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Request for Proposals

Prototype Grant Program Partner

**Contact:**

Charlie Tyson, Office of Future Mobility and Electrification

Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity

Tysonc1@michigan.org

**Deadline for Submissions:**

**5:00PM EST on FEB 9, 2024**

January 2024

**SECTION I**

**OVERVIEW**

**THE OPPORTUNITY**

The Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity (LEO) is issuing this Request for Proposals (RFP) for funding of up to $475,000 to interested parties to aid in the administration and execution of a mobility prototype grant program. The partner will develop and host a competitive application, manage an external and internal review committee, and project manage sub-grant recipients (private companies) on behalf of LEO and Michigan’s Office of Future Mobility & Electrification (OFME).

LEO seeks to secure a qualified entity to support OFME in the following areas:

* Administration of LEO funding as company grants.
* Development and management of an application for a prototype grant to spur new and more mobility products developed in Michigan.
* Coordination and management of an internal and external review committee to evaluate applications prior to OFME selections.
* Tracking program results and developing bi-annual report.
* Development of talking points related to the program value for public and private sector audiences.
* Assistance and involvement in marketing, public relations, and communications activity.
* Identification of new public or private-sector funding opportunities for program growth.
* Product development and business support for grant recipients, including, but not limited to:
  + Manufacturing readiness for mobility product developers
  + Facilitating connections between the mobility industry and Michigan suppliers
  + Commercial, Technology, and Manufacturing Readiness Level Assessments (CRL/TRL/MRL) and milestone planning
  + Risk assessments / risk mitigation planning
  + Business strategy and business model creations
  + Connections to strategic go-to-market channel partners (system integrators, automation distributors)
  + Support for mobility companies seeking to test and demonstrate their products once prototyped/developed in Michigan.
  + Assessing management team and talent needs
  + Investment and fundraising strategy support
  + Connections to investors and capital sources
  + Shared workspace opportunities

**BACKGROUND:**

OFME has identified prototyping and manufacturing support as a key gap in economic development services for the mobility industry. By addressing this need, the State of Michigan can support the attraction and retention of emerging mobility companies in Michigan, drive new business to Michigan manufacturers, and better align with priorities related to bolstering local supply chains.

The mobility prototype grant will make funding available to promising mobility and electrification technology companies to support their product development with Michigan-based firms. The grant program will support both startups and established firms with emerging mobility and cleantech systems across all transportation modes (air, ground, marine, off-road) throughout the State of Michigan.  The program will also dedicate services and funding to disadvantaged businesses, firms in distressed or rural communities, and companies relocating to Michigan or opening new operations in the state.

**PURPOSE:**

The prototype grant was envisioned and will be administered with the following purposes in mind:

* There is a significant number of physical products, advanced materials, and manufacturing technology developers in Michigan unlike any other region in the world.
* There is a clear gap in financing for hardware-based companies, i.e. seed funds, angels, VCs, and other institutional investors are not investing in these important companies.
* There are many Michigan entities supporting startups; however, there are very limited funding sources and service providers supporting innovation originating with established small businesses in Michigan.
* There are significant inequities and funding gaps to support underserved entrepreneurs (women, people of color, veterans, people with disabilities) and firms in distressed cities.
* Hardware companies generate far greater economic impacts (jobs and investments) in the development and manufacturing of their products and the trickle down of contracts they spend with the local supply chain.

**SCOPE OF SERVICES:**

LEO seeks to secure a qualified entity to provide at least, but not limited to, the following:

