

513 Business Assist – Business Mentorship Program: Request for Qualifications and Quotation

1. SUMMARY

The [513 Small Business Assist](#) initiative is seeking an appropriately qualified vendor or consortium of vendors to assist the program in developing a business mentorship program. The mentorship program will provide businesses with access to a network of legal, marketing, and accounting advisors. The mentorship program is scheduled to begin on **September 27, 2021**.

Qualifications briefs and fee quotations are due no later than **12:00pm EDT, September 9th, 2021**.

2. ORGANIZATION BACKGROUND

513 Small Business Assist is a program designed to remove barriers that small business owners face when navigating recovery assistance programs. All eligible small businesses can receive one-on-one support with grant applications, business planning, marketing, access to funding, and much more.

The services currently offered are:

- > **Rapid Business Assessment**– Small business owners entering the Initiative are provided with a recommendation of what support and services they should receive and a measure of their level of readiness to access funding.
- > **One-on-One Business Advice**– Following the assessment, small business owners are matched with one of the Initiative’s Business Support Organization partners that provide the recommended support and services.
- > **Relief Funding Support & Guidance**– Guidance is provided to all small businesses on applying to varied grant and loan programs

In order for a business to be eligible for the 513 Small Business Assist program, a business must meet the following criteria:

- > Has reduced operations or diminished revenues due to COVID-19
- > Has not declared bankruptcy within the last 3 years
- > Is located in Hamilton County, Ohio
- > Has 50 employees or less
- > Does not have federal, state, or local tax liens
- > Has been in operation as of January 1st, 2020
- > Is currently open, or has a plan to reopen within the next 60 day

3. PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

Program Partners

513 Small Business Assist brings together a working coalition of organizations that are committed to helping small businesses connect with the services they need to sustain and advance their business. This coalition is administered by the National Development Council and Next Street Financial LLC and includes the African American Chamber of Commerce, Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber, the Urban League of Greater Cincinnati, and the Greater Cincinnati Microenterprise Initiative. Funding is provided by Fifth Third Bank, Greater Cincinnati Foundation, and JP Morgan Chase & Co

Business Mentorship

The Business Mentorship component is designed to launch in September 2021. The selected vendor(s) will provide access to professional experts that can help small businesses make tangible improvements to their business in the areas of legal, marketing, financial management, or accounting.

The goal of this service is to help a select cohort of businesses, from the larger the **513 Small Business Assist** initiative, modernize their businesses and adapt to post pandemic world) We seek to create an integrated experience with our partner organizations. Desired outcomes of this process include:

- Seamlessly onboarding the Hamilton County small businesses selected for the mentorship program
- Deepening the level of support provided to the selected businesses
- Helping businesses advance and modernize
- Providing small businesses with in-depth legal, marketing, and accounting support
- Making a tangible improvement to the business

4. PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

Audience:

513 Business Assist serves businesses that are located in Hamilton County, Ohio. Please see the full program eligibility criteria in Section 2.

Integration with 513 Small Business Assist Program Partners:

The selected vendor or consortium of vendors must work closely with 513 Small Business Assist Program Partners. The selected vendor or vendors will work alongside Next Street and will be onboarded onto the 513 Small Business Assist's CRM (Submittable).

Desired Features

The selected vendor or consortium of vendors must provide, but is not limited to, the following features:

- A CRM to onboard and track small businesses and the services they are utilizing

- **Legal Assistance:** Connect a small business to a certified legal professional that can help business owner draft a contract or negotiate a lease or contract.
- **Marketing:** Provide direct support to a small business to create a new or enhance an existing market asset, which can include but is not limited to: setting up a social media account, creating a pitch deck, developing a capability statement, updating their website, etc.
- **Accounting/Financial Management:** Provide direct support to a small business that can help them create a new or enhance an existing financial management asset including but not limited to: setting up a QuickBooks account for the business, creating financial projections, creating a financial management dashboard, etc.
- **Communication:** Weekly meeting with Next Street to discuss progress towards program goals
- **Reporting:** Weekly report that will be provided to Next Street that captures businesses served, hours, and any tangible improvement from assistance.
- **Success Stories:** Collect and package a report to Next Street which highlights customers who have successfully leveraged mentorship services

5. BUDGET ALLOCATION

Please include a pricing template or table, broken down by item and cost element.

6. MILESTONES AND DEADLINES

- RFQ will be released on **August 26th, 2021**
- Follow-up or clarifying questions pertaining to the RFQ must be submitted no later than 12:00pm EDT on **September 6th, 2021**. Responses will be issued no later than **September 7th, 2021**
- Final proposals are due no later than 12:00pm EDT, **September 9th, 2021**
- Proposals will be evaluated immediately thereafter. Selected finalists may be interviewed by Next Street during the week of **September 13th, 2021**
- Target date to execute contract will be **September 17th, 2021**
- The mentorship program will kick-off on **Monday, September 27th, 2021**

7. QUALIFICATIONS

- Provide a company profile, length of time in business and core competencies
- List three, current or past projects that your firm has produced that best reflect your work and relevancy to this RFQ. Briefly list the role your firm played in each project
- Briefly describe your firm's organizational capacity to deliver the business mentorship program (e.g., staff, equipment, software, location, etc.)
- Describe the type of team that will be assigned to this project. What will each person's role be? Please include a brief background summary for each key staff member assigned to this project
- Include any Terms and Conditions

8. CONTACT INFORMATION & RFQ DISCLOSURES

This process will be managed by a working team from Next Street. Please contact Will Moss (wmoos@nextstreet.com) with any questions about the RFQ.

513 Small Business Assist is funded by federal CARES Act funding awards to Hamilton County, Ohio and philanthropic donations.

Next Street is an equal opportunity employer and considers qualified applicants for subcontracting without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, age, disability, or veteran status, or any other protected factor.

OFFEROR'S COVENANT OF NON-DISCRIMINATION:

Pursuant to the City of Cincinnati's policy of non-discrimination, specifically in its purchasing and contracting practices, the RFQ Offeror covenants, represents, and warrants that:

- The Offeror will not discriminate against small business enterprises on the basis of race, ethnicity, gender or disability in the process of contracting, subcontracting and purchasing.
- The Offeror will use good faith efforts to promote opportunities for SBEs and M/WBEs to participate in and compete for opportunities to the extent of their availability and capacity.

S/M/WBE SUBCONTRACTING:

There is no specific S/M/WBE subcontracting goal for this project. However, the City of Cincinnati desires that opportunities for City-certified SBEs, WBEs, and/or MBEs be generated to the maximum extent practicable. As such, S/M/WBE subcontracting will be one of the factors considered for award.