




Minneapolis
City of Lakes

B TAP



BUSINESS TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Supporting Business
Growth in the City of Minneapolis

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS 2019 Funding Round



CITY OF MINNEAPOLIS COMMUNITY PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BUSINESS TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM B-TAP REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

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1. INTRODUCTION

The City of Minneapolis is seeking proposals from local non-profit organizations that provide direct business technical assistance and training to small businesses and microenterprises located in Minneapolis. The total funding available for the Business Technical Assistance Program (B-TAP) in 2019 is \$500,000 and we expect to receive multiple proposals. During the contracting process, the selected business consultants and the City will agree upon the grant agreement outcomes and deliverables. These will be *outcomes-based* grant agreements for up to two years. Business consultants will submit quarterly invoices in accordance with the terms of their grant agreements. Payments are based on the successful completion of the outcomes in the grant agreements (see Exhibit A for Scope of Services template).

2. OBJECTIVES

The goal of the Business Technical Assistance Program (B-TAP) is to help small, Minneapolis-based businesses start or expand and support job creation in the city. B-TAP also helps to address economic and racial disparities given the demographics of its participants with high representation from women and entrepreneurs of color.

For the 2019 funding round, B-TAP has the following objectives:

- Provide tools to evaluate the feasibility of business ideas and to prepare prospective entrepreneurs interested in starting a business in the city.
- Provide technical support to successfully open new businesses in the city.
- Provide technical assistance tools to retain existing businesses in the city.
- Support the expansion of existing businesses conducting operations in the city.

3. RFP DETAILS

Funding for the Business Technical Assistance Program has four categories. Organizations may apply for one or more categories. Your proposal should clearly indicate which category or categories you are applying for.

- **Category A:** \$100,000 for business feasibility and readiness, up to \$30,000 per provider
- **Category B:** \$150,000 for new business development, up to \$50,000 per provider
- **Category C:** \$150,000 for general technical assistance for existing businesses (retention), up to \$40,000 per provider
- **Category D:** \$100,000 to support business growth (expansion), up to \$50,000 per provider

For prospective business:

a. CATEGORY A – BUSINESS FEASIBILITY AND READINESS (\$100,000 available funding / \$30,000 cap)

The selected consultant will provide one-on-one consultation and/or group training and prepare prospective entrepreneurs to start a business in Minneapolis. B-TAP will pay up to \$50 per hour for technical assistance or training, up to 10 hours per entrepreneur. Business Consultants must provide a feasibility report showing how the provided services guided the prospective entrepreneur to decide whether or not to open a business. Activities may include, but are not limited to: business plan writing classes, business readiness assessments, market studies, and one-on-one technical assistance. To be reimbursed, City Staff will request the following documentation:

- Category A report (exhibit B)
- CDBG Income verification form (exhibit B)

For new business:

b. CATEGORY B – NEW BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT (\$150,000 available funding / \$50,000 cap)

The selected consultant will provide one-on-one consultation to develop new businesses located in the city. B-TAP will pay up to \$5,000 for every new business opened with a store front or commercial space, and \$2,500 for each home-based, food-truck or incubator-hosted business located in Minneapolis. Business Consultants must demonstrate how the provided services made a significant contribution to the opening of the new business. To be reimbursed, City Staff will request the following documentation:

- Category B report (exhibit B)
- CDBG Income verification form (exhibit B)
- Photo (jpg or gif) of the business
- Documentation of Technical Assistance provided, as requested by City contract manager

For existing business:

c. CATEGORY C – BUSINESS RETENTION (\$150,000 available funding / \$40,000 cap)

The selected consultant will provide one-on-one consultation to existing Minneapolis businesses to retain existing jobs and improve operations. B-TAP will pay up to \$75 per hour for technical assistance, up to 20 hours per business. Business Consultants must report how the provided services made a significant contribution toward business retention. Technical assistance is not limited to low income individuals. To be reimbursed, City Staff will request the following documentation:

- Category C report (exhibit B)
- CDBG Income verification form, if applicable (exhibit B)

d. CATEGORY D – BUSINESS EXPANSION (\$100,000 available funding / \$50,000 cap)

The selected business consultant will provide one-on-one consultation to business expansions in the city that result in more than five new jobs created, physical growth, and/or substantial sales increases.

