

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

**Contractual Services for
Birmingham Region Life Science:
1) Market Intelligence Study
2) Perception Study
3) Strategy and Implementation Plan**

Birmingham Business Alliance Foundation

ISSUE DATE: October 17, 2022

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: November 4, 2022

EMAIL SUBMISSIONS TO: ejerkins@birminghambusinessalliance.com;

cc: jchandler@birminghambusinessalliance.com

1. Summary

The Birmingham Business Alliance Foundation is seeking proposals for a qualified consultant to conduct a life science market intelligence study, perception study, and implementation plan for the Greater Birmingham Alabama Region.

The U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration (EDA) Disaster Recovery Program [awarded a \\$450,000 grant](#) to the Birmingham Business Alliance Foundation, in partnership with the Jefferson County and Shelby County Commissions to conduct the project, which includes:

- Identifying key life science assets, as well as opportunities for growth and investment;
- Identifying opportunities for existing life science businesses to grow capacity; and
- Identifying opportunities for economic developers and communities to attract life science businesses.

This Request for Proposal (RFP) includes context on the region, the primary point of contact(s), scope of work, schedule, guidelines for submissions, evaluation criteria, requirements, and legal considerations. **Proposals will be accepted by the primary point of contact no later than 5 p.m. CST on November 4, 2022.**

2. Context

The project will serve the Birmingham region, including Bibb, Blount, Chilton, Jefferson, Shelby, St. Clair, and Walker Counties and the municipalities therein. This seven-county region includes over 1.1 million residents and 540,000-plus workforce participants. Centrally located in the Southeast United States, the Birmingham region is the largest population center in Alabama. The region offers connectivity to the Southeast, nation and world via its accessible logistics network

of five major interstates, inland port, international airport offering 114 domestic flights daily to 26 airports and 23 cities and less than two-and-a-half-hour proximity to Atlanta-Hartsfield International Airport, the busiest airport in the world.

Beyond its connectivity, this former industrial city is gaining momentum by transforming itself into an innovation hub that is gaining national attention. As COVID-19 began to spread, Birmingham's research institutions, universities and businesses joined the efforts to combat COVID-19. The growth of bioscience businesses has been a glimmer of hope amid the economic and public health crisis. A sample of notable activity includes German-based Evonik's expansion of its advanced biomaterials facility, Southern Research's partnership with a NY-based biopharma company to develop a coronavirus vaccine, and BioGx's partnership with Becton Dickinson to roll out its speedy diagnostic test for COVID-19. The region's contributions to life science research and development are also producing the next generation of scientists and researchers. Within 100 miles of the region's core, 26 accredited universities and colleges produce a robust talent pipeline of 20,000-plus graduates annually. One of those institutions, The University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB), is the state's largest single employer with 23,000 employees and is internationally regarded for its high levels of NIH-funded research and scientific discoveries.

UAB is also one of the key higher education partners in the region's workforce development partnership, Building (it) Together, which is co-led by CentralSix AlabamaWorks! and the Birmingham Business Alliance. Launched in January 2020, the Building (it) Together Workforce Alignment Strategy seeks to meet the needs of industry by aligning funding, partnerships, and programs behind three priorities: 1) increase career awareness, 2) upskill the existing workforce, and 3) attract talent to the region. The implementation of these priority areas is centered around innovative and growing industries of strength – life science, advanced manufacturing, and technology. To further promote the state's competitiveness as an innovation hub, the State of Alabama recently added two financial tools – a research and development enhancement grant and a tax credit for growing, innovative businesses – to its toolkit via the passage of the Alabama Innovation Act and the Alabama Incentives Modernization Act (AIM), respectively. Both financial tools improve the region's ability to compete for life science businesses and jobs. Now more than ever, the Birmingham region believes it has the right combination of competitive advantages and partnerships to accelerate the of its life science industry.

3. Questions & Inquiries

The Birmingham Business Alliance is the sole point of contact for the purposes of the RFP. Primary contact information can be found below:

Point of Contact(s)
Emily Jerkins Hall, President & COO Birmingham Business Alliance ejerkins@birminghambusinessalliance.com (251) 725-7551
Jacqueline Chandler, Partner Birmingham Business Alliance jchandler@birminghambusinessalliance.com (256) 505-8930

4. Scope of Work

The Birmingham Business Alliance Foundation seeks services for each or all proposed components conducted across three phases:

Phase I: Life Science Market Intelligence Study (Not to exceed \$200,000):

- The intent of this study is to identify the region's assets, talent pipeline, and market potential within the life science industry by addressing the problem statements below. It is expected that the finding of Phase I will provide the foundation for Phase II and III.
 - We believe that we have a strong life science ecosystem, but we would like to better understand our unique strengths and where opportunities for investment lie.
 - We are interested in enhancing our lead generation strategy for companies that our existing regional assets are a match for and understanding the business case of why moving to Birmingham would be a beneficial to these companies.
 - We need to know what sectors within the life science industry we are positioned to be a national leader in.
 - We hear that there is a growing need for available lab space, but we do not have quantifiable data to show how much lab space exists in the market, how much is needed, and what the market rate would be per square foot.
 - We would like to understand what type of financing is most helpful for growing life science companies and how to best leverage capital from across the nation.
 - We lack local incentives to help companies bridge startup costs and funding gaps.

