**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

**TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR SMALL BUSINESSES**

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**Contact: Connor Rigney, Planner**

 **Two Rivers-Ottauquechee Regional Commission**

 **128 King Farm Road**

 **Woodstock, VT 05091**

 **Phone: (802) 457-3188 x 3010 Email: crigney@trorc.org**

**Date of Issue: September 22, 2022**

**Deadline: October 24, 2022 at 4:00 PM EST, submission to the TRORC office.**

**No paper copies will be accepted. Proposals must be emailed as Adobe PDFs.**

**TRORC will make its selections and notify all firms on or before November 14, 2022.**

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**INTRODUCTION**

In order to assist struggling small sole proprietor businesses with the ongoing impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Two Rivers-Ottauquechee Regional Commission (TRORC) is seeking qualified consultants to provide one-on-one technical assistance for local small businesses in Washington, Chittenden, Franklin, Grand Isle, Essex, Caledonia, Orleans, Orange and Windsor counties on the following topics:

* Website Development / Enhancement
* Financial Management (Bookkeeping) and Record-Keeping
* Branding and Marketing (digital, print, audio)

You may provide services in any or all topics. Services will be paid for on an hourly basis per-client. A client may receive assistance in one or more of the aforementioned topics, up to a maximum of $2,000 worth of services per client. The maximum expected award per consultant is $20-25,000, or approximately 10-15 clients served per topic area. Consultants are expected to work with clients selected by TRORC from any of the aforementioned counties. Assistance may be offered in-person or virtually, however part of the intended audience is not comfortable using computers. Mileage for in-person work will be reimbursed at the federal rate. Part of the intended audience may also not use English as their primary language. Consultants will be expected to work with third parties, contracted separately by TRORC, to provide clients with language support as needed.

**REQUEST**

Interested parties shall provide a proposal consisting of the following documents and information:

* A signed cover letter by a principal in the firm with your business address and contact information explaining your firm or team’s interest in the project, along with how your knowledge, experience, and skills align with the scope of the work. The cover letter must also acknowledge that you have, or will have, the required insurance coverages (see below).
* A brief technical proposal of specific services that you would expect to provide, given time constraints and differing levels of businesses, especially those with no experience as they relate to your selected topic categories (Website Development/Enhancement, Financial Management and Record-Keeping, and/or Branding and Marketing). A proposal will be scored higher if it demonstrates that a consultant has experience assisting a diverse range of sole proprietor businesses, including new entrepreneurs with no prior formal training. Consultants that can provide in-person services will be scored higher as well.
* A brief cost proposal, including expected hourly rates, direct costs, and the expected number of hours you would be able to dedicate to one client in exchange for $2,000.
* Resumes and/or bios of team members involved in the project.
* At least two work sample(s) from a project of a similar scope. Please provide client company name, primary contact name, phone number, and email address.

Proposals should be packaged as single pdf document and emailed to Connor Rigney (contact information above). Paper copies will not be accepted.

**TRORC’S ROLE**

Two Rivers-Ottauquechee Regional Commission will do the following:

* Connect you with clients
* Manage your contract and the dispersal of funds. We will be paying you, not the clients.

**INSURANCE AS REQUIRED BY THE STATE OF VERMONT**

Before commencing work on this Agreement, the consultant must provide certificates of insurance to show that the following minimum coverages are in effect. It is the responsibility of the consultant to maintain current certificates of insurance on file with the State through the term of this Agreement. No warranty is made that the coverages and limits listed herein are adequate to cover and protect the interests of the consultant for the consultant’s operations. These are solely minimums that have been established to protect the interests of the State.

*Workers Compensation*: With respect to all operations performed, the consultant shall carry workers’ compensation insurance in accordance with the laws of the State of Vermont. Vermont will accept an out-of-state employer's workers’ compensation coverage while operating in Vermont provided that the insurance carrier is licensed to write insurance in Vermont and an amendatory endorsement is added to the policy adding Vermont for coverage purposes. Otherwise, the consultant shall secure a Vermont workers’ compensation policy, if necessary to comply with Vermont law.

*General Liability and Property Damage*: With respect to all operations performed under this Agreement, the consultant shall carry general liability insurance having all major divisions of coverage including, but not limited to:

Premises - Operations

Products and Completed Operations

Personal Injury Liability

Contractual Liability

The policy shall be on an occurrence form and limits shall not be less than:

$1,000,000 Each Occurrence

$2,000,000 General Aggregate

$1,000,000 Products/Completed Operations Aggregate

$1,000,000 Personal & Advertising Injury

*Automotive Liability:* The consultant shall carry automotive liability insurance covering all motor vehicles, including hired and non-owned coverage, used in connection with the Agreement. Limits of coverage shall not be less than $500,000 combined single limit. If performance of this Agreement involves construction, or the transport of persons or hazardous materials, limits of coverage shall not be less than $1,000,000 combined single limit.

*Additional Insured.* The General Liability and Property Damage coverages required for performance of this Agreement shall include the State of Vermont and its agencies, departments, officers and employees, and TRORC, as Additional Insureds. If performance of this Agreement involves construction, or the transport of persons or hazardous materials, then the required Automotive Liability coverage shall include the State of Vermont and its agencies, departments, officers and employees, and TRORC, as Additional Insureds. Coverage shall be primary and non-contributory with any other insurance and self-insurance.

*Notice of Cancellation or Change.* There shall be no cancellation, change, potential exhaustion of aggregate limits or non-renewal of insurance coverage(s) without thirty (30) days written prior written notice to the TRORC.

**EVALUATION**

For proposal evaluation, the following scoring system will be used:

* -  5 as “Excellent” / “More than fully compliant/innovative”
* -  4 as “Good” / “Fully compliant”
* -  3 as “Satisfactory” / “Compliant”
* -  2 as “Acceptable” / “Almost compliant”
* -  1 as “Unsatisfactory” / “Poorly compliant”
* -  0 as “Major concerns” / “Non-compliant”

Minority and Women-owned businesses are encouraged to apply.