* **Propose and finalize program plan and specific metrics** deemed feasible with funding available for OFME approval.
* **Administer at minimum of $400,000 of LEO’s $475,000 of funding as company grants** for product development costs. $75,000 of LEO’s funding is eligible for program administration fees to the contracted entity.
* **Develop, host, and maintain an application** for the prototype grant program to ensure a competitive, accessible, and equitable process for interested parties.
* **Develop application criteria, qualifiers, and evaluation criteria** for OFME approval prior to implementing into promotional material and the application review process.
* **Lead coordination and management of an internal and external review committee** to ensure a fair process to determine the most qualified applications for final review by OFME.
* **Contract, develop scope-of-work (SOW), and project manage grant recipients** to ensure projects meet deliverables and intended outcomes.
* **Track program results and develop bi-annual report** to allow OFME to determine successes and areas of improvement for future programming.
* **Facilitate introductions to Michigan product development firms** with capabilities needed by grant recipients.
* **Provide wraparound services to grant recipients** including business services support and product development planning.
* **Report on program alignment with MI Future Mobility Plan** as it relates to product development, supply chain, and local manufacturing.
* **Develop talking points related to the program value** for OFME review and collective sharing to public and private sector audiences.
* **Support OFME on marketing, PR, and communications activity,** including provision of key project material for press releases, success stories, and briefings for public speaking engagements.
* **Identification of new public or private sector funding opportunities** for the program and support pursuing those that OFME and contracted entity collectively agree are worth pursuing.
* **Actively engage and connect program stakeholders to local and state partners** to participate in the program, support cohort of grant recipients, and to benefit from the program value.

As a result of these activities, it is anticipated that Michigan, the prototype grant stakeholders, and cohort of grant recipients will obtain:

* Increased promotion of Michigan as the leading region to design, engineer and prototype mobility and electrification physical products.
* Reduction of barriers and time required for mobility companies to take their products to market in Michigan.
* An increase in connectivity between emerging mobility companies and Michigan-based suppliers, engineering firms, and contract manufacturers.
* Improved access to prototyping resources for local and global mobility companies.
* An improved awareness of the importance of driving new business to legacy suppliers, engineering firms, and manufacturers based in Michigan.
* A better understanding of how new or existing grant programs can drive supply chain resiliency and new mobility products built in Michigan.
* More clarity on the key product development and prototyping needs of local and global mobility companies and gaps in Michigan’s supply chain capabilities.
* A foundation for a prototype grant program that can be scaled with potential new state, federal, or private sector funding.
* An improved process for mobility companies to develop products and then test, pilot, and deploy with partners in communities across the state of Michigan.

**PERFORMANCE MEASURES:**

To demonstrate grant success, respondents must be able to track and report on the following anticipated performance measures:

|  |
| --- |
| **Performance Measures** |
| # of grants awarded and products designed, engineered, prototyped, or produced in Michigan |
| # of grant recipients attracted to Michigan or retained and expanded in the state through increased operations, staff count, and partnerships |
| # of new products commercialized in Michigan |
| # of contracts between mobility companies and Michigan-based suppliers |
| $ value of contracts to Michigan-based suppliers |

**REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

To ensure quality execution of this grant program, the organization is responsible for participating in scheduled check-in calls and submitting Narrative Progress Reports and Financial Reports to OFME and LEO. Report templates will be provided.

**SECTION II**

**PROPOSAL FORMAT**

**REQUIRED PROPOSAL COMPONENTS**

Respondents are encouraged to be innovative in their proposed design and delivery of this grant program. The following proposal components outline the requirements for this RFP:

* Business Organization and History
* Scope of Services
* Competence, Experience, and Staff Capacity
* Budget/Budget Narrative

**Business Organization and History**

State the full name, address, phone number, and contact person for Respondent organization and, if applicable, the branch office or other subordinate element that will perform, or assist in performing, the work. Indicate whether it operates as an individual, partnership, or corporation; if as a corporation, including the state in which it is incorporated. If appropriate, the proposal must state whether the organization is licensed to operate in the State of Michigan.

**Scope of Services**

Please provide a narrative description of the Respondent organization’s ability, capacity, and plan to deliver the *Scope of Services* in each areabelow as described in Section I above.

**Competence, Experience, and Staff Capacity**

Describe the prior experience of the Respondent organization that may be considered relevant to the successful accomplishment of the scope of services defined in this RFP. Include sufficient detail to demonstrate the relevance of such experience. In this section, proposals submitted should include descriptions of qualifying experience that include project descriptions, costs, and starting and completion dates of projects successfully completed.

The Respondent must be able to staff a project team which possesses talent and expertise in the field of the requirements of this RFP. Identify staff leads assigned by name and title. Include experience and any other appropriate information regarding the work team’s qualification to implement the scope of services. Show where the project team will be physically located during the time they are engaged in the work. Indicate which of these individuals is considered key to the successful completion of the work. Do not include any financials for the contemplated work within the Proposal. Resumes of qualifications should be supplied for proposed project personnel.

