

THE 2022 NYS MWBE

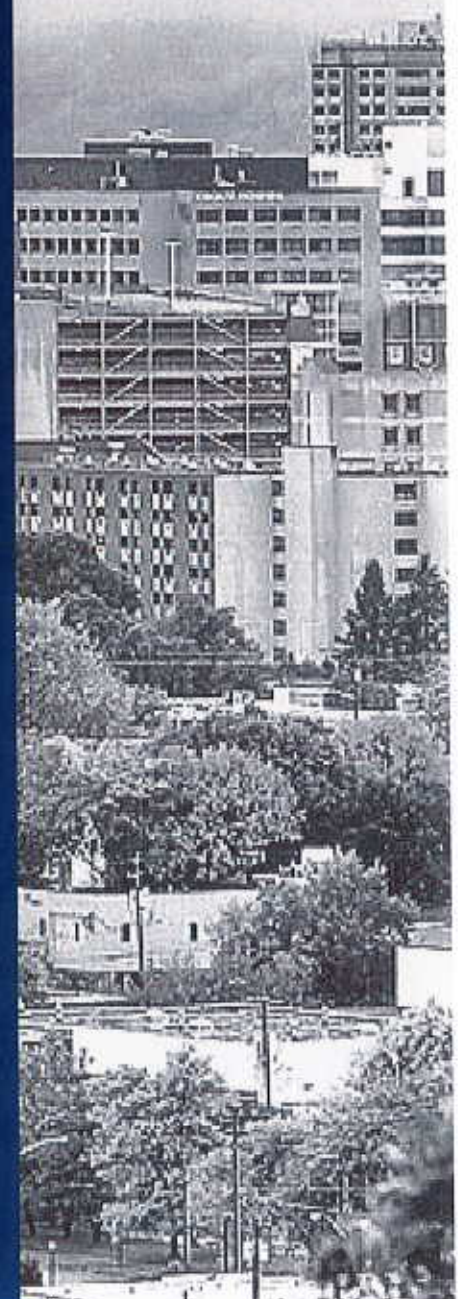
BUSINESS GROWTH ACCELERATOR



submitted by the City of Syracuse

i. Technical Proposal

Request for Proposal for the New York State Minority
and Women Owned Business Enterprises 2022 BGA



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B. Firm Experience and Qualifications

Introduction

There is an unprecedented level of investment underway and planned within Syracuse's urban core and the CNY and Mohawk Valley Regions. Much of this work is being driven or supported by the City of Syracuse, Onondaga County, adjacent municipalities and private businesses and institutions, who collectively have over a billion dollars in planned capital projects that will come online over the next few years. This exciting time in our region has been a catalyst for a long, hard look at our opportunities for MWBEs and our diverse local workforce.

For a host of reasons, Syracuse's construction industry has long struggled to provide business for MWBE firms as well as hire and retain workers of color and women, particularly within low-income communities within the City of Syracuse and throughout Onondaga County and Central New York. Although data is difficult to obtain and validate, anecdotal evidence suggests the region's building trades unions have historically struggled to achieve diversity in their ranks. Given many construction opportunities include organized labor on development projects, MWBE firms, particularly MBE are not "labor shops". Their financial capacity hinders interest in union membership and skepticism in its return on investment. The Syracuse MWBE Business Growth Accelerator program is the essential link to ensure that local NYS Certified MWBE businesses share in the benefits of the construction job growth initiatives currently being implemented.

Partner organizations for the City of Syracuse MWBE Business Growth Accelerator program will include, CenterState CEO and programs such as the Work Train and UpStart Initiatives, OMNI Procurement Solutions (NYS certified MWBE), the Upstate Minority Economic Alliance (UMEA), CNY Works, Syracuse Build, and a collaboration between the City of Syracuse and Onondaga County to establish a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) One-Stop Shop, specifically designed to prepare these companies for opportunities on the \$2 billion federally funded I-81 Interstate Highway project. These companies will receive DBE certification, technical, advocacy and financial assistance services.

The City of Syracuse as the lead application and program administrator, is committed to equitable economic inclusion through its functions as a municipality:

MWBE Procurement Opportunities (Chapter 42-General Ordinance)

Chapter 42 of the City of Syracuse General Ordinances, established in 1991 and amended in 1994 established MWBE goals of 9% MBE and 6% WBE utilization on city contracts, was again amended on March 4, 2022, by the City of Syracuse Common Council to increase its subcontract procurement opportunities to 30% (MWBE goals - 18% MBE/12% WBE) for all city contracts.

City of Syracuse - Bloomberg Equity in Procurement Initiative

In 2021, the City of Syracuse participated in a process with the Government Performance Lab (GPL) at the Harvard Kennedy School, one of the leading institutions specializing in procurement reform. One of the outputs of that collaboration focused on procurement equity, specifically performing an exploratory analysis of challenges for smaller and MWBE vendors. A survey which we distributed among current and potential small businesses that work with the City received over 200 responses which were then synthesized into a series of recommendations to improve accessibility.

Seeking to continue this work, the City, led by its Office of Management and Budget in collaboration from the Office of Accountability, Performance and Innovation (API), and Digital Services teams applied in 2022 to a new program launched jointly by GPL and Bloomberg Philanthropies to transform procurement practices in cities that have been recognized by their innovative practices. Syracuse was one of two cities (the other being Seattle) to be admitted into this program which includes a \$2 million grant and the participation of a full-time 2-year GPL fellow to work within the Office of Management and Budget to implement reforms aimed at making procurement a core strategic function of the City, adopt results-driven contracting practices, and introduce equity into its purchasing processes.

Led by the commitment of Mayor Ben Walsh and Budget Director Timothy Rudd, the city's procurement function is moving from being a back-office administrative function to becoming cemented as a core strategic function of the City. The goal is to create procurement processes that enable departments to consider the budget team and the procurement office as partners in helping drive their strategies to engage the private sector and ensure equity in our contracting. Immediate results of this effort were a modification of the city's charter - Chapter 42 which outlines MWBE participation. Additional efforts include:

Syracuse Economic Development Corporation (SEDCO) is a private not-for-profit local development corporation providing low-cost, fixed asset financing for commercial businesses operating within the City of Syracuse. SEDCO loan proceeds may be used to finance a portion of the cost of the acquisition and rehabilitation of real property or purchases of machinery and equipment. Maximum loan amounts typically do not exceed \$125,000. The corporation is staffed by the City of Syracuse personnel. SEDCO's lending capacity has been recently increased through the use of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding awarded to the city. These lending programs include:

1. The SEDCO Micro-enterprise Fund: Up to \$5,000 in financial assistance for eligible businesses with 10 or fewer employees in an industry or location that has experienced economic hardship. Loans can be forgiven as long as the business remains in operation and retains employees.

