

Request for Proposals

Evaluation Services

New Orleans Business Alliance (NOLABA) is soliciting competitive proposals for an evaluation service to analyze a small business program called the Resilient Corridors Initiative. The evaluator will be needed for an eight-week period starting July 31, 2023, for 5-10 hours per week

All quotes and proposals should be submitted to: **Attn: Chandra Teddleton**, 1250 Poydras Street, Suite 2150, New Orleans, LA 70113. One (1) electronic copy in PDF format must be submitted by **5:00 PM CDT Tuesday, August 1, 2023**, to resilientcorridors@nolaba.org with the subject line "NOLABA RFP RCI Evaluation".

New Orleans Business Alliance reserves the right to accept or reject all proposals and/or any portions of proposals.

All documents submitted are subject to the Louisiana Public Records Act (La. R.S. 44:1 et seq.). Any emails sent or received by NOLABA employees are potentially subject to these laws. Unless otherwise exempted from the Public Records Act, senders, and receivers of NOLABA email or other records should presume that all information sent is a matter of public record and is therefore subject to public inspection upon request. To comply with the Public Records Act, NOLABA keeps all hard documents and electronic correspondence in accordance with its Document Retention Policy.

Additional information may be obtained by contacting the New Orleans Business Alliance at 504-934-4659 or Resilient Corridors Program ResilientCorridors@nolaba.org.

Submittals that are incomplete, unclear, or fail to comply with the requirements as outlined in the instructions may be rejected.

CONTRACT OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

Description of Entity

New Orleans Business Alliance (NOLABA) is the official non-profit organization tasked with leading economic development initiatives for Orleans Parish. We are a public-private partnership between the City of New Orleans and private investors from the local community. The vision of NOLABA is to reposition New Orleans as the next great American city for business investment, quality of life and economic opportunity.

We have a mission to unite a diverse community of stakeholders to catalyze job growth, create wealth, and build an equitable and sustainable economic future for New Orleans. NOLABA's goal is to unify partners and stakeholders to design and build a solid economic foundation for New Orleans: a collaborative and business friendly environment fueled by a unique culture and dynamism unequalled anywhere in the world.

Description of Program

The Resilient Corridors Initiative: An Approach to a Resilient and Entrepreneurial New Orleans Post COVID-19

New Orleans is the third most COVID-19-exposed metro area in the country, outside of Las Vegas and Orlando, due to its reliance on hospitality/leisure spending. Within New Orleans, key communities that were once thriving or emerging entrepreneurial hubs, after years of disinvestment and natural disasters, now struggle to regain footing as we enter the post-pandemic world. To address the record economic fallout while supporting the entrepreneurial community, this initiative will stimulate three New Orleans Opportunity Zone-located commercial corridors (New Orleans East, Tremé and Algiers), further pivoting the city into more resilient industry development sectors of technology, bio innovation, and food production “Resilient Corridors Initiative,” led by the New Orleans Business Alliance, the public-private economic development partnership for the City of New Orleans, and partnering organizations including the City of New Orleans, this project is embedded within a larger strategy to stabilize seven commercial corridors through technical assistance and seed funding.

Project Goals are as follows and will address the economic, health and safety risks caused by the pandemic—

- 1) The economic vibrancy of the identified commercial corridors remains post-COVID-19.
- 2) Commercial corridors are made and promoted as safe to do business, leveraging technologies and other digital transformation for ongoing success
- 3) Business owners are connected to each other for networking and mentorship, resulting in stronger connections and outcomes.
- 4) Disadvantaged entrepreneurs can experience business continuity and preparedness for any other natural disaster and economic shock by ensuring they are supported through technology-enabled entrepreneurialism.
- 5) Entrepreneurs will be supported throughout any necessary pivot strategies from idea phase to deployment of their product innovation, experiencing opportunity to enter new markets and/or test new service lines

Scope of Solicitation

Overview

New Orleans Business Alliance invites you to respond to this Request for Proposal (RFP) for Evaluation Consulting Services. Through this RFP, NOLABA seeks proposals to provide program evaluation to the NOLABA team. NOLABA’s priorities include improved reporting capacity and increased system efficiency through the following scope of services:

