Missouri Technology Corporation
Geospatial Accelerator Operator

July 2020
Request for Proposals

**Key Dates:**

RFP Release Date – Tuesday, June 23, 2020

Written Questions – Thursday, July 2, 2020

Final Submission Deadline – Friday, July 17, 2020

Proposal Review and Selection (approximate) – Monday, July 27, 2020
1. Introduction and General Information

1.1. About the Missouri Technology Corporation

The Missouri Technology Corporation (the "MTC") is a public-private partnership created by the Missouri General Assembly to promote entrepreneurship and foster the growth of new and emerging high-tech companies. The MTC focuses on 21st Century industries that build on Missouri’s rich history in agriculture and technology. The MTC is governed by a 15-member board of directors, which is appointed by Missouri’s Governor, Speaker of the Missouri House, and President Pro Tem of the Missouri Senate. The President of the University of Missouri System and the Director of the Department of Economic Development are ex officio members of the board.

1.2. Intent of the RFP

The intent of this RFP is to identify and select a qualified vendor to design and operate a St. Louis-based, corporate accelerator program sponsored by the National Geospatial Intelligence Agency (the “NGA”) as described below. It is anticipated that the qualified vendor engaged under this RFP will operate the accelerator program for two “classes” of participants; additional classes may be added at the discretion of the NGA and the MTC. The MTC reserves the right in its sole discretion to engage any qualified vendor.

1.3. The RFP Process

The MTC expects to use the following process to solicit vendor proposals: (i) Release of RFP; (ii) Questions and Answers; (iii) Submission of Proposals; (iv) Review and Evaluation of Proposals; and (v) Engagement. However, the MTC reserves the right to modify the RFP process in its sole discretion.

1.3.1. Release of RFP

This RFP will be posted on the MTC’s website (www.missouritechnology.com). The MTC will also distribute the RFP with a view to widely disseminating the notice of the solicitation within Missouri.

1.3.2. Questions and Answers

Potential vendors may submit questions regarding this RFP. Questions must be submitted in writing via email to jack.scatizzi@missouritechnology.com no later than 5:00 p.m. CDT on Thursday, July 2, 2020.

1.3.3. Submission of Proposals

Proposals must be submitted no later than 12:00 p.m. CDT on Friday, July 17, 2020 to be considered. Late proposals will not be accepted. It is the
responsibility of the vendor to ensure that the MTC receives all required materials by the deadline. Final vendor proposals should be emailed to jack.scatizzi@missouritechnology.com.

2. Program Description

2.1. Project Overview

The NGA is seeking innovative solutions that will advance its mission capabilities and sustain technological advantages for the NGA and its constituents. The NGA has partnered with the MTC to design and operate a new corporate accelerator program (the “Program”) to run competitive classes or cohorts designed to deliver innovative and commercially viable solutions through technology transfer initiatives to commercialize federally-developed technology. The Program will focus on the Greater St. Louis entrepreneurial ecosystem to develop such innovations in geospatial technology.

2.2. Goals and Objectives

The goals of the corporate accelerator project are to assist in the rapid development of dual-use (commercial and government) geospatial technologies and to create a pipeline of emerging geospatial solutions among the NGA, its constituents and the Greater St. Louis entrepreneurial ecosystem. The NGA and the MTC seek to integrate into the Program a platform for the NGA’s workforce to collaborate with early-stage technology companies and small businesses.

