

# Request for Proposals

## Economic Industry Sector and Workforce Cluster Analysis Project

*Released by:*

**Anchorage Economic Development Corporation (AEDC)**

**Release Date: September 1, 2021**

**Response Deadline: September 30, 2021**

**Proposed Contract Period: January 4, 2022 – November 18, 2022**

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# Introduction

Anchorage Economic Development Corporation (AEDC) is releasing this request for proposals for the purpose of developing an Economic Industry and Workforce Cluster Analysis. The primary goal of the Industry and Workforce Cluster Analysis is to determine changing and new industry clusters based on current and emerging industries within the Anchorage area and identify gaps and opportunities in our workforce pipeline.

The analysis will profile and build a business case for business development targets that leverage Anchorage's current and emerging economic strengths and assets, including its natural resources, for value added diversification including but not limited to Oil & Gas, Tourism, Renewable Energy, Broadband based opportunities, Transportation & Logistics and Healthcare. The analysis will have a major emphasis on other diversification targets that are existing, new or emerging and can be considered sustainable growth opportunities and a good fit for Anchorage and the existing and emerging industry and workforce clusters.

## Background

The Industry Cluster and Workforce Cluster Analysis will enable AEDC to identify and significantly improve long- term strategies for providing economic development planning.

The Industry and Workforce Cluster Analysis is part of a multi-strategic development grant from the Economic Development Administration (EDA). This grant includes the following in the overall parameters: engaging existing businesses in business development, existing sites and buildings, leveraging Opportunity Zones, addressing targeted workforce development needs, broadening entrepreneur support and investigating innovation districts. For the Cluster Analysis the consultant should consider aspects in which AEDC can learn from changing and evolving industry and workforce clusters.

This study should help guide AEDC in future economic development efforts for business recruitment and business retention within Anchorage – the consultant will be expected to look at the big picture and previous studies while planning the overall approach and development of the Industry and Workforce Cluster Analysis.

**Note: Industry Cluster is defined as a geographic concentration of interdependent competitive firms that do business with each other, including firms that sell inside and outside of the geographic region as well as support firms that supply new materials, components, business services, and other institutions including government and education.**

# Project Scope and Conditions

The selected consultant will work with AEDC staff and representatives of our local economic development partners, and knowledgeable, local community leaders throughout this process. The consultant will

- Evaluate and recommend data sets and industry clusters.
- Work with stakeholders to facilitate focus groups for the industry clusters (if determined necessary and appropriate).
- Complete a data analysis of regional sector data based on the final approved list of indicators and industry and workforce clusters.
- Identify emerging subsectors and collaborate with AEDC to create localized conversations about those emerging sectors.
- Develop a list of key developing industries to use for business attraction efforts.
- Identify any additional data points around the Industry and Workforce Cluster Analysis.

This Industry and Workforce Cluster Study will provide quantitative and qualitative data for Anchorage and the surrounding region (where it makes sense to add for supply chain and labor pool concepts). The geographic focus of strategic clusters should be regional-specific, with recognition that limited statewide analysis may be necessary on a cluster by cluster basis.

## Priority Data Elements:

Three Priority Data Elements will be used to identify the strategic clusters. They are:

1. Industry and workforce clusters.
2. Supply chain gaps around the industry clusters.
3. Job concentration.
4. Workforce gaps.
5. Skillsets in existing workforce.
6. Workforce opportunities.

The proposed budget for the Industry Sector and Workforce Cluster Analysis is not to exceed \$300,000.

There are three primary consultant deliverables for this project around the project scope:

1. **Recommended data indicators for a representative analysis**
  - a. Identify cluster and industry indicators.
  - b. Develop a list of emerging industry and workforce sectors.
  - c. Develop a list of challenged industries within the region.
  - d. Identify training requirements for targeted sectors/occupations.
  - e. Identify supply chain gaps and opportunities.
  - f. Identify how to best grow new clusters based on existing economic strengths.
  - g. Description of current economic foundations (e.g. labor pools, knowledge, financing, physical infrastructure, quality of life, regulations).

- h. Workforce and industry interactions analysis.
- i. Multi-sector SWOT analysis, to be refined later with stakeholder feedback.
- j. Initial identification of 5-10 mature, emergent and potential clusters.
- k. Barriers to employment.
- l. Assess existing skills and experience in current labor pool.
- m. Prioritized list of job training and reskilling opportunities.
- n. Provide any recommendations for updating the key industry and workforce clusters that are recognized as focus areas by the AEDC region.

