Request for Proposals: TMACE Data Specialist

Introduction
InnovatePGH requests proposals from qualified firms or teams of firms with the appropriate expertise to serve as a "Data Specialist" for Build Back Better Project 5 "Training and Market Access for Entrepreneurs" (TMACE). InnovatePGH is seeking a firm that will identify and recruit robotics and/or advanced manufacturing companies with buying power and work with these companies to collect, benchmark, and analyze their procurement data and practices. The Data Specialist will make recommendations to these companies for ways in which they can increase their spending with local, diverse vendors and suppliers. The Data Specialist will also make strategic recommendations to InnovatePGH for how the TMACE program can evolve programming to close supply gaps in these industries.

In Summer 2022, the Southwestern Pennsylvania New Economy Collaborative (the Collaborative) announced the receipt of a $62.7 million federal Build Back Better Regional Challenge grant awarded by the U.S. Economic Development Administration (U.S. EDA). The southwestern Pennsylvania region is one of only 21 applicants receiving this grant funding, chosen from the 60 finalists involved in Phase 2 of the Build Back Better challenge. Phase 1 of the challenge received 529 application submissions, of which southwestern Pennsylvania was chosen as one of the 60 applications to move to Phase 2.

Pittsburgh's Build Back Better aimed at seizing a once-in-a-generation opportunity to build the region's robotics and autonomy technology sector through investments in five separate but intertwined projects. Project 5's TMACE program seeks to connect local historically disadvantaged small businesses with opportunities in the supply chains of the robotics, automation, advanced manufacturing, and artificial intelligence industries in the Southwestern Pennsylvania region.

About InnovatePGH
Founded in 2017 after the Brookings Institution published a report announcing, "Pittsburgh's rise as a global innovation city", InnovatePGH works to unify the critical mass of talent, university resources, transformative technology, and cultural assets in Pittsburgh's Oakland neighborhood to create a sustainable innovation ecosystem with global impact.

Surrounded by prestigious universities, cutting-edge medical centers, and world-renowned cultural institutions, the Pittsburgh Innovation District, located in the Oakland neighborhood, combines the critical mass of talent and amenities to support a next-generation innovation ecosystem.

About TMACE
The Training and Market Access for Entrepreneurs (TMACE) program launched in July 2023 with the mission to drive economic growth in Southwestern Pennsylvania by connecting local BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color), woman, and veteran owned and/or rural small businesses with contracting opportunities in the robotics, automation, advanced manufacturing,

and AI industries. Through partnerships with Riverside Center for Innovation and the University of Pittsburgh Institute for Entrepreneurial Excellence PantherlabWorks, the TMACE team spent 2023 identifying businesses in the region that offer business services that businesses in the robotics, automation, advanced manufacturing, and artificial intelligence industries need and creating a Vendor Directory that can be shared with these industries. To be included in the TMACE Vendor Directory, businesses must complete a Robotics Readiness Assessment and be BIPOC, woman, veteran owned, and/or located in a rural county in the Pittsburgh region. TMACE prioritizes small businesses that cloud-based and utilize technology in their business operations. Businesses receive technical assistance from Riverside Center for Innovation and the University of Pittsburgh PantherlabWorks as needed.

TMACE is ready to enter the next phase of its programming through direct engagement with target industry companies. To support this work, InnovatePGH is seeking to bring on a Data Specialist to the TMACE team to help drive strategic movement forward.

The Data Specialist will:
- Recruit at least 5-10 companies in the robotics and/or advanced manufacturing industries to participate in data collection and analysis.
- Collect two years of procurement spend data from each participating company.
- Analyze data individually and collectively to identify the following:
  - What types of goods and services are high in demand in these industries
  - Current levels of spend with local businesses.
  - Current levels of spend with diverse businesses.
  - Sourcing/delivery requirements for key procurement categories.
  - Where individual companies can shift spend to local and/or diverse businesses.
  - Gaps in the local supply chain.
- Create a report for the TMACE team detailing existing and future opportunities for local and diverse businesses to work with companies in the target industries. This report will include recommendations of ways TMACE can adjust programming to better support these small businesses and close supply gaps in these industries.

There is no set maximum funding amount for this project. The work for this contract should be completed in 12 months from the work start date.

This funding cannot be spent on any functions outside of the designated program and will require regular reporting to InnovatePGH.

Selection Schedule:

RFP Release Date	February 16, 2024
Deadline for Questions	March 1, 2024
Responses to Questions Posted	By March 8, 2024
Proposals Due	March 15, 2024
Interviews & Selection	Week of March 18, 2024
Contract Negotiation and Finalization	By April 15, 2024

Submittal Requirements
Any questions regarding this Request for Proposals (RFP) should be submitted via email to Erin Jensen at ej@innovatepgh.com on or before Friday, March 1, 2024 at 5:00 PM (EDT) using the subject line "TMACE RFP Questions."

Answers to questions will be made available to all respondents via email and posted on innovatepgh.com.

Proposals must be submitted by no later than 5:00 PM (EDT) on Friday March 15, 2024 to Erin Jensen at ej@innovatepgh.com with the subject "TMACE RFP Proposal." Submittals received after this time and date will not be considered. The proposal should be divided into sections as described below.

1. **Cover Letter:** Summarize your interest in the project as well as include the name and contact information of the main person of contact.

2. **Company Profile(s)/Description:** Provide a brief description of the team in as much detail as necessary to demonstrate the team's ability to carry out the scope of services as requested in this RFP. Include a company profile and description for the prime and any sub-consultants that may be used for this effort.

3. **Project Personnel:** Provide an organizational chart of proposed team.

4. **Project Approach:** Provide a concise summary of the firm or team's approach to the project. If your proposal includes any variation to the proposed scope of work (reduced or additional services), please identify and provide justification for any modifications. Please include an overview of proposed project deliverables and milestones.

5. **Past Performance**: Provide a maximum of three (3) examples of similar or related projects successfully completed within the last five years if applicable. Include a contact name, email address and telephone number for each project described.

6. **Cost Proposal/Budget:** Submittals must include a detailed budget for the project.

Submissions should be **brief and concise**. Please do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions.

Selection Criteria
Successful applications will include the following:
- Demonstrate a willingness or history specifically working with companies in the robotics, automation, advanced manufacturing, or artificial intelligence industries.
- Demonstrate a willingness or history specifically working with historically disadvantaged small businesses.

- Demonstrate a history of successful data analysis, especially as it relates to procurement data.