



## **Request for Proposal International Business Development Program Support**

### **BACKGROUND**

Washington, DC is an international hub for global businesses. As the nation's capital, DC is not only home to the federal government, but over 170 international embassies that shape national and global policy, more than 550 international companies, world-renowned universities, and the headquarters of international financial institutions like the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the Inter-American Development Bank. With access to 177 federal regulators and 400+ international organizations, DC is at the front lines of those working across the public and private sectors to shape international policy. DC's highly educated workforce, proximity to power and policy, global connectivity, and robust network of private, public, and non-profit changemakers make it the ideal place for international companies to locate and grow.

To support international business development, the DC Chamber of Commerce works with the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development (DMPED) and its partners, including the Greater Washington Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (GWHCC), Greater Washington Black Chamber of Commerce (GWBCC), and the Washington DC Economic Partnership (WDCEP), to (1) encourage foreign direct investment into Washington, DC and (2) support local small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) establish or increase a presence in overseas markets. In order to continue to attract international businesses and support their growth in DC, the DC Chamber of Commerce seeks a qualified Contractor to provide technical assistance and business support as part of the Washington DC Global Soft Landing Initiative.

### **INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMING**

#### **Washington DC Global Soft Landing Initiative**

The District of Columbia's Comeback Plan, the city's five-year comprehensive economic development strategy designed to make DC a place for successful businesses, opportunity rich neighborhoods, and thriving people, set a goal of creating 35,000 new jobs in high growth industry sectors. To support the growth of these sectors, strategies are focused on attracting investment, fostering innovation clusters, and building a talent pipeline, including the creation of a landing zone for international firms, startups, and talent.

Launched in April 2024, the Washington DC Global Soft Landing Initiative is a comprehensive effort designed to attract and support international companies and entrepreneurs looking to establish operations in DC by offering access to discounted, flexible office space, visa solutions,



and access to a variety of services and resources offered through local economic development organizations to streamline their entry into DC.

The initiative is a collaborative effort between DMPED, WDCEP, the Golden Triangle Business Improvement District, the Penn West Equity and Innovation District, The George Washington University, The Build Fellowship by Open Avenues, and Federal City Council. Supporting partners include the DC Chamber of Commerce, GWHCC, and GWBCC. The initiative offers two programs for international businesses: the Penn West Global Soft Landing Program, which provides companies with a flexible, discounted real estate solution at a premium coworking space, and the GW x Penn West Global Build Fellowship, which provides a competitive visa solution, in addition to flexible, discounted real estate.

### **SCOPE OF WORK**

The DC Chamber of Commerce, GWHCC, and GWBCC seek a highly qualified Contractor to enhance and expand the capacity of existing international business development programs. The programs through the Washington DC Global Soft Landing Initiative, as described above, are designed to support international companies with market entry and expansion strategies. The Contractor will play a key role in implementing the Washington DC Global Soft Landing Initiative by providing expertise and customized advisory and business support services, along with coordinating and collaborating with program partners to ensure successful execution.

The goal of this RFP is to select a qualified Contractor responsible for building capacity, supplementing expertise, and expanding the offerings of the Global Soft Landing Initiative, to enhance the experience and outcomes for businesses entering the DC market. The Contractor's services shall include, but not be limited to:

- Program Coordination and Project Management:
  - Coordinate with key partner organizations on program implementation to ensure seamless delivery of services.
  - Build relationships with businesses as they grow and work to help them expand and stay in the District.
  - Monitor and report on program and project progress and outcomes.
- Business Development Support and Connections:
  - Identify opportunities, facilitate introductions, and coordinate meetings with potential customers, strategic partners, distributors, industry peers, and local stakeholders within target markets of Soft Landing participants.
  - Identify opportunities for networking in DC.
- Mentorship and Advisory Services:



- Provide one-on-one consultations and on-going customized support services to Soft Landing participants on topics such as doing business in the US, incorporating/business structure, regulatory and compliance requirements, finance/banking/taxes, human resources and hiring practices, immigration and visa solutions, etc.
- Leverage network of DC-based businesses (preferably those that are DC Chamber, GWBCC, or GWHCC members) to fulfill requests from Soft Landing participants for referrals to business service providers. These service providers should be screened for responsiveness and reliability before being offered to Soft Landing participants.
- Provide a regular roster of training sessions and workshops for Soft Landing participants on relevant topics such as customer discovery and acquisition, market expansion, marketing strategy, etc. Develop the presentations and resources needed to execute these training sessions and workshops.
- Market Research and Analysis:
  - Support businesses interested in expanding into DC by providing market identification services

## **DELIVERABLES**

The Contractor shall perform the activities below to successfully complete the requirements and submit each deliverable to the DC Chamber of Commerce.

- Participation in bi-weekly coordinating meetings with participating partners.
- Marketing materials highlighting services offered as part of the Washington DC Global Soft Landing Initiative and its programs.
- Monthly report of businesses assisted through the Washington DC Global Soft Landing Initiative, including services described above: Business Development Support and Connections, Mentorship and Advisory Services, and Market Research and Analysis.
  - Total number of prospects assisted.
  - List of the prospects assisted.
  - Prospect information including company name, industry, HQ address / country, FTEs, contact name, title, email, and phone number.
  - Brief narrative describing the request and type of assistance for each business.
  - Total number of 1:1 meetings or introductions facilitated.
  - Total number of meetings, trainings, and/or technical assistance sessions coordinated and delivered for program participants.



