

**DELAWARE VALLEY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS
GRANT-WRITING SERVICES**

I. INTRODUCTION

The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) is seeking individuals with experience in researching and writing government funded and privately funded grants, preferably within the areas of agriculture, community development, direct marketing, distribution, economic development, farmers market development, farmland preservation, food systems, food access, hunger relief, marketing, nutrition education, rural development, small business development, sustainable agriculture, and/or technical assistance.

Submission Date: Qualifications packages are due by email on or before **4:30 PM EST on Friday, April 2, 2010** to Amanda Wagner, Food Systems Associate, Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, awagner@dvrpc.org. **Packages submitted after this time and date, and submissions that are non-responsive to the requirements of this RFQ will not be considered.**

Information: Questions of a technical nature concerning this RFQ should be directed to Alison Hastings, Senior Environmental Planner, Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, ahastings@dvrpc.org, 215/238-2929.

II. BACKGROUND

Created in 1965, the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) is an interstate, intercounty and intercity agency that provides continuing, comprehensive and coordinated planning to shape a vision for the future growth of the Delaware Valley region. The region includes Bucks, Chester, Delaware, and Montgomery counties, as well as the City of Philadelphia, in Pennsylvania; and Burlington, Camden, Gloucester and Mercer counties in New Jersey.

DVRPC is currently managing a Local Food Economy financial and technical assistance initiative funded by the William Penn Foundation within its food system planning program. Several goals of this initiative are: 1) provide or contract for technical assistance serving DVRPC's Food System Stakeholders; 2) identify opportunities to access non-local funds (i.e. federal grant programs and national foundation funds); and 3) provide opportunities for stakeholders to collaborate within existing projects and on new projects. DVRPC is seeking the qualifications of several grantwriters to assist in these efforts over the course of 12 to 18 months.

More information regarding DVRPC's Food System Planning program and identified Food System Stakeholders are available at: www.dvrpc.org/food.

III. OVERVIEW

The successful individual must have:

- A track record of successful grant-writing that includes both government funding and private resources.
- General knowledge of key practices in grant administration in order to estimate if Stakeholder organization is capable of meeting grant reporting requirements.
- Excellent oral/written communication and interpersonal skills, and demonstrated ability with electronic databases, websites, and Microsoft Office programs.
- Ability to network, and present information to key groups and individuals.
- Working knowledge of proposal preparation.
- Ability under pressure to be professional, courteous, and tactful in working with Food System Stakeholders, funding agency contacts, and foundation staff.
- Ability to prioritize tasks given externally-generated deadlines.
- Ability to work with minimum direction and guidance.

IV. SCOPE OF SERVICES

As funding opportunities or proposal ideas arise, DVRPC expects to call on a pool of grantwriters to provide the following services:

- Outreach to relevant funding agencies or private foundations.
- Working with DVRPC, perform outreach to relevant Food System Stakeholders.
- Working with DVRPC, organize and facilitate meetings with Food System Stakeholders to identify technical needs, common interests, and project ideas.
- Respond to needs of Food System Stakeholders in a professional and timely manner.
- Develop grant proposals, which includes narrative and proposed budgets.
- Perform research, which may include interviewing Stakeholders, to understand food system issues and individual organizations' missions, capacity, and success stories.
- Draft letters of support.
- Revise grant proposals with Stakeholders and DVRPC.
- Submit complete grant proposals/applications on behalf of a lead organization.
- Follow-up with stakeholders and funders as needed.

V. EXAMPLES OF GRANT PROPOSALS TO BE DEVELOPED

To give respondents a better idea of type of candidate DVRPC is looking for, below is a brief list

of project proposals may be developed over the course of this 12 to 18 month period:

- Securing start-up funding and/or technical assistance to launch a home-delivery milk service (farm to community program).
- Start a nutrition education and active living program in an urban school.
- Feasibility study to evaluate the possibility of opening a second farmstand or local food store (i.e. co-op) in an under-served urban neighborhood.
- A double value SNAP/EBT coupon program to be used at farmers markets. (ex. Boston Bounty Bucks)
- Butchering classes to farmers, processors, entrepreneurs, and job-seekers.
- Start food buying clubs in senior citizen or active adult communities.
- Outreach to farmers to encourage transition from commodity growing to direct marketing
- Increased funding to already-established Farm to Institution or Farm to School programs.
- Using social media to recruit, retain, and educate new farmers.

VI. QUALIFICATION PACKAGES

The individual is asked to include in the qualifications package: a) a resume, b) an example of a successful grant proposal, c) two references, d) a proposed fee structure (hourly wage, overhead, and any foreseen expenses), and/or e) other materials, such as a press release or news article announcing a grant award, which will help to support the submission.

VII. ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

DVRPC estimates the turn-around time between an announcement of a funding opportunity and the completed proposal will vary between 3 weeks and 12 weeks. DVRPC expects a grant-writer to be able to communicate and decline a given opportunity if the timeframe is unreasonable for his or her schedule. A grant-writer will be asked to submit a Scope of Services and budget estimate for each research assignment or funding opportunity he or she will undertake.

DVRPC will contract for each grant-writing and research assignment on an ad hoc and cost reimbursable (i.e. invoice) basis. Non-labor fees, such as travel expenses, must be submitted in a budget estimate for a given assignment. Responding to and being selected for this RFQ enables the contract to be expedited and work to commence immediately.

DVRPC encourages minority businesses and women-owned businesses to submit qualification packages. Disadvantaged and minority-owned businesses will be required to submit certification of eligibility ownership prior to execution of any agreements.

DVRPC's Food System Planning staff and a small Advisory Committee shall provide overall

direction and technical supervision; DVRPC's Accounting Office shall authorize all payments to the selected consultant.

VIII. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Award of the contract(s) will be to the individual(s) who best meet the Commission's needs, has a successful track record, and has demonstrated an interest in and/or knowledge of the food system. The Commission reserves the right to reject all proposals.

Specific criteria to be used in judging qualification packages include:

- Past experience and successful track record of the grant-writer (25%)
- Quality of the example grant proposal (25%)
- Relevance and responses of references (20%)
- Proposed fee structure (15%)
- Past experience working in food system issues (15%)