2. SEDCO Small Business Assistance Fund: Up to \$25,000 in financial assistance for eligible businesses with 50 or less employees, and experienced a decline in sales and/or located in a ARPA eligible census tract. A portion of loan financing up to \$5,000 can be forgiven for micro-enterprise forms with 10 employees or less.
3. SEDCO Community Impact Fund: Up to \$200,000 in loan financing for a business, nonprofit, or development entity making capital investment resulting in renovation or other physical real estate improvements. This program is designed to generate new investment and create new job opportunities in ARPA eligible census tracts throughout the City of Syracuse.

Syracuse Industrial Development Agency (SIDA) mission is to enhance the City of Syracuse's economic development capabilities by promoting, attracting, encouraging, and developing recreation and economically sound commerce and industry to advance job opportunities, health, general prosperity, and economic welfare of the people of the City of Syracuse; improve their recreation opportunities, prosperity, and standard of living; and, prevent unemployment and economic deterioration.

SIDA achieves its mission by providing a variety of financial incentives to projects, including exemptions from property, sales, use and mortgage recording taxes, grants, and bond financing. SIDA conveys benefits in a strategic, consistent, and transparent manner based on the City of Syracuse's collective economic development priorities.

Syracuse Build is an initiative championed by the City of Syracuse (Mayor Ben Walsh) and CenterState CEO and structured under the umbrella of CNY Works, the regional Workforce Investment Board (WIB). Syracuse Build seeks to create a workforce pipeline for the construction industry and foster a career pathway for city residents. Pathways to Apprenticeship, a program of Syracuse Build in collaboration with the local Building Trades unions, is an 11-week, paid comprehensive apprenticeship readiness training program focused on preparing women, people of color and veterans to gain access to the Building Trades' registered apprenticeship programs.

The Syracuse BGA will build upon the capacity of local MWBE companies which have traditionally provided first-source hiring opportunities for the local workforce. The urban core's decline has a deep and long-standing history consisting of redlining, urban renewal, and the geographic footprint of the highways, including the 1.4-mile elevated section of Interstate 81, have left a legacy of divestment and poverty on the community. The NYS DOT issued its Final Environmental Impact Study (FEIS) on April 15, 2022. This \$2.25 billion construction project will reconstruct portions of interstates 81, 481, and 690 and remove the existing elevated structure that has divided the City of Syracuse for decades and disproportionately impacted residents of color. The structure will be replaced by a new Business Loop 81 and an integrated Community Grid that will disperse traffic along local north-south and east-west streets. Syracuse Build's inaugural team of

anchor partners includes the City of Syracuse, Syracuse University, and Onondaga County. Anchor partners can leverage their purchasing power and development budgets, but it is the businesses as employers that can directly address Syracuse Build's hiring goals.

The City of Syracuse MWBE Business Growth Accelerator program will provide the critical connection to assist those MWBE businesses secure contracts in order to expand, hire and sustain qualified workers in the construction-related fields as Syracuse Build prepares local labor for employment. The BGA training and counseling is vital to the strategic growth of the MWBE community for long-term sustainability.

In addition to opportunities through construction project partners the NYSDOT, other opportunities include large campus facilities such as Upstate University Hospital, Syracuse University, Lemoyne College, Onondaga Community College, and the State University of New York Educational Opportunity Center (SEOC) as it prepares for a \$20 million renovation project drive construction projects with their spending. Syracuse Housing Authority (SHA) and Syracuse City School District/Joint Schools Construction Board (SCSD/JSCB) both oversee substantial properties with active capital building initiatives. Housing-focused community-based organizations that receive Community Development Block Grants (CDBGs) (e.g., Housing Visions, Home Headquarters, and Jubilee Homes) have multiple smaller-scale projects that aggregate into steady, multi-year construction initiatives. Participation as an anchor partner requires a commitment to MWBE utilization and local hiring.

Onondaga County Government is a committed partner to achieving economic inclusion and creating a growing community for all, providing resources to assist with building sustainable businesses, expanding operations, and creating jobs in the Syracuse and Central New York region. Onondaga County procurement opportunities include projects funded by several NYS Departments. The Division of Purchase's mission is to provide sustainable and compliant procurement services, a commitment to supplier diversity, and lifecycle management of goods and services in order to support public service operations. It serves as the principal source of purchase administration for the county, city of Syracuse and the Syracuse City School District. Its Supplier Diversity (MWBE and EEO Workforce Utilization) program requires that all New York state funded projects, MWBE combined goals are 30% (participation of MBEs and WBEs may be in any percentage combination to meet the goal).

OMNI Procurement Solutions LLC, is an SBA-certified veteran/minority small business, NYS-certified MWBE and Department of Transportation-certified DBE. OMNI provides public and private Procurement, Acquisition and Contract Management support Services (Pre/Post Award). OMNI provides both Professional and Technical Business support services. OMNI has experience which includes: Business Development, Contract Compliance, Project or Contract Monitoring, Vendor Management Services, State MWBE/SDVOB and DBE Program Support, and training

services (Construction Contract Management, Safety, OSHA, State and Federal Certification Programs)

OMNI will work under contract with the City of Syracuse to provide an in-depth review of participants' application, qualifications, capacity and capabilities. Will perform a SWOT analysis to determine the company's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. OMNI will meet individually with businesses to discuss the findings of the review and conduct a second meeting to identify a training plan and area of emphasis for the participants.

CenterState CEO, Central New York's regional chamber of commerce, is an independent and forward-thinking economic development strategist, business leadership organization, and chamber of commerce; dedicated to the success of its members and the prosperity of the region. CenterState serves as an advocate and resource for smart business, to catalyze and facilitate regional growth, and promote community prosperity through results-driven partnerships, planning, and problem-solving. CenterState initiatives include:

Work Train is dedicated to addressing the challenge of un-and-underemployment in Central New York by creating solutions that benefit both businesses and job seekers alike. Housed within CenterState CEO, the initiative is driven by a collaboration of funders and develops solutions for industries with persistent, robust demand that offer good wages and opportunities for career advancement by bringing together employers, business organizations, educational institutions, and community partners to collaborate within Industry Partnerships.

