



Request for Proposals (RFP) for Grant Writing Services with Federal Grant Expertise

Issue Date: April 23, 2024

1. Introduction & US Ignite Background

US Ignite invites qualified grant writing professionals to submit proposals for grant writing services and support. We seek individuals or firms with demonstrated expertise in securing Federal grants, foundations, and corporate partners focusing on technology-enabled solutions.

US Ignite prefers an organization that has experience drafting technology proposals so that they can understand the problem statement and capture details from existing US Ignite resources and team member feedback.

US Ignite (www.us-ignite.org) is a national nonprofit, a 501(c)(3), that accelerates community innovation and creates value for an entire ecosystem – by guiding communities into the connected future. US Ignite works closely with communities, military bases, startups, and researchers to solve their toughest economic development and technology innovation challenges. Operating like a high-tech startup, our organization delivers customized results through stakeholder engagement, technical expertise, and targeted tools. Read more about US Ignite at <https://www.us-ignite.org/>.

2. Services Overview

Grant Proposal Approach and Strategy: Once we have identified a proposal where we can be competitive, we seek support from the vendor in an initial call to define and strengthen our approach and strategy for the proposal.

US Ignite has a long history of securing Federal funding support through various Federal grants and awards to support our mission. As we continue to grow, we need support to buttress our internal capacity to submit compelling proposals for the grant RFPs we identify in our pipeline. We seek a visionary firm to help tell our story, draft compelling proposals, and help augment our capabilities to seek and secure additional Federal grant support.

In addition to US Ignite priming Federal grants, we often partner with individual US Ignite Communities to submit joint applications for support. US Ignite has experience in applying for and receiving support from a wide array of Federal agencies, but in particular, we are looking for multiple resources with proposal experience in:

- National Science Foundation (NSF)
- Department of Energy
- Department of Transportation (DoT)
- Department of Defense (DoD)



- Department of Commerce (including the NTIA and the EDA)
- State and local governments
- Foundations and CSR

3. Scope of Work

Vendor shall provide support for Federal grants across the full lifespan of the application process from brainstorming and drafting the initial proposal approach to final edits through the submission process.

The selected vendor will be responsible for:

Proposal Development:

- Collaborating with US Ignite team members, including project managers, to gather necessary information for grant proposals.
- Crafting compelling narratives that effectively communicate US Ignite mission, objectives and capabilities.
- Ensuring that grant proposals are tailored to each specific grant opportunity, highlighting US Ignite achievements and capabilities.
- Incorporating data, metrics, and evidence based strategies to strengthen the grant proposals.
- Identifying suitable references from the web, identifying images/charts that align with the proposal, and drafting timelines and process charts that could visualize and strengthen the proposal.

Compliance and Documentation:

- Ensuring strict adherence to all grant guidelines, requirements, and submission instructions.
- Conducting thorough reviews and quality checks to eliminate grammar and formatting errors and inconsistencies in grant proposals.
- Organizing all necessary documentation, and supporting materials required for grant proposal submissions.
- Ensuring that the proposal is visually appealing and includes all required elements of the proposal as stated in the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO).

US Ignite will be responsible for submitting the final proposal to the appropriate entity.

4. Administrative Information

4.1 Solicitation and Project Timeline

Table 1: Solicitation Timeline

Milestone	Date	Description
RFP Release	4/23/2024	Date RFP opens



Questions Due	5/3/2024	Deadline to ask questions on RFP document (this document)
US Ignite Responses to Questions	5/10/2024	US Ignite shall provide responses
Proposals Due	5/17/2024	Deadline to submit proposals
Interview Finalists	5/20/2024	US Ignite may contact finalists for video interview
Contract Award (CA)	5/31/2024	Target latest date for contract award. US Ignite will strive for earlier date

4.2 Questions and Answers

All clarification questions must be submitted by **May 3, 2024, no later than 8:00 PM Eastern Daylight Time (EDT)**. Questions should be submitted in the following format:

1. Section Number
2. Paragraph Number
3. Page Number
4. Question

All requests, questions, or other communications about this RFP shall be made in writing to sayed.elhamz@us-ignite.org. Communications made to other US Ignite personnel or attempts to ask questions by phone or in person will not be allowed or recognized as valid and may disqualify the supplier. Suppliers should only rely on written statements issued by the RFP coordinator. US Ignite will endeavor to respond to all parties no later than May 10, 2024, 8:00 PM EDT.

