



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR LEAD CONSULTANT:

RESEARCH STUDY TO CONSIDER NORTH CAROLINA'S SYSTEM OF PUBLIC FINANCE, WITH A FOCUS ON POTENTIAL NEW REVENUE STREAMS OVER 30 YEARS

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: 5 PM, JANUARY 19, 2022

About the Research Project and Funder

The NCEDA Foundation, in partnership with the NCEDA Research Committee and with funding by CLT Host 2020 Inc., will conduct this research study to consider North Carolina's system of municipal, county, and state public finance, with a focus on exploring potential new revenue streams over the next 30 years. The study is intended to serve as a base of information that policy makers may use to plan for the future—specifically to explore revenue generation opportunities and to address associated needs through 2050. The study is designed to focus on revenue opportunities only and is not intended to make policy recommendations or to offer guidance on spending.

To promote the Charlotte area and the Carolinas during the planned 2020 RNC Convention, local leaders formed the 2020 Charlotte Host Committee (CLT Host 2020 Inc.), a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit economic development organization with no political affiliation. This non-partisan organization is now focused on distributing the remaining funds to projects benefiting the public good.

CLT Host 2020 Inc. awarded the NCEDA Foundation a grant to oversee this research study and the work of an external lead consultant to complete this research project, with significant input from an Advisory Committee and other partners. This project contributes to the NCEDA Foundation's mission of strengthening the broad, statewide economic development community in North Carolina and providing state leadership with relevant and impactful information for the benefit of our communities.

NCEDA FOUNDATION RFP

About the NCEDA Foundation

For more than half a century, the North Carolina Economic Development Association (NCEDA) and its over 700 members have led successful efforts to serve as the voice for North Carolina's economic development community by providing professional development, networking opportunities, and advocacy to secure the state's economic future.

In 2020, NCEDA established the **North Carolina Economic Development Association (NCEDA) Foundation** to build on NCEDA's mission and successes with new and expanded programs and sources of funding. The NCEDA Foundation will advance the economic development profession, enhance the knowledge and skills of economic developers, and strengthen the broad, statewide economic development community in North Carolina through funding professional development activities, expert research, and education programs, especially to underserved, distressed, and rural counties and economic developers across North Carolina. The NCEDA Foundation will respond to challenges and will address obvious and important needs with programs that will enhance competitiveness and equitable economic opportunity in every part of North Carolina.

NCEDA FOUNDATION AREAS OF WORK

SCHOLARSHIPS FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPERS

- The Foundation expands NCEDA's current scholarships with a focus on under-represented people and professionals working in underserved and distressed areas. Scholarships are available statewide for a wide range of professional development.

AWARENESS & TRAINING PROGRAMS

- Educating community and elected leaders across the state about the purpose, practices, and needs of economic development programs and practitioners.
- Offering NCEDA Fellows from the state's higher education institutions opportunities for internships with economic development organizations, especially in rural and underserved areas, that will strengthen our talent pipeline for economic development.

RESEARCH PROGRAMS

- Reviewing best practices in economic development programs
- Enhancing the competitiveness of North Carolina
- Informing state economic development policy
- Producing information to support city/county economic development policies
- Raising awareness of trends impacting economic development

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Request for Proposals

The **NCEDA Foundation Board of Directors** is seeking proposals from qualified consultants to plan and execute this research project to consider North Carolina's system of municipal, county, and state public finance, with a focus on projecting future revenues and exploring potential new revenue streams over the next 30 years. The study is intended to serve as a base of information policy makers may use to plan for the future—specifically to explore revenue generation opportunities and to address associated needs through 2050. The study is designed to focus on revenue opportunities only and is not intended to make policy recommendations or to offer guidance on spending. The project will include the creation of an Advisory Committee; data collection, analysis, and reporting; and all related activities to be led by the lead consultant.

Scope of Work

While the **NCEDA Foundation Board of Directors** seeks the consultant's recommendations for an effective process to complete the research project, the Foundation expects the process to include at least the following elements:

1. Establishing a formal, short-term Advisory Committee to consist of representatives of the NCEDA Foundation Board and management team, NCEDA Research Committee, CLT Host Committee, NC Governor's Budget Office Staff, NC General Assembly Budget Office Staff (majority and minority parties), as well as university research personnel, communications experts, and any other experts as needed. This committee will meet regularly under the leadership and coordination of the lead contractor. This Advisory Committee may determine a project name, mission statement, process expectations, desired outcomes, etc. The consultant will be expected to convene the committee at least 4 times over the course of the project and will provide the committee with monthly project updates, interim reports of input and analysis, a draft report and a final report.
2. Convening partner meetings, including Advisory Committee meetings, regularly and additionally as needed, to garner feedback and to remain aligned with project goals and expectations. The consultant will be expected to engage, at a minimum, representatives of the following groups for input into potential revenue sources: NC General Assembly, NC Governor's Budget Office, NC Department of Revenue, UNC School of Government, NC City and County Managers Association, NC League of Municipalities, Association of County Commissioners, and others to be determined. The consultant will present a summary of input from these sources at an Advisory Committee meeting.