Include the name and telephone number of person(s) in the Respondent organization authorized to expedite any proposed grant with the LEO.

Include any other information that is believed to be pertinent, but not specifically asked for elsewhere.

Preference will be given to organizations that can demonstrate existing global and national partnerships with corporations; pre-existing innovation-based methodologies that have worked in national and global markets; experience working with domestic and international startups and tech scouting; businesses in adjacent technology-based industries or in non-traditional, emerging areas of the automotive/mobility sector; experience working with venture capital and alternative financing models.

**BUDGET/BUDGET NARRATIVE**

A comprehensive budget covering the grant period is required. Please complete the appropriate section of Attachment A: Proposal Template, which includes components such as project management, advisors, operational expenses, pilot stipends, and others. The Budget Narrative must thoroughly describe how the planned expenses and requested funding support the scope of services.

**PROPOSAL FORMAT**

The proposal narrative addressing the scope of work and deliverables is limited to no more than six (6) pages, single spaced, single side 8.5 x 11 page with 12-point Arial font, using one-inch margins.

**SECTION III**

**RFP PROCESS AND TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

**TIMELINE FOR GRANT PROPOSAL AND AWARD**

**Proposals must be submitted to the contact person listed below via email by 5:00 PM EST on February 7, 2024.**

Contact: Charlie Tyson, Technology Activation Director, Michigan Office of Future Mobility and Electrification (OFME)

616.389.7328

[Tysonc1@michigan.org](mailto:Tysonc1@michigan.org)

All respondents will be contacted regarding their status and/or potential grant award per the following schedule:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| DATE | ACTIVITY |
| January 26, 2024 (14 Days) | RFP Posted |
| February 9, 2024 | **Deadline for Submission** |
| February 23, 2024 | Awardee Notified |
| March 1, 2024 – March 1, 2025 | Anticipated Grant Period |

**ELIGIBLE RFP RESPONDENTS**

Examples of eligible Respondents include, but are not limited to:

* Future Technology-Focused Advisors and/or Accelerators
* Industry Innovation Firms
* Organizations that have experience supporting mobility and electrification companies with product development and prototyping.

**PROPOSALS**

To be considered, Respondents must submit a complete response to this RFP by 5:00 pm EST on February 9, 2024. No other distribution of proposals is to be made by the Respondent. Respondent's proposal must be submitted in the format outlined below. There should be no attachments, enclosures, or exhibits other than those required in the RFP or considered by the Respondent to be essential to a complete understanding of the proposal. Each section of the proposal should be clearly identified with appropriate headings.

The Technical Proposal must be **signed physically or electronically** by an official of the Respondent authorized to bind the Respondent to its provisions. The rates quoted in the budget must remain firm for the period indicated in Section I.

Each proposal should be prepared simply and economically, providing a straightforward, concise description of the Respondent’s ability to meet the requirements of the RFP. Emphasis should be on completeness and clarity of content.

**SELECTION CRITERIA**

Respondents will be rated on evidence of the capacity, commitment, and experience to carry out program management responsibilities; experience of the selected Organization; and a plan for decision-making and internal communications. Preference will be given to organizations with existing knowledge of industrial high-tech talent needs and that can demonstrate existing partnerships with collaborators including large and medium corporations, economic development entities, and educational organizations.

Responses to this RFP will be evaluated based upon a three-step selection process. The proposal must address the requirements described in Section II of this RFP.

The first step is an evaluation of which proposals satisfactorily meet the requirements of this RFP.

Step I – Evaluation for Compliance

* 1. *Proposal Content* – Proposals will be screened for technical compliance to include but not limited to:
* Timely submission of the proposal.
* Proposal, Budget, and Budget Narrative clearly identified.
* Proposal signed physically or electronicallyby an official of the Respondent authorized to bind the Respondent to its provisions.
* Proposals satisfy the form and content requirements of this RFP.

Step II – Criteria for Satisfactory Proposals

1. During the second step of the selection process, proposals will be considered by a Joint Evaluation Committee (“JEC”) comprised of individuals selected by LEO. Only those proposals that satisfy the requirements described in this RFP, as determined is the sole discretion of the JEC, will be considered for evaluation in Step II. The JEC reserves the right to request additional information from any Respondent.
2. *Competence, Experience and Staffing Capacity* – The proposal should indicate the ability of the Respondent to meet the requirements of this RFP, especially the quality, and recent projects similar to that described in this RFP. The proposal should indicate the competence of the personnel whom the Respondent intends to assign to the project, including education and experience, with particular reference to experience on projects similar to that described in this RFP.
3. *Delivery of* *Scope of Services* – The proposal should indicate the ability of the Respondent to execute the Scope of Services as described in Section I above.
4. During the JEC’s review, Respondents may be required to make oral presentations of their proposals to the JEC. These presentations provide an opportunity for the Respondents to clarify the proposals. LEO will schedule these presentations, if required by the JEC.

Step III – Criteria for Satisfactory Budget/Budget Narrative

1. Based on what is in the best interest of the State of Michigan, LEO will award the Grant considering value, quality, and the ability to meet the objectives of this RFP, of proposals that were approved as a result of this three-step evaluation process.
2. LEO reserves the right to consider economic impact on the State when evaluating proposal budgets. This includes, but is not limited to, job creation, job retention, tax revenue implications, and other economic considerations.
3. The award recommendation will be made to the responsive and responsible Respondents who offer the best value to LEO and the State of Michigan. The Respondents offering the best proposal that meets the objectives of the RFP will determine best value*.*
4. LEO reserves the right to award to another “best value” Respondent in case the original Respondent does not accept the award, or to multiple Respondents.

**Scoring Criteria for Proposals**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | EXEMPLARY | ADEQUATE | NEEDS IMPROVEMENT | MISSING  INFORMATION | SCORE |
| Proposal Compliance  (Up To 10 Points) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Proposal Narrative  (Up To 50 Points) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Organization/Partnerships/Staffing (Up to 15 points) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Budget/Budget Narrative  (Up To 25 Points) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Totals |  |  |  |  |  |

**ATTACHMENT A**

**PROPOSAL TEMPLATE**

**Deadline for Submissions: 5:00 PM on February 9, 2024**

**PROPOSAL RESPONDENT INFORMATION:**

Respondent Type: Select Respondent Type

Organization Name: Click here to enter Organization Name

Contact Name: Click here to enter Contact Name

Title: Click here to enter Title

Address: Click here to enter Street Address  
Click here to enter City, State, and Zip Code

Phone: Click here to enter Phone Number

Email: Click here to enter Email Address

Website: Click here to enter Website

**PROPOSAL NARRATIVE: Competence, Experience and Staffing Capacity**

Please provide a narrative description of the Respondent organization’s *Competence, Experience and Staffing Capacity* pertaining to the management of this grant:

Click here to enter **Competence, Experience and Staffing Capacity**

**PROPOSAL NARRATIVE: Scope of Services**

Please provide a narrative description of the Respondent organization’s ability, capacity and plan to deliver the *Scope of Services* in each areabelow as described in Section I above, including the following:

* **Propose and finalize program plan and specific metrics** deemed feasible with funding available for OFME approval.
* **Administer at minimum of $400,000 of LEO’s $475,000 of funding as company grants** for product development costs. $75,000 of LEO’s funding is eligible for program administration fees to the contracted entity.
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Click here to enter **Scope of Services**

**BUDGET/BUDGET NARRATIVE**

Please provide a budget and budget narrative to cover the costs to deliver the services stated in the proposal for a period covering February 2023 through January 2025:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Grant Funds | Cash Match | In-Kind Match | Totals |
| Project Management |  |  |  |  |
| Advisors |  |  |  |  |
| Operational Expenses |  |  |  |  |
| Company Grants |  |  |  |  |
| Other |  |  |  |  |
| Totals |  |  |  |  |

Please include below narrative descriptions for all items included in the budget above:

**Project Management:**

**Advisors:**

**Operational Expenses:**

**Company Grants:**

**Other:**