

### QUESTIONS FROM THE 11.04.20 PRE-SUBMITTAL CONFERENCE

Q: Can you demonstrate how to get into the application in iSupplier?

A: To learn how to access/use the Department of Procurement Services (DPS) iSupplier Portal / eProcurement Site (i.e. How to Register, View Bids/Solicitations, How to Respond, Adding Attachments, etc.), please review the following resources:

- Intro to eProcurement presentation slides at [chicago.gov/eprocurement](http://chicago.gov/eprocurement) [URL] > Online Training Materials [Page] > Supplier Responses/Submission [Section] > [Pre-bid /eProc Handout \(5.20.19\)](#) [Link]
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- Tutorial videos in the DPS [Online Training Materials](#) page
- Contact the iSupplier Customer Support Center at (312) 744-HELP (4357) or [CustomerSupport@cityofchicago.org](mailto:CustomerSupport@cityofchicago.org)

Q: Are RFPs editable after submission if submitted before 11/30?

A: Yes, you may update and/or revise your bid response at any time before the RFP closes on November 30, 2020; 12:00 PM [Noon] CST. Please note:

- Your most recent update is considered your bid and replaces all previous versions.
- Once the RFP closes, no further updating is allowed and the system will automatically lock.

Q: If you exceed a character limit on a question, can you attach a pdf file of the narrative for that question's answer?

A: Yes, you may submit an attachment to complete your response to an RFP question.

- Please refer to the attachment in your response (e.g. "Response to the questions is continued in attached document named...")
- Attachment title/file name should contain the specification number, question/requirement number, and clearly describe the content of the attachment.

Q: Is there a list of required attachments to be provided? If so, what page of the RFP is it on?

A: Yes, in the "Organization Information" section of each individual RFP solicitation the following question is asked, "Did you attach the following in your Admin. section?\*Liability Insurance\*Board Member Identification\*IRS Determination Letter\*Certificate of Good Standing\*Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation\*Financial Statement"

Q: Is the DUNS number required?

A: The Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number is not required; however the question requires an answer. Please type "N/A" if your organization does not have a DUNS number.

Q: Is there a monetary maximum amount per grant?

A: No, there is no maximum grant amount per grant, however, please note the following:

- As noted in the RFP description, the range of funding for 2019/2020 NBDC Program grantees (per annum) is \$9,285 to \$84,142.
- The average funding (per annum) per grantee for the 2019/2020 NBDC Program cycle is \$37,500.

- Your response amount should be justifiable, and reflected accordingly in your proposed budget, which corresponds to work program outputs/outcomes.
- We may counter your submittal with a different grant amount, which you may accept or decline.

Q: Is the total funding budget still 3.3M?

A: Yes, the total funding for the 2021/2022 NBDC program is \$3,360,000.

Q: Do you have a WORD version of the questions?

A: No, we do not have a Microsoft Word version of the RFP solicitation questions.

However, once the Header and Line sections are completed in an open RFP solicitation, you may select "Continue" and the "Printable View" option will be available to allow you to download a PDF copy of the Quote prior to submission.

Q: Could you say a few more things about the PEER-TO-PEER priorities? The topics are so broad.

A: Peer-to-Peer Trainers assist other NBDC grantees in building the capacity of the organization in the following priority topics:

- Business/Economic Development:
  - Focus on identifying business opportunities in the marketplace to assist entrepreneurs/business owners to capitalize market and business opportunities, and/or
  - Focus on a specific geographic area and the creation of economic activity in the geographic area to attract businesses to locate/thrive in the geographic area.
- Technology:
  - Focus on identifying/assessing the technology needs of NBDCs, and recommending/providing solutions (i.e. Hardware, Software, Online Tools, Cloud-based/Telecommunication tools, etc.) via workshops/training.
  - Focus on providing the NBDCs the knowledge/tools to help their clients/members with identifying/assessing their technology needs, as well as recommending/providing solutions (i.e. Hardware, Software, Online Tools, Cloud-based/Telecommunication tools, etc.) via workshops/training.
- Organizational Operations
  - Focus on providing training to NBDCs on managing the operations (i.e. Administration/Board, Finance, Fundraising, Human Resources/Volunteers, Marketing, Risk/Data Management, Member Management (if applicable), Event Planning, etc.) of their nonprofit organization.
  - Focus on providing training to NBDCs to be able to provide workshops/training to their clients/ members on managing the operations (i.e. Administration/Board, Finance, Fundraising, Human Resources/Volunteers, Marketing, Risk/Data Management, Member Management (if applicable), Event Planning, etc.) of their business.

Peer-to-Peer Trainers RFP respondents may also propose other types of workshops/training to NBDCs that they have specialized expertise either in-house or outside hired consultant.

- Peer-to-Peer Trainers RFP respondents are expected to provide details on their proposed program including, but not limited to, their curriculum, syllabus and/or workshop slides.

