

Upper Darby Township
Community & Economic Development

Request for Proposals (RFP)

Business Empowerment Hub / Small Business Resources and Consulting Services

Introduction

In 2025, Upper Darby Township will establish a new program, the *Business Empowerment Hub* (“Center”) to provide professional services to businesses located in, or wishing to locate in, Upper Darby Township. The Township is seeking proposals for professional consulting and business resource services for businesses, from those that typically have fewer than ten (10) employees and annual revenue that does not exceed \$250,000 to businesses that have up to fifty (50) employees and annual revenue that does not exceed \$500,000.

Services will be provided, variously, at the Municipal Building at 100 Garrett Road, Upper Darby, PA, 19082; mobile services at business corridors across the Township; and, via phone or video conferencing services.

About the Township

It is the mission of Upper Darby Community & Economic Development to guide sustainable business district and neighborhood development that results in a higher standard of living, enjoyment, and quality of life in Upper Darby Township.

Upper Darby Township is 7.8 square miles, with a population of over 85,000,837 making it the 6th largest municipality in Pennsylvania. Upper Darby Township is unique relative to other Delaware County municipalities by virtue of its size and demography - its population density is much closer to Philadelphia than surrounding Delaware County municipalities. Upper Darby is more racially and culturally diverse than its neighbors, including Philadelphia, as more than a quarter of Upper Darby residents speak a language other than English at home.

Upper Darby sits just seven miles from Philadelphia International Airport and the 30th Street Amtrak Station. Multi-modal transportation connections are a competitive advantage for Upper Darby, where residents and commuters use the road networks, trains, trolleys and buses for leisure and business. SEPTA’s 69th Street Transportation Center, is the terminus of the Market-Frankford Elevated Rail Line and the beginning of the Norristown High Speed Line, and is the eastern destination for the 101 (Media) and 102 (Sharon Hill) Trolley Lines.

The Upper Darby Township Comprehensive Plan calls for neighborhoods to be connected to vibrant commercial districts, accomplished through the creation of Transportation Oriented Development Districts, zoning ordinance updates, creation of a signage and wayfinding system, financial incentives, new special events and a brand and marketing campaigns.

Upper Darby Township’s Economic Development Initiative is informed by these goals and builds upon them to include incentivizing and attracting new investment and jobs to revitalize the

community and improve well-being for residents. The subject of this Request for Proposals is part of an Economic Development and Business Revitalization program. Successful businesses revitalize neighborhoods and create opportunity; strong business sales diversify and expand the tax base; the creation and retention of jobs promotes economic stability; and, community pride and identity grow - all of which serves residents, increases visitors and attracts investment to Upper Darby.

Timeline

Tuesday, March 18, 2025

RFP Reissued

Tuesday, March 25, 2025

All questions regarding this RFP must be submitted via email to CED@upperdarby.org

Friday, March 28, 2025

All questions and answers will be provided back to all prospective bidders via email and posted at <https://www.upperdarby.org/CommunityandEconomicDevelopmentProjects>

Friday, April 11, 2025

Proposals Due by 4:00pm

Five (5) hard copies must be delivered to Upper Darby Township Community & Economic Development, 100 Garrett Road, Upper Darby, PA 19082. A digital submission is also required to be sent via email to CED@upperdarby.org

Monday, April 21, 2025

Finalists will be notified and a presentation date will be scheduled for the week of April 28, 2025

May 2025

Project Award

Upper Darby Township reserves the right to not award and/or to revise this timeline at any time

SCOPE OF SERVICES

Upper Darby Township is requesting business development and professional services for a three (3) year contract, renewed annually, to provide the following:

General Administration

- Provide professional services to businesses located in, or wishing to locate in, Upper Darby Township for businesses between fewer than ten (10) employees and annual revenue that does not exceed \$250,000 to businesses that have up to fifty (50) employees and annual revenue that does not exceed \$500,000.
- Services will be provided, variously, at the Municipal Building at 100 Garrett Road, Upper Darby, PA, 19082; mobile services at business corridors across the township; at facilities across the township; and, via phone or video conferencing services.
- Maintain a presence in Upper Darby Township for a minimum of twenty (20) hours per week.
- Capacity to effectively serve limited English-speaking communities.

Planning

- Work closely with Upper Darby Community & Economic Development to identify the needs of the business community, and create a plan that includes Immediate Actionable Items (12 months); Medium-Term Actionable Items (1 - 4 years) and Long-Term Actionable Items (5 or more years)
- Gather information from Upper Darby businesses to understand the most pressing needs and wants along business corridors and the surrounding neighborhoods.
 - Develop a series of meetings, surveys, and data research to understand the issues and develop best-fit solutions.
 - Conduct exploration of existing resources and create new partnerships where advantageous.

Business Resources

- Provide businesses with both start-up and ongoing assistance, such as the development of business and marketing plans, record keeping, accounting, personnel development, etc.
- Provide technical assistance to include business plans and business development; accounting, finance, and taxes; digital and traditional marketing assistance; access to investment and loan opportunities; and, M/W/DSBE Certification.

Business Grants

Financial investment in small businesses is a crucial component of growth and ideally closely follows capacity building. Township grants under consideration include Local Business Development, for start-ups and new growth; Essential Business Equipment Procurement; Façade Improvements, such as signage, painting, window treatments; and, improving energy efficiency and/or reducing pollution or waste.

- Develop a structured, equitable, and merit-based application and award process to evaluate applicants and allocate funds.
- Provide awardees with the technical support to successfully manage the grant.
- Monitor return on investment closely to gauge the success of the program.