Up Start is a collaborative business development program that connects existing businesses and aspiring entrepreneurs to the tools and networks that help them thrive. The program brings together the collective resources of existing business organizations and community partners while also bridging the work of CenterState CEO's Economic Inclusion and Innovation and Entrepreneurship portfolios. Through training, technical assistance, and lending, each Up Start entrepreneur and the business owner works with a program adviser to build a personalized path to successful business ownership and expansion.

New York State Educational Opportunity Center (SEOC) SEOC will serve as a physical location at 100 New St. Syracuse, NY 13202. SEOC will provide its facility as a location for Business Growth Accelerator service delivery. The Center features amenities that include a computer lab, office space for consultations, virtual meeting and instruction technology and general gathering space, and free parking for visitors.

The SEOC has provided educational and vocational programs to the Central NY community for nearly 50 years. The SEOC has been located on the city's southside, an economically challenged neighborhood for the past 30 years and has provided the latest superior vocational training for economically and educationally disadvantaged residents.

SEOC by far has been the “go to” partner for workforce training in our region. From their role in the recently completed \$200 million City of Syracuse-Syracuse City School District Joint Schools construction project to their current partnership with NYSDOT and its WorkSmart NY Training Program, WorkSmart provides a 7-week hybrid (classroom and workshop) training to prepare students for various construction jobs. Training includes construction math, blueprint reading, introduction to power tools and hand tools, introduction to concrete and forming systems, flagging and OSHA-10 for construction. Students completing the program will receive an OSHA-10 Construction Safety and Health card. Students will also participate in soft skills training, resume writing workshops and mock interviews before completing the program. While SEOC services are workforce focused, it is fulfilling a labor pipeline sorely needed by businesses in this region.

The Mohawk Valley Resource Center for Refugees (assumed name The Center), located at 309 Genesee Street Utica, NY 13501 is a resettlement agency that not only provides comprehensive refugee resettlement services but also has a wide range of programs and services that further support integration for both refugees and immigrants into the community. Mission: The Center assists refugees, immigrants, and Limited English Proficient (LEP) individuals throughout the integration process and helps them achieve independence and self-sufficiency by developing products and services that enable us to build community with many cultures.

The Center has administered an ONA Opportunity Center since 2012 and has provided comprehensive immigration and citizenship services, access to citizenship classes, and access to free legal consultation services. The Center provides professional cultural competency training and consulting for a wide range of organizations such as human service organizations, educational institutions, healthcare agencies and systems, employers, and government agencies. The agency also operates Compass, a professional interpretation provider, and Tone, a professional translation service that provides language services 24/7 supporting 42 languages, via in-person, telephone, and video services.

CNY Works is the local Workforce Investment Board (WIB) and One-Stop organization to connect employers, job seekers, and training providers. As a central point of entry for workforce information, CNY Works is an important stakeholder in the expansion of job skills training and the connecting hiring of individuals located in Syracuse and Central New York for employment in local businesses.

The Upstate Minority Economic Alliance (UMEA) is the only Minority Chamber of Commerce in the sixteen county Upstate and Central New York region for minority business owners and professionals of color. Its vision is to create greater regional prosperity through economic development and to enhance economic opportunities for minority professionals and business owners. UMEA’s mission is: Harnessing the economic power of the minority community for the benefit of the Upstate and Central New York region. UMEA is dedicated to the success of minority owned businesses throughout the Upstate New York region

Urban Jobs Task Force (UJTF) is a coalition of organizations and residents of Onondaga County and the City of Syracuse and is composed of friends, neighbors, businesspeople, and community-minded advocates. UJTF is concerned about the lack of access to employment opportunities faced by citizens in Syracuse as well as the poverty that results from it. The coalition works to combat poverty by advocating for job training and job opportunities for Syracuse's unemployed and under-employed workers, especially minorities. UJTF believes publicly subsidized economic development should give equal economic opportunity to all residents and improve the well-being of all our neighborhoods. As an advocacy organization focused on the greater good, UJTF fights for dignity and fairness in local economic policy.

Removing the legacies of economic barriers and changing historic business development approaches have failed to generate significant gains and require the collaboration of individuals, government, community organizations and businesses.

Detailed information on past experiences operating and successfully implementing economic development and/or business development programs

The City of Syracuse Office Of Management and Budget operates two divisions: Budget and Purchase. The Division of Purchase's functions entail processing and preparing specifications for RFP's and construction bids, conducting competitive bidding and awarding contracts. The division assists all departments with procurement procedures. In Spring, 2022 the city of Syracuse changed oversight of the Office of Minority Affairs (OMA) to this division. All city contracts (except for housing projects) originate from this division, therefore aligning OMA with the Purchase Division provides the staff with first-hand knowledge not only of released RFP and bid opportunities but project planning efforts. Housing Development projects are administered by the Department of Neighborhood and Business Development that require OMA monitoring to ensure projects adhere to MWBE and Section 3 requirements.

The Office of Minority Affairs is responsible for ensuring adherence to Chapter 42 of the City of Syracuse General Ordinances. The office, which is staffed by two people, works with colleagues to assist small businesses and start-up enterprises with navigating the process and growing their business in the Syracuse community. The Office of Minority Affairs develops techniques, materials, and procedures to facilitate the participation of WBEs and MBEs in public contracting opportunities and to facilitate compliance with regard to city contracts. Services include but are not limited to City of Syracuse MWBE certification; pre-bid and pre-award meetings to inform WBEs and MBEs of subcontracting opportunities and to review with the successful bidder its MBE and WBE responsibilities; maintain and periodically update a directory of city certified MWBE businesses.

The Department of Neighborhood and Business Development's (NBD) Division of Business Development will oversee the daily management of the Business Growth Accelerator Incubator Program. The collaboration between the NBD Division of Business Development, Office of Minority Affairs and Division of Procurement will provide a comprehensive approach to assist MWBE firms participating in the program. Eric Ennis, Deputy Commissioner of Business Development, and

Brianca Hill, Business Engagement Specialist will work alongside the OMA staff in establishing the Business Growth Accelerator program to assist participants to access the necessary resources and capital to reach the next stage of their growth.

