



Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF HOUSING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
**MASSACHUSETTS OFFICE OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT**  
136 BLACKSTONE STREET, 5<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR  
BOSTON, MA 02109

**Regional Economic Development Organization Grant Program  
Fiscal Year 2022  
Request for Response – Round 2**

**COMMBUYS Bid #: BD-22-1100-SEA01-SEA01-70731**

**RFR Release Date:** February 1, 2022

**Proposal Deadline:** February 22, 2022 by 4:00 P.M.  
Late applications will not be accepted.

**Email proposal to:** [Nhat.Le@mass.gov](mailto:Nhat.Le@mass.gov)  
Cc: Applicable MOBD Regional Director.

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**I. Background**

The Massachusetts Office of Business Development (MOBD) posted an RFP for the Fiscal Year 2022 Regional Economic Development Organization (REDO) Grant Program on COMMBUYS on 8/26/21, with a proposal submission deadline of 9/30/21. (COMMBUYS Bid Solicitation: BD-22-1100-EED01-EED01-65964 [COMMBUYS – Bid Solicitation](#).)

MOBD received applications from eleven (11) regional economic development organizations, and awarded grants to all applicants for some, but not all, proposed projects, based on scope of work, in the total amount of \$3,083,037.93.

The Legislature appropriated to MOBD \$6 M for the FY 2022 REDO Program via line item 7007-0150 of chapter 24 of the Acts of 2021. MOBD is required by M.G.L. c. 23A, Sec. 3K(a)(1) to award up to twelve (12) contracts for regional business development services.

As the original solicitation states, the goal of the Program is for successful applicants to collaborate with MOBD to support businesses in the Commonwealth, aligning with the Commonwealth's *Economic Development Plan – Partnerships for Growth: A plan to enable the Commonwealth's regions to build, connect and lead* [Partnerships for Growth: | Mass.gov](#), and *Partnerships for Recovery* [Baker-Polito Administration Announces Partnerships for Recovery, \\$774 Million Economic Recovery Plan | Mass.gov](#), including but not limited to, supporting regionally-based efforts to nurture and facilitate economic growth and prosperity in the Commonwealth.

**II. Announcement and Overview**

MOBD is now accepting applications for Round 2 of the FY 2022 REDO Grant Program. MOBD invites the eleven (11) REDOs that previously submitted applications for the FY 2022 REDO Program to submit applications for new or revised projects within their regions to maximize impact through strong partnerships; these REDOs should not re-submit for their traditional funding (i.e., funding for projects that the REDO alone will perform). MOBD also invites any additional REDOs that meet the eligibility requirements identified in Section V to submit applications for projects within their regions to maximize impact through strong partnerships. All applicants are to submit a completed application form, to which they are to attach separate descriptions of each proposed project.

MOBD will continue to prioritize well-defined proposals on the strategy and action plan to assist entrepreneurs, small businesses, and business partners. All applications with project proposals should clearly define the scope, a detailed budget, the impact to the region, and clear performance benchmarks with metrics. Also, applications with one or more proposed projects from any new or existing partners must clearly define the roles of the REDO and its partners. If the project receives or will receive other funding sources, please indicate that in the application.

For FY2022, MOBD hopes to see more partnerships formed to deliver positive economic outcomes through projects. The REDO applicant may demonstrate how its organization supports businesses and communities in stabilizing and/or growing their regional economy with one or more of the following types of recovery efforts identified under *Partnerships for Recovery*: Getting Massachusetts Back to Work, Supporting Small Businesses, Revitalizing Downtowns, or Fostering Innovation.

### **III. Samples of Types of Projects Eligible for Grants**

- Non-construction façade improvement/investment (e.g., signage, beautification)
- Continuation of pop-up businesses
- Projects similar to Shared Street and Spaces Program projects related to economic development, such as improvements to spaces or lighting on certain streets for better business traffic
- Main Street recovery projects with high local impact for small businesses

### **IV. Types of Projects Ineligible for Grants**

- Study/Assessment
- Gift cards program
- Marketing/Tourism
- Construction/Brownfields/Renovation

### **V. Eligibility**

- Eligible organizations shall be corporations, foundations, organizations or institutions that are exempt from federal taxation under section 501(c) of the Internal Revenue Code.
- Eligible organizations shall have a primary focus on economic development and perform the services required by M.G.L. Chapter 23A, Sections 3J and 3K, – as further described in the *Governance* section below.
- Eligible organization must operate regionally and service 10 or more contiguous cities/towns with interrelated economic assets.
- The applicant engages primarily in activities intended to promote job and business retention, creation and attraction across all industry sectors within its identified region.
- The applicant has a history of collaboration with the area business community, local officials, economic development organizations, higher education institutions and other public and private organizations within the identified region. The applicant must describe a plan for a formal program encouraging participation in activities by a wide variety of organizations, governments and businesses operating in the identified region.

