

## **Request for Proposals:**

### **Small Business Development Consultant for Downtown BOOST Program**

#### **RFP Objectives**

Downtown Partnership of Baltimore (DPOB) seeks a qualified contractor ("Consultant") to provide ongoing business development services to small retail business winners of the Downtown BOOST Program. This project aims to help small retailers recover from the COVID-19 public health emergency and support the equitable revitalization of Downtown Baltimore.

#### **About DPOB**

Downtown Partnership of Baltimore is the organization that is the primary champion of the downtown core in Baltimore, Maryland. DPOB is a member organization that connects businesses, residents, and visitors to all occurring in Maryland's largest business center, cultural district, and fastest-growing neighborhoods. DPOB initiatives range from leading, promoting, and supporting new development to helping organize Baltimore Restaurant Week. DMA staff handle responsibilities that include providing directions and assistance, cleaning alleys, and supporting the Downtown's many urban parks.

Additionally, DPOB runs small business attraction initiatives to support the revitalization of Downtown's retail sector. Notably, DPOB runs the [Downtown BOOST \(Black-Owned and Operated Storefront Tenancy\) Program](#), which provides large grants and wraparound support to small businesses moving to vacant storefronts Downtown. In 2021, DPOB ran the first round of BOOST, supporting 5 businesses' relocation Downtown. As part of this program, DPOB administered the BOOST Accelerator Program, which provides guidance and lessons to small businesses while also connecting them to program partners.

As the steward of Downtown Baltimore and the Central Business District's economic engine, in 2022, DPOB requested funds from the Baltimore City Mayor's Office of Recovery Programming to implement the Downtown Baltimore Retail Revitalization Initiative. Using a portion of the successful award, DPOB will be able to continue the Downtown BOOST Program for at least 2 additional rounds in 2023 and 2024.

#### **Request for Proposal – Scope of Work**

Through this Request for Proposal (RFP), Downtown Partnership of Baltimore seeks written proposals from qualified Respondents to provide ongoing business development support to winners of the Downtown BOOST Program. The Consultant will lead the BOOST Accelerator Program, using a predeveloped curriculum to guide winners through biweekly lessons on the following subjects:

- Start-Up Capital Projections
- Lease Negotiations
- Storefront Design/Buildout
- HR
- Customer Experience
- Marketing
- Intellectual Property
- Taxes and Accounting

- Banking and Credit
- Insurance

In total, the selected Consultant will:

1. Support the selection of BOOST winners by participating in finalist interviews and supporting internal due diligence evaluations to ensure selections are financially prepared for success (6-8 hours total)
2. Report to Sr Director of Economic development on boost business consulting project and process, coordinate with internal teams to plan and implement cohort accelerator program.
3. Lead and manage all logistical planning for the BOOST Accelerator Program, including leading two, 2-hour lessons per month for 6 months (10-12 lessons, 20-24 hours total) on the above subject areas with business owners.
4. Coordinate the integration of lessons with program partners, including accountants, architects, corporate sponsors, and others.
5. Provide ad-hoc support and coaching to small businesses as they refine their business models and prepare to open operations in new spaces

#### **Proposal Content and Submission Requirements**

All bids shall to DPOB. Bidders must provide DPOB with their bids signed by an employee or officer having legal authority to submit bids on behalf of the bidder. The bidder shall bear the entire cost of preparing and providing responses.

Bid contents must include the following:

1. Cover letter
2. Project team: Please list the staff members working on this project
3. Approach and Cost Estimates: Please include cost estimates per cohort, including the number of available staff hours, all related fees, and total cost.
4. Qualifications and Experience: Please provide your team's qualifications and experience with similar projects.
5. MBE Requirement: Please provide any MBE certification with your proposal.
6. Authorized Resident Business: Please provide documentation that you are registered to work in the State of Maryland with this proposal.
7. Good Standing: Please provide a screenshot of your business' profile on [Maryland BusinessExpress](#) to verify your company is in Good Standing with the State of Maryland.
8. Insurance Coverage: Please provide documentation that your business insurance complies with the following minimum coverage requirements:

General Liability:

|                         |             |
|-------------------------|-------------|
| Each Occurrence         | \$1,000,000 |
| General Aggregate Limit | \$1,000,000 |
| Medical Expense Limit   | \$5,000     |

Aggregate limit to apply per project

Additional Insured Endorsement: CG 20 10 07 04 & GC 20 37 07 04

9. References: Provide two references (name, title, organization, email, and phone) who can attest to expertise in the field.

**Notification of Intent**

Parties interested in responding to the RFP should notify DPOB of their interest in formulating a response by emailing [sstorey@dpob.org](mailto:sstorey@dpob.org). These parties will be placed on a distribution list for notice of any amendments to the RFP, sent responses to questions asked during the Q&A period, and will receive any other updates/notices pertaining to the RFP. Failure of an interested party to notify DPOB of their desire to be added to the solicitation distribution list could result in the party missing key information about the solicitation and its requirements.

**Amendments**

DPOB reserves the right to make amendments to the RFP as necessary. Amendments will be sent to the Respondents who have notified DPOB of their intent to participate in the process.

**Solicitation Timeline**

Respondents shall submit their responses in a PDF document to Sam Storey, Sr. Director of Economic Development, at [sstorey@dpob.org](mailto:sstorey@dpob.org) by January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023, at 5:00 pm ET. All questions and comments are also to be submitted to Sam Storey.

Issue Date: December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2022

Deadline for Questions: December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022

Submission Due Date: January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023

*DPOB reserves the right to set up meetings/interviews to review proposals with the respondents prior to selection.*

Project Award: February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023