



**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

**Small Business and Industry Incubator Development Guide**

**August 28, 2019**

## **North Carolina's Southeast Overview**

North Carolina's Southeast (NCSE) is a regional public-private economic development partnership of 18 counties that markets the southeast region nationally and globally to encourage new economic growth. We also provide leadership on key regional initiatives that help advance the regional economy. Business and government leadership work together in this partnership to promote the region and its assets through *The Southeastern Partnership*, a 501(c) 6 organization. The eighteen counties that make up the NCSE region are: Anson, Bladen, Brunswick, Columbus, Craven, Cumberland, Duplin, Hoke, Lenoir, New Hanover, Montgomery, Moore, Onslow, Pender, Robeson, Sampson, Scotland, and Wayne.

Some of the key regional and competitive assets in the region include the International Port of Wilmington, 15 community colleges, six public and private universities, seven major military installations (Ft. Bragg, Pope Army Airfield, Military Ocean Terminal Sunny Point, Camp Lejeune, Seymour-Johnson AFB, Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point, and Marine Corps Air Station New River), multiple interstate highways, regional airports, and a strong agricultural base.

### **Mission Statement of NCSE**

*Provide strong regional economic development leadership in southeastern North Carolina through innovative marketing and collaborative regional initiatives that will support the creation of new jobs, generate capital investment, and secure new business locations.*

Please refer to the NCSE website for more information: [www.ncse.org](http://www.ncse.org)

### **Request for Proposals (RFP)**

NCSE plans to hire a consultant to research, develop and write a comprehensive *Small Business and Industry Incubator Development Guide* that is customized and applicable to counties and communities in the southeast region. The guide will support communities that are interested in evaluating potential incubator projects as an economic development strategy and asset.

Small business and industry incubators are becoming more broadly used as economic development tools to spur private investment and new job creation, particularly in rural areas. Since the southeast region is diverse, there is no 'one size fits all' approach to the development of incubators in the region. Some incubators are in downtown environments, some are in community college settings, and some are in industrial/business parks. The incubators have been public, private or public/private initiatives.

There is no incubator development guide to assist communities, other than national level guidelines, so this project will be an 'A-Z' overview and guide to incubator development that incorporates best practices within the region and nationally. This guide should include a strong focus on incubator development in rural areas.

The consultant should have:

- Knowledge and expertise of economic development tools, including incubators.
- Proven research, communication and writing skills supporting economic development activities, programming, marketing, and advocacy.
- Examples of other projects with engagement in economic development.

This should be a highly practical and technical guide that provides clear “how-to” steps for developing an incubator. It should be comprehensive, but easily understandable, and supporting text should not be overly lengthy. It must be “user-friendly” for any community to use.

## **Scope of Work**

### **Overview of Existing Incubators in the Region**

Provide a detailed look at existing incubators in the southeast region, including their location, year started, generation of companies and jobs, ownership, structure-type, funding sources, and other relevant information. Include photographs of the facilities.

### **Best Practices**

Provide a best practices overview of incubators as an economic development tool, based on research and interviews with incubator owners and operators in the region.

### **Steps to developing an Incubator**

Provide a comprehensive step-by-step outline for evaluation and complete development of an incubator, including, but not limited to:

- Market analysis
- Type of incubator – small business and/or industrial
- Location analysis
- Ownership structure
- Needs requirements
- Funding sources
- Cost estimates
- Construction and/or upfit

This would include providing generic blueprints with cost estimates that would be included with the guide. This would be done in conjunction with a developer and/or contractor that has developed an incubator(s), working with NCSE.

## **Incorporation of Information into Marketing Program**

Work with NCSE staff and website vendor to incorporate the guide and supporting information into the NCSE marketing program, including the website and relevant marketing materials.

## **Format of the Guide**

Prepare a hard copy version of the guide and a digital version of the guide. The guide will be placed on the NCSE website. Please provide a flexible format to the guide that easily allows for modifications and updates in the future. The consultant will work with NCSE on the graphics to be used in the guide.

## **Presentation and Distribution of the Guide**

The consultant will prepare and provide a presentation of the guide to the NCSE staff, Local Developers Advisory Group (LDAG) and the NCSE Board of Directors.

Media information, output, and distribution will be developed in conjunction with the NCSE Team and communications consultant.

## **Submission Requirements**

- Firm history overview
- Proposed work plan
- Examples of other economic development project engagement
- References
- Contact information
- Timeline -- assume a launch date of October 18, 2019.
- Cost -- a range is sufficient as the scope of work details will need to be further refined after a selection is made.

Proposals must be received no later than 5:00 PM, September 27, 2019. Two (2) hard copies and one electronic copy of the proposal should be submitted to:

Steve Yost, President  
North Carolina's Southeast  
707 West Broad Street  
PO Box 2556  
Elizabethtown, NC 28337

910-862-8511  
stevey@ncse.org

### **Conditions of Request**

The following conditions apply to this RFP:

1. NCSE reserves the right to withdraw this solicitation of a proposal at any time without prior notice. Further, NCSE makes no representations that any agreement will be awarded to any firm submitting a proposal.
2. NCSE reserves the right to reject any and all proposals submitted in response to this request and reject any sub-consultant or individual working on a consulting team.
3. Any changes to the proposal requirements will be made by addendum.
4. In any event, NCSE shall not be liable for any pre-contractual expenses incurred by any proposed or selected contractor. Proposers shall not include any such expenses as part of the price proposed in its proposal. Pre-contractual expenses are defined as expenses incurred by proposers in:
  - a) Preparing the proposal;
  - b) Submitting proposal to NCSE;
  - c) Negotiating with NCSE on any matter related to proposal; or
  - d) Other expenses incurred by consultant or proposer prior to date of award for any agreement related to services herein described.

NCSE shall be held harmless and free from any liability, claims or expenses whatsoever incurred by or on behalf of any person or organization submitting a proposal.

### **Questions**

Please direct all questions regarding the submission of proposals to:

Steve Yost, President  
910-862-8511 W  
910-991-5689 C  
stevey@ncse.org