- The applicant has received or has commitments to receive substantial financial and in-kind support from private resources or member municipalities.
- The applicant is capable of and agrees to provide services to the entire region identified in the application.

## **VI. Ineligible Organizations**

- Governmental regional entities, which serve as regional or district planning commissions under M.G.L. Chapter 40B.
- Regional employment boards.
- Tourism councils under M.G.L. Chapter 23A, § 14.
- Entities that are a political subdivision of a municipality or wholly owned by a municipality.

## **VII. Use of Funds**

- Funding may not be used to increase salaries or hire additional staff for the REDO.
- Sub-contracting is allowed for project implementation by REDO partners.
- No more than 10% of the REDO grant can be used for the grantee's overhead costs that are not specifically related to REDO activities allowable pursuant to M.G.L. Ch. 23A, § 3K.
- This grant is intended to improve service delivery for the benefit of the Massachusetts business community.
- Grant funds from the REDO Grant Program cannot be used to subsidize non-REDO operating costs.
- Organizations are required to list other funding sources on the application. Please disclose:
  1. The origin and amount of the funding;
  2. Detailed budgets and accounting documents for REDO grant funds to differentiate spending from each source of funding; and
  3. If applicable, describe any initiatives that are planned to be jointly funded through the REDO Grant and another public funding source.

## **VIII. Selection Process and Criteria**

The review committee will review and score the grant applications and at its sole discretion contract with individual organizations and/or regional partnerships that demonstrate an ability to utilize grant funds to improve upon the region's economic competitiveness. Proposals must demonstrate the ability to meet the following in order to receive funding:

- 15 points - Provide a strategy and a clear action plan to address business needs in the region that would result in strong impact and outcome.

- 10 points - Demonstrate that organization/partnership understands the region's strengths and opportunities and has the capacity in providing services to the entire region identified in the proposal.
- 10 points - Demonstrate the value added of the funding to the organization and region in an organized, well-written and complete grant proposal; and how it aligns with the Commonwealth's economic development plan *Partnerships for Growth*;
- 20 points - Demonstrate that services would serve the small businesses; plan to refer businesses to MOBD.
- 20 points - Have a detailed and reasonable budget, executable and measurable metrics, and a clear timeline for services outlined in the proposal
- 20 points - Have a strong record of committed partnership and collaboration either among partners and/or with MOBD to carry out and complete the proposal.
- 5 points - Will be for the demographic makeup for the coverage area.

MOBD reserves the right to require, as a condition of a grant of funds, that two or more organizations with significant overlap in service areas or initiatives create a regional partnership to ensure substantial coverage.

## **IX. Grant Contract Duration**

The grant contract term shall be from the date the grant contract is fully executed through June 30, 2022. All services must be performed by June 30, 2022, and all deliverables must be submitted no later than June 30, 2022 and in accordance with the schedule set forth below.

## **X. Contract and Payment**

If the proposal is accepted for funding, disbursement of grant funds is subject to the execution of a contract with the grantee. The application and grant proposal narrative shall become the basis for MOBD's contract negotiations with the applicant to determine the precise scope of work, budget, and use of funds. All documents deemed necessary by MOBD will be revised from the grant proposal and incorporated into the contract as attachments, including a scope of work submitted by the Grantee and approved by MOBD.

## **XI. Grant Program Reporting**

Organizations shall submit quarterly and annual reports in the provided templates.

- Activity report template (excel) should be submitted quarterly and can be submitted jointly or separately. This report should include type business assistance to companies, the identification of diverse businesses, number of jobs created and/or retained, events hosted, and meetings with partners and regional directors.
- Final report (PowerPoint) should feature business support along with job numbers, communities, business success stories, partner organizations and regional areas of concern.

- It is expected that important regional highlights will be communicated in real-time to the MOBD Main Office or Regional Offices.
- Any additional documents that exhibit and support the work being completed by the REDO in the region are welcomed, but not required.

## **XII. Governance**

### **Governance: REDO Services Required by M.G.L Section 3K(c) of Chapter 23A**

*Contracts for services entered into under this section shall include, but not be limited to, the following required services to be performed by the organization on behalf of the commonwealth*