Deputy Mayor Sharon Owens, Chief of Staff to the Mayor, has direct oversight of the Department of Neighborhood and Business Development and will provide overall monitoring and support to the Syracuse MWBE BGA. Prior to her current role and under the previous city of Syracuse administration, Ms. Owens served as the city's MWBE Compliance Officer from 2010 to 2013. Ms. Owens brings both expertise and networking experience of operational needs required to provide impactful service to the MWBE firms and is actively working with the Purchase Division to successfully implement strategies learned through the Harvard-Bloomberg Equitable Purchasing initiative.

While a majority of City of Syracuse contracting opportunities are funded by a variety of non-city resources, there are opportunities when projects are fully funded by city resources and therefore city of Syracuse MWBE certification is required to meet our procurement standards. Additionally, the city manages several US Department of Housing and Urban Development-funded development projects which provide an excellent contracting opportunity for MWBE companies and require city of Syracuse certification.

Through these economic development programs and staff are prepared to tailor assistance to meet client needs, the City of Syracuse has built the capacity to assist the MWBE firms that participate in the Business Growth Accelerator program.

Detailed information on the experience providing business management and technical assistance to clients by either the Incubator or partner organizations

The Office of Minority Affairs has provided business management and technical assistance to MWBEs since its inception in the early 90s. OMA has worked closely with small businesses seeking to certify their firm as a MWBE, and with community stakeholders such as the Upstate Minority Economic Alliance (UMEA), which advocates minority construction firm opportunities and the Urban Jobs Task Force (UJTF) for hiring individuals from low-income communities on construction projects.

An important internal collaborative partner to the Purchase Division is the Department of Neighborhood and Business Development (NBD) where multiple full-time staff are dedicated to supporting small businesses to sustain and grow. The staff offers a variety of resources designed to accomplish this, including technical assistance to those in the planning stages to launch or undertake a new project for their business, or financial assistance through capital financing, grants, or tax abatements depending on eligibility criteria. This technical assistance and financial resources provide direct assistance and NBD staff is consistently working with local firms to ensure access to these programs.

A primary example is the Syracuse Economic Development Corporation (SEDCO) which has assisted minority and women owned businesses to receive the capital necessary to acquire property or purchase equipment necessary in order to expand. The program is staffed by the City of Syracuse with NBD Deputy Commissioner Eric Ennis serving as its Executive Director. SEDCO can lend up to \$125,000 through its revolving loan fund, or provide up to \$2 million in capital through the Grow America Fund, as a Small Business Administration (SBA) 7A lending tool in partnership with the National Development Council (NDC). In 2018, SEDCO invested approximately \$1.6 million in local projects, leveraging over \$2.7 million in total investment in the Central New York region. A primary example is Interior Innovations, a certified women-owned firm that recently relocated its headquarters to Syracuse and acquired a building on the city's east side. The project received \$660,000 from the Grow America Fund and the business has now completed its initial office and showroom space, and is now planning further expansion plans for the facility.

CenterState CEO is the largest business and economic development organization in Central New York and provides direct services to a wide range of businesses. CenterState CEO runs the Up Start program, which supports entrepreneurs and small businesses from historically marginalized communities, providing them access to classes, technical assistance, lending, and real estate support. Additionally, CenterState CEO operates the Tech Garden, which helps create technology-leveraging start-ups, fosters the development of entrepreneurs, and supports the innovation ecosystem throughout the Central New York region.

CenterState CEO is also responsible for managing the GENIUS NY program and the Clean Tech Center. CenterState CEO serves as the program partner for the Salt City Market. CenterState CEO entrepreneurs across the community, are wrapped into Centerstate CEO Events, Programs, and Resources, and offered business planning assistance, mentoring, specialized advice, targeted referrals, networking opportunities and inspiring space from which to grow their businesses.

CenterState CEO has partnered with the Upstate Minority Economic Alliance to create a Minority Owned Business of the Year Award that is presented at CenterState CEO's Annual Meeting. This award recognizes and highlights the impact minority-owned businesses have on the local economy. This exposure also provides a platform for future business opportunities as the event attracts over 500 attendees annually.

Detailed information on similar projects of this scope and budget size

Through an initial \$20,000 planning grant from the Bloomberg Philanthropies Cities for Financial Empowerment Fund (CFE), the City of Syracuse now implements a successful Financial Empowerment Center (FEC) embedded and has contributed American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds for its continued success. Individuals from all income levels receive Financial Empowerment Center services. Healthy person credit is of critical importance to the success of MWBE firms. FEC counseling will be incorporated in the curriculum, one-on-one counseling and business growth plan development of each participant.

The MWBE Business Accelerator Program will build on the knowledge and skills learned from the planning and implementation of the FEC program. The MWBE businesses will be referred to the Syracuse FEC, as appropriate to help build credit scores, reduce debt and increase savings. The two initiatives, the Financial Empowerment Center and the MWBE Business Growth Accelerator program will complement each other in providing the resources necessary to increase the financial acumen of local MWBE's. In helping MWBE's to develop short-and long-term financial strategies of a five-year strategic plan, the FEC counselors would expand their service offerings to include a potential income-generating growth segment of business management counseling.

In the spring of 2021, the City of Syracuse received \$123 million in America Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding. It has developed a thorough and comprehensive process to monitor funded projects and initiatives and a transparent public-facing dashboard to share progress:

<https://www.syr.gov/Initiatives/American-Rescue-Plan-Act-Overview>. In its effort to assist businesses impacted by the COVID 19 pandemic, the city has committed over \$6.3 Million dollars to various programs to financially support small businesses and MWBEs.

In, 2021 Syracuse was named a recipient of the latest round of awards for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative, a NYS funded economic development program. \$10 million in vertical and horizontal construction projects will be awarded construction contracts to complete their projects within a two-year window. All projects will require 30% MWBE utilization.

Detailed experience in using technology to deliver remote and in-person learning, develop and build capacity of minority and women-owned firms

"WHEN AMERICA CATCHES A COLD, BLACK AMERICA GETS PNEUMONIA" Covid-19 does not discriminate, but the conditions that allow the disease to flourish have a 400-year history rooted in racism—inadequate housing, over-policed neighborhoods, limited access to fresh foods, uninsured or under-insured health needs, poor-quality schools, and low-wage (aka essential) jobs. Freeman, Terri May 2020..." America catches a cold" Black Enterprise <https://www.blackenterprise.com/its-true-when-america-catches-a-cold-black-america-gets-pneumonia/>.