- We would like to know what public sector participation is needed to support the growth of life science companies.
- We need to create a strategy around how to leverage the connections of UAB scientists and R&D for lead generation purposes.
- We need programs that seed innovation in the life sciences program, bridging IP to companies and companies to capital.
- We do not have a full understanding of the current talent pipeline in the State of Alabama and the types of companies it is primed to support.
- We would like to know what type of life science companies are prone to above-market growth of jobs and investment.

Phase II: Perception Study (Not to exceed \$100,000):

- The intent of this study is to guide the consortium's life science talent and business attraction strategy, including its messaging, branding, and lead generation initiatives by addressing the questions below.
 - How do we message and utilize the findings in Phase I and the regional brand in to deploy a lead generation strategy?
 - What is the perception of thought and decision leaders as it relates to Birmingham's position in the life science industry?
 - How can we best utilize our existing industry connections to change perceptions about the Birmingham region amongst leaders in the life science industry?

Phase III: Strategy & Implementation Plan (Not to exceed \$105,000):

- The intent of this plan is to take the knowledge gained from Phase I and II to guide the region's actionable next steps. The recommendations are intended to build programmatic capacity needed to grow and retain existing regional companies, attract prospective businesses and talent, and improve the region's competitiveness as a life science hub through answering the following questions:
 - What are we a prime market for within the life science industry?
 - What list of companies should be our targets for recruitment to the Birmingham region?
 - What is the business case for recruiting the types of companies listed?
 - How can we best reach perspective leads within the life science industry?
 - What physical infrastructure (i.e. lab space) is needed to support growth within the life science industry?
 - What public/private initiatives would be helpful to improve the existing life science ecosystem?

- How can we develop a talent pipeline in the region to meet the growing needs of life science companies?
- How can we promote growth of innovation and startup creation in the Birmingham region?

An entity submitting for all three phases or partnerships of consultants to submit one, unified proposal for all three (3) components will be prioritized when evaluated. On the cover sheet (**Attachment A**), please indicate which Phase(s) and component(s) are included within the proposal.

5. Evaluation

The proposals will be reviewed and evaluated by the project lead (Birmingham Business Alliance Foundation), the project co-leads (Jefferson County Commission and Shelby County Commission) and a review committee comprised of BioAlabama, Alabama Power, Alabama Department of Commerce, the Greater Birmingham Regional Planning Commission, Southern Research and the City of Hoover using the criteria outlined below. The committee members will individually score each proposal submitted, and the project lead will take an aggregate of the reviewers scores to rank the submissions. If a tie were to occur, the project lead and co-leads would re-score and rank the tied submissions following the same process and criteria that was used in the initial review process. The Birmingham Business Alliance Foundation will contact the respondent receiving the highest aggregate score by close of business on November 14, 2022.

Criteria	Maximum Score
Project deliverables	20 points
Project approach	20 points
Expertise/previous experience of consultant(s)	30 points
Single entity submission or partnerships of consultants to submit one, unified proposal for all three (3) phases	10 points
Ability to meet schedule	10 points
Overall quality of proposal	10 points
TOTAL POINTS	100 points

6. Reference Material

It is highly recommended that Proponents review previously published reports by [BIO Alabama](#), the state of Alabama's professional association for bio related industries, research scientists, clinicians and business professionals who are working together to foster, develop and support the life sciences in Alabama, before submitting a proposal:

- [BIO Alabama Economic Development Roadmap, October 2020](#)
- [Economic and Fiscal Impacts of BIO Alabama, April 2018](#)
- Building (it) Together

BIO Alabama is the state affiliate in Alabama of the Biotechnology Innovation Organization (BIO), the preeminent national association for biotechnology companies.

Within the Birmingham region, Proponents can learn more about life science industry [here](#).

7. Project Schedule

The Birmingham Business Alliance Foundation will take proposals into consideration in the Fall of 2022. Proponents should confirm that submitted rates will be held constant and remain effective for the duration of the project. The lowest cost proposal will not necessarily be accepted. The Birmingham Business Alliance reserves the right not to proceed with any proposal. Please find the project schedule and timeline below.

