Community Navigator Program Request for Applications
Instruction Guide

SECTION 1: COMMUNITY NAVIGATOR PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Austin City Council provided $500,000 for the Community Navigator Program by adopting Ordinance No. 20210506-002 on June 5, 2021. This program will support local businesses, non-profit organizations, and creative professionals impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic by offering application assistance and technical assistance for local, state, and federal relief programs.

Economic Development Department staff is collecting responses to this Request for Applications from entities that are interested in providing at least one of the following services:

1. Helping businesses, non-profits, or creative professionals apply for federal, state, or local economic recovery programs.
2. Providing technical assistance to businesses, non-profits, or creative professionals impacted by the pandemic.
3. Completing stakeholder engagement activities to raise awareness about the Community Navigator Program.

Economic Development Department staff intends to award multiple contracts through this Request for Applications. This will ensure businesses, non-profits, and creatives from various communities have access to trusted and diverse vendors that can provide the services included in this solicitation. Contracts will not exceed $50,000.

SECTION 2: SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION

Economic Development Department staff will only accept responses to this Request for Applications through the online submission portal at www.AustinTexas.gov/community-navigator-program. **Economic Development Department staff will not accept hardcopies or emailed copies**. Responses submitted after October 1, 2021 at 5:00 p.m. Central Time will not be accepted.

The final section of this document lists information applicants must include in their Request for Application response. Economic Development Department staff advises applicants to prepare their responses in a word processing program (e.g., Microsoft Word, Google Documents, etc.) before uploading documents to the submission portal. Request for Application responses must be submitted as PDF or JPG file formats. Individual files cannot be larger than 10 MB.

Responses must be on 8.5 in. by 11 in. pages with 1 in. margins. Applicants should include their company's name in the top left corner and page numbers in the bottom right corner of each page. Use single columns. Use 12 point Calibri or 12 point Arial font. **Finished applications should not exceed 20 pages.**

SECTION 3: TASK CATEGORIES

Applicants for the Community Navigator Program Request for Applications must indicate the Task Category (A, B, and/or C) for which they are qualified to work. Details for each Task Category are included below.

Applicants for all task categories should be able to provide services in languages as requested by service recipients and ensure that all assistance is accessible without discrimination of technological access. Applicants should maintain sufficient levels of in-house staffing capacity to complete tasks.

Task Category A: Technical Assistance for Businesses, Organizations, and Creative Professionals.
Applicants for Task Category A must be able to provide two types of technical assistance services for local businesses, organizations, and/or creative professionals:
- Provide one-on-one technical assistance to service recipients (up to five hours per recipient).
- Provide two-hour-long technical assistance classes at least once per month.
- Topics for one-on-one assistance and classes may include: (1) diversity, equity, and inclusion training and/or strategic planning; (2) disaster recovery and resiliency best practices, (3) financial guidance like credit counseling and financial literacy; (4) business planning; (5) strategic marketing and communications; (6) revenue and business development; (7) e-commerce planning; and (8) market research.

Applicants for Task Category A must be able to collect and report data monthly to the Economic Development Department:
- Number of Community Navigator Program service recipients receiving technical assistance.
- Name, physical address, and email address for each service recipient.
- Descriptions of the technical assistance service provided to each service recipient.
- Number of technical assistance service hours provided to each service recipient.
- Additional information about service recipients, including gender, race, ethnicity, veteran status, disability status, years in operation, sector/industry, and zip code.

Task Category B: Application Assistance for COVID-19 Programs (Federal, State and Local)
Applicants for Task Category B must be able to provide up to five hours of one-on-one virtual and/or in-person assistance per service recipient to help the service recipient apply for federal, state, and/or local programs to recover from economic impacts caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Applicants for Task Category B must be able to collect and report data monthly to the Economic Development Department:
- Number of Community Navigator Program service recipients receiving application assistance.
- Names and address for each service recipient.
- Descriptions of the application assistance provided to each service recipient.
- Number of application assistance hours provided to each service recipient.
- Additional information about each service recipient, including: gender, race, ethnicity, veteran status, disability status, years in operation, sector/industry, and zip code.
- Dollars (in thousands or millions) of requested federal, state, and/or local assistance by service recipient, including names of each program from which funding was requested.
- Dollars (in thousands or millions) of approved federal, state, and/or local assistance by service recipient, including names of each program from which funding was received.

