AMERICA'S SBDC MINNESOTA Northeast Region
HOSTED BY: NORTHLAND FOUNDATION
202 West Superior Street, Suite 800
Duluth, Minnesota 55802
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Request for Proposal

Position: Small Business Consultant - **Marketing**, Northland Small Business Development Center
Primary Location: 7 Counties of Northeast Minnesota (Remote/Video Conference/In-Person based on availability)
Hours: Part-Time Contractor(s)

The Northland Small Business Development Center is seeking to contract with a Small Business Consultant who will assist business owners/managers and aspiring entrepreneurs to successfully start, manage, and grow their businesses. The consultant will also work directly with clients, consulting, and documenting services and outcomes.

Specific Duties

- Provide direct client consulting assistance in marketing.
- Guide entrepreneurs to identify and achieve their marketing goals for their small business.
- Evaluate and assist with preparation of clients' marketing plans.
- Provide training on the use of common social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, Tiktok, etc. for business marketing uses.
- Assist clients with setting up and optimizing Google Business Profiles and provide guidance on effective marketing through Google tools.
- Support businesses in selecting and developing a do-it-yourself website or in scoping proposals for professional web development services.
- Provide training on search engine optimization (SEO) and other digital marketing techniques.
- Assist with developing press releases and marketing materials for grand openings and other business events.
- Maintain accurate client files, including all records required by the MN SBDC.
- Document consulting activities and client outcomes in the designated database system (Neoserra).
- Research, develop, and share resources and materials to address client marketing needs.
- Represent the Northland SBDC at community events, networking opportunities, and other outreach activities to increase awareness of SBDC services and connect with prospective clients.

Preferred Qualifications

- At least three years of experience in communications or marketing with experience in digital marketing.
- Excellent written and oral communication skills.
- Experience working with diverse populations.
- Comfort working with Microsoft Office software (Word, Excel, and PowerPoint) and video conferencing (Zoom).
- A demonstrated track record of successful marketing training with small businesses or working with small business owners.
- A passion for small businesses and a desire to help empower entrepreneurs in achieving success.

APPLY

If interested, we ask for the following:

1. In the body of an email, please write up to two paragraphs telling us why you are interested in and about your qualifications and experience for the position. Specify if you prefer to meet with clients virtually, in person (specify communities), or are open to either. You will not receive more consideration because of a longer or shorter email.
2. In the body of the email, please include your proposed rate per hour for consulting services for 2027 and your preferred number of consulting hours per month. Preferred contracting hours will be considered but not guaranteed. Our maximum hourly rate is $67.00 per hour for 2027. Deadline for applications is October 26, 2026.
3. Attach your resume to the email or share a link to your LinkedIn profile.
4. Please send your email to Jenny Lisic: jenny@northlandsbdc.org

Proposal Evaluation and Selection

Proposal will be reviewed, scored, and ranked by the Northland SBDC Program Coordinator and Regional Director. Consultants that are selected will be notified by November 13, 2026.

Evaluation Criteria:

Category	Weight
Relevant Experience & Expertise	25%
Availability & Regional Coverage Fit	20%
Cost per Hour of Direct Services (Including Reasonable Preparation Time)	15%
SBDC/Partner Familiarity & Commitment to Mission	15%
Communication & Professionalism	15%
Consulting Approach & Client Impact	10%

The Northland Foundation is a regional foundation serving the seven-county region of northeastern Minnesota and is host of the Northland Minnesota Small Business Development Center (SBDC). The SBDC operates under the Minnesota Small Business Development Center (MN SBDC) Network. The SBDC is a program sponsored by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED), and sponsoring host organizations and partners. The Minnesota SBDC is part of a nationwide network of SBDC offices organized as the Association of SBDCs (ASBDC) known as America's SBDC. The primary mission of the Minnesota SBDC is to support economic development in the state by providing technical assistance (professional business consultation and education) in the start-up, successful operation, and expansion of small businesses within the state's small business community. The SBDC is funded in part through a Cooperative Agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration, Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development and regional support partners. All opinions, conclusions or recommendations expressed are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the program sponsors. Programs are open to the public on a nondiscriminatory basis. Reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities will be made if requested at least two weeks in advance. **Northland Foundation is an equal opportunity employer, lender, and provider.**