

# Request for Qualifications

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# San Juan County, Utah

Release Date \_\_\_\_\_

Submission Date \_\_\_\_\_

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# Purpose and Scope

San Juan County is seeking qualified individual (s) or firm (s) to develop and implement a strategy to address issues related to job creation, employment strategy and economic development in the County. County officials are concerned about employment opportunities, business growth, and the financial health of the region. The County has applied and received notice of approval for an EDA matching grant to fund the development and implementation of job creation strategy for the area. The total of all grant awards and matching funds does not exceed \$100,000.00.

San Juan County is requesting interested firms that can demonstrate appropriate qualifications to respond to this request for qualifications (RFQ) in order to be considered to be awarded a contract(s) to provide the following services under the requirements of the EDA grant.

## Outline Scope of Work

Provide professional economic consulting services to develop a strategy for regional economic and industry cluster job creation and put in place a collaborative action plan for enhancing job growth in response to persistent poverty in San Juan County. Consultant (s) will execute the phases of the Scope of Work and provide critical economic development services to San Juan County.

A. Phase 1- Project start-up, research and initial data collection process, benchmarking, stakeholder interviews, public input. (Estimated time frame 90-120 days)

The project consultant will:

1. Begin work in collaboration with project partners - Utah Department of Workforce Services (DWS), local government, Navajo Nation, not for profits, private business employers, economic development agencies, local regional banks, University and other partners - to identify and communicate project parameters, and stakeholder goals, data research methods and the time table for developing a job creation strategy.
2. Determine representative groups/individuals and key sample groups to participate in data review and interviews, and input data using County/DWS Business Expansion and Retention (BEAR) program and other data.
3. Establish baseline demographics, economic data, workforce information, resource identification and reference point (benchmark) data for comparisons, outcome projections and project performance evaluation.
4. With assistance from local and tribal leaders, establish initial contact and schedule intake assessment interviews with key economic stakeholders and groups.
5. Conduct and document interviews (initial stakeholder assessment interviews) and public participation forums. Include key industry leaders, elected officials, tribal leadership and other stakeholders.

6. Hold at least two public participation forums to be conducted after the individual assessment interviews have concluded to elicit public comments and suggestions from the community.

7. Conduct follow-up contacts, interviews and meetings as necessary to support strategy development.

**B. Phase 2 -Economic job creations strategy development, economic growth impediments/opportunities. Implementation of job strategy with collaboration partners. (Time Frame; (90-120 days)**

1. With project partners, review research on relevant economic development and demographic analysis/studies and relevant economic data for this region. Analyze information on existing economic composition (primary and support industries), demographic trending and wage rates, occupational and employment projections, skill sets and education micro clusters and regional economic linkages.

2. Perform preliminary SWOT Analysis of potential cluster groupings.

3. Review industry and occupational growth projections for region's clusters (micro clusters).

4. Identify strategic partnerships, policy implications, innovative solutions, resource allocations and investment opportunities.

5. Develop outline implementation strategies and recommendations consistent with analysis and stakeholders input. Actively solicit stakeholder comments (30 day comment period) for strategy formulation.

6. Develop strategic implementation plan based on phase 1 data and collaborative partner input and comments. Make assignments as appropriate for implementation responsibilities, communication and reporting requirements.

7. Begin implementation of job creation strategy across County with partners and stakeholders.

## **Economic Development Consulting**

There are additional economic concerns that will be identified as part of the analysis, strategy development and implementation process. This will lead to open discussion and recommendations and active support for strategy revisions and additional initiatives that can foster higher wage job growth and business expansion in the region. These additional opportunities may suggest other projects and funding sources that will further increase the region's economic capacity across a wider range of possibilities.

## **Essential Qualifications**

Proposals should include a list of relevant experience and identify specific projects in rural areas that are similar to the scope of work described under Purpose and Scope. Successful proposals will include a list of the personnel that will provide the scope of work activities.

# Consulting Team

Respondents should identify key players on the Consulting Team and indicate specific experience in the development of similar projects. Responses should identify the person who will serve as the principal point of contact and is authorized to speak on behalf of the Consulting Team.

Respondents should provide the following:

- \* Resumes for key personnel and a project team organizational chart.
- \* A description of the type and location of similar projects.
- \* A summary of the outcomes from similar projects on which the Consulting Team members have been involved.

The qualifications of each member of the Consulting Team are important criteria in the selection process. All respondents must state the roles and responsibilities of the members of their team. The completed description must be returned with the Response to RFQ. The Response should not exceed five (5) pages not including attachments.

## Evaluation and Selection Criteria

Response to this RFQ is at the Respondent's sole risk and expense. The County anticipates selecting one or more Respondents, but there is no guarantee that any Respondent will be selected.

The County will take into account the information provided in the proposal, references, and any other information about the Respondent's performance available to the County. Proposals that are not complete or do not conform to the requirements of this RFQ will not be reviewed. In addition to evaluating Respondents on the extent to which they demonstrate qualifications to complete the program objectives as described in the Purpose and Scope, the county will evaluate each response according to the criteria listed below.

\* **Qualifications** - The track record, knowledge and experience of the Respondent, as demonstrated by participation and success in economic consulting projects of this type, the development and implementation of job strategies and other experience in rural economic development are key considerations. Familiarity with San Juan County and a working relationship with the project partners, including EDA, is considered an important qualification.