Proposed Project Milestones

Milestone	Estimated Date
Request for Proposal (RFP) Published	October 17, 2022
Deadline for Questions from Vendors	October 24, 2022
Final Addendum for Questions Published	October 28, 2022
Deadline for Proposal Submissions	November 4, 2022
Proposal Review	November 4 - 11, 2022
Tentative Date for Awarding Contract	November 14, 2022
Phase I	November 28, 2022 – March 1, 2023
Phase II	March 1 – May 1, 2023
Phase III	March 1 – May 1, 2023
Full Project Completion Deadline	May 1, 2023

8. Guidelines for Submission

The following items must be included within the submission in this order:

1. Cover Sheet (see Attachment A)
2. Cover Letter
3. Statement of Qualifications
4. List of Previous, Relevant Work
5. Key Personnel and Subcontractors (if applicable)
6. Project Work Plan
7. Project Deliverable
8. Budget & Fee Schedule
9. List of three (3) references from past clients for work performed within the last three (3) years

Proposals should not exceed ten (10) pages and should be submitted as a Portable Document Format (PDF). **Electronic proposals are due to the point of contact**

no later than 5:00 pm CST on November 4, 2022. Submissions received after this time will be returned to the sender.

9. Certificates and Assurances

All organization(s) awarded contracts will be required to provide assurances stating:

- a) Its legal organization status;
- b) That the organization and all of its principal owners or partners are not barred from receiving federal funds;
- c) That federal dollars will not be used for lobbying on behalf of this program;
- d) That Equal Opportunity laws and Limited English Proficiency guidelines will be followed.

10. Contract Award

The successful proponent will enter into a Short-Term Service Contract with the Birmingham Business Alliance Foundation based upon the information contained in the RFP and the successful proponent's submission and any modifications thereto. The Birmingham Business Alliance Foundation will notify the successful Proponent(s) in the form of a Letter of Award sent via email from the primary point of contact. The RFP and completed proposal form will be incorporated by reference in the Short-Term Service Contract and included within the formal agreement which will form part of the contract/agreement between the Birmingham Business Alliance Foundation and the successful proponent. While the Jefferson County Commission and Shelby County Commission will be active in the evaluation and selection process, all contracts will be between the proponent and the Birmingham Business Alliance Foundation. Any changes to the contract will be confirmed by an amended agreement. The Birmingham Business Alliance Foundation reserves the right to terminate the contract following any instance of unacceptable performance with regard to contractual standards, quality, quantity or delivery.

11. Legal Considerations

- This RFP does not obligate the Birmingham Business Alliance Foundation to pay any costs incurred by the applicants in the preparation and submission of a proposal or an interview.
- The Birmingham Business Alliance Foundation reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and to negotiate the terms of the contract, including the award amount, with the selected vendor prior to entering a contract.
- The Birmingham Business Alliance Foundation provides equal employment opportunities to all employees and applicants for employment and prohibits discrimination and harassment of any type without regard to race, color, religion, age, sex, national origin, disability status, genetics, protected

- veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state or local laws.
- As a 501(c)3, the Birmingham Business Alliance Foundation is exempt from income tax.
 - Prices for all goods and/or services shall be firm for the duration of this contract. Prices should be all inclusive. Additional charges not shown in the proposal will not be honored upon completion of the agreed upon work, and all data, maps and reports shall be the property of the Birmingham Business Alliance Foundation.
 - Insurance will be required by the contractor and any subcontractor.
 - This is a competitive proposal.

12. Proposal Submission

All proposals should be sent via email to:

Emily Jerkins Hall
President & COO
Birmingham Business Alliance
505 20th Street North
Birmingham, AL 35203
ejerkins@birminghambusinessalliance.com | (251) 725-7551

Jacqueline Chandler
Partner
Birmingham Business Alliance
505 20th Street North
Birmingham, AL 35203
jchandler@birminghambusinessalliance.com | (256) 505-8930

ABOUT THE BIRMINGHAM BUSINESS ALLIANCE FOUNDATION

The Birmingham Business Alliance Foundation is the charitable arm (501c3) of the Birmingham Business Alliance. The Birmingham Business Alliance (BBA) is the first stop destination for businesses currently operating or considering an operation in Birmingham. The BBA is the economic development agency for the Greater Birmingham Region and local chamber of commerce for the city of Birmingham. Our mission is to help businesses start, stay and succeed in Birmingham. To learn more, please visit the Birmingham Business Alliance's website at birminghambusinessalliance.com.

Attachment A. Cover Sheet

Organization name:

Address:

Contact person:

Title:

Phone:

Email:

PROPOSAL INFORMATION:

Which phase and/or components are you proposing?

Primary services to be provided:

Proposal abstract:

Total proposed cost: _____

Certification: *This is to certify that the official signor possesses the legal authority to represent the agency and all information contained within the proposal is true and correct and shall be open to verification, that all costs are real, allowable, and necessary for the completion of the proposed contract.*

Signature:

Name:

Title:

Date: