

Vermont Agency of Commerce & Community Development
Department of Tourism & Marketing
C. Davis Building, 6th Floor
One National Life Drive
Montpelier, VT 05620-0501

VERMONT BUY LOCAL CONSUMER STIMULUS PROGRAM RFP

ADDENDUM 1

June 15, 2020

TO ALL BIDDERS OF RECORD:

This Addendum consists of 3 page(s).

Acknowledge receipt of this Addendum by entering its number and date as allotted on the Certificate of Compliance Form. This Addendum forms a part of the Contract Documents and modifies them as follows:

Questions and Answers:

1. Can you explain in more detail how the selection process works?

Please refer to section 3.4 of the RFP for the evaluation criteria that will be used to consider the proposals received.

2. Who decides what marketing program or programs is selected for that region?

This RFP opportunity is for potential vendors who could provide a consumer stimulus program that regions could employ if funding is allocated. If funding is allocated for a consumer stimulus program, a separate process will be developed for regions to apply for that funding. At that time, each region would select which marketing program(s) from the prequalified vendors and strategies that are determined from this RFP that they prefer to use.

3. Is there any preference for using marketing agencies located in a particular region?

No.

4. If known, can you please describe the process the regions will use in making their decisions selecting the programming?

Each region may determine which prequalified vendors and strategies determined through this RFP process they prefer to use.

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5. How would we go about collaborating with the other vendors selected?

Collaboration between bidders is not required for consumer stimulus vendors to provide a response to this RFP opportunity.

6. Are all efforts around the consumer stimulus program meant to be used by Vermonters, or is there an intent to expand these dollars to out-of-state consumers, as long as all dollars are solely benefiting Vermont businesses?

The program may capture both in state and out of state consumer spending that directly benefits Vermont businesses.

7. Are all funds for the consumer stimulus piece intended to benefit tourism-specific businesses, specifically those that generate rooms & meals taxes? Or is this a stimulus plan that could benefit any business that has been hard-hit by the pandemic?

The program is intended to benefit the hardest hit sectors of Vermont businesses, but it is not anticipated that businesses would need to be exclusively rooms and meals tax contributors to participate in the program.

8. In the RFP, it mentions each of the seven regions will receive \$500,000, however, does this take into account the amount of rooms & meals taxes each region contributes? For example, you may find that Chittenden County brings in significantly more rooms & meals tax than the Franklin/Grand Isle region. If the dollars are not flexible.

The amount of funding that each region may be eligible to receive has not yet been determined by the Legislature.

9. Is it your intention that these funds would help support local development agency efforts or would they be focused on providing direct support to help businesses recover here in Vermont?

The program is intended to directly benefit Vermont businesses through consumer spending.

10. What does a region need to do to access the money once it is made available?

As noted in the answer to Question 2, this RFP opportunity is for potential vendors who could provide a consumer stimulus program that regions could employ if funding is allocated. If funding is allocated for a consumer stimulus program, a separate process will be developed for regions to apply for that funding.

11. Do regions need to do anything now other than meet and work through their goals via a consumer spending initiative?

In anticipation of funding being allocated, yes, it would be helpful for regions to consider their goals for a consumer stimulus program so that they are prepared when the process for regions to apply for that funding is made available.

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12. What is the responsibility of the organization or entity that receives the \$500,000?

Each region will need to identify a fiscal sponsor who will contract for services from the prequalified list of vendors identified through this RFP should funding be allocated for this program.

13. Can that organization utilize a portion of the funds to cover costs of administration?

Yes, administrative costs are allowable but should be kept low to allow the majority of the consumer stimulus funding to be directed to consumer spending at local Vermont businesses. More details on the utilization of funds will be included when the process for regions to apply for that funding is created.

14. What is the protection for the organization who receives the funding should a problem arise during the project?

A grant agreement between the Agency of Commerce and Community Development and the regional organization that is the recipient of funds, should funding be allocated for the program, will outline the responsibilities of each party to the agreement.

15. This RFP will hopefully allow for our region to improve its economic standing and benefit the community at large. The NEK is the most rural and impoverished section of the state. Internet is not readily available to all our citizens and can negatively affect their ability to do business locally and globally. This problem will not be solved through the disbursement of these funds. Our hope would be to provide tools and resources that will increase sales for participating businesses. The timeframe for the delivery of this comprehensive proposal is pretty tight. We spend considerable time doing research and pricing in an effort to deliver a comprehensive, financially responsible proposal. Will the deadline be extended for the RFP?

No, the deadline for the RFP will not be extended.

16. Who are the partners in each Regional Collaborations? It would be very helpful to discuss in depth the needs as they see them for increasing our economic base.

Each region is encouraged to identify and collaborate with organizations and other partners to develop the best possible strategy that reaches as many local businesses and consumers as possible.

END OF ADDENDUM #1