



Request for Proposals
Marketing for Cultural Showcases
World Business Chicago
April 2023

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SECTION I. – BACKGROUND INFORMATION

WHO WE ARE

World Business Chicago (WBC) is the city of Chicago’s public-private economic development agency. Our mission is to drive inclusive economic growth and job creation, support business, and promote Chicago as a leading global city. WBC serves as the partnership between the City of Chicago and Chicago’s business community, with a Board of Directors composed of prominent business and civic leaders who actively guide the progression of Chicago’s business climate. Working in partnership with the City of Chicago, WBC strives to ensure that all Chicagoans can prosper and participate in the economic growth of our city. With consistent efforts to nurture Chicago neighborhoods, foster the city’s burgeoning tech and innovation ecosystem, and remain a leader in both site selection and foreign direct investment, WBC consistently creates opportunities for economic growth.

From April 2022 through 2024, WBC will be focusing on industries that have been severely impacted by COVID-19 through investment in growth industries that can bolster economic recovery, supporting local businesses and entrepreneurs, and boosting Chicago’s travel and tourism sector. Programming, intended to drive investment and expansion, will center on aiding impacted commercial corridors.

WBC focuses on the sectors and opportunities identified in the Chicago Recovery Task force (“RTF”): Transportation, Distribution & Logistics, Healthcare & Life Sciences, Food & Agriculture, Manufacturing, and Corporate Specialty Centers. Aggressive growth in these sectors and direct aid to impacted tourism businesses are essential to building back the City’s economy. Through prioritizing these sectors, WBC supports the City in capturing displaced workers, building a resilient economy, and returning the economy to pre-pandemic levels of employment and growth.

OBJECTIVE

WBC is undertaking a series of retail “pop-up” activations along Chicago’s commercial corridors. These pop-ups focus on bolstering Chicago’s tourism and hospitality industries through filling vacant storefronts, providing visitors with interesting and engaging activities, and supporting local businesses. These pop-ups give participating Chicago-based businesses the opportunity of temporary tenancy in downtown Chicago and along high traffic commercial corridors. Along with providing a high traffic retail space for businesses, the pop-ups highlight Chicago’s support for small businesses and Chicago’s diversity and innovation within the business community.

The purpose of this Request for Proposal (“RFP”) is to retain a qualified third-party firm to **create and execute a comprehensive marketing and public relations strategy to**

promote World Business Chicago's new pop-up showcases, their events, and their participants. Resulting from this RFP, the engagement agreement with the selected firm will be anticipated for pop-up activations over the next year, with the option to expand to additional project scopes, and extend (up to three years) or reduce term as needed.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

For the 2023 summer, World Business Chicago is launching two pop-ups downtown. One pop-up will feature Chicago-based Ukrainian businesses and is located in the Wrigley Building. The second pop-up will feature Chicago-based Colombian, Pakistani, Polish, and Kyrgyz businesses and will be located in The Rookery Building. Because the pop-ups will open for a short period of time, WBC hopes to work with a marketing firm that can promote and program the pop-up space and maximize the success of the pop-ups.

Responses to this RFP should demonstrate the capability to provide all services required to promote and program events at the pop-up store, with the goals of increasing awareness, foot traffic, and sales at the pop-up store.

Specifications:

- Activation Locations – Chicago, IL, Magnificent Mile and Loop
- Pop-Up Duration – June to September 2023

KEY CONTACTS

LIA KAPANI, Director, Public Sector Investment Strategy

NICOLETTE PETERS, Project Manager, Public Sector Investment Strategy

SECTION II– SCOPE OF SERVICES

All Services required must be performed with that degree of skill, care, planning and diligence normally shown by a professional performing work of comparable scope, purpose and magnitude. All Services must be completed with the highest degree of organization, efficiency, and professionalism. It is expected that Services are planned carefully to minimize the cost to the client.

