



## **Request for Proposal Entrepreneur/Small Business Outreach Services**

### **I. Executive Summary**

The OneGeorgia Authority in collaboration with the Georgia Department of Economic Development (GDEcD) is seeking proposals to continue building on the state's policies and programs to enhance, support and grow small businesses and entrepreneurs in Georgia. Over the last several years under the guidance of Governor Sonny Perdue, the state has worked to seek out new and existing high-growth potential small businesses in an effort to provide expertise by connecting these businesses to the appropriate resources, expanding into new markets and providing highly specialized technical assistance through Georgia's research universities and other qualified service providers.

The Georgia Department of Economic Development recently announced that 81% of Georgia's counties have earned the Entrepreneur Friendly designation and 46 of those communities received implementation grants over a four year period. The implementation grant funds were provided by the OneGeorgia Authority. In addition, the OneGeorgia Authority's ESB (Entrepreneur & Small Business) Loan Guarantee Program is a public-private partnership with banking institutions across Georgia to provide access to capital in rural areas with an emphasis on "near bankable" loans.

All of these activities, in conjunction with the work of other state agencies and partners, resulted in Georgia earning top honors at the national level by the Kauffman Index for Entrepreneurial Activity. Georgia's ranking moved from third in 2007 to first in 2009. The study indicated that Georgia has 590 entrepreneurs per every 100-thousand adults and that in fiscal year 2009, small businesses invested more than \$354 million in locations and expansions.

This Request for Proposals (RFP) provides a brief historical background as well as a scope of work and outline of tasks to be accomplished by the vendor(s) selected. If your organization wishes to be considered, the OneGeorgia Authority and the Georgia Department of Economic Development requests a written proposal addressing all points detailed in this RFP be submitted no later than **August 05, 2009.**



## **II. PROJECT ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

All proposals should be developed adhering to the following eligibility requirements:

### **Targeted Population:**

1. Activities must be targeted to directly eligible and conditionally eligible counties as identified by the OneGeorgia Authority
2. Activities must be targeted to eligible counties as outlined above within Georgia's service delivery regions
3. Activities must be targeted to small companies and entrepreneurs with less than 100 employees.
4. Activities should generally be targeted to Georgia's identified strategic industries or a qualified supporting industry including: Advanced Communications, Aerospace, Agribusiness, Automotive, Bioscience, Defense, Energy/Environment, Financial Services, Information Technology, Logistics/Transportation, Manufacturing, New Media and Tourism.

## **III. SCOPE OF WORK**

Proposals supporting Small Business / Entrepreneur Outreach should be developed considering Georgia's fiscal investments and track record of encouraging small business and entrepreneurial growth over the last several years.

Proposals should seek to incorporate as many of the following project activities as possible as well as provide the opportunity for other new and innovative activities. Project outcomes are aimed at retaining Georgia's recognition as the top state for entrepreneurs, fostering not only growth among existing entrepreneurs and small businesses but also nurturing new entrepreneurs and small businesses in today's highly competitive 21<sup>st</sup> century global economy.



### **III. SCOPE OF WORK** (continued)

#### **PROJECT ACTIVITIES & OUTCOMES**

##### **1. Mentoring & nurturing to support start-up companies and small businesses**

- Business to Business mentoring and Peer to Peer Networking opportunities in all OneGeorgia eligible regions.  
Outcome: minimum 30 companies mentored in each of the 12 service delivery regions (360 total), each company reporting new business deals, job creation, and or investment as a result of the service or activity.

##### **2. Access & prospecting new markets (domestic and international)**

- Market data and helpful user guidelines provided to companies
- How to use market data to attract new business and/or compete otherwise in the global marketplace
- Identifying and prospecting to a niche market  
Outcome: 300 companies served, results tracked and reported, and a minimum of 20% of companies served reporting new business deals, job creation, and or investment as a result of the service or activity.

##### **3. Marketing through technology**

- e-commerce
- website development and enhancement
- search engine optimization
- social media/networking
- adapting websites to include foreign languages and translation of collateral materials  
Outcome: 300 companies served and results tracked and reported, and a minimum of 20% of companies served reporting new business deals, job creation, and/or investment as a result of the service

##### **4. Specialized manufacturing and technical expertise**

- Manufacturing plant design and automation
- Lean manufacturing
- Applying software technology in the manufacturing plant  
Outcome: 300 companies served and results tracked and reported, and a minimum of 20% of companies served reporting new business deals, job creation, and/or investment as a result of the service or activity.



### III. SCOPE OF WORK (continued)

#### 5. Business development & growth

- Building capacity and planning for growth
- Attracting and retaining a skilled workforce
- Understanding financials, operating efficiency
- Attracting and retaining a skilled workforce

Outcome: 120 companies served, results tracked /reported and a minimum of 20% of companies served reporting new business deals, job creation, and/or investment as a result of the service or activity.

#### 6. Defense and other state and federal contracts

- How to become a government contractor
- Understanding government applications, requirements, proposals
- Assistance with applications

Outcome: 120 companies served, results tracked and reported, and a minimum of 20% of companies served reporting new business deals, job creation, and/or investment as a result of the service or activity.

