

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
FOR A FIRM TO ASSIST THE NORTHWEST INDIANA
REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY IN THE MANAGEMENT
OF THE MINORITY COMPLIANCE
AND BUY INDIANA PROGRAMS**

Issued by



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Released on March 20, 2009

INTRODUCTION

This Request for Proposal is for a qualified compliance and quality auditing specialist to present to the Northwest Indiana Regional Development Authority (RDA) a proposal for technical assistance in the administration of the RDA's minority compliance and Buy Indiana programs and the ongoing monitoring function of its grantees. The enabling statute of the RDA stipulates that RDA-funded projects should achieve a utilization goal of 15% minority business enterprises and 5% women business enterprises and increase participation of Indiana corporations, goods and services.

SCOPE OF THE REQUEST

Under I.C. 36-7.5-3-1, the RDA has been formed by the State of Indiana to assist in the expansion of the Gary/Chicago International Airport; the extension of commuter rail owned/operated by the Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District; the creation of a regional bus system under the Regional Bus Authority; the redevelopment of the Lake Michigan shoreline; and, in the development of other qualified projects.

The RDA is seeking a firm to assist in the administration of the RDA's MBE/WBE compliance and Buy Indiana programs and to conduct ongoing monitoring and auditing of grantees' compliance to these respective program goals and priorities. The firm will be responsible for guiding the RDA and managing its grantees toward program success by using a clearly-defined, standardized and well-managed reporting and consultative process beginning—with an applicant's initial engagement with the RDA through a grantee's project completion.

A qualified firm should be equipped to coordinate incoming reports from grantees and its own outgoing reports to the RDA Staff and Board on a monthly and quarterly basis. These reporting activities would be concurrent to the monitoring and auditing functions that are expected to be conducted electronically, by paper and through face-to-face, on-site meetings. Other requirements include limited travel and attendance at either four to six (4-6) RDA board meetings. The qualified firm will be asked to sign a non-compete clause.

Additional areas of responsibility may include the assistance and/or the coordination of other program-related activities as instructed by the RDA Board or Executive Director.

At the time of this RFP release, the RDA oversees eleven (11) active grantee contracts totaling over \$82.8 million. The policy development of the minority compliance and Buy Indiana programs are nearing completion and the standardization of program reporting are being established; therefore, this contract would focus more on program implementation and execution rather than policy formulation.

BACKGROUND

The Northwest Indiana Regional Development Authority (RDA) was created by the Indiana General Assembly in 2005. The Authority is a multi-purpose, area-wide planning and regional development organization responsible for development within Lake and Porter Counties in Indiana. It is governed by a board of seven members appointed by the Mayors of Gary, Hammond, and East Chicago; the County governments of Lake and Porter Counties; and the Governor of Indiana.

The mission of the RDA is to be a catalyst for the transformational advances in Northwest Indiana. We are guided by a set of principles directing us to be bold in our thinking; collaborative as we work with many groups and organization without regard to political affiliation, race, or social status; transparent to instill public confidence as we do our work; non-partisan as we reach out to all constituents; efficient in our use of the publics' resources; accountable for prudent actions, now and in the future; and socially equitable in the way we conduct our business internally and externally that respects the diversity of the region we serve. This vision and these principles are very important to the RDA and will be embodied into the decision-making framework during the awarding of this contract.

