

Is this a brand-new program being instated? Or has a contract expired and this is a continuation?

This is a brand new program.

What exactly are the expectations for the individual who works 20 hours a week? Is the schedule flexible? It is a Monday- Friday position? Do the expectations change based on need? Can you share any detailed oversight?

The 20 hours per week is the minimum hours per week the Township would like the Consultant to be present in Upper Darby. It is not required that it be one person; it may be partly scheduled office hours, partly work in the field. The Township is open to various scenarios being presented in the proposal.

Can you give a threshold or range of investment for this type of grant?

The small business grant parameters have not been established. It is envisioned that the size of a grant could be the cost of a new freezer to façade work to joint business corridor projects.

Can you give an idea of what the relationship building looks like to improve engagement with the residents and business owners of Upper Darby?

As this is a new program, a proposal from bidders, based on their previous experiences and/or best practices on how to achieve relationship building and engagement is sought.

What is the date to kick off this initiative?

As soon as is feasible, but no later than Fall 2025.

Are any funds allocated for upstart or prep cost?

Yes. ARPA funds were originally allocated for Economic Development via Ordinance 3123 "Small Business Grant Program" (\$1.0M) and Ordinance 3139 "Business District Revitalization" (\$3.8M) and are now in a Capital Reserve account. A Township Council vote is required to access these funds and is planned based on the results of this RFP.

The individual in this position would need a plethora of resources to build the infostructure. Who in Upper Darby would be helping with that?

The Consultant will report to Community & Economic Development. The Township is not currently staffed to build the infrastructure, which is a reason why the RFP was issued.

As far as Job Creative Jumpstart does it exist? Or would this individual develop the application and review processes to help select the business moving into Upper Darby?

Job Creation Jumpstart doesn't currently exist. The Consultant will help develop the application and review process for qualified Upper Darby businesses.

Is this program an extension of the community? Meaning can anyone walk in at any time with business related questions or would appointments be required?

The Township is open to proposals for how the business owners, and potential business owners, are best served.

What languages are the consultant to be familiar with?

According to the Upper Darby School District, the most common languages spoken are English, Spanish, Bengali, Urdu, Arabic, and Vietnamese. It is expected that this will be consistent across business owners, but will need to be assessed.

Can the Township clarify what specific metrics or benchmarks will be used to evaluate the success of the program during the three-year period, particularly in regard to job creation and business sustainability?

The Township and the Consultant may develop metrics and benchmarks together, based on the Consultant's experience and best practices.

Will the selected contractor have access to any existing data or reports from prior small business support initiatives in Upper Darby (e.g., business census data, corridor assessments, or prior grant recipients) to inform planning and outreach?

Where there is relevant data available, the Township will provide the Consultant with access.

Does the Township already have identified top non-English languages to prioritize in outreach materials, or will the contractor be responsible for conducting a language needs assessment?

According to the Upper Darby School District, the most common languages spoken are English, Spanish, Bengali, Urdu, Arabic, and Vietnamese. It is expected that this will be consistent across business owners, but will need to be assessed.

Is there an expectation or preference for the selected contractor to collaborate with existing economic development partners (e.g., chambers of commerce, workforce boards, CDFIs), or should the contractor propose entirely new partnerships?

The Township believes there is benefit to collaborating with existing partners and organizations and welcomes the opportunity for new partnerships.

For the business and workforce development grant programs, will the Township manage the disbursement of funds directly, or is the contractor expected to manage both disbursement and compliance?

This will be determined as part of the grant creation process.