Task Category C: Marketing and Stakeholder Engagement.
Applicants for Task Category C must be able to provide three types of marketing and stakeholder engagement services for the Community Navigator Program:
- Distribute Economic Development Department-provided marketing collateral to target audiences at least twice per month.

o Organizations that create their own Community Navigator Program content must receive Economic Development Department approval of marketing collateral prior to use. This includes but is not limited to print and digital marketing assets.

- Provide comprehensive community outreach and engagement by supporting the City with public meetings, events, workshops, and other community engagement efforts, both in-person and virtual. This includes providing logistical support for up to three engagements per month and providing meeting facilitation for up to two meetings per month.
- Coordinate, facilitate and mediate up to two meetings per month with diverse stakeholder groups to support coordination and service delivery.

Applicants for Task Category C must be able to collect and report data monthly to the Economic Development Department:

- Number of unique potential service recipients reached through outreach/engagement activities. The information should be disaggregated by outreach/engagement action.
- Descriptions of the outreach/engagement activities, including information on which platforms were used (e.g., social media, radio, print, etc.) and evidence of effectiveness (e.g., social media interactions, newsletter subscriptions and open rate, etc.).
- Additional information about potential service recipients reached by outreach and engagement activities including: gender, race, ethnicity, veteran status, disability status, years in operation, sector/industry, and zip code.

SECTION 4: AWARD PROCESS AND CONTRACT TERM
Economic Development Department staff will recommend contract awards based on the evaluation factors associated with this Request For Applications. Economic Development Department staff may award multiple contracts to the top rated applications in one or multiple Task Categories (see Section 3). **Applicants may apply for awards up to $50,000**. Applicants that submit responses exceeding this limit might not be considered for this round of funding. Contracts will be made for a base project period of 36 months and 120-day hold-over at the City of Austin's option.

SECTION 5: CHANGES, CORRECTIONS, AND CANCELLATIONS
Economic Development Department staff may revise this Request for Applications through a written Addendum, which will be posted online to the Community Navigator Program website. Explanations, clarifications, interpretations, or changes made in any other manner are not binding. Please note that Economic Development Department staff reserves the right to cancel this Request for Applications at any time for any reason and to resolicit the goods and services included in this Request for Applications.

SECTION 6: PROPRIETARY AND CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION
All responses to this Request for Applications received and opened by Economic Development Department staff are subject to the Texas Government Code, Chapter 552, and could be made available to the public upon request. Applicants that want portions of their submission kept confidential must mark each portion as "Proprietary". To the extent allowed by law, City of Austin staff will endeavor to protect such information from disclosure. City staff may request a review and determination from the Attorney General's Office of the State of Texas of any contents marked as "Proprietary". A copyright notice or symbol is insufficient to identify proprietary or confidential information.

SECTION 7: LIVING WAGES
All applicants' employees and subcontractors directly assigned to this contract must be paid a minimum living wage equal to or greater than $15.00 per hour. The City of Austin may require applicants to certify compliance with this requirement if applicants are selected for a Community Navigator Program contract.

SECTION 8: HISTORICALLY UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES

Several items in this Request for Applications reference "historically underserved communities." For the purposes of this Request for Applications, "historically underserved communities" means local communities that have experienced exclusion, marginalization, and discrimination because of City policies and practices. These include communities in the following zip codes: 78617, 78653, 78660, 78702, 78719, 78721, 78722, 78723, 78724, 78725, 78741, 78744, 78745, 78747, 78748, 78752, 78753, and 78754.

SECTION 9: EVALUATION FACTORS

Each application will be reviewed and scored according to the following evaluation matrix.

