

## ICAP 2 Pre-Proposal Conference Questions and Answers 1/5/2022

**Q:**

How does the state view a cluster differ from a trade association and what duties separate clusters from trade associations?

**A:**

Several of the first round ICAP clusters are led by trade associations. Across the state, there are many trade associations that function similar to an early stage cluster. There are several aspects that separate innovation clusters from traditional trade associations:

- Joint innovation projects – successful clusters go beyond convening potential partners from their membership; they are bringing together industry, experts, funders, and other partners and playing an active role in solving industry challenges and managing research and development projects on behalf of the cluster.
- Pursuit of market opportunities- clusters pursue market opportunities on behalf of the cluster, essentially serving as a business development partner for businesses in the cluster. Many clusters employ a Business Developer.
- Cluster membership includes: industry (companies of all sizes), entrepreneurs, government and academic partners, and investors.

**Q:**

How can we demonstrate value proposition - is there real economic bottom-line data, KPIs, and increased market share data available where a cluster can prove to a potential business partner that cluster membership will increase mark share/workforce and provide real life examples?

**A:**

Please see the Resources page on the ICAP website for case studies, annual reports, and other resources from clusters around the world. [Resources - Washington State Innovation Cluster Accelerator \(icapwashingtonstate.org\)](https://www.icapwashingtonstate.org).

**Q:**

If we applied to a prior RFP for this program, do we have to create new letters of recommendation that show support for the project?

**A:**

We will accept previous letters of support. There is no need to update dates or signatures.

**Q:**

Regarding M. Risks in RFP - If we're following best practices with defining risk, what kind of risks are we defining?

**A:**

Please identify risks to your contract performance/contract management. These may include risks in your industry if those risks could impact your ability to complete your scope of work to develop and grow the cluster

**Q:**

Regarding 3.1 LETTER OF SUBMITTAL “The Letter of Submittal and the attached Certifications and Assurances form (Exhibit A to this RFP)” - Do you want the reference letter of support at the end of the proposal as an exhibit A or in this 3.1 section?

**A:**

Please provide proposal content in the order listed under 3.0 Proposal contents.

**Q:**

Regarding Diverse Business Plan in RFP – Can a successful proposal submission be all no’s in this section and explain why, list percentage of involvement, and identify manager?

**A:**

Yes. The US Economic Development Administration requires that all funds awarded (to included subcontracted) under this grant be competitively procured. Selected contractors are required to conduct a competitive procurement for all subcontractors and are therefore unable to identify them in the Diverse Business Inclusion Plan (Exhibit B) or in your proposal. You may explain “per EDA funding requirements we will complete a competitive process.” You will not be penalized for not including small and diverse subcontractors in your proposal and will have an opportunity to report any small and diverse subcontractors upon competitive selection.

**Q:**

Regarding Workers rights - Exhibit C – is the solicitation number incorrect?

**A:**

The solicitation number on Exhibit C needs to be changed to 2. We will amend document, or you may edit it directly on the form.

**Q:**

Regarding 1. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF FEDERAL FUNDING in RFP ““This project was supported by Grant No. 07 79 07630 awarded by Economic Development Administration. Points of view in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the Economic Development Administration. Grant funds are administered by the Office of Economic Development & Competitiveness, Washington State Department of Commerce.” Do we need to include this in our proposal

**A:**

The section referenced in the question above can be found in the sample contract, Exhibit D. You are not required to include anything from the sample contract in your proposal. This document is provided

for you to review and identify any exceptions to the contract terms and conditions (See Exhibit A, Certifications and Assurances)

**Q:**

Are clusters around agriculture and rural development eligible for ICAP funding?

**A:**

Yes. See 3.2.L for a scored question about geographical diversity and rural impact. Commerce is interested in supporting agricultural and other rural clusters, both in the current cohort and in the program long-term. Agricultural and other rural clusters are welcome to submit a proposal in response to the current RFP. We also encourage your organization and others interested in rural cluster development to contact the ICAP Program Director after the procurement process has ended (anticipated February 21) to help inform further program development to support future rural clusters.