Workforce Development

“Job Creation Jumpstart” is a grant program being developed to create and retain a steady increase of jobs by providing small businesses with single-use basic conditional grants. Businesses that are creating low-to-moderate income jobs, or expanding to create or retain low-to-moderate income jobs will be eligible. Businesses must be located within the township’s geographic boundaries, jobs may be part-time or full-time, and industries may include restaurants, retail, light industrial, manufacturing, etc.

- Develop a structured, equitable, and merit-based application and award process to evaluate applicants and allocate funds.
- Provide awardees with the technical support to successfully manage the grant.
- Monitor return on investment closely to gauge the success of the program.
- Maintain record of jobs created and/or maintained.

Communications

- Develop outreach materials in both digital and hard copy format in at least three (3) non-English languages based on population data in Upper Darby, PA.
- Write text and create materials, such as brochures, flyers, web site, social media, postings in public locations, and tabling at community events to promote services and programs.
- Develop workshops, seminars, and information sessions suitable for both in person and virtual settings.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS AND MONITORING

Monthly Fiscal and Programmatic Reporting

Submit detailed financial, performance and demographic reports to the Township monthly. The Township may periodically request additional programmatic or statistical information outside the normal reporting requirements.

Semi-Annual Reporting

Submit semi-annual reports that summarizes the Township-wide business development program. Report must include both data and narrative illustrating impact and effectiveness, including follow-up activity that may have occurred regarding technical assistance, grants, and the creation and or retention of jobs. The report must also include any specific business needs and/or emerging trends and provide an update for the total number of businesses and/or individuals served and how many jobs created or retained, including type of job and rate of pay.

Reports for January – June will be due on August 1st

Reports for July - December will be due on February 1st

Final Reporting

- A final report will be due thirty (30) days after the conclusion of the three (3) year project period. The report will consist of outcomes and accomplishments achieved in the Township for all three (3) contracted project years. The Final Report must include both data and narrative illustrating impact and effectiveness, including follow-up activity that may have occurred regarding technical assistance, grants, and the creation and or retention of jobs.
- The final report must also contain the total number of jobs created and/or retained during the three (3) year project period and the demographics served. The total number of businesses served, including demographics, must be reported for the entire three (3) year project period. The final report must also address any barriers to job creation and or retention that may have occurred during the three (3) year project period and how it was addressed.

Monitoring

The Township will participate in monitoring efforts and conduct additional monitoring as needed. Contractors must make all programmatic and fiscal records available for review as requested with five (5) days notice by Township staff.

Records Maintenance

Contractors must maintain records for at least seven (7) years.

QUALIFICATIONS / REQUIRED INFORMATION

Proposals must include the following:

- A concise description of similar services the contractor has provided on behalf of an urbanized municipality. This must include listing of prior positions and contain contact information for references.
- If the proposal does not specify a sole applicant, a lead project manager must be identified, and a list must be submitted that identifies the specific personnel who will be assigned to the program along with a description of their professional qualifications and work experience. This list should clearly identify specific tasks that each person will be expected to accomplish along with the proportionate amount of time that each person will spend on the program.
- A written statement that clearly demonstrates an understanding of the program and an ability to work with a broad and diverse group of constituents, including government entities. Examples must be provided.
- A cost proposal that specifies the hourly rates of all assigned personnel, a breakdown of all associated costs and a fixed “not to exceed” figure for all work to be performed.
- A demonstration of the contractor’s knowledge of business and employment trends in Upper Darby Township and a brief description of how to address any issues.

CRITERIA

- Upper Darby Township is responsible for evaluating and selecting the contractor and for determining goals and objectives. Criteria have been established to guide the evaluation of each proposal.
- Negotiations and award of an agreement will be to the contractor that provides the most advantageous proposal, all things considered, including price and cost. Upper Darby Township reserves the right to reject all proposals.
- Contractors will be evaluated by a selection committee and based on the responsiveness and quality of the proposal, technical quality of the work plan and methodology, relevant experiences and qualifications of the consulting team, quality of the references, and feasibility and completeness of the proposed budget.
- The top ranked contractors may be asked to make an oral presentation to representatives of Upper Darby Township. It is expected that the contractor’s lead team member will take part in any oral presentation. Primary criteria are as follows:
 - Previous experience providing business outreach and one-on-one technical assistance and support on behalf of an urbanized Township, with a population of at least 30,000 individuals, including a significant percentage of low- and moderate-income households.

- Demonstrated understanding of the project.
- Costs as reflected in the “Not to Exceed” figure.
- This project requires the applicant to work closely with local government officials, the local business community, the community, and the general public. The quality of written, oral, and graphic communication skills of the applicant will be a consideration.

Proposal Organization and Required Information

- Overview/scope of work that conveys the contractor’s understanding of the program’s objectives and requirements.
- Description of the team, with descriptions of qualifications and experience. If any part of the services will be assigned to subcontractors, include subcontractor name and address, and descriptions of qualifications and experience.
- Plan of work and technical approach, which is a description of the proposed course and sequence of action or tasks including methodologies and a time-phased statement of project milestones over the initial term of three (3) years.
- Staff - time breakdown, proposed site visits, and meeting schedule to include a breakdown of the estimated staff time for each task outlined in the plan of work, including proposed site visits.
- References - a minimum of three references for similar services provided, including a summary of the study and name, address, email, and telephone number of person to contact.
- Cost Proposal - to be inclusive of all costs for accomplishing the scope of work. Must be submitted in a document separate from the Technical Proposal.
- Signature – the proposal must be signed by an individual authorized to negotiate and execute agreements on behalf of the contractor and must be binding for ninety (90) days. Please include name, title, address, email and telephone number.

Upper Darby Township reserves the right to not award and/or to revise the timeline at any time