

Mid-Minnesota Development Commission
Request for Proposals
For Grant Writing Services



MID-MINNESOTA DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

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INTRODUCTION

Mid-Minnesota Development Commission (MMDC) a regional development organization serving the Minnesota Counties of Kandiyohi, McLeod, Meeker, and Renville, invites qualified professionals and firms to submit proposals for contractual grant writing services. MMDC seeks to contract with one or more professionals or firms that specialize in the management of the overall grant application process. This work will help regional stakeholders (e.g., local government units, for-profit businesses, and nonprofit organizations) connect with and benefit from grant funding that will support our regional economy.

BACKGROUND

MMDC intends to assist regional stakeholders as they apply for grants that support or promote economic development, preserve jobs, create new employment opportunities, and/or help our region overcome identified barriers to local or regional economic resilience (e.g., housing, childcare, broadband, and workforce shortages). This work will aid businesses, organizations, and communities within our region, as they improve their ability to survive and thrive during current and future economic shocks (e.g., pandemics, natural disasters, local catastrophes).

Specific grants and projects of focus will be identified and authorized by the MMDC's executive director, in consultation with the MMDC Economic Development Team. However, work may include seeking potential funding sources and developing proposals that bring grant funding for commerce-related infrastructure improvements, workforce training programs, or other facilities, activities, or improvements that have a community-wide economic benefit. While the contract agreement will be between MMDC and the selected professional(s) or firm(s), grant-writing services may be performed on behalf of and in collaboration with MMDC's regional stakeholders (local government units, regional businesses and organizations, etc.).

PROPOSAL CONDITIONS AND INFORMATION

Proposals must be received by MMDC by 12:30 p.m. on Monday, November 1, 2021. However, MMDC encourages early proposal submission.

Proposer shall submit one electronic (pdf.) version of the proposal including any supporting documentation to:

Eric Day, MMDC Executive Director
Email: Eric.Day@mmdc.org



The subject line should clearly state: "Grant Writing Services Proposal"

Questions regarding this proposal may be submitted in writing to Eric Day up until the proposal response deadline.

SCOPE OF WORK

The contracted individual(s) or firm(s) will work closely with the MMDC's executive director and Economic Development Team, to identify projects that would benefit from and are ready for grant funding. They will then conduct research, compile relevant information, write, edit, and perform other activities required to bring to fruition a proposal that meets the requirements of the identified funder (e.g., U.S. Economic Development Authority, U.S. Department of Agriculture, MN Department of Employment and Economic Development, private foundations). In some cases the contracted professional(s) or firm(s) will lead proposal development. At other times, the contracted professional(s) or firm(s) will take a supporting role.

MMDC is seeking one or more grant writers (individuals or firms) with a demonstrated ability to:

- Craft compelling grant proposals in response to requests for proposal or notices of funding opportunity from federal, state, and/or other funders.
- Collect and analyze relevant data to support grant applications or other projects.
- Provide professional-level services (paid or unpaid) to businesses, organizations, and/or local government units.
- Communicate and collaborate with multiple parties to complete major projects and achieve common goals.
- Meet rigorous deadlines.

The selected contractor(s) will be compensated based on the number of hours worked. Those submitting proposals should provide their hourly fee/rate for grant work, with the understanding that the initial service contract will be for two hundred (200) hours of contracted work, with an option to extend this contract in one or more one hundred (100) hour increments. Any extension will be contingent upon funds available and mutual agreement that the contracted arrangement remains beneficial, both to the MMDC region and to the contractor. A service contract, separate from this document, will be written and signed prior to the commencement of work. The parameters of that contract will align with this RFP document. However, the agreed upon contract will supersede this RFP.

Selected contractors will be required to invoice MMDC on a monthly basis and will be required to provide adequate documentation of billable hours and any agreed upon expenses to support invoices.

WORK TIMELINE

All work must conclude by June 30, 2022. However, it should be noted that many grant application timelines will be much earlier than that date (e.g., U.S. Economic Development Administration Economic Adjustment Assistance grant applications are due no later than March of 2022).

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Proposers must submit a detailed proposal which includes, at a minimum, the following:

- A description of grant writing qualifications. In particular, experience with the preparation and submittal of funding proposals to federal and state agencies should be highlighted, though information on proposals to private foundations will also be considered and appreciated.
- An overview of any related work (paid or unpaid) previously done on the behalf of local government units, businesses, or organizations.
- An explanation of capacity for grant-writing service output. In other words, on average, state the number of hours (per week or per month) you expect to have available for the grant-writing related activities described in this request for proposals.
- A description of the preferred process (yours or your firm's) for grant writing.
- If possible, list up to five (5) funded grant proposals which you developed detailing the funding source, amount requested, and amount funded.
- Provide an understanding of any other relevant background, professional experience, and/or other qualifications of the professional(s) involved with this grant-writing.
- Provide at least three (3) professional references, including the name of contact, affiliation, email address, and direct telephone number.

- Inform MMDC of your hourly fee, based on an initial contract of 200 hours, with the understanding that the contract may be extended in one or more one hundred hour increments if you/your firm and MMDC both agree the arrangement is beneficial. MMDC acknowledges that in addition to a time commitment, selected firms may incur additional related expenses (e.g., travel within the MMDC region, printed pages and/or copies needed for personal use). MMDC will reimburse for necessary travel at the federally approved reimbursement rate. All other expenses for which reimbursement is requested should be discussed with MMDC's executive director before the expense is incurred.

SELECTION

MMDC will make its selection based on its review of the proposals submitted. The criteria will include qualifications, experience, price, and the proposer's ability to meet the needs of MMDC and its stakeholders.

Specific Evaluation Criteria:

Criteria	Points Possible (100 Total)
Description of Qualifications, Relevant Background, and Overview of Related Work History	40
Description of Capacity for Described Work/Output	20
Cost/Fee	20
Description of Preferred Grant Writing Process	10
Demonstrated Track-Record for Grant Submittals and Grants Awarded	10

Respondents to this request for proposal are encouraged to provide information as succinctly as possible but should feel free to include any and all information that will help MMDC understand the respondent's qualifications, etc.

MMDC reserves the right to reject any or all the proposals and to waive informalities in the proposals or the proposal process. MMDC may interview selected proposer(s). MMDC further reserves the right to award the contract to other than the lowest proposer if such action is deemed to be in the best interest of the MMDC.

INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

All vendors, companies and individuals shall procure and maintain during the term of the contract the following insurance policies:

- General Liability
- Automobile Liability
- Workers Compensation & Employers Liability
- Professional Liability and Errors and Omissions