Partner Preferred Requirements:

- Experience marketing pop-up or temporary experiences
- Experience promoting events or businesses in Chicago, IL (preferably downtown)
- Experience or willingness to work within federal grant guidelines

Promotion, programming, and reporting are the major scopes of work and are further detailed in the corresponding section. We envision a single vendor will be able to oversee all of these services in house or oversee the subcontracting of the work; or a small collective of vendors working seamlessly together. You may bid on all of the work or on specific scopes. In your response, please indicate which scopes you are bidding for, and ensure cost proposals are inclusive of all proposed scopes. The scopes outlined below are based on anticipated needs but not all capabilities may be required by vendors. Please utilize the scopes as a basis for identifying which capabilities your firm is able to perform.

Additionally, this program is funded with a federal grant. Because of this, there will be additional reporting requirements as well as specific regulations (i.e., types of events, vendors, budgets, etc.). Your firm should have experience or willingness to be flexible and work within these guidelines.

Scope #1: Promotion

Services may include but are not limited to:

- Conducting research on effective promotional tactics for showcasing downtown experiences (e.g. sidewalk decals, banners, etc.) along with digital strategies such as social media, email marketing, and influencer outreach.
- Connecting with hotels, offices, and residential buildings within a 2-4 block radius of each pop-up (“nearby buildings”).
- Targeting “nearby buildings” with marketing efforts (i.e. newsletters, flyers, digital assets) aimed at building community managers and concierges.
- Communicating specific event dates and information with “nearby buildings.”
- Working with pop-up vendors to learn about their community networks and best ways to promote within their communities.
- Connecting with Chicago bloggers or influencers for paid promotion opportunities.

Deliverables may include:

- Graphic assets for promotional materials (i.e., sidewalk decals, banners, event invitations, flyers)
- List of marketing or promotional contacts for “nearby buildings.”

Scope #2: Programming

Services may include but are not limited to:

- Working with pop-up vendors to create a schedule of events for June through September 2023, targeting 2-4 events per month.
- Brainstorm event ideas and activation days to create a diverse range of experiences for attendees.
- Supporting with executing events, including setting up, designing event-specific graphics, flyers, and signage, and helping with passing out flyers on the street on event days to encourage foot traffic.

Deliverables may include:

- Event-specific graphics (e.g. flyers, signage, invitations)
- Schedule of events for June through September 2023, targeting 2-4 events per month.

Scope #3: Reporting

Services may include but are not limited to:

- Providing weekly progress reports on promotional events and efforts, including analytics and feedback from partners, attendees, guests.
- Analyzing attendance and engagement at events to measure success.
- Identifying areas for improvement and how to target future pop-up visitors and invitees.
- Providing a summary report detailing the overall success of each event/campaign and recommended strategies for future initiatives.

Deliverables may include:

- Event-specific graphics (e.g. flyers, signage, invitations)
- Schedule of events for June through September 2023, targeting 2-4 events per month.

SECTION III– RFP PROCESS AND SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

RFP PROCESS

The Proposer’s written response, which details the experience and expertise of the Proposer to provide the Services, is due no later than **five o’clock (5:00) PM central time on May 12th, 2023. Submissions after this time may be considered for future pop-ups at WBC’s discretion.**

Requirements and procedures for providing submittals in response to this RFP are described herein. If it becomes necessary to revise or amend any part of this RFP, including the due dates, WBC will notify each prospective Proposer by email.

Proposers are to contact WBC at vendors@worldbusinesschicago.com concerning this RFP and should not rely on representations, statements, or explanations other than those made in this RFP or in any written addendum to this RFP.

WBC will accept questions, in writing via email, until **five o'clock (5:00) PM central time on April 26th, 2023**. Questions should be submitted in writing to vendors@worldbusinesschicago.com. Questions and answers will be distributed to all responding parties by **five o'clock (5:00) PM central time on April 28th, 2023**.

Proposers must submit an electronic copy of the entire original submission saved in PDF. Submissions shall be delivered to WBC at the following email address: vendors@worldbusinesschicago.com

A timeline showing the key dates for the RFP process is provided as **Exhibit A**.

The responsibility for submitting a response to this RFP on or before the stated time and date will be solely and strictly that of the Proposer. WBC will in no way be responsible for delays caused by any other entity or by any occurrence. Proposals received after **five o'clock (5:00) PM central time on May 5th, 2023**, may be deemed non-responsive and ineligible for consideration.

By submitting a Proposal, Proposer agrees to accept and abide by the terms of this RFP. WBC reserves the right to reject any or all submittals, to waive any informality or irregularity, and to accept any responsive submittals which it may deem to be in the best interest of WBC. Only submittals from responsible Proposers complying with the provisions of this RFP will be considered.

Submittals will be considered incomplete if they do not bear the signature of an agent of the Proposer who is in a position to contractually bind the Proposer. The submittals can be withdrawn at any time, if requested in writing, until the deadline date at which time it will be considered final.

RFP SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

1. Company information
 - a) Company summary and mission
 - b) Company demographics and examples of commitment to DE&I
 - c) Websites and social channels (if applicable)
2. Qualifications and sample work, any visual examples you can provide that would help us understand your relevant experience further
3. Proposal with itemized cost estimate for listed scope of services.

4. Entity's ability to comply with Federal procurement rules and regulations
 - a) **Applicants must satisfy these eligibility requirements:**
 - i) Small business with under 500 employees
 - ii) In existence before March 12, 2020
 - iii) Located within the Chicago city limits
5. Statement of any relevant conflicts of interest in relation to WBC or the Pop-Up Activation

The omission of any requested information or the failure to complete any portion of the above-referenced forms may result in an RFP submittal being deemed non-responsive and ineligible for consideration. WBC disfavors time and material contracts.

SECTION IV. – RFP EVALUATION

EVALUATION PROCESS

WBC intends to conduct a comprehensive, fair and impartial evaluation of proposals received in response to this RFP. WBC will first review the proposals to assess Proposer’s responsiveness and compliance with the administrative requirements of the RFP. Evaluations will be based on criteria outlined herein and all proposals will be evaluated using the same criteria. Throughout the evaluation and selection period, each Proposer may be required to furnish additional information, make presentations and/or attend meetings as requested by WBC.

Evaluation Criteria

In evaluating the Proposals, WBC will consider, among other things, the following:

1. **Experience and Performance:**
 - a. Whether the Proposer has sufficiently described its expertise and/or provided examples of its ability to perform the Services as listed in this RFP.
 - b. Whether the Proposer has provided appropriate and relevant creative proposals and, if not, whether the Proposer has included information as to why such proposals were not provided.
 - c. Whether the Proposer has proven a commitment to DE&I.
 - d. Whether the Proposer has previously worked with units of government or has a sufficient compliance structure in place for invoice and cost tracking.
2. **Staffing and Resources:** Quality of the management experience of the team assigned to this project, and the quality of all assigned personnel’s experience and training. Whether the Proposer’s staffing plan demonstrates the commitment and needed resources for successfully completing the engagement.
3. **Financial Resources:** The Evaluation Committee will consider the financial condition of Respondent. Respondent must be financially stable to ensure performance and access to credit or liquid assets over the duration of the contract.
4. **Scope:** The range of deliverables and services capabilities.
5. **Proposed Cost Structure:** The reasonableness and competitiveness of the Proposer’s schedule of costs.
6. **Quality of Creative Proposal and Pitch:** The level of innovation, vision, and strategy for execution of the attached example project.

EVALUATION AND AWARD PROCESS

The evaluation and award process is as follows:

1. Review of the Proposals to assess compliance with mandatory administrative requirements.
2. Detailed evaluation by WBC of Proposer's mandatory service requirements and proposed services.
3. Clarifications, discussions, and presentations (if determined necessary by WBC).
4. Review of Proposed Cost Structure.
5. Internal WBC approval.
6. Award notification to the Proposers.
7. Final contract executed.

WBC reserves the right to deny an award to any and all RFP submissions if qualifications are not met.