Weighted Value      40 pts

\* **Quality of Submittal** - The quality of the Response, as evidenced, for example, by the completeness and responsiveness to the requested criteria, clarity, readability and brevity of the proposal.

Weighted Value      20 pts

\* Cost Effectiveness - The demonstrated ability to complete the entirety of the project scope with the approved budget.

Weighted Value 20 pts

\* Timeliness - Capability of the firm or consultant team to start and complete the project in a timely manner.

Weighted Value 20 pts

The County may take any or none of the following actions after reviewing the submitted materials:

- \* Contact Respondents and request additional materials or supporting information.
- \* Contact Respondents for an in-person interview.
- \* Enter into direct negotiations with a Respondent.

The County reserves the right to reject any and all responses and reserves the right to amend , modify, and waive any requirement set forth in this RFQ.

## Proposals Prepared at Consultant's Expense

The RFQ is not a contract or a commitment of any kind by the County and does not commit the County to award an exclusive contract or to pay any cost incurred in the submission of a response. All costs associated with preparing and submitting a response to this RFQ shall be the sole responsibility of each Respondent. The County, at its sole discretion, to reject the submittal or require the data to be submitted forthwith.

Respondent acknowledges and agrees that the County or any other entity affiliated with or otherwise engaged by the county will not be liable for any costs, expenses, losses, damages (including damages for loss of anticipated profit) or liabilities incurred as a result of or arising out of, submitting a response, negotiating changes to such a response, or due to the County's acceptance or non-acceptance of the response.

## Original Work

All Responses submitted must be the original work product of the Respondent. The copying, paraphrasing, or other use of substantial portions of the work product of another Respondent is not permitted unless legally enforceable permission has been secured from the other party. Failure to adhere to these instructions will cause the County to reject the Response.

## Period of Validity

All submitted materials in responses to the RFQ shall remain valid for a period of six months from the date of submission. All proposals will become the property of the County and may be subject to public records disclosure requirements.

## Clarification Requests and Other Communication

Except for written responses provided by the contact person described below, the County has not authorized anyone to make any representations regarding the subject matter of the RFQ. All requests for clarification or additional information regarding this RFQ must be submitted in writing to the contact person no later than June 20, 2014. The contact person will endeavor to respond to such request for clarification or additional information and if the contact person deems, in his sole and absolute discretion, that such response is of general applicability in his response, if any will be posted on the County's website (which constitutes a written response). Firms or individuals responding to this RFQ are encouraged to review the website frequently.

Respondents, team members and its consultants are prohibited from communicating in any manner about this project with any of the members of the County staff, Commission, or other elected official or County related party during this process, notwithstanding the foregoing procedure. All questions during this period should be submitted in writing to or by email to Charlie DeLorme, San Juan County Economic Development. Any other means of communication between Respondents, their consultants, the County or elected officials and employees, may disqualify the respondent.

## Accuracy of RFQ

All facts and opinions stated within this RFQ and in all supporting documents and data are based on the best available information from a variety of sources at this time. No representation or warranty is made with respect thereto. The selected Consultant will be responsible for accepting or verifying the accuracy for all information presented herein.

## Non-Collusive

The Respondent shall not collude in any manner or engage in any practices with any other Respondent(s), which may restrict or eliminate competition or other restrain trade. Violation of this instruction will cause the County to reject the Respondent's proposal. This prohibition is not intended to preclude joint ventures or subcontracts.



## Liability and Insurance Requirements

The selected Respondent will be required to maintain General Liability, Worker's Compensation, Automobile Liability, Professional Liability and other forms of insurance with firms authorized to do business in the State of Utah, during the duration of performance of activities pursuant to this RFQ. Endorsements naming the County as additional insured and waiving rights of subrogation against the County may be required. All policies, endorsements, certificates and /or binders shall be subject approval by the County as to form and content. The Respondent will also be required to indemnify the County against claims and obligations due to actions and activities of the Team. Terms of required insurance and indemnification will be included in the contract.

## Response Timeline

The timeline for the RFQ process and selection of a consultant is

June 20, 2014

Respondents' submission of qualification is due no later than 5:00 pm, Mountain Time on June 20, 2014. No additional submittals will be allowed after this submittal date. The County, however reserves the right to issue written notice to all participants of any changes in the proposal submission schedule or other schedules, should the County determine, at its sole and absolute discretion, if such changes are necessary.

Qualified candidates will be contacted not later than June 25, 2014 . Applicants will be then entered into the final bid evaluation.

## Contact Person & Submission

Submit two (2) hardcopies or one (1) electronic copy (PDF Format) of the Response to:

Charlie DeLorme, San Juan County Economic Development

PO Box 490

117 S. Main

Monticello, UT 84535

435-587-3235

delorme@sanjuancounty.org

An email submission must have "RFQ for Job Strategy" in the subject line of the email.

The deadline for receipt of the hardcopy or electronic submission of a response to this RFQ is 5:00 p.m. Mountain Time on June 20, 2014. It is the responsibility of the Respondent to ensure that the response is received by the County prior to the deadline.

RFQ can be found listed on Utah's Canyon Country.com and San Juan County.org.

San Juan County is an Equal Opportunity Employer and invites the submission of proposals/qualifications from minority and women-owned firms.