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Business Consultants must demonstrate how the provided services made a significant contribution to the business growth. B-TAP will pay \$5,000 for each business successfully served. To be reimbursed, City Staff will request the following documentation:

- Category D report (exhibit B)
- Photo (jpg or gif) of the business
- Documentation of Technical Assistance provided, as requested by City contract manager

e. Program Details Summary

| Category | Type of Business | Total Available Funding | Unit Price | Max hours per Business | Expected # of Businesses |
|--------------|----------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| A | Business Feasibility | \$100,000.00 | \$ 50.00 per hour | 10 | 2000 Hours (Approx. 200 Businesses) |
| B | New Businesses | \$ 150,000.00 | \$ 2,500.00 to \$5,000.00 | N/A | 30 to 45 new businesses |
| C | Business Retention | \$ 150,000.00 | \$ 75.00 per hour | 20 | 2333 Hours (Approx. 100 Businesses) |
| D | Business Expansion | \$ 100,000.00 | \$ 5,000.00 per Business | N/A | 20 business expansions |
| Total | | \$ 500,000.00 | | | 350 – 365 businesses |

Note: All the categories are mutually exclusive. For example if a client is claimed under category “A”, it cannot be claimed under category “B”, “C” or “D” in the same funding round.

f. CDBG Requirements: (apply to category “A” Feasibility and “B” New Business Development).

Federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds support neighborhood revitalization, economic development and improved community facilities and services. The City of Minneapolis is deploying a portion of its allocation of these funds to increase the level of technical assistance available to Minneapolis-based businesses that can be specifically categorized as microenterprises. By definition, microenterprises have 5 or fewer employees with at least one being the business owner.

It is important that applicants understand that CDBG funds must be used only to serve persons qualifying as low- and moderate-income individuals that own or wish to establish a microenterprise. Organizations must be able to collect information on each person receiving assistance, including, but not limited to, data on the individual’s family size and income. The City will not reimburse any organization that fails to document and support the established criteria.

g. Grant Agreement Term

Recognizing the lead time for business starts and expansions, the grant agreement will be for up to two years in duration. Agreement dollars can be drawn on a quarterly basis as services are provided and outcomes achieved. The City reserves the right to evaluate the performance at the end of year one, and terminate the agreement early if the Business Consultant has low performance at the end of year one.

4. ELIGIBILITY

a. Eligible Area

The program is available for businesses located throughout the city of Minneapolis.

b. Eligible Activities

Eligible activities support the economic vitality of local small businesses and microenterprises through one-on-one technical assistance, group training, or networking opportunities which may include, but is not limited to: support writing business plans, marketing and/or strategic planning; assistance with business registration, license applications, and other business set up and regulatory tasks; access to capital by preparing loan packages, cash flow projections and providing financial coaching; general training in business management; real estate acquisition or lease agreements; training in effective bidding and estimating; business certifications; employee management; marketing support; website design; and legal services.

Additional Focus Areas:

This year BTAP would like to support technical assistance activities in the following additional areas:

- Navigating City regulations including compliance with new ordinances
- Services aimed at businesses located in designated Cultural Districts, Green Zones, and Innovation Districts.
- Services tailored to artistic and creative sector businesses as profiled in [The Minneapolis Creative Index](#)
- Averting or mitigating impacts from gentrification and commercial displacement
- Assessing and preparing for opportunities for businesses to own their own real estate
- Connecting with and preparing for contracting opportunities with corporate and government (including the City of Minneapolis) procurement.
- Customer service and marketing
- Business financial well-being and planning

c. Eligible Organizations

Eligible organizations include non-profit organizations that have demonstrated capacity to perform the business consulting and training work. This includes staff (or consultants) with experience providing business development, establishment and expansion assistance, and experience managing contracts.

5. PROPOSAL PROCESS AND CONTENTS **New**

There are two tracks to submit the proposals, one for organizations that are existing BTAP service providers, and another for new applicants to the program.

Download [2019 B-TAP RFP Application](#)

a. For Existing BTAP Service Providers:

Existing service providers will be evaluated on their current and past performance with BTAP. They are required to fill out sections A to C of the proposal, and may provide details on changes, improvements and/or innovations, if any, on sections D to G.

b. For New Applicants:

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New applicants to BTAP, are required to complete the full application (A to G). If the evaluation team considers the organization for funding, a site visit will be scheduled for the last week of January 2019 before making the final recommendations.

c. Proposal Format:

- A. Cover Page
- B. Organization's background, capacity and performance
- C. Program Budget
- D. Business skills, tools and systems
- E. Marketing, outreach and screening
- F. Target Population
- G. Other Information

Additional Information:

- Exhibits and Supplementary materials (see page 7 for details)

d. Additional information

Your proposal must include an executed "Consent for Release of Response Data" form (Exhibit C), included in this RFP document. Proposals that do not include an executed "Consent for Release of Response Data" form shall be considered incomplete. Omission is grounds for rejection of the entire proposal.