## **2. Community conversation**

- a. Convene and facilitate industry and workforce focus groups, based on discussion with AEDC staff providing the focus group method is deemed valuable.
- b. Identify current industry and workforce sectors; work with AEDC staff for reporting on business retention and expansion site visits.
- c. Convene with industry and workforce clusters as needed; meet with trade groups, association contacts, and community members.
- d. Present draft final findings to AEDC staff.
- e. Make any additional presentations to industry and community groups as requested.

## **3. Recommended methods to identify emerging and/or subsectors**

Project deliverables in this section will incorporate leading economic indicators to identify emerging strategic sectors/cluster trends of both industry and employment using: (a) anecdotal information, (b) current emerging industries, and (c) possible transformations of declining industries. The analysis should:

- a. Identify additional indicators that should be used in the development of emerging or changing subsectors and can be tracked by AEDC into the future.
- b. Collaborate with project committee to build consensus on recommended indicators, and other processes needed for selecting emerging and/or subsectors.
- c. Build a list of recommended emerging and/or subsectors located in the Municipality of Anchorage, and the surrounding region; further identify how to grow current industry clusters based on supply chain gaps.
- d. Produce a report focused on recommending process/indicators to be used in the development of emerging and/or subsectors and include a list of recommended emerging and/or subsectors within the Municipality of Anchorage and region where it makes sense and directed by AEDC staff.

## Timeline

- Consultant will be selected mid-November 2021.
- Consultant will receive previous strategies, and information regarding the project in December 2021 to prepare for project commencement in January 4, 2022.

- First on-ground meetings held January 2022.
- Timeline will be addressed with the consultant during the contract negotiations.
- **Final product must be completed and submitted to AEDC by October 1, 2022.**
- Contractor will be available for presentation with key stakeholders after the final report is completed through the end of the contract period, November 18, 2022.

## Contract Term

AEDC is targeting Industry and Workforce Cluster Analysis to begin in January 4, 2022 and have a final version by end of October 1, 2022. The Contractor will be available for presentations of the final report to key stakeholders through November 18, 2022. A detailed project schedule identifying tasks and milestones will be developed upon contract award. The term of the contract will commence upon signature of agreed upon contract terms, scope of work and deliverables and will continue through completion of the cluster analysis.

## Policy of Competition

Anchorage Economic Development Corporation conducts all procurement transactions in a manner providing full and open competition. The RFP identifies all evaluation factors and their relative importance. All responses will be honored to the maximum extent practical. Technical, financial, and organizational evaluations will be made of all proposals received on a point system.

## Questions and Answer Period

Questions regarding this RFP can be sent to the email address: [irish@aedcweb.com](mailto:irish@aedcweb.com) Questions and answers will be responded to within 72 business hours and will subsequently be posted on our website ([www.aedcweb.com](http://www.aedcweb.com)) so every Bidder can review. Questions are accepted through September 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2021.

## Submittal Instructions

Proposals must be submitted by electronic mail to [irish@aedcweb.com](mailto:irish@aedcweb.com) with the following subject line “RFP: Industry and Workforce Cluster Analysis”, and include

- Response to requested information in the ‘Project Scope and Conditions’ utilizing the prescribed format on page 8.
- Key references.
- Any other attachments the bidder would like to include to further enhance their competitiveness.

## RFP Key Events and Dates

Proposal Requests Issued	<b>September 1, 2021</b>
Bidders Conference Call	<b>September 15, 2021</b>
Deadline for Receipt of Questions	<b>September 22, 2021</b>
Deadline for Receipt of Proposals	<b>September 30, 2021 by 3PM AKST</b>
Formal Review Process of Proposals Begins	<b>October 4, 2021</b>
Interviews scheduled (if necessary)	<b>Completed by October 25, 2021</b>
Notice of Intent to Award	<b>October 26, 2021</b>
Contract and Budget Negotiations Begin	<b>November 1, 2021</b>
Contract and Budget Negotiations End	<b>November 22, 2021</b>
Contract Start Date	<b>January 4, 2022</b>
Dates subject to change based on response	

## Evaluation and Selection Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Experience
- Understanding of services to be provided
- Personnel expertise
- Compatibility with end users
- Project approach
- Satisfaction of clients/end users
- Value of proposed services and cost

## Award of Contract

Submittal of a successful proposal(s) does not constitute a contract with AEDC. The contract award will not be final until AEDC and the successful bidder have executed a mutually satisfactory contractual agreement.