- (i) act as the primary contact for businesses seeking assistance from state or local governments, including those seeking to locate within the region or expand existing operations;
- (ii) identify public funding sources for business activity and provide assistance in accessing public tax incentive programs;
- (iii) identify potential sites for business development and maintain an inventory of key development parcels;
- (iv) market the identified region in coordination with the Massachusetts marketing partnership established under section 13A and in compliance with the marketing materials developed by the partnership;
- (v) furnish advice and assistance to businesses and industrial prospects which may locate in the region, existing businesses and industries and persons seeking to establish new businesses or industries and engage in related activities;
- (vi) establish and maintain a network of public and private expertise related to regional assets, industry clusters, workforce and education opportunities and public tax and regulatory incentive and capital access programs;
- (vii) partner with the Massachusetts office of business development representative to the region and representatives of quasi-public agencies and authorities engaged in economic development activities to exchange information and jointly provide direct consultation with businesses seeking to expand or locate to the region;
- (viii) act as the primary contact for the region for a business seeking state assistance and incentives in a location decision;
- (ix) in partnership with the staff of the Massachusetts office of business development, assist member municipalities with economic development efforts related to business attraction and retention and with access to state economic development programs; and
- (x) submit an annual report to the Massachusetts office of business development on the business development activities conducted under the contract. The report shall include: a summary of the preceding year's program activities, objectives and accomplishments; a description of how the programs and marketing strategy conducted under the contract align with the commonwealth's overall economic development and strategies; an analysis of how the contracting organization's involvement in promotion activities has generated prospective business expansion and relocation clients; and a summary of its efforts to obtain funds from local, private and federal sources.

### **Governance: REDO Services Required by M.G.L. c. 23A, sec. 3J(d)**

*Contracts for services entered into under this section shall include, but not be limited to, the following required services to be performed by the regional economic development organizations on behalf of the commonwealth:*

- (i) assessing regional competitive strengths, weaknesses and opportunities;
- (ii) representing the regional business community in long-range workforce skills pipeline planning efforts to ensure robust skills and talent pipelines that meet regional needs;
- (iii) representing the regional business community in collaborative, long-range workforce skills, transportation and land use planning;
- (iv) promoting regionally significant industry clusters;
- (v) promoting connections across sectors of the regional economy;
- (vi) maintaining an inventory of key development parcels;
- (vii) marketing the region in coordination with the Massachusetts Marketing Partnership established under section 13A; and
- (viii) furnishing advice and assistance to businesses and industrial prospects which may locate in the region.

### **XIII. Grant Contract Scope of Work, Budget and Use of Funds**

If the grant is awarded, the grant application shall become the basis for MOBD's contract negotiations with the applicant to determine the precise scope of work, budget, and use of funds. All documents deemed necessary by MOBD will be revised from the grant proposal and incorporated into the contract as attachments, including a scope of work submitted by the applicant and approved by MOBD.

### **XIV. Grant Contract Payment Process**

The grantee shall submit invoices on a form provided/approved by the project manager, as well as any additional documentation required by the project manager, for cost reimbursement or periodic scheduled payments on a quarterly basis.

**All payments are contingent on the obligation of all grant funds by June 30, 2022, as well as grantee's timely submission of all reports identified in RFR Section XI.**

### **XV. Questions**

Questions may be submitted to Nhat Le via email at [nhat.le@mass.gov](mailto:nhat.le@mass.gov), or by telephone at (617) 571-7432.

## **XVI. Forms Required to be Executed by Successful Applicant**

- Commonwealth of Massachusetts Standard Contract Form  
[https://www.macomptroller.org/wp-content/uploads/form\\_standard-contract.docx](https://www.macomptroller.org/wp-content/uploads/form_standard-contract.docx)
- An IRS W-9 Form for new grantees that have not previously received grant or contract payments from the Commonwealth  
[form\\_w-9.pdf \(macomptroller.org\)](https://www.macomptroller.org/wp-content/uploads/form_w-9.pdf)
- A listing of authorized signatories who will be authorized to legally bind the grantee; and including the designation of a Contract Manager who will be responsible for management of grant performance.  
[CONTRACTOR AUTHORIZED SIGNATORY LISTING \(macomptroller.org\)](https://www.macomptroller.org/wp-content/uploads/contractor-authorized-signatory-listing.pdf)

## **XVII. Acceptable Forms of Signature**

Effective June 15, 2021, for all 1) Comptroller (CTR) forms, including the Standard Contract Form, W-9s, Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) forms, ISAs, and other CTR-issued documents and forms, or 2) documents related to state finance and within the statutory area of authority or control of CTR (i.e. contracts, payrolls, and related supporting documentation), CTR will accept signatures executed by an authorized signatory in any of the following ways: 1. Traditional “wet signature” (ink on paper); 2. Electronic signature that is either: a. Hand drawn using a mouse or finger if working from a touch screen device; or b. An uploaded picture of the signatory’s hand drawn signature 3. Electronic signatures affixed using a digital tool such as Adobe Sign or DocuSign. If using an electronic signature, the signature must be visible, include the signatory’s name and title, and must be accompanied by a signature date. Please be advised that typed text of a name not generated by a digital tool such as Adobe Sign or DocuSign, even in computer-generated cursive script, or an electronic symbol, are not acceptable forms of electronic signature.