Although the federal government established the Paycheck Protection Program under the COVID-19 Cares Acts, too many small and minority-owned businesses did not benefit from the program. These businesses just did not have the capacity and banking relationships to apply for the resources. The City of Syracuse and its Division of Business Development recognized this disparity and created an initiative to address the need. In 2020 and 2021, the City of Syracuse allocated Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds toward SEDCO in order to establish and launch the COVID-19 Small Business Grant Program to provide grants of up to \$10,000 to more than 50 small businesses, with more than half of recipients minority and/or women-owned. The City and SEDCO used this program to help provide support to dozens of businesses that were too

often unable to receive support from federal small business stimulus resources.

Demonstrated experience in and familiarity with the Construction Service and Construction Consultancy industry.

The City of Syracuse has extensive experience executing and managing horizontal, vertical and consultant construction services.

Horizontal Construction Services: The city of Syracuse administered these type of projects via:

- Department of Public Works: responsible for right of way repair and maintenance, snow removal, sanitation, sewer maintenance, lighting infrastructure.
- Water Department: is responsible for constructing, maintaining and operating all necessary and desirable facilities for the supply and distribution of a safe, potable water supply for the City of Syracuse.
- Department of Parks, Recreation and Youth Development: in addition to recreation and youth services, the department is responsible for maintenance and repair of park infrastructure.

These departments annually implement capital improvement projects that include: road reconstruction and repaving, sewer repair and construction and park grounds redevelopment. 2021, the city implemented a municipal sidewalk program, through this program Syracuse will assume responsibility and repair of all sidewalks, instead of property owners. This program will require ongoing maintenance, repair and snow removal. Examples include the Syracuse Creekwalk

Vertical Construction Services: While most vertical construction takes place through private industry, all construction must be vetted and approved by Neighborhood and Business Development's Division of Code Enforcement. The Division is responsible for plan review and inspection of building construction within the City of Syracuse. It also maintains the Housing and Property codes and enforces compliance with the Syracuse Zoning Ordinance; and its Office of Permits and Licensing, which offers a single location to request for and receive assistance with various City construction related approvals. Overall review of project plans, architectural drawings and project designs are reviewed and managed by this city staff. This process includes housing development which involves a combination of both private and public funding sources and present opportunities for smaller and growing MWBE firms.

Construction Consultants: All construction projects start with architects, civil engineers, construction managers, cost estimators, design specialists, clerks of the work and others. City of Syracuse executed projects are managed by the Department of Engineering. Department maintains staff of qualified civil engineers and engineering firms on retainer to assist in the review and management of projects. The Engineering Department provides engineering services and support for all city departments. The Department reviews and approves private projects that are on or related to city owned property, assists City Officials with the planning, review, and implementation of City projects and private ventures that require City of Syracuse involvement.

Any contract funded all or in part by NYS requires 30% MWBE utilization.

Demonstrate examples of successfully assisting minority and women-owned businesses build capacity and expand

The City of Syracuse, Office of Minority Affairs assists minority and women-owned businesses to build capacity by conducting lending events, contractor mixers and developing workforce training for MWBE businesses.

One of the most innovative initiatives was the development and implementation of the \$300 million Joint Schools Construction School Board (JCSB) project. This project included a Development and Diversification Plan for Workforce and Business. In this plan, the JCSB created participation goals that increased as capacity increased and developed strategies to create and coordinate efforts to ensure a more diverse workforce for the projects, as well as, ensure the participation of minority and women-owned businesses. This JCSB project included specific MWBE utilization (12% MBE and 8% WBE), workforce and residency goals, further specifying that not more than 25% of the goal could be met with clerical or support staff. In addition, the program identified certified MBE and WBE firms to provide goods and services, firms that could be M/WBE certified, opportunities for mentorship, and partnerships with local labor, government, and not-for-profit agencies to develop, recruit and train a new diverse workforce.

As a result, MWBE firms are currently contracted for the JCSB for over \$39 million. To date, they have been paid \$21,044,714.85 of those funds. Several of these companies are utilizing the income from the JCSB project to purchase new equipment and to expand their businesses and hire local labor.

The City of Syracuse has its own MWBE certification program designed to provide increased opportunities for City of Syracuse certified businesses for projects solely funded by city of Syracuse funding. OMA also:

- Develops and implements techniques, materials and procedures that monitor contracting activities and insure overall compliance with the local, state and federal laws governing MWBE and DBE compliance.
- Provides ongoing information and technical assistance to Minority and Women-owned businesses to assist in their growth and success.
- Provides information, forms and technical assistance related to the City of Syracuse MWBE certification process and provides an updated inventory of certified businesses for public use.

Syracuse certifies small MWBE companies that lack current capacity to certify with New York State. While the requirements mirror that of the NYS process, it also requires that companies have been established and operate in Onondaga County for a minimum of nine (9) months. These companies have the opportunity to contract on smaller contracts made available by housing agencies and private developers, giving them greater experience and capacity building. The JCSB project does not require NYS-certified firms but requires city-certified MWBE compliance as outlined in the JCSB Phase II: Development and Diversification Plan for Workforce and Business. The City's program certified forty-two (42) MWBEs in 2018. City of Syracuse's desire is that these companies become

NYS certified and work toward assisting firms in achieving that goal.

Demonstrate examples of successfully continuing or cultivating relationship with Prime contractors in NYS

Per a Syracuse City local ordinance, the Office of Minority Affairs meets quarterly with approximately 10 labor stakeholders. The group (composed of unions, contractors, workforce developers, and community advocates) discusses workforce-related issues and reviews progress toward participation goals.

The City of Syracuse Office of Minority Affairs also conducts several outreach events throughout the year to connect MWBE firms with Prime Contractors. The most recent efforts have been related to the \$300 million JSCB school modernization project. Pre-Bid meetings averaged 30 companies. These networking events have led to solid relationships and contract opportunities for MWBE's, including informal mentoring interactions and joint venture prospects. As a result of these events, several MWBE's have been awarded subcontracts.

Additionally, the office mediates conflicts between developers and MWBE firms to ensure continued participation on projects.

To help guide the Syracuse Build initiative, CenterState CEO commissioned Dewey Intelligence & Strategy (Dewey IS) to investigate and report on the local commercial construction industry ecosystem and labor demand. Dewey IS used a mixed-methods research approach including occupational supply/demand analyses and in-depth interviews with developers, construction managers, contractors, union leaders, training providers, employers, and community leaders. Urban Jobs Task Force joined the research effort to inform key questions around labor supply, training curriculum, and legal agreements, and share their expertise related to building equity in construction trades.

The Dewey IS study cited "a recurrent theme in research conversations was the need to break down networking silos and build new working relationships. Both prime contractors and MBE subcontractors expressed a need to sit down together, interact with one another, and work collaboratively to create employment opportunities and equity."

The professional training, technical assistance and networking opportunities built into the Syracuse MWBE BGA program will break down the networking silos and encourage the development of new working relationships. Both prime contractors and MWBE businesses have expressed the need to sit down together, interact with one another, and work collaboratively to create employment opportunities and equity.

Detailed information on contracting opportunities for MWBEs in regional area, both currently and projected after program end

Led by the City of Syracuse, in partnership with Onondaga County and Syracuse University, Syracuse Build is an initiative designed to build a robust and inclusive workforce pipeline of Syracuse residents aligned with upcoming employment opportunities stemming from these projects. Premiere among these opportunities is the redevelopment of Federal Interstate Highway 81 (I-81), in particular the removal of a 1.4 mile elevated section of the highway (viaduct) that bisects the city center and represents a \$2 billion infrastructure investment that potentially will result in enormous business opportunities and job creation, likely beginning in 2022 and lasting for an estimated 6 years.

Funding for the project will unfortunately dictate that federal utilization and workforce requirements supersede NYS MWBE utilization on the project. It is estimated based on the project cost with a 10% state revenue funding the project \$120,000,000 could have been awarded to state certified MWBE firms based on the 30% requirement. This is a significant missed opportunity for certified MWBE firms. However, the incubator will assess the feasibility of federal Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) certification for companies enrolled in the Syracuse Incubator program. Follow up will include appropriate referrals and assistance throughout the federal certification process. While we understand this service falls outside of the prescribed scope of this NYS program, we cannot ignore the opportunities the NYSDOT highway construction program will bring to local MWBE companies if they can federally certify and meet the federal utilization requirement. The I-81 project alone had the potential to provide significant financial support to MWBE certified businesses. It is the deep commitment of this community that these opportunities are predominantly secured by businesses operating in the City of Syracuse and Greater Syracuse Region.

In June, 2019 the NYS Assembly approved legislation which is the first big hurdle for a regional high school which will focus on science, technology, engineering, arts and math, or STEAM. The STEAM school which is proposed for the now vacant Central Tech High School on the edge of downtown Syracuse and is a centerpiece of the city of Syracuse's (Mayor Ben Walsh) development plan known as the Syracuse Surge. This massive redevelopment of the STEAM building is estimated to cost \$75 million, 98% of which will be paid by NYS generating an expected \$22 million in MWBE contracts.

Syracuse Surge is a series of projects which, together, are poised as the signature inclusive development project of the Walsh Administration. Surge which will focus investment, estimated to be in the range of \$200 million dollars, and development along a corridor on the south end of downtown -- an area that's struggled to attract the kind of development seen in other parts of downtown. It is a long-term strategy, but it has been suggested that it could be the biggest economic growth initiative ever proposed by the city government. The Surge aims to modernize Syracuse's economy and prepare the workforce for what economists call the "Fourth Industrial Revolution."

The NYS MWBE 2019 BGA will assist the City of Syracuse in empowering neighborhood-based, minority and underserved entrepreneurs and business owners and give them additional tools to increase their chances for success while at the same time help to stabilize and revitalize distressed neighborhoods and attract new investment in our underserved areas.

Syracuse Build also seeks to ensure that there is a deep pool of experienced workers from the local community that can access job opportunities related to the I-81 project when it commences.

Construction managers and large general contractors, in commercial construction, are typically large organizations. As the prime contractor, these firms oversee projects and rely heavily on smaller subcontracting firms to execute portions of the work. Most large firms have a small in-house trade group. These trade divisions are deliberately small to avoid seasonal expansion/contraction swings. Prime contractors staff projects through subcontracts and union halls. Generally, they are shielded from direct hiring, and experience labor demand through the filter of subcontracts and union partnerships. Expansion of MWBE from subcontracting firms to large general contractors is key to the growth of this business segment.

According to the Dewey Intelligence & Strategy report "Syracuse Build Playbook" released on October 29, 2019, "A common refrain among interviewees was the need for more minority business owners, the need for MBEs to scale and grow, and the need for more networking opportunities to connect with xBE (disenfranchised business enterprises) business owners." The articulated demand for more MWBE-owned subcontractors is exacerbated by the growth challenges that most MWBE-owned businesses are confronted with. The Dewey study cited the following barriers to expanding their MWBE businesses:

- High start-up entry costs, including liability insurance, workers' compensation insurance, materials, tools, technology (e.g., iPads)
- Lack of credit and financing, including credit card redlining
- Small contracts preventing owners from hiring workers
- High real estate costs associated with opening a fabrication shop
- Limited time/opportunities to network and market their business
- Need for development support (e.g., cost estimators and proposal writing)
- Fear they cannot provide sustainable employment for additional workers

Syracuse Build will create a robust and inclusive workforce pipeline of Syracuse residents aligned with upcoming employment opportunities associated with over a billion dollars in planned capital projects by the city government, anchor partners, and New York State.

The operating budget and institutional capacity for use of grant funds

The Syracuse MWBE Business Growth Accelerator program would be managed by the Department of Neighborhood and Business Development (NBD) - Division of Business Development in collaboration with the Office of Minority Affairs. The Syracuse BGA will have oversight by the Mayor's office.

The Department of Neighborhood and Business Development works to preserve and enhance Syracuse neighborhoods and commercial centers and create opportunities for business growth by administering federal, state and local funding programs, engaging with and providing support to encourage residential development and economic growth and leveraging resources to create thriving neighborhoods, communities and business districts and their business establishment throughout the city of Syracuse. The 2022-23 Operating Budget for the Department of Neighborhood and Business Development is \$7.3 million. One third of its budget is funded by grant administration and salary allotment costs. The Neighborhood Business Development currently manages over \$21 million in Federal, State, and philanthropic grant funding. NBD manages the City's HUD funding, comprised of CDBG, HOME, ESG, and Lead Paint Hazard Reduction grants; Housing and Downtown Revitalization Initiative grants from NYS; LISC (Local Initiatives Support Corporation) and Enterprise grants, neighborhood grants funded through Syracuse University, and more. NBD also administers \$40 million of the City's \$123 million ARPA allocation, spread across 18 different projects and sub-recipient contracts. The Syracuse Financial Empowerment Center is also managed under the Department of Neighborhood and Business Development.