- List of the participating strategic partners, industry peers, and/or potential customers including, but not limited to, their company name, industry, address, contact name, title, email, and phone number.
- Outcome of the prospect engagements, including whether the prospect relocated to or expanded in DC.
- Number of new jobs supported through verified relocations or expansions of prospects assisted.
- If relocated, address and SF of new DC location.
- Market research and reports provided to the prospects.
- Training materials and resources provided to businesses.

### **TERMS OF CONTRACT**

The DC Chamber intends to award one indefinite delivery indefinite quantity (IDIQ) contract. The terms of the contract shall require that the Contractor deliver the specified services outlined in the scope of work and provide the specified deliverables for a total compensation of \$50,000 during a one-year period beginning from the date the contract is executed, with two one (1) year options for an extension.

### **HOW TO APPLY**

#### **1. Submission Guidelines**

- All Applications must be submitted to [globalbiz@dcchamber.org](mailto:globalbiz@dcchamber.org) no later than the Submission Deadline. All attachments must be submitted in PDF format. Any other formats will deem the submission incomplete.
- All Applications will be recorded upon receipt. Any incomplete Applications or Applications received after the Submission Deadline will not be accepted. Unless requested by the DC Chamber, any additions or deletions to an Application will not be accepted after the Submission Deadline. The DC Chamber is not responsible for unreadable, incomplete, and/or out-of-order submissions.
- Applications that encounter technical system errors must be reported using this email: [globalbiz@dcchamber.org](mailto:globalbiz@dcchamber.org).

#### **2. Contents of Application**

- **Cover Letter:** Summary of interest in this scope of work that highlights the applicant's expertise and experience in delivering requested services: program coordination and project management; business development support and connections; mentorship and advisory services; and market research and analysis.
- **Organization Overview & Operational Plan:** Description of the organization's history, mission, and current or past projects that demonstrate the organization's capacity to deliver the requested scope of services, such as managing an international soft landing



program, international business assistance programs, technical assistance programs, etc. Provide an operational plan that details how the applicant will structure and deliver the requested scope of services for this particular initiative. To provide further information, the applicant can reference its website or attach an organizational brochure or resumes.

- **Team Structure & Key Personnel:** Organizational chart to explain proposed team structure, including involved entities, individual roles and responsibilities, and overall project management structure. For the primary applicant entity, include contact information and a brief history of the organization and its guiding principles. For other entities (e.g., financial partners, tenants, contractors, etc.), highlight their primary role in executing this scope of services and include a brief history of the organization. Identify specific team members for each involved entity and provide a brief biography and a resume that highlights relevant experience.
- **Pricing Model:** Provide a detailed description of your fee structure including any applicable administrative fees and a breakdown of the estimated costs for the requested services described within the scope. This could include examples of the potential total number of businesses serviced or estimated total number of hours available based on the budget of \$50,000.
- **References:** Contact Information for three references who can speak to the primary applicant's relevant experience.
- **Past Performance** on DC Chamber of Commerce contracts and/or District Grants/Contracts:
  - i. Identify DC Chamber programs and/or District agencies from which the applicant has received funding as a contractor, grantee, or partner in the past five years and provide specific information including:
    - The grant(s) or contract(s) title;
    - The District agency/agencies;
    - The grant number(s), contract number(s), or other identifier(s);
    - The amount(s) paid; and
    - The accomplishments as a result of the funding.

### **EVALUATION CRITERIA:**

- **Knowledge and Experience (25 points)**  
This evaluation factor considers the overall knowledge and experience of applicant's ability in delivering requested services: Program coordination and project management; Business Development Support and Connections; Mentorship and Advisory Services; and Market Research and Analysis. – **10 points**



This evaluation factor will also consider the applicant’s demonstrated knowledge and experience managing an international soft landing program, international business assistance program, technical assistance program, and/or other relevant programming. – **10 points**

The evaluation factor will also consider the applicant’s demonstrated experience with engaging international and community stakeholders, including government agencies, businesses and local service providers related to successful delivery of requested services. – **5 points**

- **Proposed Methodology (20 points)**

This evaluation factor considers the applicant’s proposed methodology and understanding of program goals, including project management, design, deployment, training, documentation, and ongoing support. – **10 points**

This factor will also consider the applicant’s description of how the applicant intends to structure and deliver the requested scope of services successfully for this initiative, and its approach to working with the District and program partners to address the program’s goals. – **10 points**

- **Qualifications of Key Personnel (20 points)**

This evaluation factor considers the qualifications, capabilities, and experience of the applicant’s key personnel, team members, and subcontractors to be involved with this project. – **20 points**

- **Past Performance on Similar Projects (20 points)**

Evaluation of past performance allows the team to assess the applicant’s ability to perform and the extent to which the applicant has performed similar work for public or private entities in the past five years. **10 points**

This evaluation factor considers the extent of the applicant’s past performance within the last five years in achieving a high degree of customer satisfaction. Evaluation of this factor will be based on the quantity and quality of applicant’s performance on programs of comparable size, highly technical nature, and complexity. **10 points**

- **Price Criterion (15 Points Maximum)**

The price evaluation will be objective. The applicant with the lowest prices will receive the maximum price points. All other proposals will receive a proportionately lower total score. The following formula will be used to determine each applicant 's evaluated price score:

$$\frac{\text{Lowest price proposal}}{\text{Price of proposal being evaluated}} \text{-----} \times 15 = \text{Evaluated price score}$$



**RFP DATES**

Open: Thursday, February 20, 2025

Closed: Wednesday, March 5, 2025