



## **Missouri Technology Corporation**

### **Request for Proposal**

#### **Stakeholder Engagement Initiative**

Seeking proposals from vendors who can assist in developing strategies to support the state's innovation and entrepreneurial ecosystems in an effort to promote the growth of new high-tech companies.

**August 2024**

**Key Dates:**

RFP release date: Tuesday, August 27, 2024

Written Questions: Friday, September 6, 2024

Submission of proposals due: Tuesday, September 17, 2024, by 11:59 pm CDT

## **1. Introduction and General Information**

### **1.1. About the Missouri Technology Corporation**

The Missouri Technology Corporation (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 is governed by a 15-member board of directors, who are 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.

For more information on the MTC, visit [www.missouritechnology.com](http://www.missouritechnology.com).

### **1.2. Intent of the Request for Proposal (RFP)**

The intent of this RFP is to gather proposals related to identifying and selecting a vendor who can assist MTC in developing strategies to support the state's innovation and entrepreneurial ecosystems in an effort to promote the growth of new high-tech companies.

### **1.3. The RFP Process**

The MTC expects to use the following process to solicit respondent 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 at its sole discretion.

#### **(i) Release of RFP**

This RFP will be posted on the MTC's website ([www.missouritechnology.com](http://www.missouritechnology.com)). The RFP will also be otherwise distributed, as determined by the MTC, to widely disseminate notice of the solicitation.

#### **(ii) Questions and Answers**

Potential respondents may submit questions regarding this RFP. Questions must be submitted in writing via email to [mtcrfp@missouritechnology.com](mailto:mtcrfp@missouritechnology.com) no later than **5:00 p.m. CDT on Friday, September 6, 2024**. MTC will gather all received questions, assess them, and review the available information to determine which responses will offer valuable guidance to potential respondents. Following such evaluation, the MTC will post select questions and responses on the MTC's website ([www.missouritechnology.com](http://www.missouritechnology.com)). It is the responsibility of each respondent to review such responses and MTC has no obligation to provide individual responses to any potential vendor.

**(iii) Submission of Proposals**

Proposals must be submitted no later than **Tuesday, September 17, 2024, by 11:59 pm CDT**, to be considered. Late proposals will not be accepted. It is the responsibility of the respondent to ensure that the MTC receives all requested materials by the deadline. Proposals should be emailed to [mtcrfp@missouritechnology.com](mailto:mtcrfp@missouritechnology.com).

**2. Description of Project**

**2.1. Project Description**

MTC is seeking a vendor who can assist MTC in developing strategies to support the state's innovation and entrepreneurial ecosystems to promote the growth of new high-tech companies. More specifically, MTC is seeking to develop strategies that will allow MTC to achieve its mission of catalyzing innovation and entrepreneurship to drive [technology-based economic development \(TBED\)](#) within the state.

The primary objective is to evaluate the understanding of key stakeholders, including elected officials in state and local governments, of MTC and where the stakeholders efforts complement and support MTC's mission and programs. After developing that context, the vendor will propose strategies to MTC on how to educate stakeholders, including elected officials, about the advantages of supporting innovation and high-growth potential entrepreneurship to drive economic development in the state.

**2.2. Project Objectives & Deliverables**

The project will have two main objectives to be completed in a written report and presented to MTC's Board of Directors.

Objective #1: Evaluation of the political environment's impact on catalyzing innovation and high-growth potential entrepreneurship in Missouri. More specifically, this evaluation should identify the opportunities for, or barriers to, implementing additional support, in the form of policies and resources, to support innovation and high-growth potential entrepreneurship for driving technology-based economic development in the state. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Identifying elected officials who have demonstrated specific interest in leveraging innovation and high growth potential entrepreneurship to drive economic development in the state as well as have the potential to be thought leaders and 'champions' for this mission; and

- Identifying current misunderstandings or barriers to the allocation of additional resources and the adoption of policies to support catalyzing innovation and high-growth potential entrepreneurship to drive economic development in the state.

Objective #2: Propose strategies to MTC on how to engage and educate stakeholders, including elected officials, on the advantages of leveraging innovation and high-growth potential entrepreneurship to drive economic development. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Developing talking points and narratives to address dissenters' concerns and support 'champions' in promoting TBED as a foundational approach for future state economic development;
- Identifying opportunities to demonstrate the value and potential impact of implementing an economic development strategy for the state that incorporates innovation and high-growth entrepreneurship, including one-on-one or small group engagement, as well as larger gatherings of elected officials at the state or regional level; and
- Developing strategies to strengthen MTC's engagement with other economic development organizations (regional or statewide focus) that support the use of innovation and entrepreneurship as an economic development approach in the state.

### **2.3. Project Requirements**

Connect with a minimum of 30 elected officials (both current or those that have served within the past three years) and economic development-focused agencies aligned with MTC's mission of promoting entrepreneurship and fostering the growth of new and emerging high-tech companies within the state. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Governor's Office and/or Lieutenant Governor's Office;
- Members of each party's current/future leadership, including appropriations and economic development committees, or caucuses aligned with catalyzing innovation and entrepreneurship within Missouri; and
- Economic development agencies, such as the Department of Economic Development, Missouri Chamber of Commerce, Greater St. Louis Inc., Kansas City Tech Council, and Missouri Economic Development Council.

Connect with approximately 15 representatives from organizations that are currently promoting innovation and high-growth potential entrepreneurship or TBED strategy for economic development in the state. This includes, but is not limited to, BioSTL, BioNexus

KC, Codefi, Springfield Innovation, Research Alliance of Missouri Committee, and SSTI (national).

#### **2.4. Term of the Project**

The Project has an anticipated timeline of approximately four (4) months, culminating in a presentation of the findings to the MTC Board of Directors in January 2025, coinciding with the beginning of Missouri's 2025 legislative session.

MTC suggests the following schedule for projections when submitting proposals. The final schedule will be determined through negotiations with the selected vendor.

- Early October – engagement agreement with the selected vendor;
- October & November – Vendor conducts evaluation of the political landscape;
- November 19<sup>th</sup> – Vendor presents preliminary findings to MTC Executive Committee (virtual meeting);
- December – Vendor continues evaluation of the political landscape;
- December 17<sup>th</sup> – Vendor presents findings to MTC Executive Committee (virtual meeting) and delivers draft written report; and
- January 23<sup>rd</sup> – Vendor presents findings to MTC Board of Directors (virtual or in-person – Kansas City) and delivers final written report.

MTC estimates the Project will require 125-175 hours to complete. Subsequently, the budget for the Project shall not exceed \$50,000.

The MTC may terminate the Project at any time at the MTC's option and sole discretion.

#### **2.5. Ideal Respondent**

Qualified respondents must be individuals or organizations with a proven track record of successfully meeting the Project's objectives and requirements.

For this Project, MTC will review proposals only from vendors based in Missouri.

### **3. Proposal Submission Requirements**

#### **3.1. General Proposal Requirements**

- Each respondent must submit a single, digital PDF file of their proposal. Physical submissions or submissions received after the established deadline will not be considered.
- All proposals must address the questions outlined in Section 3.2 and be structured in accordance with the outline.

- Any confidential information included in the proposal should be clearly marked as confidential. All proposals submitted will become public records once the award process is completed.
- 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 will 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. That certification can be contained within the cover letter or as a separate document in the proposal that does not count in the page limits for the answers to the Direct Questions (Section 3.2.ii).

### **3.2. Proposal Form and Content**

#### **(i) Cover Letter**

The cover letter must contain the name and contact information of 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.*

#### **(ii) Direct Questions**

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

- General Experience - The proposal should include an introduction to the respondent, including a detailed overview of the person(s) who will be working on the Project and their relevant experience.
- Specific Experience - The proposal should describe at least three similar projects that are either ongoing or that the respondent has recently completed. If publicly available, the proposal should include direct links to those projects' finished written deliverables, metrics, and achievements. Additionally, the proposal should describe the respondent's experience working with public-private partnerships, state agencies, projects related to promoting innovation, high-growth potential entrepreneurship, or technology-based economic development, and any previous associations with MTC.
- Approach & Timetable - The proposal should describe the anticipated approach to achieving the Project Objectives & Deliverables (Section 2.2) and the Project Requirements (Section 2.3) within the Proposed

Timetable (Section 2.4)., including any assumptions made to ensure the Project can be completed within the proposed timetable.

- Requirements - The proposal should clearly outline any requirements of MTC for the proper execution of the Project as well as any material assumptions included in developing the proposal that may affect the methodology, approach, projected timeline, and projected budget.
- References - The proposal should include a list of references with full contact information (full name, organization, title, email address, and phone number) from five different projects.
- Additional Information - Any additional information the respondent believes will assist the MTC in the selection of a vendor for the Project, including but not limited to why the vendor is interested in the Project.

**(iii) Budget**

The proposal must contain a detailed budget and accompanying narrative for the total budget requested. This should include hourly rates or flat fee structure, payment terms, retainers (if applicable), the requested payment schedule, and any other pertinent fee or payment details for vendor selection. Project funds may not be used to reimburse the respondent for any costs expended prior to the award date. MTC reserves the right to negotiate payment terms that align with MTC's standard procedures.

Every budget must include a proposed schedule for disbursement of funds, contingent upon the respondent achieving key milestones. This should include projected dates for both the milestones and disbursements.

**Proposals must encompass all elements outlined in the Direct Questions and Budget sections, with a maximum length of 15 pages, excluding the cover letter and certifications.**

**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 if they meet the eligibility criteria and comply with the requirements of this RFP. All proposals that are found to comply will be reviewed by the Executive Director. The MTC reserves the right to solicit the review and advice of external evaluators. The MTC may also request additional information to assist with their evaluation of proposals.

The MTC Executive Committee will approve the selected respondent and the engagement agreement.

## **4.2 Evaluation Criteria**

Proposals that meet the eligibility criteria will be scored using the four criteria outlined below:

### **(i) Qualifications and Experience (30%)**

Respondent's proposals must demonstrate a strong track record of executing similar projects and have the relevant experience to achieve the Project Objectives & Deliverables (Section 2.2) and the Project Requirements (Section 2.3). Respondents should highlight their experience working on similar projects or with organizations similar to MTC. Respondents who have successfully completed at least three similar projects in the past will receive higher scores.

### **(ii) Proposed Methodology, Approach, and Work Plan (30%)**

Respondent's proposal must include a satisfactory methodology and approach to meet the Project Objectives & Deliverables (Section 2.2) and the Project Requirements (Section 2.3) in the Proposed Timetable (Section 2.4).

### **(iii) Appropriateness of Budget & Timeline (30%)**

Respondent's proposal must include a comprehensive budget and timeline for executing the Project in accordance with the requirements detailed in Section 2.4.

### **(iv) Overall Quality of Proposal (10%)**

Respondent's proposal should demonstrate the detail and high-quality of deliverables that are expected for the Project deliverables.

## **4.3 Engagement**

Upon review and approval by the MTC Executive Committee, the successful respondent will be notified by the MTC staff. The MTC staff will then provide an engagement agreement that reflects the vendor's expertise and experience. The engagement agreement will include customary confidentiality obligations regarding all MTC information. Funds will not be distributed until the agreement is approved by the MTC Executive Committee and executed by the Executive Director.