jayer@northwesthillscog.org) by **noon on September 18, 2020**.

No oral interpretations will be made to any potential respondent as to the meaning of any requirements specified within this RFQ. In preparing the consultant's response, the respondent shall rely on what has been communicated in writing and no oral communication shall become the basis for any subsequent protest of the selection process.

NHCOG is an Affirmative Action Equal Opportunity Employer. M/F/V/H/EOE

NHCOG retains the right to reject any submittals, request additional information, or re-issue this RFQ.