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**RochesterWorks, Inc.**  
**Request for Qualifications (RFQ)**  
**Strategic Grant Development & Writing Services**  
**EDA AI Upskill Accelerator Pilot Program**

**I. Overview**

RochesterWorks, Inc. (“RWI”), on behalf of the Monroe County/Rochester Workforce Development Board, is seeking qualifications from experienced consultants or consulting firms to provide strategic grant development and writing assistance in support of an anticipated application to the U.S. Economic Development Administration’s (“EDA”) [AI Upskill Accelerator Pilot Program](#).

RWI intends to convene and coordinate a regional coalition of workforce, education, employer, economic development, and community-based partners to develop a competitive application focused on advancing inclusive workforce development strategies that support AI-enabled industry transformation in the Greater Rochester region.

The selected consultant will provide technical assistance and strategic support to RochesterWorks staff and coalition partners in preparing a high-quality, compliant, and competitive federal grant application for submission to EDA by the published NOFO deadline.

The successful respondent should possess demonstrated experience in:

- Federal grant writing
- Workforce and economic development initiatives
- Coalition-based proposal development
- Public-sector funding
- Large-scale regional workforce initiatives

Experience with EDA funding opportunities, workforce innovation programs, sector partnerships, AI/digital transformation initiatives, or federal economic competitiveness programs is strongly preferred.

**II. About RochesterWorks, Inc.**

RochesterWorks, Inc. (“RWI”) is the workforce development board and workforce system administrator for Monroe County, New York, and the largest provider of employment and training services in the Greater Rochester region.

Established in 2004, RWI provides employment and training services through multiple career centers and specialized workforce initiatives serving youth, adults, dislocated workers, employers, and underserved communities throughout the Rochester region.

As the designated fiscal agent for federal workforce development funding in Monroe County, RWI administers approximately \$14 million annually in workforce programming, the largest funding coming through the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and New York State Office of Temporary Disability Assistance (OTDA).

RWI also serves as a regional convener and strategic partner in workforce and economic development initiatives involving local governments, educational institutions, employers, industry organizations, labor representatives, and community-based organizations. Most recently, it was awarded a Recompete Strategy Development Grant by US EDA in 2023, which it used to develop strategies to address low workforce participation rates among prime age individuals (ages 25-54) in the City of Rochester.

### **III. Project Background**

The EDA AI Upskill Accelerator Pilot Program seeks to support regional initiatives that strengthen workforce readiness and economic competitiveness through AI-related workforce development and employer engagement strategies.

RochesterWorks anticipates leading or coordinating a regional consortium focused on:

- Incumbent worker upskilling
- Equitable workforce access
- AI-enabled industry transformation
- Sector-based partnerships
- Inclusive pathways into emerging occupations

Potential industry focus areas may include advanced manufacturing, healthcare operations, logistics, administrative operations, and small business productivity.

The proposal is expected to involve collaboration among workforce development providers, employers, higher education institutions, community organizations, economic development entities, and local government partners.

### **IV. Scope of Services**

The selected consultant will be expected to provide strategic and technical assistance including, but not limited to:

#### **A) Grant Development Support**

- Assist in development of a competitive grant strategy aligned with NOFO priorities
- Support coalition-based proposal development
- Assist in identifying and articulating measurable outcomes and implementation strategies
- Support development of project timelines, work plans, and program models

## B) Narrative Development

- Draft and/or edit proposal narrative sections
- Ensure responsiveness to all NOFO requirements
- Incorporate partner-provided content into a cohesive proposal
- Develop compelling economic development and workforce impact narratives
- Assist with equity and underserved community impact framing

## C) Partnership Coordination

- Support coordination of proposal inputs from multiple stakeholders.
- Assist with collection and organization of letters of support and partner documentation

## D) Budget & Compliance Support

- Assist with development of grant budget and budget narrative
- Advise on allowable costs and federal compliance considerations
- Assist with match documentation strategies
- Support completion of required federal forms and application materials

## E) Submission Support

- Assist with final assembly and submission of application materials through applicable federal submission platforms
- Support final quality assurance review prior to submission

## **V. Desired Qualifications**

Qualified respondents should demonstrate experience in the following areas:

- Federal grant writing and proposal development
- Workforce development and/or economic development initiatives
- Multi-partner coalition coordination
- Public-sector funding opportunities
- Outcome-based program design
- Equity-centered workforce strategies
- Federal budget and compliance requirements

Preference may be given to firms with prior experience involving EDA grants, Department of Labor grants, regional workforce systems, AI or technology workforce initiatives, or sector partnership strategies.

## **VI. Required Response Elements**

Responses should include the following:

- Relevant federal grant writing experience
- Demonstrated success securing federal grant awards
- Experience with workforce/economic development initiatives
- Project approach and proposed methodology
- References (minimum of three)
- Cost proposal/pricing structure
- Estimated number of hours required to complete the scope of work (this is non-binding)

The required elements will be weighted equally in our evaluation of the responses.

## **VII. Timeline**

RFQ Released: Thursday, May 21<sup>st</sup> 2026.

Questions Due: Thursday, May 28<sup>th</sup>, 2026 at 4:30pm EDT.

Responses Due: Thursday, June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2026 at 4:30pm EDT.

Project Start: Thursday, June 11<sup>th</sup>, 2026 at

Anticipated Proposal Submission: Thursday, July 10<sup>th</sup>

## **VIII. Submission Instructions**

Questions and Responses shall be submitted electronically to:

Lee Koslow  
RochesterWorks, Inc.  
Lkoslow@rochesterworks.org

Questions regarding this RFQ must be submitted no later than Thursday, May 28<sup>th</sup> at 4:30pm EST.

RWI reserves the right to:

- Reject any or all submissions
- Request interviews
- Negotiate scope and pricing
- Select the proposal deemed most advantageous to the organization

## **IX. Additional Considerations**

RWI strongly encourages responses from firms and consultants with demonstrated experience supporting:

- Inclusive workforce initiatives
- Underserved communities
- Employer-led workforce partnerships

- Regional economic competitiveness strategies

#### **X. Option to Extend Contractual Agreement**

RochesterWorks, Inc. reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to extend or amend any agreement resulting from this RFQ for additional grant development, grant writing, strategic planning, post-award support, or related consulting services associated with future funding opportunities or implementation activities.

Any such extension or additional scope of work may be exercised for a period of up to two (2) years from the date of the initial contract execution and shall be subject to:

- mutual agreement between the parties,
- satisfactory consultant performance,
- availability of funding,
- and approval by the Monroe County/Rochester Workforce Development Board, where applicable.
- RWI does not guarantee any additional work beyond the scope described in this RFQ.