



Request For Proposals

Business Technical Assistance Provider

Spokane Independent Metro Business Alliance (SIMBA)

RFP open until filled

Budget: \$3k-\$4,999

Timeline: Present until May 31, 2023

About SIMBA

SIMBA is the independent business alliance of the Spokane-Coeur d'Alene metro region. We build a prosperous, equitable, and local economy by organizing and educating regional businesses, consumers, and partners.

SIMBA envisions a connected, interdependent, supportive, and collaborative local economy with shared opportunities, broadened ownership, and unique community character.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The purpose of this project is to benefit low-income, underserved, and rural communities by helping businesses that are members of these communities thrive through participation in the Live Local INW Community Marketplace.

Across the Inland Northwest in both urban and rural communities, under-represented and smaller-sized businesses lack reliable, easy-to-use, and values-aligned tools to promote their businesses and products and reach the much larger pool of local-first customers outside their town or county. This is especially noted along the main streets of smaller and rural communities in the region like Colfax, Kettle Falls, Palouse, or Colville. This project will help diverse, local, independent businesses in these areas bridge the rural-urban gap by connecting them with regional market consumers looking for their unique goods and services. It will also support businesses by closing the digital divide that keeps many entrepreneurs limited to Facebook, email, and foot traffic promotion to find, engage, and serve a much larger audience of "good fit" customers.

This Live Local INW Community Marketplace project will create an online and mobile app-powered community marketplace platform that attracts and equitably directs the economic

potential of individual consumers, locally-owned businesses, and institutions across Washington State who want an easier way to shop and buy locally.

By expanding our existing commitment to provide the resources and tools for local businesses and business serving organizational partners, this project will make it much easier for regional consumers to support a diverse network of rural and urban microenterprise businesses.

This project will serve to catalyze invaluable opportunities for the newly-formed Business Equity Coalition of the Inland Northwest (BECiN) to strengthen relationships among its coalition members and community partners, and to give regional consumers and institutions another way to strengthen the resilience and equitable representation of our local and regional economies. In addition to the marketplace, the project consists of outreach to partner organizations and local businesses, and grantmaking.

STATEMENT OF WORK

Overview

Given the technical focus on the Live Local INW Community Marketplace, this role is designed to provide assistance to our marketplace participants as well as our coalition partners throughout the project. The selected contractor will have both the technical aptitude as well as the customer service experience to address the breadth of this role.

Services

The contractor will provide the following services as part of this project:

	Service	Hours (if applicable)	Cost Subtotal
1	<i>Technical Assistance:</i> Provide technical assistance to small businesses applicants through a FAQ, recorded webinar information sessions, and offer a point of contact for follow-up questions. Support other subject matter experts in executing their Technical Assistance focused virtual events as well as our grant program leaders to support grant applicants in completing the online application.		
2	<i>Customer Service:</i> Act as single point of contact for participants, potential participants, and partners to support them with their enrollment and ongoing involvement in the Live		

	Local INW Community Marketplace and Local Dollars payment rewards system.		
3	<i>Phone Outreach:</i> Coordinate/liaison with Outreach Team phone banking personnel as needed to ensure support and recruitment calls are all logged and recorded consistently in SIMBA's HubSpot system. Contractor is expected to use their own smartphone for the duration of the short-term contract, but documented phone service bills during the sub-contract performance period may be submitted for expense reimbursement.		
4	<i>Local Dollars Promotion and Implementation Assistance:</i> Work with App Developer, Marketing Agency, Technical Communications Manager and Project Manager and others as needed to become a Subject Matter Expert on the Local Dollars integrations. Work with our members and partners to educate them, as well as with our project team and project content writer to craft communications about the opportunities.		

BUDGET AND TIMELINE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We want to highlight and provide context for the RFP timeline requirements and budget, which are unique to this opportunity.

This contract is being funded through a special, one-time grant from the Washington State Department of Commerce that was – by design – required to be disbursed and executed in a short timeframe. This timeframe is, by association, reflected in our RFP process.

SIMBA is committed to ensuring that this process is as accessible and supportive for you as possible, given the unique parameters. With that, we welcome questions and conversation, especially if you are perceiving potential roadblocks or need more clarity. Tiffany Harms is our RFP point person and would be happy to check in with you. She can be reached at team@spokaneindependent.org and 253-224-8080.

EVALUATION METRICS

SIMBA will evaluate bidders and proposals based on the following criteria:

- Previous experience/past performance history.
- Projected costs.
- Experience and technical expertise.

- Bidders must demonstrate the organizational capacity to conduct the work required by this project.
- SIMBA shall grant preference to SIMBA members and partners, in accordance with Federal law.
- SIMBA shall award contracts only to responsible contractors possessing the ability to perform successfully under the terms and conditions of this project.

SIMBA will not pay for travel, lodging, or per-diem unless specifically mandated in the requirements.

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Bidders must adhere to the following guidelines to be considered:

- Submissions are to be directed to Tiffany Harms at team@spokaneindependent.org.
- Include samples and references with your proposal.
- Proposals should not be more than 10 pages. Failure to comply with this guideline will result in an automatic rejection.
- A proposed schedule must also be included and clearly expressed.
- Include pricing using the table provided above under Statement of Work.
- If you are interested in more than one open RFP opportunity, you must submit a separate proposal for each.

UEI AND INVOICING REQUIREMENTS

The grant we are working under requires that all vendors possess an active UEI (Universal Entity Identifier) number in order to receive payment. This means that we will need all selected vendors to have a UEI by the end of the contract period, May 31, 2023. While this is a no-cost process to complete, it does include multiple steps that we want vendors to have time to move through. To obtain a UEI visit sam.gov. Please don't hesitate to reach out to us if you have any questions.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For questions or concerns connected to this RFP, please don't hesitate to reach out to:

Tiffany Harms (*pronouns: she/her*)

Recruiting and HR Consultant, Juno Collaborative Consulting

Spokane Independent Metro Business Alliance

team@spokaneindependent.org | 253-224-8080