The contents of the proposal and any response clarification of the proposal contents submitted by the successful proposer may become part of the contractual obligation and be incorporated by reference into the contract between the proposer and the City.

6. EVALUATION CRITERIA

In reviewing the proposals, the review team will consider the following criteria. The maximum score a proposal can receive is 100.

- a. Organizational background, capacity and historical performance (30 points):** Do the mission, vision and objectives of the organization align with City goals? How established is the organization? Does the organization have a track record serving businesses and the ability to keep appropriate documentation? Does the organization have an established business technical assistance, training and coaching program?
- b. Budget and financial leverage (10 points):** Is the proposed timeline realistic? Do the City funds leverage other funding? Leveraged funds are those that are committed by your organization and/or others to the specific activities in your proposal.
- c. Business skills, tools and systems (20 points):** Does the organization have the structure in place to begin delivering services immediately? What is the organizational capacity to provide business consulting services? What are the qualifications of the Business Consultants (or how will the capacity be expanded)? What is the organization's intake and screening process? Does the organization have the experience and capacity to conduct the work proposed? What is the quality of reports already provided (applies only to current B-TAP Business Consultants)?
- d. Target Population (20 points):** What is the experience of this organization working with specific target populations (geographical, ethnic, language, gender, etc.)? How does the organization

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strengthen the economic vitality in areas with high levels of unemployment, concentrations of low income and racial minority residents and high building vacancy in the city?

- e. **Marketing, outreach and screening (20 points):** Does the organization demonstrate good marketing and outreach systems to engage their target market? Are the promotional materials, website, and other similar marketing tools accessible and appealing to the target population? Does the organization have a plan to promote the services as sponsored by City of Minneapolis?

The City may, in its sole discretion, expand or reduce the criteria upon which it bases its final decisions. Selected provider will agree to communicate to the business participants that the technical assistance is sponsored by the City’s B-TAP program.

7. RFP SUBMISSION AND TIMELINE

a. Proposal Submission and Deadline

Proposals shall be delivered to the City on or before: **January 14, 2019, 4:00 pm**. Proposals and supporting documentation must be submitted in PDF or Microsoft format (up to 10mb file), by email to:

Email: btap@minneapolismn.gov

Subject: B-TAP RFP

Proposals received after the deadline will not be accepted. It is neither CPED’s responsibility nor practice to acknowledge receipt of any proposal. It is the responder’s responsibility to assure that a proposal is received in a timely manner. Please make sure your proposal is complete.

b. RFP Inquiries

Prospective responders should direct questions by email to the department contact person:

Daniel.Bonilla@minneapolismn.gov

City of Minneapolis, Community Planning and Economic Development

All questions are due no later than **December 19, 2018, 4:00 pm**. Questions and responses will be posted on the CPED web site (www.minneapolismn.gov/cped/cped_rfp) by **December 21, 2018, 4:00 pm**. The department contact person cannot vary the terms of the RFP. **An informational meeting will be held on December 19, 2018, from 10:30 – 11:30 am** at the Crown Roller Mill building located at 105 Fifth Ave. South, Suite 150. Attendance is recommended but not required.

c. Review and Selection Process

A committee of City staff and partner organizations will review proposals and make a recommendation to City Council for funding.

The City reserves the right to reject any or all proposals or parts of proposals, negotiate modifications to an entire proposal or specific components of the scope of work within a proposal to create a project of lesser or greater magnitude than described in this RFP or the submitted proposal.

d. Anticipated Timeline

RFP Issued: December 7, 2018

Informational meeting and questions due: December 19, 2018

Submission deadline for proposals: January 14, 2018

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Staff evaluation of proposals: February 2018
Recommendation to City Council: March 2018
Contracting: March 2018

e. Grant Agreement

This is a *reimbursable* performance-based grant agreement. Organizations with grant agreements will submit invoices for payment for the delivery of outcomes in accordance with the terms of their agreements. During the contracting period, organizations will work with City contract managers to develop a Scope of Services (see Exhibit A). The Scope of Services will be the basis for payments. By signing the grant agreement, the organization is committing to **completion of all of the deliverables** in the Scope of Services.

8. CITY CONTRACTING REQUIREMENTS

The selected contractor will be expected to sign a Grant Agreement. The City reserves the right to update the grant agreement forms as necessary to comply with laws regulations and ordinances.

9. EXHIBITS

- A. [Scope of Services template](#)
- B. [Reports package](#) (all categories)
- C. [Form of Consent for Release of Response Data](#) (submit with your application)

10. Download [2019 B-TAP RFP Application](#)