4.3 Proposal Submission

All proposals must be submitted by **May 17, 2024, no later than 8:00 PM EDT** to sayed.elhamz@us-ignite.org. Any bid proposal received after this deadline will not be considered.

Interested respondents are invited to submit proposals (not to exceed **5 pages**). The proposals should include:

- I. **Cover Page:** Include primary contact information, including name, title, phone number, email, and organization name, address, and DUNS number.
- II. **Company Overview:** A brief introduction of the services provider company, including relevant experience and expertise in writing and providing similar services. Provide the metrics for each Federal agency or other entity for which a proposal was written and the outcomes.



- III. **Project Approach:** A detailed outline of the provider's approach to providing support and guidance on Federal grant proposals.
- IV. **Previous Work Samples:** Examples of previous grant support projects demonstrating the provider's ability to create impactful and inspiring content and winning proposals. Please attach these in an appendix, and it does not have to be the full proposal. This will not count against the proposal page limit.
- V. **Team:** Details about the team member(s) involved in the project, their roles, and their relevant experience and background.
- VI. **Labor Cost Proposal:** A proposed fee schedule should be all-inclusive and presented on an hourly basis. The total cost of a project will vary based on the total hours of work provided. The contractor will invoice and be paid per application. Respondents shall provide their inclusive hourly rates for each labor category (senior staff, professional staff, junior staff, technical editors, etc.) for three calendar years (2024, 2025, and 2026). Inclusive rates should encompass all relevant costs and considerations associated with the services. Respondents may differentiate labor categories based on their level of experience, education, and responsibilities.
- VII. **References:** Contact information for at least three references from previous clients.

4.4 Proposal Evaluation Criteria

US Ignite will select the successful bidder through a formal evaluation process. All proposals will be initially reviewed to ensure compliance with the RFP requirements. If proposals are late or are not administratively compliant, they will be excluded from further consideration.

Proposals that meet the proposal instructions and requirements will be given a thorough and objective review. Administratively compliant proposals will be scored against the evaluation criteria listed below by a panel of evaluators, and the composite scores of those panelists will be used to rank proposers. Should evaluators have questions about a proposal that may affect a proposal score to one or more of the criteria, US Ignite may conduct an informational interview with a proposing organization.

Table 2: Evaluation Criteria

Criteria Description	Weight
Technical expertise: Ability to bring technical approaches to our grant writing proposals and craft compelling narratives for support.	30%
Experience: Shows strong experience with grant writing and familiarity with a wide range of Federal agencies and other funding sources. Experience and/or samples provided showing high-quality winning proposals.	40%
Cost: Competitive rate structure suited to the project needs	30%



4.5 Solicitation Administration Terms

- I. **Master Services Agreement and Task Order:** If US Ignite elects to make an award(s) to a Proposer(s), then US Ignite will prepare and send a Master Services Agreement (MSA) and Task Order(s) to the successful Proposer(s). No award will be finalized without a fully executed MSA. US Ignite shall require resumes and commitments for assigned staff prior to executing each Task Order.
- II. **No Offer by US Ignite:** This RFP does not constitute an offer by US Ignite to enter into an agreement. This RFP is simply an invitation for offers from interested Proposers. No offer shall bind US Ignite.
- III. **Accept and Rejection of Proposals:** US Ignite may reject any or all proposals in whole or in part, waive a technicality, make awards in a manner deemed in the best interest of US Ignite and unless otherwise specified by the organization, accept any item in the proposal.
- IV. **Multiple Awards:** US Ignite reserves, at its sole discretion, the option to make awards to multiple Proposers. Multiple awards may be made on the total Scope of Services or components of the Scope of Services.
- V. **Ownership of Proposals:** Each Proposal submitted to US Ignite will become the property of US Ignite, without compensation to a Proposer, for US Ignite use. US Ignite will not share proposals with any individuals or entities outside of the US Ignite review team and its key project stakeholders, given the consent of proposers prior to being shared. Proposers should mark any proprietary information within the proposal.