



### **2025-2026 Consultant Expansion for the ABC Program**

The City of Seattle's Office of Economic Development (OED) seeks to expand the Consultant roster inclusive economy within the city that supports new or established Seattle-based small businesses, entrepreneurs, and non-profits (ABC Participants) by providing targeted operational support to develop or grow their businesses for long-term success.

#### **I. Program Overview**

Expanding the Consultant roster for the ABC Program will allow OED's Community Wealth-building Initiatives to be more effective and provide ABC Participants with a broader range of services to sustainably and independently manage their accounting systems, marketing strategies, and business operations. It is not intended to provide ongoing accounting, bookkeeping, and business services past the maximum set hours. Experienced Technical Assistance (TA) Providers will provide one-on-one consulting sessions to ABC Participants who meet the following criteria:

1. Must have a valid City of Seattle Business License (i.e., make sure it is up to date),
2. Have less than two locations,
3. Have less than 50 Full-time Employees (FTE), and
4. Make less than \$5M of annual gross revenue.

The TA Provider will provide each ABC Participant with 5-10 consulting hours at no cost to the Participant. Additional hours incurred past the maximum threshold by the ABC Participant will be paid directly to the TA Provider at an agreed-upon rate unless OED provides written approval.

#### **II. Role of TA Provider**

We are seeking to expand the ABC Program with the following TA Providers:

##### Certified Public Accountants (CPAs) & Accountants

- Tax Preparation
- Financial Projections
- Sales Tracking & Reporting
- Payroll Management
- Financial Assessment & Strategy
- Enrolled Agents (EAs) – Preparation & Representation
- Tax Advisory
- Bookkeeping Support
- Accounting System Setup or Migration



Marketing & Brand Strategy

- Social Media Analysis, Implementation, & Strategy
- Unique Selling Proposition (USP)
- eCommerce Strategy
- Product Development
- Wholesale Implementation
- Pricing Strategy
- Market Research
- Logo Design
- Brand Development & Design
- Packaging & Menu Design
- Website Support (e.g., Wix, Square, WordPress)
- Website Audit Reports & Data Privacy
- Digital Marketing Competitive Website Analysis
- Search Engine Optimization (SEO)
- Conversion Rate Optimization (CRO)

Business Development Consultants

- Business Formation & Development
- Business Management Strategy
- Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)
- Payroll & Benefits
- Business Licensing & Compliance Support (e.g., City, State, and Federal)
- Business Plans
- Operations Assessment & Strategy
- Optimizing Operational Capacity
- Business Valuation
- Support with Food & Beverage Brick & Mortars
- Support with Food Carts, Food Trucks, & Farmer's Markets
- Customer Relationship Management (CRM) Implementation
- Business Advocates
- Lease Review & Negotiation

*Applicants fluent in languages other than English are encouraged to apply.*



Additional deliverables that the TA Provider will provide include, but are not limited to the following:

- Collecting business information, demographics, and additional data on the ABC Participants served to meet program reporting metrics.
- Reporting on recommendations, description of services, number of service hours provided to each ABC Participant, and the outcome and/or product (i.e., business plan, logo, financial statement, etc.) created from services provided.
- Tracking interactions and collaborations with Community Partners, other TA Providers, etc., using an Outreach and Community Engagement Log.
- Completing qualitative reporting metrics to include a summary of accomplishments and lessons learned by the TA Provider, including stories of impact and feedback from the ABC Participants.
- Following up with the ABC Participant after completion of services to assess the impact of the services provided.
- Attending monthly Roundtable Meetings for the ABC Program. These meetings are typically held virtually, albeit two in-person 3-hour Workshops once a year.

### **III. TA Provider Qualifications**

Prior to entering into an Agreement with OED, interested Applicants should have the following:

1. Be a legally established business for at least two (2) years at the time of application. Businesses with less than two years at the time of application are welcome to apply; however, they will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and subject to extenuating factors.
2. Must be in good standing with the City of Seattle, IRS, and all state and county government entities.
3. Have a minimum of 3-5 years of experience consulting, supporting, and advocating for Seattle-based small businesses, nonprofits, and entrepreneurs.
4. Valid Washington State Business License. You may apply/renew [here](#).
5. If applicable, register with the Secretary of State. You may register/renew [here](#).
6. Valid City of Seattle Business License. You may apply/renew [here](#).
7. Registered with the City of Seattle Online Business Directory. You may apply [here](#).
8. Willingness to obtain Liability Insurance. The City's Liability Insurance requirements must be met before signing the Contract Agreement.

Note: All TA Providers who were previously qualified to perform services under the ABC Program and are seeking to continue performing such services, or any additional services, must reapply and submit supporting documentation to be eligible for consideration.



#### **IV. Scope of Work**

TA Providers interested in being considered should complete the Application using the link provided [HERE](#). submit a Scope of Work to OED along with the following supporting documents:

- *Consultant's resume and relevant Team Member's resume(s): Please also define the Consultant's role and the role of other team members providing services under this program.*
- *Copies of any certifications and valid licenses held, if applicable, in areas of expertise listed on the Consultant's and Team Member's resume(s) or proof of compliance with industry standards.*
- *Two letters of reference for the Consultant's Business (written within the last six months). OED will contact references supplied by each Applicant.*

The Scope of Work should include:

- *Services you can provide that will assist small businesses to successfully and sustainably grow their business and independently manage their own operational, finance, and accounting systems for long-term wealth-building.*
- *Your experience working with BIPOC communities, small businesses in neighborhoods at high risk of displacement, and women-owned businesses.*
- *Descriptions, links and/or samples of previous work, workshops, social media account, website, etc.*
- *Level of immediate availability for requested projects (i.e., When are you able to start).*
- *Hourly consulting rate.*
- *Any other pertinent information the Consultant feels should be presented to OED that could impact the quality and capacity of services provided.*

#### **V. Compensation**

Compensation to the TA Provider for services rendered under the ABC Program shall be reimbursed based on billable hours and agreed-upon rates for the actual work performed. Please note that the City of Seattle operates on a Net 30 payment schedule. Payment for invoices will be issued and mailed to the TA Provider within thirty (30) calendar days of receipt of the invoice.

**VI. Evaluation Criteria & Scoring Rubric**

TA Providers will be selected based on qualifications, experience, capacity, ability to meet the program’s compliance and reporting requirements, price competitiveness, and the desire to serve Seattle-based small businesses, nonprofits, and entrepreneurs. Completed applications and document submissions will be evaluated and scored according to the following scoring rubric:

Criteria	Points Possible
1. Qualifications	20
2. Experience	20
3. Capacity to execute TA services & Ability to meet reporting requirements	20
4. Clarity of Scope	10
5. Price Competitiveness	15
6. Community Impact	15
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100 points</b>

\*The minimum score to be selected as a TA Provider is 70 points.

If an Applicant scores higher than 70 points, they will proceed with a virtual interview and a completed reference check, after which an offer will be made. If the offer is accepted, the Applicant will start the City’s Contracting Process.

Note: OED reserves the right to disqualify any TA Provider at any time if it determines, in its sole discretion, that a TA Provider is non-responsive to the requirements of the ABC Program, including without limitation an inability or unwillingness to comply with the terms provided in the City’s Consultant Contract.

**VII. Submission Deadline & Additional Information**

Priority will be given to Applicants who submit their qualifications on or before Friday, January 10th, 2025. Submissions received after that date will be reviewed on a rolling basis. Final decisions are expected to be made on or before Friday, February 7th, 2025.

Inquiries and questions should be directed to Robyn Duckett at [robyn.duckett@seattle.gov](mailto:robyn.duckett@seattle.gov)