## Appeal Process

Any appeal of the final consultant(s) selected must state the basis of the appeal. Appeals can be sent in writing within seven (7) calendar days after the publication of the successful consultant(s) to [irish@aedcweb.com](mailto:irish@aedcweb.com)

# Proposal Format

Your responses to the inquiries below should be submitted electronically with the following format restrictions:

- 8 1/2" X 11" page size with 1" margins
- 12 point Arial or Calibri font
- Double spaced (itemized bid information may be single spaced)
- Total submission, including cover page, should be no longer than 7 pages
- Submissions in greater length than 20 pages will be *disqualified*

## Proposal Narrative

### Background – 25 points

Provide a brief narrative describing the following:

- A brief overview of your organization, including number of employees
- Three (3) professional references, including full contact information (address, phone, email)
- Clear identification of collaborating or partnering organizations, including organization name, primary contact information, the services they will provide
- Short description of work history in and completion of similar projects. Hyperlinks may be used to highlight projects.

### Organizational Capacity – 15 points

Provide a brief narrative describing the following:

- A brief history of your organization, including how long you have been in business, and how many projects of similar scale you have experience with.
- Why your organization is pursuing the work, how it is uniquely qualified to perform it, and why it should be chosen as the successful bidder.
- How your organization will ensure successful delivery of agreed upon services.
- Organizational chart for main consulting team
- Resumes for direct consulting team (brief associated work bios also accepted)

### Scope of Work – 35 points

Provide a narrative and outline around project execution from the noted deliverables in section 1, also include a timeline of executing the project scope. At a minimum the narrative should include:

- How the consulting team will identify industry clusters.
- How the consulting team will work with AEDC staff and evaluate data points.



- Recommendation on focus groups/ community meetings process for developing supply chain gaps and opportunities, identifying growth of targeted sectors, and how to best grow current industries and workforce clusters based on the existing sectors.
- Additional information around the process and development of the overall Industry and Workforce Cluster Analysis.
- How the consulting team plans to coordinate calls, visits, and meetings both virtually and on the ground with AEDC team.

## Fiscal – 25 points

Provide a bid that includes:

- A total bid amount for full range of services, plus:
- Explanation and listing of all costs and fees bidder proposes to charge AEDC for services.
- A brief description of how you are pricing your services, including any itemized costs for each service area if applicable.
- Listing of any in-kind services included in this proposal, if applicable.

Please briefly describe the following:

- Whether your organization is bonded or carries liability insurance. If so, describe.
- Whether your organization has filed for bankruptcy in the past three years.
- Whether your organization is currently involved in or has pending legal action relating to organization operations or financial transactions. If so, describe.

## Miscellaneous

1. AEDC will select the proposal which is most qualified to provide the services which will achieve the overall objectives of this Proposal Request.
2. AEDC reserves the right to make such investigation as it deems necessary to determine the ability of bidders to furnish the required services, and bidders shall furnish all such information for this purpose as AEDC may request.
3. AEDC reserves the right to reject any proposals for failure to meet the requirements contained herein, to waive any technicalities, and to select the proposal which, in AEDC's sole judgment, best meets the project requirements.
4. AEDC reserves the right to reject, or to seek modifications of any proposal offered if in AEDC's sole discretion the proposal does not meet the overall RFP objectives.
5. AEDC reserves the right to offer an award to the next highest rated proposal if a contract cannot be successfully negotiated, or to renegotiate or reissue an RFP should an appeal for non-award be upheld.
6. This Proposal Request is not in itself an offer of work, it does not commit the Anchorage Economic Development Corporation to fund any proposals submitted, nor is it liable for any costs incurred in the preparation or research of proposals.

7. The RFP creates no obligation on the part of AEDC to award a contract or to compensate the bidder for any costs incurred. AEDC reserves the right to award a contract based upon proposals received without further discussion or negotiation. Bidders should not rely upon the opportunity to alter their qualifications during discussions.