Request for Application Evaluation Factors	Points
Executive Summary: The applicant included the specific Task Category(ies) for which they want to be considered, and they summarized their background, qualifications, and work experiences that are applicable to this Request for Applications.	5
Project Concept: The applicant demonstrated how their project concept will achieve the goals related to the Task Category(ies) for which they want to be considered.	25
Applicant Experience: The applicant demonstrated experience in projects of similar size and scope, including experience working in Austin's historically underrepresented communities.	25
Personnel Qualifications: The applicant has qualified professional personnel who will be assigned to this project.	20
Project Work Plan: The applicant has a well thought-out schedule for completing tasks.	15
Sample Work Product: The applicant's sample work product is related to the Task Category(ies) for which the applicant wants to be considered, and the sample work product demonstrates the applicant's competency in completing the work.	10
Total	**100**

SECTION 10: QUESTIONS

Questions should be submitted in writing via email to ATXrecovers@austintexas.gov. Economic Development Department staff will respond to all questions in writing within two (2) business days.

MANDATORY ITEMS FOR REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

Include each of the following sections in your response. Consider preparing your responses in a word processing program (e.g., Microsoft Word, Google Documents, etc.) before uploading documents via the online submission portal at www.AustinTexas.gov/community-navigator-program. Applications must be submitted in PDF or JPG file formats. Individual files cannot be larger than 10 MB. Type responses on 8.5 in. by 11 in. pages with 1 in. margins. Include the company's name in the top left corner and page numbers in the bottom right corner of each page. Use single columns. Use 12 point Calibri font. You may use Arial as an alternate font. **Finished applications should not exceed 20 pages.**

Part 1: Executive Summary
In two pages or less, provide an Executive Summary of your application, confirm you will comply with the requirements in this solicitation, and identify the Task Category(ies) for which you want to be considered. Also, summarize your relevant background, qualifications, and work experiences. Submit the Executive Summary in the form of a standard business letter on your official business letterhead, signed by your authorized representative. Include the complete name and address of your business, as

well as the phone number and email address of the person the Economic Development Department staff should contact regarding your application.

Part 2. Project Concept
Identify the specific Task Category(ies) for which you want to be considered and describe how you will provide the services within the Task Category(ies). Give specific details about how you will serve those located in historically underrepresented communities. Clarify which elements of your project concept will be delivered by you, and which ones will be delivered by other partners.

Part 3. Applicant Experience
Describe your qualifications for this opportunity. Include specific details on your years of providing services in Austin, including experiences directly serving historically underrepresented communities in Austin. Reference at least two specific examples of providing application assistance, technical support, and/or outreach and engagement for the benefit of businesses, non-profit organizations, and creative professionals, especially those from Austin's historically underrepresented communities. Clearly describe measures of success, key accomplishments, and lessons learned that you would use to improve outcomes in future programs/services.

Part 4. References
Provide at least two but no more than four references for whom you have conducted projects of similar size and scope as described in this Request for Applications. References should be aware that they may be contacted by Economic Development Department staff. At least two references should be from a historically underrepresented community. Include the following for each reference: organization name and contact information; contact's business title, phone number, and email address; and details of work completed for the reference.

Part 5. Personnel
Provide names and qualifications of all professional personnel who will be assigned to this project. Identify key people by name and title. Provide resumes as separate uploads. Resumes do not count towards the application page limit.

Part 6. Project Work Plan
Submit a project work plan that includes a proposed schedule of tasks, actions, meetings, and decision points for required successful completion of the items within your Project Concept (Part 2).

Part 7. Price Proposal
Outline the fee for services specific to the deliverables listed in the Project Concept (Part 2). The total contract amount will not exceed $50,000.

Part 8. Sample Work Product
Submit a sample work product as a separate upload. The sample work product should demonstrate experience with projects of a similar size and scope as listed in the Project Concept (Part 2). Sample work products do not count towards the solicitation page limit.