The MTC is seeking a qualified vendor to oversee the various facets of designing and operating the Program. These responsibilities/objectives include:

(i) identifying and recruiting best-in-class companies developing novel geospatial technology solutions;

(ii) working alongside the NGA to ensure alignment of the recruitment and selection process with the NGA’s technology focus areas and strategy;

(iii) building an engaging and impactful curriculum for early-stage companies developing potential dual-use geospatial technology solutions, to include topics specific to developing dual-use solutions and educating participants about available opportunities with relevant programs, including Cooperative Research and Development Agreement (CRADA), Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR), Broad Agency Announcements (BAA), Educational Partnership Agreements (EPA), Mentor Protégé, and Other Transaction Authorities (OTA);

(iv) supporting Program participants with a strong advocate network that provides access to relevant resources and expertise (which will include subject-matter-experts, mentors, and technologists from the NGA’s workforce);
(v) hosting technology “demo day” events to showcase and connect Program participants to potential commercial, academic, government partners, and investors; and

(vi) providing post-graduation support to Program participants through a robust alumni network and other value-added connections and referrals.

2.3. Eligibility

Prior to engagement, qualified respondents must:

(i) have a physical location within the St. Louis region;

(ii) provide a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number;

(iii) provide evidence of compliance with the registration requirements set forth in the System for Award Management (SAM) database;

(iv) identify any conflicts of interest between the respondent, the NGA and its affiliates or the MTC and its affiliates; and

(v) adopt a Conflict of Interest Policy, to address any of the conflicts identified in clause (iv) above, as well as Program participants.

Ideal respondents will have the following qualifications:

(i) experience launching and operating technology-focused accelerators;

(ii) experience in managing government or corporate-sponsored innovation activities; and

(iii) experience building and maintaining a diverse and robust network of subject-matter experts, mentors, investors, technologists, and other relevant relationships.

2.4. Term of the Program

The Program has a projected timeline of approximately one year starting in the Fall of 2020. The Program will encompass two consecutive cohorts of approximately 5-8 companies per cohort. The budget for the Program shall not exceed $4 million. The MTC may terminate the Program at any time at the MTC’s option and sole discretion.

---

1 Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number means the nine-digit number established and assigned by Dun and Bradstreet, Inc. (D&B), to uniquely identify business entities. A DUNS number may be obtained from D&B by telephone (currently 866-705-5711) or the internet (currently at http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform)

2 System for Award Management (SAM) means the primary Government repository for prospective federal awardee information and the centralized Government system for certain contracting, grants, and other assistance-related processes. Additional information about registration procedures may be found at the SAM internet site, (currently located at https://www.sam.gov)
3. Proposal Submission Requirements

3.1. General Proposal Requirements

(i) Each respondent must submit a single, digital PDF file of its proposal. Hard copy submissions or submissions received after the established deadline will not be considered.

(ii) All proposals must include the subject matter outlined below in Section 3.2.

(iii) Any information included in the proposal that a respondent wishes to request be treated as confidential during the evaluation process should be clearly marked as confidential. All proposals submitted will become public records once the award process is completed.

(iv) All proposals must be accompanied by a certification that (a) to the best of the respondent’s knowledge and belief, the information contained in the proposal is complete, true and correct, (b) if any information requires alteration or supplementation, the respondent must agree to provide that information in writing to the MTC as soon as practical, and (c) the respondent acknowledges that submitting false or misleading information in connection with the proposal may be punishable by law.

3.2. Proposal Form and Content

3.2.1. Cover Letter

The cover letter should include the name and contact information for the respondent, a brief summary of why the respondent is interested in the opportunity, and the respondent’s qualifications. The cover letter may not exceed one page in length.

3.2.2. Direct Questions

Each proposal should include a section that clearly and concisely addresses the questions below:

(i) What is your process for company recruitment? How will you ensure that the NGA receives the ‘best of breed’ applicants to participate in the accelerator?

(ii) How will you work with the NGA to determine the types of problems for which they would be seeking potential technology solutions? What process have you used with other corporate or government agencies?

(iii) Please include a brief outline of your financial incentive structure.
Outside of financial incentives (investment, paid contracts, etc.), what other tangible benefits will you provide to accelerator participants?

Describe your mentor and subject matter expert network. How do you recruit mentors and such experts? What does your screening and onboarding process look like? How can this network be leveraged for the success of Program participants and the project at-large? How would you incorporate your existing network with the NGA?