Our target outcomes:

- 1) Small BIPOC & WDBE Businesses: Increase capacity and expansion of small businesses
- 2) Public Policy and Advocacy: Increase public and private investments dedicated toward BIPOC

businesses and improve policies that effect those investments

The Evaluator shall:

- 1) Demonstrate prior experience conducting similar evaluations related to the growth and sustainability of small businesses
- 2) Demonstrate expertise in both qualitative and quantitative data analysis and program evaluation of the same or similar grant projects (develop a logic model based on current EDA report out formula)
- 3) Finalize proposed evaluation design
- 4) Manage all data collection processes, including formal agreements with appropriate entities
- 5) Analyze program components and conduct structured and/or unstructured interviews (focus group format; three sessions included mentors, technical assistance providers and businesses in the program)
- 6) Combine focus group session data with pre and post survey data that highlighted the businesses experience as a program participant (NOLABA will provide the raw data and survey summary reports)
- 7) Provide bi-weekly updates on status of all evaluation work
- 8) Provide formative evaluation reports with summative findings and recommendations.
 - a. The formal Final Report evaluating program operations and data from February 1, 2021, through May 29, 2023, shall be included in the report.
 - b. The reports shall address the following questions (the evaluator can recommend other questions to address):
 - i. Was the program being delivered as intended?
 - ii. Are business participants achieving intended outcomes?
 - iii. How did technical assistance and mentors contribute to program functioning?
 - iv. What were the unintended successes of the program?
- 9) Present findings in-person presentation for stakeholders (NOLABA staff and/or Board) regarding the final report.

Core Tenants of the Evaluation

Determine whether the program has been implemented as designed; understand the perspectives of internal and external stakeholders about our work; and obtain recommendations for program improvement.

Project Document Requirements

A proposal of no more than ten (10) pages including a detailed budget for the defined contract period, excluding examples in an appendix, with the subject line "NOLABA RFP: RCI Evaluator" must include the following information:

- 1) Contact Information
 - a. Respondent's Full Name, Address, Federal Employer Identification Number
 - b. Primary Contact's Full Name, Address, Telephone Number, Email Address
- 2) Methodology and Work Plan

- a. Respondents should clearly delineate their methodology, work plan & schedules, estimated hours/month, including meeting cadence with NOLABA, key dates, and resources needed for achieving expected outcomes
- b. Respondents should also include an outline with key deliverables and metrics for success
- 3) Statement of Qualifications & Requirements to Perform Duties
 - a. Respondent should provide information demonstrating the background and qualifications to carry out the scope of work.
 - b. Respondent should provide two (2) sample work products of similarly conducted evaluation reports.
- 4) Budget Summary and Fee Schedule, not to exceed \$30,000 (thirty thousand dollars and 00/100 cents)
- 5) References
 - a. Provide up to three (3) client references including full names, address, phone numbers, email address, scope of services provided, and length of service
 - b. These client references should be for similarly contracted services within the last (10) ten years
 - c. NOLABA staff may contact these references or industry sources, investigate previous projects and current commitments, interview some or all of the proposed team members, and take other information into account in its evaluation of the responses, including contacting individuals not listed explicitly as references.
- 6) Evidence of status as a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) as certified by the City of New Orleans and/or the State of Louisiana, if applicable.

Responses will be evaluated by using the following criteria, with 100 points as highest possible score:

10 points	Completeness, technical competence, and clarity of the response
15 points	Project approach including budget and schedule
20 points	Knowledge of best practices and experience
20 points	Responder's overall qualifications and DBE participation
25 points	Respondent's examples of past work
10 points	Respondent's experience with similar organizations

NOLABA intends to award one contract that will begin on *July 31, 2023*, and will complete by *September 22, 2023*.

Confidentiality Statement

All information included in this RFP is considered confidential and intended only for use by responders. No information included in this document, or in discussions related to NOLABA's Evaluator Consulting Services selection effort, may be disclosed to another party, or used for any other purpose without the express written or verbal consent.