### IV. PROJECT MANAGEMENT

All proposals should address the following:

1. What is your organizations history and philosophy with regard to supporting the growth of entrepreneurs and small businesses in Georgia?
2. Please provide a brief overview of your organizations capabilities
3. Please provide a performance history for each of the last three years?
4. Please address each of the following items:
  - How will you identify new clients?
  - How will you collaborate with other state agencies/entities to maximize leverage and opportunity?
5. Please list at least five clients with whom you have had a long-term relationship with and describe why the relationship has been successful.
6. What type of database/software is available to accumulate historical data and reports? Please provide samples of the reports available
7. What controls are in place to ensure conformity to applicable state and federal laws?



#### **IV. PROJECT MANAGEMENT (continued)**

##### **Key Staff/Organizational Background**

1. Describe your organizational structure
2. What is your organization's process for choosing team members to work on this project?
3. Please provide brief bios for the team you would assign to this project
4. Who will be responsible for managing timelines and budgets?
5. What programs do you have in place for enhancing skills and knowledge of your staff?
6. indicate level of administrative staff available to compile data and measurable incomes

##### **V. Budget**

1. The maximum budget available for this project is \$1 million
2. Your proposal should include a breakdown by category of costs
3. Please include a commitment letter providing the value of any additional soft-dollar relationships that will enhance your proposal
4. Proposal should include timeline outlining project activities and requested payment structure from anticipated start date of September 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010.
5. Contracting agency reserves the right to withhold a portion of the final payment to vendor(s) in the event that project activity outcomes are significantly less than required.

##### **VI. Selection Criteria**

1. Vendors selected for contract award are expected to provide on-going support to existing entrepreneurs and small businesses as well as to start-up entrepreneurs and small businesses.
2. This proposal may be awarded to one or several vendors, thus vendors may submit proposals for the entire contract or certain components for which the vendor is most qualified and experienced.
3. Final determination will be made following a review of the vendor responses received, consideration of a vendors' ability to uniquely perform certain project activities and/or a vendor's request to only be considered for certain activities, and finally, in consideration of the budget available for fiscal year 2010.



## **VI. Selection Criteria** (Continued)

Criteria used in the evaluation of eligible proposals received prior to the established deadline may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Proven ability to perform proposed work
- Knowledge of and experience across multiple business sectors
- Team credentials
- Excellent relationships and reputation with industry influencers and relevant partners, state entities, academia, etc.
- No conflicts of interest
- Proposal appears responsive to objectives of the project.

## **VII. Tentative Timeline for selection & awarding of contracts**

July 17:	RFP document distributed to agencies/organizations
July 24:	Deadline to provide notification on intent to respond
July 28-30	OGA & GDEcD available for inquiry calls or meetings
Aug 05:	Completed RFPs due to OGA & GDEcD by 5:00 PM
Aug 12:	Notify agency/organization on advance to next round
Aug 18-20	Final team presentations
Aug 25	Agencies/organizations notified of final selection
Aug 27-28	Execution of contracts and kick off meeting
Sept 01	Start of project activities

### **Timeline for service delivery**

September 1, 2009 – June 30, 2010

### **Outcomes Reporting Requirements**

Quarterly beginning October 10, 2009 (for September) and the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month following each quarter thereafter. (January 10, April 10, July 10)



## **VIII. Process of Evaluation**

1. Please provide an email response to all three contact names provided below within five days of issuance of this RFP indicating your interest in submitting a response.
2. Any questions regarding the RFP should be emailed to all three contact names below.
3. RFP responses must be received no later than 5 PM EDT on August 05, 2009
4. RFP responses may be submitted electronically
5. Late proposals and proposals delivered by facsimile will not be accepted.
6. Finalists may have the opportunity to make an oral presentation
7. Contracting agency reserves the right to reject any or all RFP responses
8. Contracting agency reserves the right to issue multiple awards

**Please submit one original, signed RFP response to each of the following no later than 5 PM EDT on August 05, 2009**

**The OneGeorgia Authority  
1202 Hillcrest Parkway  
Dublin, GA. 31021      Att: Nancy Cobb**

**The Georgia Department of Economic Development  
75 5<sup>th</sup> St., NW, Ste. 825  
Atlanta, GA 30308      Att: Heidi Green and Dara Barwick**

For more information, please email questions to:

[nancy.cobb@onegeorgia.org](mailto:nancy.cobb@onegeorgia.org)  
[dbarwick@georgia.org](mailto:dbarwick@georgia.org)  
[hgreen@georgia.org](mailto:hgreen@georgia.org)



**RFP response contents should include:**

1. Cover sheet on your organizational letterhead that includes all relevant contact information for your organization, including but not limited to, the name of the contact person, phone/fax number, email address and a brief, concise summary of the proposed project.
2. Proposal
3. Your organization's qualifications, background, primary mission, and history.
4. Detailed budget for your project / Amount of your request
5. Appendices (as applicable)
  - a. IRS tax-exempt status determination letter
  - b. Certification of Incorporation and By-Laws
  - c. List of Staff, Officers and Board of Directors
  - d. Letters of funding commitment
  - e. Letters of support (maximum of three)

**END OF REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL**