**Questions and Answers**

**RFP: MICRO2020**

Q. I would like to understand what constitutes a “network of microenterprise organizations with statewide reach.” I am not aware that any such organization exists other than, perhaps, the Washington State Microenterprise Association. Is this RFP specifically targeting the Washington State Microenterprise Association?

A. The language within the Legislative bill did not call out any specific entity to do this work. Therefore, this RFP isn’t targeted specifically to anyone. See Legislation Below.

ESHB 1109

Chapter 415, Laws of 2019

Section 129

(69) … a grant to assist people with limited incomes in nonmetro areas of the state start and sustain small businesses. The grant recipient must be a nonprofit organization involving a network of microenterprise organizations and professionals to support micro entrepreneurship and access to economic development resources.

Agency Detail

Department of Commerce

**Microenterprise Grants**

Funding is provided for a grant to assist people with limited incomes in non-metro areas of the state start and sustain small businesses. (General Fund-State)

Q. Could we be eligible if it proposed a project that would move it towards becoming a network with statewide reach by replicating its new branch office in Port Angeles in additional rural communities (e.g., in Mt. Vernon and/or in Yakima) in partnership with WSU’s Washington Small Business Development Center (especially given that WSBDC is clearly a network with statewide reach – which by virtue of our partnership would be assisting people of limited resources in non-metro areas)?

A. Eligibility for this RFP is based specifically on the minimum qualifications. If an entity meets the minimum qualifications it will pass through to evaluators for scoring.

Q. Section 1.5 says the period of any contract arising out of this RFP “is tentatively scheduled to start on or about September 18, 2019 and to end on June 30, 2021.” If awarded a contract, must the work start and end on these dates, or could the start and end periods be other dates as long as the start date is not before September 18, 2019 and the end date is not after June 30, 2021 (e.g., an 18 month project starting January 1, 2020 and ending June 30, 2021)?

A. You are correct. The start date is a tentative date for the contract to start; however, this could be different. The end date is a firm date.

Q. Section 1.5 says that “Commerce reserves the right to extend the contract for two one-year periods.” Would these extensions be no-cost extensions (simply allowing for additional time), or would they be more like option periods with an opportunity to request additional funding if granted?

A. This is standard language within our RFP document. It is unknown if there will be future funding. The funding for this RFP ends June 30, 2021, no extension will be granted for time to complete the work proposed would be granted. As far as additional funding, we would not know anything about extending this contract for the same work, until a budget passed in 2021.

Q. Section 2.9 of the RFP says that vendors may submit a complaint to Commerce prior to 5 days before the bid response deadline if (a) the solicitation unnecessarily restricts competition . . . or (c) the solicitation requirements are inadequate or insufficient to prepare a response.” If we were to submit a complaint on the basis that this appears to be a sole source contract for the Washington State Microenterprise rather than a competitive process, and/or that 16 days is not a sufficient amount of time to develop a competitive proposal and requesting an extension of the deadline, would this in any way negatively impact the evaluation of our proposal?

A. The RFP process is competitive, fair and transparent. The RFP Coordinator who receives the complaint does not evaluate the proposals. If a complaint is submitted, this in no way would negatively impact the evaluation of a proposal, by the evaluators.