Under I.C. 36-7.5-2-8, the RDA shall

“(b) In addition to the provisions of subsection (a), with respect to projects undertaken by the authority, the authority shall set a goal for participation by minority business enterprises of fifteen percent (15%) and women’s business enterprises of five percent (5%), consistent with the goals of delivery the project on time and within the budgeted amount and, insofar as possible, using Indiana businesses for employees, goods and services. In fulfilling the goal, the authority shall take into account historical precedents in the same market. *As added by P.L. 215-2005, SEC. 73.*

To that end, the RDA board articulated the following board policy with respect to MBE/WBE utilization,

The RDA strongly affirms its support as a matter of policy for the 15% MBE and 5% WBE spending goals contained in the enabling RDA legislation. Accordingly, moving forward, grantees approved for funding, or operational consultants utilized by the RDA, will achieve these spending goals in the completion of projects funded or services provided to the RDA. Documentation of planned efforts to meet these goals must be a part of every grant application, and the adequacy of this plan will be taken into account when the RDA Board acts on any funding request. If, at any time during a grant cycle, it is revealed that a grantee is not achieving the expected goals agreed to at the time of the grant, the grantee will be given thirty days notice to submit a corrective action plan acceptable to the RDA. Failure to submit such a plan will result in automatic suspension of outstanding funding under the grant.

OVERVIEW OF THE REQUEST PROCESS

The proposed timeline for this RFP process is as follows and may be subject to change.

March 20, 2009	RFP Released to Public and Posted to Web-site
April 24, 2009	Proposals Due to the RDA Office
May 6, 2009	RDA Executive Director Completes Initial Review of Proposals and the Qualified Firms are Scheduled for Interviews
May 14, 2009	RDA Compliance RFP Working Group Makes Recommendation for the Consultant
May 17, 2009	RDA Board Votes on the Recommendation for Consultant
June 2009	RDA Transitions between Consultant
July 2009	RDA Minority Compliance and Buy Indiana Monitoring Begins

All responses to or questions regarding this request should be submitted in writing to:

Mr. William Hanna, Executive Director
Northwest Indiana Regional Development Authority
9800 Connecticut Drive
Crown Point, Indiana 46307

and be clearly marked "RDA Compliance Consultant"

The RDA will accept until **4:30 p.m. CST on Friday, April 24, 2009.**

FORMAT AND SUBMISSION OF QUALIFICATIONS

The proposal should include the following information:

- 1) The name and address of the submitting organization and the state in which it is incorporated or chiefly located; a designated contact within the organization and a telephone, fax number, and e-mail address; a list of any proposed sub-consultants that may be used on this project along with the state in which such sub-consultants are incorporated or chiefly located and their designated contacts and phone numbers. If sub-consultants are to be used, a primary contact/project manager must be specified.
- 2) Identification and resumes of the project manager and the key technical personnel who will be conducting the work on the project.
- 3) The designated roles and duties with projected time allotted per week on this project for each consultant and sub-consultant must also be specified. The estimated cost for the work proposed.
- 4) References for similar work done by your firm, including the name, address, and telephone number of the client/contact person and a description of the work.
- 5) A copy of the ethic code to which the submitting organization subscribes.
- 6) One hard copy and an electronic file on cd or thumb drive are needed. Packets received after the deadline will be rejected.

REVIEW AND EVALUATION

The RDA Executive Director will review and evaluate the proposals based on, but not necessarily limited to, the completeness and clarity of the packet submitted, past experience in similar projects by firms and their staff members assigned to this project, qualifications, and availability of key personnel to participate in the project, and the fees involved in this submittal. Members of the Compliance working group will review those proposals forwarded by the Executive Director and may participate in the interview process. The Compliance working group will make a recommendation on the finalist which will be presented to the full board for action at the May board meeting.

COST OF PREPARATION

The RDA is not liable for any cost incurred prior to issuance of a contract.

GENERAL RFP DISCLOSURES

- 1) Requirements and specifications of this proposal are considered to be the minimum needed.
- 2) If any modifications are made to the Regional Development Authority's request, anyone who has requested the original RFP will be sent copies of said modifications.
- 3) The responder must follow all RFP instructions to be considered responsive.
- 4) The RDA has the sole discretion to award this contract and reserves the right to modify or withdraw any and all offers.
- 5) The RDA reserves the right to reject all of the proposals.
- 6) The RDA reserves the right to interview, negotiate and deliberate with candidates before making a final decision.