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Scope of Work (continued)

3. Gathering and analyzing all relevant data from a broad range of sources, including other states. In addition to the data sources mentioned above, the consultant will also gather best practices in government revenue sources from other states comparable to North Carolina. Best practice information should include a summary of the revenue program, revenue raised, restrictions on spending the revenue, effectiveness of the revenue program, obstacles for revenue collection, how the program is evaluated, etc. The consultant will present best practice research at an Advisory Committee meeting and include this information in the draft and final reports.
4. Compiling data, findings, and projections. The consultant will create revenue projections for each potential new revenue source in North Carolina as well as estimate the cost of implementing and administering each revenue source. The consultant will present this information at an Advisory Committee meeting and in the draft and final reports.
5. Creating a preliminary, written report for review with partners and allowing time for modifications, as needed. The consultant will present a draft report for input from the Advisory Committee.
6. Creating a final, written report for delivery to the NCEDA Foundation Board of Directors, the CLT Host Committee, project Advisory Committee, other interested parties, media, and the public. The consultant will also deliver a summary report and presentation.

Qualifications

The **NCEDA Foundation Board of Directors** seeks a consultant with demonstrated experience in successfully developing and executing similar high-caliber research projects, especially projects with an emphasis on projecting fiscal opportunities and associated needs. The consultant must have experience in planning, developing, and executing a data-driven research project that involves a diverse set of relevant parties.

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Qualifications (continued)

The consultant will also possess the following credentials:

- Experience and knowledge regarding project startup, convening diverse partners for feedback and guidance, gathering and analyzing data from a range of relevant sources, projecting potential opportunities and outcomes, and reporting findings.
- Ability to collect data from a variety of sources and direct the work of other entities (universities, contractors) to gather and analyze data.
- Strong facilitation skills and ability to solicit input from individuals from various backgrounds, by convening meetings (in-person and virtual) of diverse partners/stakeholders to discuss the project and to gain insights and guidance from these partners.
- Exceptional communication capabilities, with a commitment to communicate regularly with NCEDAF, funders, and other partners; and to compile findings in a final report to be presented to a variety of parties including NCEDAF, the funders, partners, media, and other interested entities.

Proposal Requirements

Proposals must include the following:

1. Workplan: Provide a detailed description of the activities to be conducted by the consultant to complete the requested scope of work, including the following:
 - a. Specific activities to be conducted.
 - b. Timeline of activities at each stage.
 - c. Milestones and deliverables tied to those activities.
2. Consultant qualifications and roles: Describe the consultant's qualifications to conduct the RFP scope of work activities, including expertise, knowledge, and experience conducting similar or related work.
3. Previous work product: Include at least two examples of written work similar to the research project requested by this RFP.
4. References: Include three references of individuals or organizations who can address comparable research projects completed by the consultant.
5. Personnel: Provide information about the key personnel, whether employees of the consultant or contractors, who the consultant expects to be directly involved in the project process, including descriptions of their roles and qualifications. If a group of consultants will conduct the planning process, indicate which consultant will have primary responsibility for implementation of the work and activities of each consultant.
6. Budget: Include a detailed budget for the entire project and each major project component.

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Timeline

December 8, 2021	Request for Proposals issued
January 19, 2022	Deadline for submission
January 31, 2022	Finalists selected
February 9, 2022	Interviews with finalists (Zoom or in-person)
February 14, 2022	Lead Contractor selected and hired
February 2022	Lead Contractor and NCEDA Foundation staff plan project elements
March – July 2022	Lead Contractor convenes Advisory Committee meetings and gathers data
August 2022	Lead Contractor compiles findings and completes a preliminary report
September 2022	Lead Contractor delivers final report to NCEDA Foundation Board of Directors

Proposal Evaluation

The **NCEDA Foundation Board of Directors** will select the proposal that will provide the highest quality content and deliverables at the best value, through a competitive process that includes several factors, such as the following:

- Qualifications of the consultant.
- Demonstrated understanding of the objectives of this research project.
- Workplan that details project activities, milestones, and deliverables.
- Background and experience in executing research projects for similar organizations/foundations.
- Quality of writing and prior research projects provided as examples.
- Demonstrated ability to use technology to solicit input from outside experts, involved parties, and stakeholders and to create the associated committees and materials.
- Cost effectiveness of the consultant role.

Proposal Submission

Complete proposals are **due by 5 pm EST on Wednesday, January 19, 2022**. It is the responsibility of the respondent to ensure NCEDA Foundation receives the submission.

Respondents must **submit proposals by email in PDF format** to Emily Martin: emily@nceda.org. Submission by mail, fax, or any method other than email to the address above will not be accepted.

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Inquiries

Inquiries regarding this RFP may be directed to Emily Martin: emily@nceda.org.

Additional Information

1. All costs incurred in responding to this RFP are the responsibility of the respondent and will not be reimbursed by NCEDA or the NCEDA Foundation.
2. NCEDA Foundation will negotiate a written contract with the candidate selected to complete this research project.