

**Request for Qualifications (RFQ)**  
**Service Providers Providing Services to Small Businesses**

Invest Newark, the City of Newark's Economic Development Corporation, propels the City's strong and diverse economy, builds vibrant communities, and creates opportunities for all Newarkers. Invest Newark supports small, women and minority-owned businesses, invests in world-class internet service, spurs real estate development and executes economic development activities to produce and sustain economic growth, generate jobs and create wealth for the citizens of Newark.

**A. INTRODUCTION** Invest Newark invites qualified service providers in specific categories to submit their qualifications for inclusion in a directory of service providers. The specific categories of service providers sought support small business owners with: Marketing, Credit Repair, Projection Preparation, Business Coaching, Accounting, Legal Services, and Real Estate (brokers).

Qualified respondents will be included in the directory of service providers that Invest Newark may refer to business owners.

Additionally, Invest Newark will be issuing grants in 2026 and 2027 that will provide funds for Newark-based small businesses to pay for services in specific categories from qualified service providers. The small businesses - not Invest Newark - will be the clients of selected service providers. This solicitation seeks to build a pool of qualified providers from which grant awardees may select and engage directly.

Respondents must provide services that fall into at least one of the following categories:

**Marketing Services**

- Online and social media-specific marketing services
- E-commerce services for business owners
- Development of comprehensive online and social media marketing strategies
- Digital content creation and campaign execution across social platforms
- High-level review and optimization of current digital footprint and engagement metrics

**Credit Repair Services**

- Comprehensive credit report analysis and review
- Strategic dispute filing and credit history correction
- Financial counseling and long-term credit building strategies

**Projection Preparation Services**

- Development of revenue forecasting and business financial modeling
- Preparation of cash flow projections and pro-forma statements
- High-level review of financial viability and growth planning

**Business Coaching (English, Spanish and other languages)**

- Business Plan Preparation Services
- One-on-one mentorship and strategic business planning in the client's preferred language
- Guidance on operational efficiency, team management, and scaling operations
- Development of tailored action plans to achieve short-term and long-term business goals

### **Accounting Services**

- Quickbooks and Excel training services
- Bookkeeping, accounting, and income tax preparation services
- High-level review of company books and records, including general ledgers and bank reconciliation
- Assessment and development of internal control policies

### **Legal Services**

- Legal review of entity organization, structure, and formation
- Review and monitoring of status relevant of licensing, certifications, and compliance requirements
- Drafting and review of standard commercial contracts, lease agreements and operational agreements

### **Real Estate Brokers**

- Assistance with identifying and securing appropriate commercial real estate spaces for small businesses
- Strategic negotiation of commercial real estate leases and review of leasing terms and conditions
- Market analysis and guidance on location-based strategies for business expansion or relation

A limited number of qualified responding firms will be selected for inclusion in a pool of recommended providers that will be shared with the small business grant awardees.

## **B. INFORMATION REQUIRED FROM PROSPECTIVE FIRM**

- **Profile of Firm:** Describe the firm on an overall basis, both locally and nationally (if applicable). Summarize the firm's specialties and qualifications. Give the firm's present complement of personnel by specialty, division, and employment classification in the Newark / New Jersey office. Include M/WBE status, UEZ certification status, and physical location.
- **Quality of Service Provision:** Describe how your firm will obtain a basic understanding of grant awardee's operations and activities to develop an engagement action plan. Describe the key personnel to be utilized on the engagement along with résumés of key personnel. Indicate their degrees of expertise and prior experiences as appropriate for the engagement.

- **Responsiveness and Communication:** Describe procedures utilized to monitor progress of the work for periodic evaluation and communication to the small business client. Describe any reporting or documentation your firm would be willing to provide to Invest Newark for grant compliance and oversight purposes (e.g., engagement summaries, milestone confirmations), subject to all applicable rules of professional conduct and confidentiality applicable to the service provider. Identify key local engagement personnel who will be continuously available for consultation or discussion with small business clients and, subject to all applicable rules of professional conduct and confidentiality applicable to the service provider, with Invest Newark.
- **Fee Structure:** Provide a rate schedule or menu of fees by service type and/or employment classification, including any out-of-pocket costs typically passed to clients. Fees should reflect what would be charged directly to small business clients engaging your firm under a grant-funded arrangement.
- **References:** Include reference contact information and descriptions of work for past clients
- **Attachments:** Include State of New Jersey Certificate of Good Standing, Proof of Insurance, and copies of any other certifications relevant to your specialty

**C. EVALUATION AND SELECTION** By use of numerical and narrative scoring techniques, RFQ submittals will be evaluated by the Invest Newark staff. A minimum score of 80 points must be obtained in order for a respondent to be included in the final pool of recommended providers.

1. Responsiveness of the proposal to the RFQ (20 points)
2. Meets state licensing requirements (10 points)
3. Meets all other technical requirements (10 points)
4. Location (physical office presence in Newark) (20 points)
5. References and Past Clients (20 points)
6. M/WBE owned firm (20 points)

Invest Newark reserves the right to reject any or all submittals and to waive any irregularities or informalities in the submittals received.

**D. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS** All proposals must be received in their entirety before 5pm on May 22<sup>nd</sup> 2026. One (1) PDF copy shall be submitted via E-mail to [cdeoleo@investnewark.org](mailto:cdeoleo@investnewark.org).

**E. STATEMENT OF NON-COMMITMENT** Issuance of this RFQ does not commit Invest Newark to award a contract, engage any service provider, or guarantee any volume of work or payment to respondents. Inclusion in the provider pool does not create any contractual relationship between Invest Newark and the service provider. Inclusion in the provider pool does should not create any expectation of any amount of business, work or money being or becoming available any to service provider. Invest Newark will not pay costs incurred in the preparation of proposals responding to this RFQ.

**F. QUESTIONS & ANSWERS** Applicants may submit questions and/or requests for further information no later than 5pm on May 11, 2026.

**G. SCHEDULE**

- RFQ distribution: April 29, 2026
- Deadline for questions: May 11, 2026, 5:00pm
- Proposals due: May 22, 2026, 5:00 pm

If you have any questions or would like further clarification of any aspect of this request for qualifications, please contact Lead Navigator Christopher Deoleo at 862-754-2659