



**TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE,
CAPACITY BUILDING AND
EDUCATIONAL SERVICES PROGRAM**

REQUEST FOR RESPONSES

January 3, 2012

REQUEST FOR RESPONSES

I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. INTRODUCTION

The Mission of the Massachusetts Growth Capital Corporation (“MGCC”) is to create and preserve jobs at small businesses, minority-owned businesses, women-owned businesses, and to promote economic development in underserved, gateway municipalities and low and moderate income communities. The MGCC provides a centralized resource at the state level that offers working capital, loan guarantees, and targeted management assistance to solve specific financial and operational problems. Consistent with its mission and pursuant to a contract with the Executive Office for Administration and Finance, MGCC will coordinate and oversee the implementation of a Technical Assistance, Capacity Building and Educational Services program (“the Program”).

The primary objective of the Program is to enhance the viability of eligible firms to compete for and participate in ever increasing levels on public construction contracts. For purposes of the Program “eligible firms” shall consist of minority-owned firms, women-owned firms, and small businesses that (a) have performed or are seeking work as contractors on public construction projects and (b) meet the size and tenure in business criteria. Special emphasis under the Program will be placed on the delivery of services to firms that are certified by the Massachusetts Supplier Diversity Office as minority business enterprises, women business enterprises and/or disadvantaged business enterprises.

B. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

As indicated, the primary objective of the Program is to enhance the viability of eligible firms to compete for and participate in ever increasing levels on public construction contracts. In order to meet this objective, the Program consists of two, distinct elements – a Tier I and a Tier II component. The services offered through the Program are designed to assist eligible firms to achieve growth and an increased level of competitiveness. As such, firms that do not meet the size and tenure in business requirements are not eligible to participate in the Program.

The Tier I component is designed for smaller and/or less mature, eligible firms. It is designed to cover basic, but important, elements of doing business in the public construction contracting space. Tier I eligible firms (a) **cannot** have gross annual revenues in excess of \$2,500,000 and (b) must have been in business at least one year prior to participating in the services to be delivered.

The Tier II component is designed for larger and/or more mature eligible firms. It is designed to offer a higher level of services to those eligible firms that have experienced success in the public construction contracting space and that are looking to take their operations to the next business level. Tier II eligible firms (a) **cannot** have gross annual revenues in excess of \$10,000,000, and (b) must have been in business at least one year prior to participating in the services to be delivered.

Through contract(s) expected to be awarded under this Request for Responses, MGCC will fund services aimed at increasing the probability of significant growth for eligible firms. Selected vendors will work independently and with various state agencies to achieve the objectives of the Program. Successful applicants, among other requirements, will possess and demonstrate experience in providing technical assistance, capacity building and/or educational services to eligible firms.

C. PROGRAM SCOPE OF SERVICES

(1) TIER I COMPONENT

The Tier I component shall consist of the following seminars/courses which make up the scope of services:

- Introduction to Public Construction
- Contract Administration
- Financial Management, including Job Cost Management
- Bidding & Estimating
- Construction Safety Practices
- Business Development
- Bonding and Insurance Basics

The aforementioned seminars/courses shall be offered to participants, who shall participate as a cohort of eligible firms. The following seminar descriptions are not prescriptive or exhaustive. The descriptions are meant to provide interested Bidders with the general learning objectives of each seminar. The course Components, as a whole, should provide a small firm owner/manager with management tools basic to the public construction industry and in enough depth that he or she has a firm grasp of a starting point on which to build or increase industry operating knowledge. Upon completion of each seminar, participants should have a clear understanding and appreciation of each topic.

Introduction to Public Construction – The goal of this seminar is to provide participants with an understanding of the public construction process (from the perspective of vertical construction projects as well as horizontal projects), including the following topics: (a) bidding as a general/prime contractor and as a subcontractor and (b) understanding the state prevailing wage law and other relevant employment laws. One goal of this seminar is to increase the participants understanding of the major differences between construction practices and processes in the private sector versus the public sector.

Contract Administration - The goal of this seminar is to provide participants with introductory knowledge and basic skills they will need to understand and apply as they progress through the Tier I component. Participants should be introduced to basic concepts of contract law employed in construction and the rules of interpretation. A particular focus will be placed on administration of subcontractor contracts.

Financial Management – The goal of this seminar is to review the principles and processes of bookkeeping, accounting, internal controls, and financial analysis employed in the construction industry. Specific topics include accounting principles to track and manage labor, material, equipment, overhead and other construction resources. Techniques and systems to control job costs will be introduced. The importance of accurate and complete financial statements to facilitate the acquisition of surety bonding will also be emphasized.

Bidding and Estimating – The goal of this seminar is to increase participants’ skills in the basics of estimating public construction projects. The seminar will focus on the quantitative aspect of estimating, including quantity take-offs, pricing, overhead costs, scheduling considerations and profit. The components required for making successful bids will be addressed and analyzed. Additional elements may include subsequent events such as change orders during the construction phase.

Construction Safety Practices – The goal of this seminar is to introduce participants to the importance of construction site safety from a management perspective. Participants will be introduced to the challenges of accident prevention and techniques for managing safe and secure projects.

Business Development – The goal of this seminar is to introduce participants to the different phases of business development from start-up to growth and expansion. Participants should also be introduced to different tools by which to market their firms. Participants should learn how to develop and revise a business plan as well as the development and use of strategic marketing materials.

Bonding and Insurance – The goal of this seminar is to introduce participants to bonding and the range of insurance products typically used by contractor firms. Participants should learn and understand how bonding and insurance relate to all aspects of their business operations.

Additional Responsibilities of Successful Bidder:

In addition, the successful Bidder will work with the Office of Access and Opportunity, which will work with the Massachusetts Supplier Diversity Office, the Massachusetts Division of Capital Asset Management, and the Massachusetts Department of Transportation, to schedule and deliver the following workshops to participants interested in learning about state certification and prequalification programs:

- Supplier Diversity Office Certification as a minority business enterprise (MBE), a women business enterprise (WBE) and a disadvantaged business enterprise (DBE)
- Contractor Certification with the Division of Capital Asset Management
- Contractor Prequalification with the Massachusetts Department of Transportation

The selected Bidder is expected to deliver the scope of services for the Tier I component twice per calendar year (in two cohorts) for the duration of the contract period. Each cohort should contain **not less** than 20 participants from eligible firms (one participant per eligible firm).

(II) TIER II COMPONENT

The Tier II component shall consist of the following scope of services:

- Key aspects of bringing a business to scale
- Effective human resources development and deployment
- Linking strategic planning and action with financial management
- Access to Capital and Credit: Presentation Components and Loan Packaging
- Bonding and Insurance
- Value Engineering
- Joint Ventures / Strategic Alliances

The aforementioned seminars/course shall be offered to participants, who shall participate as a cohort, of eligible firms.

As the Tier II Component is targeted to eligible firms larger in size (as measured by gross annual revenue) and most likely seeking to expand business operations to the next level, the preceding topics are meant to be descriptive of the anticipated subject matter to be contained in each seminar. The Bidder, in responding to the RFR, pursuant to Section VII, shall submit a description of the material that each seminar will cover and the anticipated outcomes for each seminar.

Additional Responsibilities of Successful Bidder:

In addition, the successful Bidder will work with the Office of Access and Opportunity, which will work with the Massachusetts Supplier Diversity Office, the Massachusetts Division of Capital Asset Management, and the Massachusetts Department of Transportation, to schedule and deliver the following workshops to participants interested in learning about state certification and prequalification programs:

- Supplier Diversity Office Certification as a minority business enterprise (MBE), a women business enterprise (WBE) and a disadvantaged business enterprise (DBE)
- Contractor Certification with the Division of Capital Asset Management
- Contractor Prequalification with the Massachusetts Department of Transportation

The selected Bidder is expected to deliver the scope of services for the Tier II component once per calendar year for the duration of the contract period. The participant cohort should contain **not less** than 10 participants from eligible firms (one participant per eligible firm).

II. PROGRAM PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The program performance of the vendor will be evaluated by the MGCC based on the specific performance elements, which relate to the respective elements of the respective Tier. Vendors will be awarded points with respect to each performance element through the defined work activities that lead to specific outcomes. Specifically, performance points will be awarded in proportion to the vendor's satisfaction of the performance goals set forth in Appendix A to this Request for Response. The performance goals will be incorporated into the terms and conditions of the contract between MGCC and the selected vendor.

III. PERFORMANCE RATINGS / MEASURES

The selected vendor is expected to achieve an overall score of "Satisfactory" (or better) performance rating for each year of the contract, and will be assigned a performance rating by MGCC for each year of the contract based on the below rating system:

PROGRAM PERFORMANCE SCALE	
Performance Ratings	Scores
Outstanding	90 & above
Favorable	80 – 89
Satisfactory	71 – 79
Unsatisfactory	70 & below

Failure to maintain at least a "Satisfactory" performance rating may result in termination of the contract. For a detailed indication of the Performance Scale, see Appendix A.

The Selected Vendor will provide MGCC with the name and contact information for each participant enrolled. MGCC should be informed if a participant misses three or more meetings or withdraws, formally or informally.

The Selected Vendor shall provide to seminar participants a rating form by which participants will evaluate the information presented based on whether the material was well organized, clear, informative and useful (see Appendix B). The vendor shall deliver to MGCC, by facsimile or by email not more than forty-eight (48) hours after each seminar, a rating sheet filled out and signed by each participant completing the seminar.

IV. PROGRAM PRIORITIES

The Bidder's Response must demonstrate the Bidder's ability to achieve the goals and produce the deliverables outlined in the Scope of Services for which the Bidder has submitted a Response. Each Bidder submitting a Response must demonstrate that he/she possesses the experience, skills and resources to perform the selected Scope of Services successfully. Preference will be given during the selection process to a Response that effectively addresses the following priorities:

- (1) Bidder who demonstrates prior, successful experience in delivering services similar to the Scope of Services for which the Bidder has responded;

- (2) Bidder who can demonstrate the organizational capacity to deliver the Scope of Services;
- (3) Bidder who provides clear indicators of their capacity to significantly involve experienced, practicing, construction industry personnel in delivering course material and information;
- (4) Bidder who can demonstrate experience, or have on their team in a leadership role persons who have demonstrated understanding, evaluation and responses to the needs of small businesses including minority contractors, and women contractors;
- (5) Bidder who can demonstrate previous efforts to assist small firms in winning public construction projects.

V. PROGRAM SCHEDULE

The Bidder shall develop and submit, as part of its Response, a detailed schedule for delivering the scope of services for which the Bidder has submitted (see Section VII). The detailed schedule should outline delivery of the scope of services for the calendar year keeping in mind that the Bidder, if selected, will be required to deliver the scope of services twice a year (two cohorts of participants) for the Tier I component and once a year (one cohort) for the Tier II component. In no event, shall the delivery of the scope of services of the cohort(s) extend beyond a calendar year.

VI. AWARD INFORMATION

A. FUNDING AVAILABILITY

The Executive Office for Administration & Finance has made \$1,800,000 available to the Massachusetts Growth Capital Corporation to partially underwrite the Program. The greater emphasis of time and resources in responses will be weighted toward the Tier I Program.

MGCC reserves the right to negotiate changes with the Successful Bidder to ensure the mission and objectives of the Executive Office of Administration and Finance and the Office of Access and Opportunity are met.

PROGRAM AWARD/PERIOD

A contract for the Tier I Component is expected to be entered into and have a start date of not later than March 1, 2012. A contract for the Tier II Component is expected to be entered into and have a start data not later than June 1, 2012. The award period under this solicitation is anticipated to be three (3) years, with two funding periods post the initial funding round. Contracts will initially be funded for one year; however, should the selected Bidder/Vendor achieve "Satisfactory" progress pursuant to the annual evaluation, the selected Bidder/Vendor will receive a contract extension of one year to allow for the delivery of the scope of services for the succeeding calendar year. The maximum number of contract extensions shall be two (2).

VII. ELIGIBILITY OF APPLICANTS / SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS

- A. For-profit entities and non-profit organizations are eligible to submit a Response.
- B. Content and Form of Application

In general, the Bidder's Response submission must clearly articulate how the Bidder will implement the work requirements of the Scope of Services for which the Bidder has responded and achieve the performance measures as set forth in Appendix A. A complete proposal consists of a detailed program narrative with defined sections.

A Bidder must submit a separate proposal for each Tier if the Bidder is seeking consideration for both the Tier I and Tier II components. A complete Response should contain the information below, in the following order:

1. Cover Page

The application cover page must provide the applicant's name, address, telephone number, email address, date of submission and the Tier component for which the Bidder is responding.

Following the cover page there should be an indication of any governing body or management requirement authorizing submission of the proposal and any authorization or vote required to enter into a contract with MGCC.

2. Table of Contents

Bidders should outline the full contents of the Response and provide corresponding page numbers. All pages of the application must be consecutively numbered.

3. Program Narrative

(a) Bidder's Capability (30 points total)

Organizational Background and Knowledge of Eligible Firms: Bidder's organizational background, emphasizing knowledge of or experience with targeted firms and strategies for enhancing their knowledge and understanding to compete in the public construction marketplace. Consideration will be given to past experience providing similar or related services.

Mission Alignment: The extent to which the Bidder's organizational mission can support the objectives and methodology of the Program.

(b) Bidder's Experience (40 points total)

Staff: Qualifications and experience of Bidder's staff/consultants to be deployed to deliver against the selected scope of services for which the Bidder has responded. The Bidder should identify the person who will serve as the Project Director and should identify, both by way of resume and in narrative form, the Project Director's experiences delivering similar and/or related services.

The Bidder should identify each staff member/consultant to be deployed to deliver against the scope of services. The Bidder should take care to represent each staff member's/consultant's relevant experience that demonstrates an ability to successfully deliver the scope of services for which the Bidder is responding.

Partners: It is possible that no single entity/organization may be equipped to deliver against the selected Tier component and its scope of services. In the event that a Bidder plans to utilize and deploy a strategic partner or partners to support delivery of the scope of services, the Bidder should identify the information sought in paragraph (a) (Bidder's Capability) for each such partner and should identify the information sought in paragraph (b) (Bidder's Experience) for any staff member/consultant to be utilized by the partner/partners.

Location of Services Delivery: The location in which the Bidder will deliver the scope of services of the Tier component for which the Bidder has responded. The Bidder's location of services delivery must be able to accommodate delivery of the scope of services, should be accessible to client populations by both public and private transportation, and be professional in appearance. *Please note: The selected Bidder should discuss, in its Response, how it will deliver subsequent scope of services in alternate locations to ensure that participants from across the Commonwealth can gain access to the Program.*

(c) Methodologies (30 points total)

Start-up Phase: The Bidder shall submit a strategic plan for commencement of delivering the scope of services of the Tier component for which the Bidder has responded. The successful Bidder must begin operations within thirty (30) days after commencement of the contract.

Work Plan: The Bidder should include a cogent work plan with a clear schedule that identifies implementation milestones. Said work plan shall outline the delivery of the scope of services for each of the two classes that will be delivered during the calendar year. Additionally, for the Tier I component, the work plan should identify when, in the Program, the successful Bidder anticipates scheduling work with the Office of Access and Opportunity to coordinate the delivery of the certification and prequalification workshops to the participants of each of the two classes. Significant implementation milestones shall include but not be limited to signing up clients, initiating the first seminar/class, the schedule for the delivery of all seminars/classes, etc.

Recruitment Plan: The Bidder should include, as part of the work plan, the Bidder’s approach to recruiting and enrolling eligible firms to participate in the component for which the Bidder has responded. The Bidder’s response should take into account the requirement to offer services to two cohorts during the calendar year.

Response Submission; Date, Time and Method

All Responses must be received in the office of the Massachusetts Growth Capital Corporation by 5:00PM on Friday, February 3, 2012. **No late submissions will be accepted.** All submissions must be in the form of five hard copies and one electronic version.

All submissions must be in two parts, separated according to the following method:

- 1) The first part will be the Program Plan, as outlined in paragraph (B), “Content and Form of Application” of Section VII, “Eligibility of Applicants/Submission of Applications.”
- 2) The second part must be a sealed cost proposal, in sufficient detail to enable MGCC to comprehend the costs attributed to the staff required, including project director, project administration, space, materials, travel, instructors, outreach costs, and other related matters included in the Response. Costs must be related to number of weekly sessions proposed and number of attendees projected.

All hard copies must be delivered to:

Karen Brann
Mass Growth Capital Corp.
The Schrafft Center – Suite 1M10
529 Main Street
Charlestown, MA. 02129

Electronic version must be delivered to:

Karen Brann
Kbrann@massgcc.com

VIII. Guiding Evaluation Principle: Best Value

The Massachusetts Growth Capital Corporation will utilize a “best value” approach in determining which Bidder(s) to select for contracting. In adopting a “best value” approach, the MGCC has developed evaluation criteria that measure factors beyond cost. To determine “best value,” the MGCC will consider and balance the following guiding principles:

(1) Bidder demonstrates that its approach will facilitate attainment of the goals and objectives of Technical Assistance, Capacity Building and Education Services Program

The MGCC is seeking to contract with a Bidder who demonstrates through its Response that it understands the goals and objectives of the Program.

(2) Bidder demonstrates its ability to deliver the scope of services in a timely manner

The MGCC is seeking to contract with a Bidder who demonstrates an ability to deliver the scope of services in a timely manner, per the terms of the Contract.

(3) Response demonstrates both Quality and Economic Value

The MGCC is seeking to contract with a Bidder who demonstrates “best value” via a consideration of both the Bidder’s Program Plan and Cost Proposal. Via this approach, the MGCC will seek to select the Bidder who develops the highest quality Program Plan and the most competitive Cost Proposal.

IX. COST-SHARE EXPECTATION

The Technical Assistance, Capacity Building and Educational Services Program shall be operated as a partial, fee-for-service program. The vendor is expected to generate program income through the imposition of a reasonable client fee, which shall not exceed one thousand, two hundred and fifty dollars, per participant, for the Tier I component and shall not exceed two thousand, five hundred dollars, per participant, for the Tier II component. Fees are retained as income by the Selected Vendor.

Appendix A
Performance Measures

A. Performance Measures

The selected vendor will be responsible for the effective management of all functions and activities supported by the contract. Additionally, the vendor is required to report to MGCC on the attainment of program performance goals during each contract year, once at the end of the first delivery of services under the relevant Tier component and once at the end of the second delivery of services under the relevant Tier component. The first Semi-Annual Progress Report is due thirty (30) days after the end of the first delivery of services (first semi-annual period). The vendor shall then submit a comprehensive Year-End Progress Report on the accomplishments and overall operations of delivering against the annual, contracted scope of services. The Year-End Progress Report is due within thirty (30) days after the end of delivering against the annual, contracted scope of services. The evaluation criteria for measuring project performance on an ongoing basis are as follows:

Tier I Component Scope of Services Performance Measures	Performance Points
Introduction to Public Construction	10
Contract Administration	10
Financial Management	10
Bidding & Estimating	10
Construction Safety Practices	10
Business Development	10
Bonding and Insurance Basics	10
% Cohort Successfully Enrolled (Based on 20 Participants)	18
% Cohort Successfully Completes Curriculum (Based on 20 Participants)	12
Total Possible Score	100

Tier II Component Scope of Services Performance Measures	Performance Points
Key aspects of bringing a business to scale	10
Effective human resources development/deployment	10
Linking strategic planning and action with financial management	10
Access to Capital and Credit: Bank Underwriting and Loan Packaging	10
Bonding and Insurance	10
Value Engineering	10
Joint Ventures/Strategic Alliances	10
% Cohort Successfully Enrolled (Based on 10 Participants)	18
% Cohort Successfully Completes Curriculum (Based on 10 Participants)	12
Total Possible Score	100

Appendix B – Seminar Evaluation Forms

Please answer each of the following questions concerning this seminar.

Q. Please rate the quality of the learning material used in this seminar.

- Excellent
- Good
- Average
- Poor
- Very poor

Q. Please rate the relevance of the learning material to the overall goals of the seminar.

- Excellent
- Good
- Average
- Poor
- Very poor

Q. In terms of time was the average session...

- Far too long
- Too long
- Just right
- Too short
- Far too short

Q. Thinking about the seminar session was the amount of **discussion** time...

- Far too much
- Too much
- Just right
- Too little
- Far too little

Q. Please rate the room where this seminar met.

- Excellent
- Good
- Average
- Poor
- Very poor

Q. Please rate the seminar on having clear objectives.

- Excellent
- Good
- Average
- Poor
- Very Poor

Q. Please rate the seminar on meeting its objectives.

- Excellent
- Good
- Average
- Poor
- Very Poor

Q. Based only on the content and material, could you confidently recommend this seminar to other participants?

- Definitely
- Probably
- Maybe
- Probably not
- Definitely not

Q. Please rate the instructor on preparing for this seminar.

- Excellent
- Good
- Average
- Poor
- Very poor

Q. Please rate the ability of instructor to effectively answer questions.

- Excellent
- Good
- Average
- Poor
- Very poor

Q. Please rate this seminar based only on its content and material.

- Excellent
- Good
- Average
- Poor
- Very poor