Q: Who makes the final decision on the monetary amounts granted?

A: The final decision on the grant amounts is made by the BACP Chief Small Business Officer and Commissioner.

Q: What if your organization does not track age, gender, ethnicity, income level?

A: Certain demographic information is part of the data we collect to prove that NBDCs are servicing a specific target population per their contract.

However, if the information is not required for your specific contract, then capturing demographic information will be optional for your organization.

Lastly, we do not track age or income level.

### QUESTIONS FROM THE 11.05.20 PRE-SUBMITTAL CONFERENCE

Q: With chambers facing financial challenges due to decreased dues, sponsorship, events, what is the best way to share the need for grant in the proposal and how can we get the total budget of the program increased so the city can support chambers at a higher level throughout this program?

A: As you describe your suite of business service offerings in the program summary section, you may denote the need for the grant to encompass your response to the challenges of our current environment.

With respect to the total budget of the program, just as our BACP Commissioner and Chief Small Business Officer advocates for additional funding for NBDCs with the Mayor's Office and Aldermen, so can chambers/business service organizations reach out to the Aldermen of the ward(s) in their respective service area.

Q: Do we provide the services, or do we get others to help provide the services? Or both? Can we apply for one specialty? Such as workforce development? Do we have to submit for every expenditure before grant funds are released?

A: NBDCs are expected to have expertise and capacity to provide the services they are proposing in their RFP response, and if they do not have the in-house expertise, then they must either hire the appropriate resource(s), or have qualified business service organization partners to refer their clients/members to.

An organization may apply to any of the NBDC Program types that they are qualified for; please keep in mind that each respective NBDC Program types requires a separate application.

Grant funds are released per monthly, or quarterly, voucher which has a corresponding approved set of deliverables. More information will be provided if your response is accepted.

Q: Are presentation slides available on website?

A: Yes, both the presentation and recorded video session are available at [chicago.gov/nbdc](http://chicago.gov/nbdc)

Q: Can you serve in multiple special roles?

A: There are seven (7) NBDC Program types. If applying for more than one program type, respondents must submit SEPARATE responses for each respective program type.

Q: Will one agency be able to receive more than their capacity & capabilities?

A: Grant amounts provided are commensurate to multiple factors including, but not limited to, proof of capacity and capabilities along with their corresponding budget for the proposed activities and output/outcomes per the work program, historical program performance (if applicable), and overall fit to the program based on the factors noted in the RFPS.

Q: Example of a successful RFP?

A: An example of a successful RFP response would be answering all the RFP questions properly and directly with the appropriate supporting information to illustrate expertise/experience, proven capabilities, grant and operational management, proper allocation and usage of funds, as well as clearly defined goals and objectives.

Please see our list of NBDCs at [chicago.gov/nbdc](http://chicago.gov/nbdc) for successful applicants to the prior cycle RFPS, and the map of their respective areas. If your organization's proposed service area overlaps another NBDCs service area, then illustrate how your services will differentiate, or complement

their services, to accommodate the needs of a business community that has the appropriate capacity.

Q: Is there an applicant that specifies how long they've been in the business/program?

A: Applicants can include their experience with being a business service organization, chamber, or NBDC in the summary section, which we will take into consideration as part of our evaluation.

Q: How do we get the bids into the I-Supplier, where do we request RFP's into the portal?

A: To learn how to access/use the Department of Procurement Services (DPS) iSupplier Portal / eProcurement Site (i.e. How to Register, View Bids/Solicitations, How to Respond, Adding Attachments, etc.), please review the following resources:

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Q: Is the reporting for the Innovation Specialist similar to the Generalist role?

A: Some of the basic reporting requirements are similar, however, there are specific differences due to the different functions as noted in the RFPs.

Q: Is there a citywide geographical area map specific to 77 neighborhoods?

A: The City of Chicago website has a dedicated page for Chicago Ward, Community Area and Neighborhood Maps. Just go to [chicago.gov](http://chicago.gov) and type "neighborhood maps" in the search field and the top result is the aforementioned page.

Q: Any guidance on length the RFP may be?

A: Please login to iSupplier and select any one of the NBDC Program RFPs to review the RFP questions. All questions must be answered.

Q: With chambers facing financial challenges due to increased dues, events, what is the best way to meet the needs in the proposal of the grant? In the past did the RFP ask for grant amount?

A: We understand the challenges that business service organizations and chambers of commerce face, and expect organizations to illustrate how they, with their adjusted capacities, will be able to maintain the quality of services that they provide to their respective business communities while managing our current environment. The strength of a response is based on proposed outcomes, and not just outputs, during the two-year cycle of the program. And thus, our evaluation of a proposal is not only based on capacity, but also how the organization responds to the changing needs of the small business ecosystem of their community, filling a business service gap in said communities, as well as overall fit to the NBDC program.

And, yes, our RFPs have always asked organizations to provide the grant amount requested.