FIND VENTURES

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS #06222021

PROJECT TITLE: Equitable Innovations Accelerator Programming Support

PROPOSAL DUE: August 13, 2021 by 5PM Pacific Time

ESTIMATED TIME PERIOD FOR CONTRACT: November 2021- November 2022

CONTENTS OF THE REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS:

1. Context for the RFP pg. 2
2. Find Ventures Background and EIA Scope pg. 2
3. Contractor Goals and Outcomes pg. 4
4. RFP Evaluation Process & Submission pg. 5
5. Protest Procedure pg. 5

1. CONTEXT FOR RFP

Find Ventures envisions a world where all entrepreneurs have a shot at solving our greatest challenges and those who seek resources can find them confidently. Through early-stage, non-dilutive funding, we seek to seed a generation of diverse founders and innovation for all.

In March 2021, Find Ventures received funding for operational support of the Equitable Innovations Accelerator (EIA). Find Ventures is initiating this Request for Proposals (RFP) to solicit proposals from firms interested in participating in a project to facilitate the startup programming and EIA program logistics for the EIA.

Find Ventures has budgeted an amount not to exceed $100,000 for this project. Proposals in excess of this amount will not be evaluated.

The period of performance of any contract resulting from this RFP is tentatively scheduled to begin on or about November 2021 and to end on November 2022. Amendments extending the period of performance, if any, shall be at the sole discretion of Find Ventures.

2. FIND VENTURES BACKGROUND and EIA SCOPE:

Find Ventures is founded and directed by Elizabeth Scallon, a heavyweight in the Seattle entrepreneurship and tech community. Obsessed with growth and knowledge, Ms. Scallon went from a degree in Biochemistry, to Georgetown's Global Executive MBA in Innovation, Entrepreneurship, Emerging Markets. Known for a keen ability to locate disruptive and innovative technology, she was most recently invited to join the 2019 cohort of Harvard Business School's YALP program which aims to develop leaders who understand cross-sector collaborations for shared prosperity and can implement them more effectively and spread them more rapidly than in the past. Under her leadership as Board Chair, and with the support of a diverse Advisory Committee responsible for Find Venture organization’s governance, policies, fundraising and strategy, she brings experience and leadership representing the best practices and learnings from the Softbank Emerge program and previous work with accelerators in the State to Find Ventures.

Ms. Scallon’s expertise supporting diversity in tech, underrepresented entrepreneurs or entrepreneurs from marginalized backgrounds is matched by the expertise of our Innovation Director, Courtney Law. Dr. Law developed and managed the WIN Mentoring Program to accelerate the success of early stage life science companies by accelerating ventures’ progress towards key milestones in fundraising, business development, regulatory and IP strategy and hiring key personnel. This program was expanded under Dr. Law’s leadership to serve the entire state of Washington through creating strategic partnerships to fund the program and support entrepreneurs in under-resourced locations and sectors.

The fundraising components of the EISF project will be managed by Miranda Berger, Find Ventures’ Development Director. Ms. Berger has 10 years of experience in fundraising and philanthropic development, overseeing extensive gift campaigns involving both individuals and corporations above the $1M target of the EISF. Being the first employee of Find Ventures, Ms. Berger’s role illustrates the commitment the organization places on bringing committed funding to the table. Both employees of Find Ventures as well as our Board Chair and program partners have experience working with federal and state governments.

The Equitable Innovation Accelerator Program: Taking place over a 24 month period, the EIA program includes a fundraising drive, application development and a 4-month long accelerator program that will provide 10 tech startups with up to $100K philanthropic grants, startup programming, co-working space, and access to mentors/coaches.

The ideal cohort participant will be the founder or CEO of potential venture-scale tech startup that:

• Has at least one founder that is Black, Latinx, Native American, female/non binary, disabled, a veteran, refugee, and/or LGBTQ;

• Has a team or a co-founder;

• Has a product or service that is at least a Minimum Viable Product. We will also consider products/services representing tech transfer from WA-based research institutions;

• Has a technology-based product or service, or a tech-enabled product or service serving any of Washington’s vital business sectors (maritime, aerospace, agriculture, manufacturing, etc);

• Is below $500,000 in annual revenue;

• Is headquartered in Washington, with a preference for startups located in rural areas.

Grants received by each tech startup will be non-dilutive, creating a unique space where founders will not have to give up equity or incur debt to grow their business.

3. CONTRACTOR GOALS AND OUTCOMES

Find Ventures seeks to contract with a provider to assist and further the Equitable Innovations Accelerator programming. While programming will occur over a 4-month period, Find Ventures is seeking to contract a 12 month programming support process that includes:

* Coordinating the programmatic launch of the EIA program throughout the state; Contractor will be responsible for collaborating with Find Ventures to create:
	+ Program application on selected platform;
	+ Scheduling and coordinating Q&A sessions;
	+ Managing application inbox;
	+ Creating programming materials.
* Coordinating all scheduling activities for EIA startups and partners to support the EIA programming;
* Providing Founders with curated benefits and resources to further their development, including: introductions to investors and service providers, educational content, access to product discounts, and forums to connect with other founders.
* Collaborating with Find Ventures to create a comprehensive evaluation of the EIA upon conclusion of the first cohort, including a review of successes, areas of improvement, and a suggested action plan to continue Fundraising and Accelerator programming for future cohorts;
* Provide storytelling and marketing resources for the cohort, including PR Support.
* Provide convening space for the cohort as required for major convenings, including but not limited to kick-off and showcase events.
* Provide and execute EIA Programming evaluation, including ongoing check-ins with cohort participants.

Strong proposals will include all costs associated with the development and execution of the Programming Process by a contracting organization with statewide experience and reach.

4. RFP SUBMISSION & EVALUATION PROCESS

Submission Process: Submit electronic proposals to EIA@findventures.org. Proposals must be received by the RFP Coordinator no later than July 15, 2021. Proposals should include the following within the narrative:

1. Project Management: Provide a description of the proposed project team structure and internal controls to be used during the course of the project. Identify project staff indicating the responsibilities and qualifications of such personnel, and include the amount of time each will be assigned to the project. Detail project costs and requested budget.
2. Description of Services including the following elements:
* Work Plan: Include all project requirements and the proposed tasks, services, activities, etc. necessary to accomplish the scope of the project defined in this RFP. Include any required involvement of Find Ventures staff. The Consultant may also present any creative approaches that might be appropriate and may provide any pertinent supporting documentation.
* Deliverables: Fully describe deliverables to be submitted under the proposed contract.
* Outcomes and Performance Measurement: Describe the impacts/outcomes the Consultants propose to achieve as a result of the delivery of these services including how these outcomes would be monitored, measured and reported to Find Ventures.

Evaluation Process: Responsive proposals will be evaluated strictly in accordance with the requirements stated in this solicitation. The evaluation of proposals shall be accomplished by an evaluation team to be designated by Find Ventures.The following weighting will be assigned to the proposal for evaluation purposes:

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| --- | --- |
| Project Management – 30% |  |
| Description of Services – 70%   |  |
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5. PROTEST PROCEDURE

This procedure is available to Consultants who submitted a response to this solicitation document. Upon receiving response notice from Find Ventures, the Consultant is allowed five (5) business days to file a protest of the acquisition with Find Ventures by email. Consultants protesting this procurement shall follow the procedures described below. Protests that do not follow these procedures shall not be considered. This protest procedure constitutes the sole administrative remedy available to Consultants under this procurement.

All protests must be in writing and signed by the protesting party or an authorized agent. The protest must state the grounds for the protest with specific facts and complete statements of the action(s) being protested. A description of the relief or corrective action being requested should also be included. All protests shall be addressed to Find Ventures. Only protests stipulating an issue of fact concerning the following subjects shall be considered:

∙ A matter of bias, discrimination or conflict of interest on the part of the evaluator ∙ Errors in computing the score

∙ Non-compliance with procedures described in this procurement document

Upon receipt of a protest, a protest review will be held by the Find Ventures. The Board Chair or an employee designated by the Board Chair who was not involved in the procurement, will consider the record and all available facts and issue a decision within ten (10) business days of receipt of the protest.

In the event a protest may affect the interest of another Consultant that submitted a Response, such Consultant will be given an opportunity to submit its views and any relevant information on the protest to Find Ventures. The final determination of the protest shall:

∙ Find the protest lacking in merit and uphold Find Ventures action, or

∙ Find only technical or harmless errors in Find Ventures acquisition process and determine Find Ventures to be in substantial compliance and reject the protest, or

∙ Find merit in the protest and provide Find Ventures options which may include correcting the errors and re-evaluating all Responses or reissuing the solicitation document and begin a new process.

If Find Ventures determines that the protest is without merit, Find Ventures will enter into a contract with the apparently successful bidder. If the protest is determined to have merit, one of the alternatives noted in the preceding paragraph will be taken.