How will you measure the success of the accelerator? Be sure to include any historical key performance indicators from other accelerator programs you have been associated with.

What is your philosophy regarding accelerator program content? What principles or values will guide you as you design this program? Additionally, how will you incorporate curriculum specific to the development of early-stage companies seeking to establish and grow businesses based on novel dual-use geospatial solutions?

What differentiates you from other potential accelerator operators? What do you believe is your ‘secret sauce’? What makes you unique?

How will this Program add value to the greater St. Louis technology and innovation ecosystem? Include any specific ideas related to engaging the St. Louis community, as well as the St. Louis-based NGA workforce in this project?

What is your commitment to diversity and inclusion? How will you ensure strong representation from underrepresented founders and subject matter experts?

When answering questions, please include any success metrics and/or specific data that would separate you from other applicants. This section may not exceed 13 pages in length.

3.2.3. Budget

The proposal should include a high-level budget and supporting budget narrative for the total budget requested in the proposal. Project funds may not be used to reimburse the respondent for any costs expended prior to the award date. The budget should also include any investments, stipends, grants or awards made in/given to selected accelerator participants. The contract entered into with the respondent engaged by the MTC will be a Firm-Fixed-Price agreement. All budgets should include a proposed schedule for disbursement of funds based on the respondent achieving key milestones and include projected dates for the milestones and disbursements. The budget section may not exceed three pages in length.
4. Award Process and Post-Award Monitoring

4.1. Proposal Review Process

After the submission deadline, the MTC staff will review all proposals received to determine whether each proposal meets the eligibility criteria and complies with the requirements of this RFP. All proposals determined to comply will be reviewed by the MTC’s Executive Director. The MTC reserves the right to solicit the review and advice of external evaluators. The MTC may also request that a respondent submit supplemental information to assist in the MTC’s evaluation of a proposal. The MTC Executive Committee will select the respondent to be engaged. The respondent will be required to execute an engagement agreement in the form requested by the MTC.

4.2. Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be scored using the six criteria outlined below:

4.2.1. Ability to Recruit (20%)

Respondents must exhibit a strong track record of sourcing and identifying diverse, high-potential early-stage technology-based companies.

4.2.2. Network Quality (15%)

Respondents must exhibit a broad and knowledgeable network of potential mentors, subject matter experts, partners and collaborators.

4.2.3. Relevant Experience (30%)

Respondents must exhibit a strong track record of launching and operating technology-focused accelerator programs. Respondents who have experience running corporate or government-sponsored accelerators will be viewed more favorably.

4.2.4. Budget Appropriateness (15%)

Respondent submissions must include a thorough budget for implementing the Program. Proposals with a clear understanding of accelerator operations and their associated costs will be viewed favorably.

4.2.5. Projected Civic Impact (10%)

Respondent submissions must articulate the social and economic benefits to the St. Louis region and the State of Missouri of their proposed project.
4.2.6. Overall Quality of Proposal (10%)

4.3 Engagement

Upon review and approval by the MTC Executive Committee, the successful respondent (the “Operator”) will be notified by the MTC staff. The MTC staff will provide an engagement agreement reflective of the Operator’s proposal. The engagement agreement will include customary confidentiality obligations with respect to all MTC information. No funds will be distributed until the engagement agreement is approved by the MTC Executive Committee and executed by the Executive Director.

4.4 Contract Requirements

4.4.1 Reporting Requirements

The Operator will agree to submit monthly reports during the cohort phase of the Program, a post-cohort report and annual reports for three years following the end of each cohort phase. The MTC will have the right to request additional or different reporting at any time in the MTC’s sole discretion.

4.4.3 Public Disclosure, Media and Publications

The Operator shall obtain the written consent of the MTC prior to making any press release or public statement which refers to the terms and conditions of the Program or the engagement agreement. The Operator shall provide appropriate attribution to the MTC in any such press release or public statement related to the Program.