SECTION V. – CONDITIONS, DISCLAIMERS AND DISCLOSURES

This RFP does not represent a commitment or offer by WBC to enter into an agreement with a Proposer or to pay any costs incurred in the preparation of a response to this RFP. WBC also reserves the right to seek new submittals when such a request is in the best interest of WBC and to reasonably request additional information or clarification of information provided in the response without changing the terms of the RFP. The Proposer assumes the responsibility for all costs incurred in responding to this RFP. It is understood and agreed that WBC assumes no liability for the Proposer's costs incurred in responding to this RFP. The RFP and the selected Proposer's response to the RFP may, by reference, become a part of the final Agreement between the selected Proposer and WBC resulting from this solicitation process.

Signing Forms

Proposal forms must be properly completed and signed by persons with the authority to bind the Proposer(s).

Ownership of Proposals

The timely submittals and any information made a part of the Proposals will not be returned to the sender. WBC reserves the right to retain all submittals and to retain any ideas in a submittal regardless of whether a Proposer is selected. Submittal of a response to this RFP indicates acceptance by the Proposer of the conditions contained within the RFP document.

Improper Practices

The Proposer shall not offer any gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value to any official or employee of WBC, WBC's evaluation team, or any other individual or organization that may have a clear interest in the outcome of the selection process, for the purposes of influencing the outcome of the RFP response selection process.

The Proposer shall not collude in any manner or engage in any practices with any other Proposer(s), which may restrict or eliminate competition or otherwise restrain trade. Violation of this instruction will cause the Proposer(s) submittal(s) to be rejected by WBC. The prohibition is not intended to preclude joint ventures or subcontracts.

Interpretation

Should any question arise as to the proper interpretation of the terms and conditions contained in this RFP, WBC's decision shall be final.

Multiple Awards

It is the intent of WBC to award to one Proposer as a result of this RFP. However, WBC reserves the right to award the contract to one or more Proposers as it deems to be in its best interest or if multiple Pop-up sites are launched

No Criminal/ Civil Liability

Submission of a proposal shall include a representation that neither the Proposer, nor any of its joint venture participants, partners, members, affiliates, subsidiaries, officers, directors, managerial employees, or any individual who, directly or indirectly, holds an ownership interest in the Proposer's organization has been convicted of or entered into a plea agreement for a criminal offense incident to the application for or performance of a contract or subcontract with a governmental or private entity, or has been convicted of a criminal offense, or held liable in a civil proceeding, that negatively reflects on the entity's or individual's business integrity, based on a finding of embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification, or destruction of records, receiving stolen property, or violation of state or federal antitrust statutes or similar laws.

Insurance Requirements

At all times during the term of the Agreement and during the time period following final completion if the Proposer is required to return and perform any additional work, Proposer is required to maintain the minimum insurance coverage insuring all operations related to the Agreement. WBC reserves the right to modify insurance requirements based on the nature of the services rendered or the projects required under the Agreement.

Confidentiality

Except with WBC's approval, the Proposer shall not directly or indirectly disclose, divulge or communicate to any person, firm or corporation, other than WBC or its designated representatives, or as required by law, any non-public information which it may have obtained during the RFP process concerning any matter relating to the work or regular business of WBC. Any and all Proposers who are not engaged by WBC shall immediately destroy any information provided by WBC as a part of this RFP.

Rejection of Proposals

Proposals that do not comply with the submittal requirements of the RFP, or that contain omissions, erasures, alterations or additions not called for, or that are irregular in any way, may be rejected as informal and insufficient. WBC, however, reserves the right to waive any or all informalities when it considers a waiver to be in its and the public's best interest.

In addition to all other basis for rejection, any Proposer found to have falsified any information to WBC in relation to this or any other procurement, or which has been barred from doing business with WBC, the City of Chicago or State of Illinois, or which has been convicted of a felony or entered into a plea agreement related to procurement contracting with any unit of government, may be rejected.

EXHIBIT A – RFP TIMELINE

The anticipated timeline for the RFP process is set forth below. These are target dates and are subject to change.

Request for Proposals (RFP) issued	April 14, 2023
Pre-Submittal questions due by	April 26, 2023
Answers to questions issued by	April 28, 2023
Proposals due	May 12, 2023
Approval and notification of selection	May 17, 2023
Project kick-off	May 19, 2023