

**REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS**  
**COMPREHENSIVE MARKETING PLAN**  
**WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION**  
**HAZLETON, PA**

While the Covid-19 Pandemic has been destructive to the local economy in Luzerne County, it has been even more so to the Greater Hazleton Area. Our region has been struggling for years with higher levels of poverty and unemployment, with lower incomes and educational attainment than the County as a whole. *The City of Hazleton has been hit hardest, with 54% of its population considered Low-Moderate Income (LMI) and more than 20% below poverty--prior to the pandemic.*

Prior to March 2020, data suggested that the Greater Hazleton Area had a strong workforce position. With a 341,000-person workforce within a 30-mile commute shed, we held record low levels of unemployment coupled with unprecedented industrial growth along the i81 corridor. Regionally, Northeastern Pennsylvania graduates approximately 11,000 students each year, yet the Greater Hazleton Area maintained educational attainment between 7%-15%, degree type dependent. The Greater Hazleton community is home to five existing industrial parks, with a sixth under development. Currently, those parks are home to over 100 industries with over 10,000 employment opportunities.

When the pandemic hit, CAN DO, together with the Greater Hazleton Chamber of Commerce, the Downtown Hazleton Alliance for Progress, the City of Hazleton, and local and regional economic development partners proactively formed the COVID-19 Recovery & Resiliency Task Force to help coordinate businesses recovery efforts and identify new initiatives and programs to help them rebound.

To assist in the development of these initiatives and programs, The Institute for Public Policy and Economic Development has been contracted to conduct an education, workforce, and training needs assessment based upon the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic to determine future programs to be brought to the Greater Hazleton Area.

**This specific Request for Qualifications is for one of five programs created by that task force: a comprehensive marketing plan for workforce development and educational partners within the Greater Hazleton area.** This initiative will put together a comprehensive marketing plan as well as implementation or proposed marketing strategies to promote Workforce Development programs that are available in the Greater Hazleton Area designed to educate the workers for the post-Covid-19 economy. This initiative will work to connect the general public, post secondary educational partners, and local industries to ensure that members of the community are aware of program availability, cost, aid options, and job opportunities.

Funding for this initiative is being provided by the Luzerne County Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act grant via the Greater Hazleton Chamber of Commerce.

## **SCOPE OF SERVICES SUMMARY**

The anticipated scope of work for this project is expected to consist of the following tasks. However, the final scope of services will be negotiated with the selected firms(s) and may include modified tasks to meet project goals:

1. Work directly with members of the Greater Hazleton COVID-19 Recovery & Resiliency Task Force to understand key stakeholders within workforce development and education in the Greater Hazleton Area
2. Engage workforce development stakeholders, with the guidance of Greater Hazleton COVID-19 Recovery & Resiliency Task Force, to understand current programs offered and opportunities available
  - i. This shall include participation in focus groups coordinated by the Institute of Public Policy & Economic Development during their period of research for a previously requested needs assessment. Data collected through this assessment will be shared with consultant based on timeline stated
3. Create a comprehensive strategic marketing plan for promoting stakeholders and their available programs/opportunities
4. Develop creative media for plan execution per strategy outlines (ie: photography, web, video, graphic, etc)
5. Execute media purchasing, placement, and monitoring over a 4-6 month period

Firm(s) will be responsible for setting appointments to meet with stakeholders (either in person or virtually) in accordance with PA Department of Health COVID-19 safety guidelines.

Firm(s) should be prepared to discuss their approach to the scope of services in an interview to be held virtually.

**Comprehensive strategic marketing plan must be completed by December 21<sup>st</sup>, 2020 for implementation starting January 2021.**

## **COMPENSATION**

Consultant(s) compensation for services will be based upon a maximum amount not-to-exceed method of compensation utilizing hourly billing rates of the firm/team. The goal is to produce a strategic marketing plan and 4-6 months of execution within the total budget of \$50,000

## **DEFINITION OF SUCCESS**

The Greater Hazleton COVID-19 Recovery & Resiliency Task Force will maintain data over a one-year period to evaluate student engagement, enrollment, graduation, and job placement. Success is defined by growth within workforce partner's already existent programs as well as the creation of new programs based on the outcome of the Greater Hazleton Workforce & Education Needs Assessment – provided by the Institute of Public Policy.

## **QUALIFICATIONS SUMMARY**

All respondents should submit a written Qualifications Summary to include information about the consultants team directly related to the selection criteria outlined below.

1. Description of consulting team. Provide all information for the primary contact person, along with all of the key people that will be a part of the firm and their proposed role.
2. Describe the consultant's related experience, including but not limited to marketing strategy & development
3. Describe the consultant's experience working with lower income, historically disadvantaged (especially Hispanic), and/or women-owned businesses.
4. Describe the consultant's familiarity with the Greater Hazleton Area and Northeastern Pennsylvania region.
5. Describe the consultant's ability to speak and write in English, Spanish, and any other languages.
6. List at least two references for services provided, similar to this proposed initiative.
7. Include a disclosure of any known competing interests or potential conflicts of interest for the consultant and any subcontractor(s).
8. Hourly rates of firm performing desired services as well as estimated time needed for development, as well as implementation
9. Signed Contractor Acknowledgment agreeing to abide by federal and state statutes and regulations governing use of federal funds (Exhibit A).
10. Optional: Provide project example(s) of similar type, where the firm has been able to provide creative, yet realistic, marketing strategy and implementation plans.

## **SUBMITTALS**

Qualification Summaries must be received no later than 5:00 PM on October 21, 2020. Electronic submittals are required (PDF format).

Questions regarding this RFQ may be submitted via e-mail to Jocelyn Sterenchock at [jsterenchock@hazletoncando.com](mailto:jsterenchock@hazletoncando.com).

It is the responsibility of the prospective consultant to ensure that their submittal is received prior to the deadline. Any submittal received after the deadline may not be considered.

## **ANTICIPATED SCHEDULE (please note this may be subject to change)**

- October 21, 2020: Qualification Summaries due
- October 23 & 26, 2020: Consultant interviews via Zoom (if needed)
- October 30, 2020: Consultant selection/contracting
- November 2, 2020: Project begins
- December 1, 2020: Content Delivered from Needs Assessment by The Institute
- December 21, 2020: Comprehensive Marketing Strategy & Implementation Plan Delivered
- January 4, 2021: Content creation and implementation begins

## **CONTRACTOR ACKNOWLEDGEMENT (EXHIBIT A)**

By signing this acknowledgment, consultant(s) agree to abide by the following federal and state statutes and regulations governing use of federal funds (Article V of the Luzerne County COVID-19 Relief Block Grant Contract #C000074007: Compliance with Applicable Statutes and Regulations), attached as Exhibit A, and including but not limited to:

- Prohibition of Illegal Alien Labor on Assisted Projects Act (P.L. 173, No. 43)
- Nondiscrimination and Sexual Harassment Provisions and its applicability to all subcontractors
- State Contractor Responsibility Program regarding suspension, debarment and tax liabilities
- Americans with Disabilities Act
- Reimbursement for Travel
- Contractor Integrity Provisions
- Right to Know Law Provisions
- Federal Contracting Provisions regarding Small and Minority Businesses, Women's Business Enterprises, and Labor Surplus Area Firms (2 CFR 200.321)
- Termination Provisions (2 CFR Par 200 Appendix II (B))

By (signature): \_\_\_\_\_

Name (printed): \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_