References from projects with this scope for the Incubator and any partner organization(s)

Right Price Companies

Daren Price, Owner
4726 South Salina Street
Syracuse, New York 13205
Tel. (315) 701-2384

J.E. Bryant & Associates LLC

Joseph Bryant, Owner
1909 South Salina Street Syracuse, NY 13205
(315) 882-3244

C. *Staff Experience and Qualifications*

In this section of the Technical Proposal, Incubators should demonstrate that the staff proposed have the knowledge and ability to perform the services described in this RFP.

Sharon Owens serves as the Deputy Mayor of the City of Syracuse, is the Chief of Staff to Mayor Ben Walsh. Ms. Owens directly oversees the Police and Fire Departments, as well as the Department of Neighborhood and Business Development. Under the previous administration, she served as the MWBE Compliance Officer for the City of Syracuse.

Timothy Rudd serves as the Director of the Office of Budget and Management (OBM) which manages the Divisions of Budget, Procurement and the Office of Minority Affairs:

- The Division of Purchase's functions entail processing RFP's and construction bids, preparing specifications for RFP's and certain contracts, conducting competitive bidding and awarding contracts. The division assists all departments with RFP's, construction bids and insurance coverage.
- The Division of Contract Compliance and Minority Affairs implements and directs the MWBE compliance program for the City of Syracuse. This involves monitoring of MWBE participation on City contracts.

Michael Collins serves as Commissioner of the Department of Neighborhood and Business Development administers the following divisions:

- Neighborhood Development - administers the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) programs: Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnership Grant, Emergency Solutions Grant, and Lead Paint Hazard Reduction Grant. This division is responsible for funding housing development projects within the city, many of which are completed by MWBE firms. The Division of Contract Compliance and Minority Affairs monitors these construction projects as well.
- Business Development - works with businesses, developers, and investors to facilitate the creation and retention of jobs in the city by providing both technical and financial assistance. The Division staffs the Syracuse Industrial Development Agency (SIDA), The Syracuse Economic Development Corporation (SEDCO) and the Syracuse Local Development Corporation (SLDC).

Additional department functions include Code Enforcement, building permitting and licensing, neighborhood planning and zoning.

The Director of Minority Affairs serves as MWBE Compliance Officer for the City of Syracuse, and will directly assist in the program curriculum and recruitment of MWBE

firms.

Eric Ennis serves as Deputy Commissioner of Business Development, will be responsible for oversight of the program, and will directly assist with supporting participants with accessing resources and financial tools in order to build capacity and allow participating firms to expand.

Brianca Hill serves as Business Engagement Specialist in the Division of Business Development and will assist with implementation of the Business Growth Accelerator program.

Cole King serves as Business Opportunity Specialist in the Division of Business Development, and will also assist with program implementation and working alongside participants.

Vaughn Davis serves as the Business Loan Manager for the Syracuse Economic Development Corporation (SEDCO) and will oversee the low interest financing and loan programs that will be made available to participants in order to facilitate business growth and expansion.

Edmund Wilson, CEO of OMNI Procurement Solutions is an accomplished leader with expertise in providing decisive leadership and vision to public and private sector contract and procurement functions. Mr. Wilson has over 32 years of experience providing procurement, contract, and acquisition management services. Mr. Wilson is an accomplished Senior Level Executive, with a proven track record of successful strategic and tactical leadership within the Contract, Acquisition and Procurement industry. Mr. Wilsons' expertise includes contracting, policy reviews, assessment, and development, Life Cycle Contracting, Supply Chain Management, Strategic Sourcing, Vendor Management Services and Organization Transformations. Mr. Wilson is also an expert in Contract Compliance, Large Project Acquisitions, Enterprise Based Procurement, Agency Specific Contacting; Industry based services including Construction and Small Business Programs (MWBE, SDVOB, DBE, etc.).

Terry Woodfork, OMNI team member, is a highly experienced and accomplished senior manager with over 22 years of driving increased efficiency, profitability and performance by envisioning, communicating and directing continuous improvement initiatives and effectively managing resource utilization. Proven ability to motivate and lead departmental & cross-functional teams and subcontractors on complex new product developments and core product lines. Unique ability and track record of transferring functional knowledge and expertise across various industries to solve problems, increase productivity and implement best practices. Experienced and qualified in creating, developing and managing strategic supplier relationships. Mr. Woodfork has a reputation for strong work ethic, customer satisfaction and commitment to quality, schedules, compliance requirements and business success.

Robert Simpson serves as President and CEO of CenterState Corporation for Economic Opportunity (CEO) and oversees a portfolio including business & economic development, innovation & entrepreneurship, economic inclusion, and research, policy, & planning.

Dominic Robinson serves as Vice President of Economic Inclusion for CenterState CEO and oversees the Work Train program. He will directly assist with the curriculum and to support the MWBE participants in the Business Growth Accelerator program.

Me'Shae Brooks-Rolling serves as Executive of the Upstate Minority Economic Alliance (UMEA), and will directly assist in the recruitment of MWBE participants in the Business Growth Accelerator program.

Chris Montgomery serves as Director of Syracuse Build is an innovative job training program created in anticipation of the I-81 Interstate Highway project. Syracuse Build addresses the training and work needs of people of color through Pathways to Apprenticeship, 11-week, paid comprehensive apprenticeship training program. Syracuse Build works proactively with developers to identify opportunities for local business and labor.

SYRACUSE MWBE BGA PARTNERS CONTACT INFORMATION

City of Syracuse Ben Walsh, Mayor Sharon Owens, Deputy Mayor City Hall 233 Washington Street Syracuse, New York 13202 (315) 448-8005	Onondaga County Ryan McMahon, County Executive John H. Mulroy Civic Center, 14th Floor Syracuse, New York 13202 Telephone 315-435-3516	CenterState CEO Robert Simpson President & Chief Executive Officer 115 W. Fayette Street Syracuse, NY 13202 Phone: 315.470.1800	Upstate Minority Economic Alliance (UMEA) 115 W Fayette St, Syracuse, NY 13202 315-407-1975 . 1975
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D. Project Plan and Approach

Information on the need for, and anticipated impact of the proposed NYS MWBE Business Growth Accelerator program on the NYS Region in which it will function

In order to create economic empowerment in the regions, we need inclusive economic development that provides opportunities for business owners from every background. In partnership with the CenterState CEO and the Upstate Minority Economic Alliance, the Office of Minority Affairs of the City of Syracuse is identifying MWBE businesses with high growth potential. The City of Syracuse MWBE Business Growth Accelerator program will target the Construction and Related Professional Services Businesses. The program is designed to meet the DMWBD's key objectives to:

- Assist State agencies in providing equal opportunities to MWBEs seeking opportunities and to increase their participation on State contracts;
- Review applications by businesses seeking certification as an MWBE, and to maintain a directory of certified MWBEs; and,
- Promote the business development of MWBEs through education and outreach to MWBEs, prime contractors, and NYS agencies and authorities.

In accordance with the requirements of ESD RFP, the Syracuse BGA will provide services to NYS Certified MWBE firms doing business within the Central New York and Mohawk Valley Regions. There will be two cohorts of 15 firms.

Within the 12-month program duration:

months 1 to 3 will entail participant involvement in qualification and pre-assessment services analysis and business plan review services;

months 4 to 9 will involve training curriculum services in six modules:

1. Business Administration and Operational Capacity and Capability
2. Procurement Processes and Responsiveness
3. Financial & Accountancy Literature Competency and Systems Proficiency
4. Marketing, Advertising, and Branding
5. Relationship Maintenance and Partnership Development:
6. Project Management

Training will be conducted in **two tiers** to meeting the specialized needs of horizontal and vertical construction (tier 1) and construction consultant firms (tier 2).

Additionally, training will accommodate firm size adopting curriculum delivery:

- **Level 1** training: Construction Service and Construction Consultant MWBE firms with construction project experience through public and/or private contracts valued at \$500K - \$1M and business revenue level of \$500K - \$1M
- **Level 2** training: Construction Service and Construction Consultant MWBE firms with construction project experience through public and/or private contracts valued at \$1M - \$5M+ and business revenue-level of \$1M - \$5M+

Months 10 to 12 will entail refresher training, continued one to one consultation and business growth plan wrap up.

One on one consultations will continue throughout the program with each participant receiving 15 hours total.

Each firm/participant will be required to:

- complete and submit an application to be considered for the program. o Be a currently certified NYS MBE, WBE or MWBE
- be in business for at least two (2) years
- have at least two employees
- Demonstrate annual revenues between \$500,000 and \$5 million during the most recent year
- have been awarded no NYS contracts

Training sessions will be conducted for 4 hours every other week (2/(2) Hour sessions) for a total of 8 hours per month. Training will include assignments, homework and individual meetings during the month which participants will need to complete in order to continue. Additional workshops and training options will also be offered to participants periodically.

Estimates generated from the NYS MWBE directory indicate the number of NYS Certified MBE companies in Onondaga County and the City of Syracuse are in line with statewide representation. There is a disparity however in the number of these firms benefiting from their certification by working on NYS funded construction projects. Data further demonstrates that CNY and Mohawk Valley regions, Onondaga County and the City of Syracuse are not keeping pace with the number of NYS certified construction firms compared to statewide. In addition to capacity building efforts for existing MWBE firms, there must be a concerted effort to increase the “bank” of state certified firms in the region in the construction industry.

The Mohawk Valley REDC region is immediately adjacent to Central New York and is closely tied to ongoing business development efforts between the two regions. CenterState CEO, as

the leading regional economic development organization and works closely with Mohawk Valley EDGE and NUAIR (the Northeast UAS Airspace Integration Research Alliance) which are directly involved in new investment from emerging industries in Unmanned Aerial Systems/drone technology and projects such as the 50-mile FAA certified drone testing corridor between Griffiss Airforce Base and Syracuse Hancock International Airport. Other community-led efforts, including recent awards of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) to the cities of Syracuse and Oneida will help leverage new project investments. Each of these New York State-led initiatives are creating new bidding opportunities for State Certified MWBE firms. The Business Growth Accelerator will support and assist MWBE firms seeking to bid on these jobs.

Given the strong partnerships and ongoing collaboration that extends throughout Central New York and the Mohawk Valley, the Business Growth Accelerator will increase the capacity and access to opportunity for MWBE through both regions.

The following illustrates the MWBE and construction firm landscape:

<i>NYS Certified MWBE Companies*</i>				
Location	MWBE	Minority	%MBE	MWBE Construction Firms
NYS	8,232	4,531	54%	1,055
CNY	358	126	35%	89
Mohawk Valley	115	18	16%	22
Onondaga County	597	297	50%	63
Syracuse	184	96	52%	54

**estimates (data from NYS MWBE Directory)*

Connecting these targeted businesses with the training, 1:1 counseling and loan opportunities they need to grow will both strengthen our local economy and help our MWBE’s prosper and remain in the region.

The Dewey IS study identified networking of paramount importance to successful implementation of Syracuse Build. “The practice of using established preferred vendors’ lists and leaning on “tried and true” subcontractors is all well and good, but new players need access and networking opportunities. Minority contractors and community groups have reported a cultural divide of established players “not knowing how to interact with us, and

we need to be sitting down together.”

In 2019, the Urban Jobs Task Force (UJTF), in partnership with Legal Services of Central New York, released a document titled: Building Equity in the Construction Trades: A Racial Equity Impact Statement (<https://www.ujtf.org/reis>). The impact study was created in order to:

- Identify racial disparities in the construction trades. The study defines racial equity as: “proportional representation of minorities with access to the opportunities available in the construction trades”.
- Identify opportunities to create equity within the construction trades
- Serve as an educational and data tool for the community

The study through data analysis examined workforce diversity throughout multiple construction sites in Syracuse and Onondaga County. The study identified a clear picture of racial disparity within the construction trades. More about UJTF and their study can be found on their website: <https://www.ujtf.org/reis>.

The extent of economic distress in the area(s) to be served.

Syracuse continues to struggle with one of the nation’s highest poverty rates. The median household income in the City of Syracuse is \$38,893, nearly half of the national median household income of \$67,521 (2020 Census data). According to 2021 U.S. Census Bureau estimates based on 2020 Census figures, the proportion of City residents living in poverty was 30.3%, over two times that of the nation (11.4%), making Syracuse the 4th most impoverished city in the United States. Syracuse has the highest child poverty rate in the nation among cities with at least 100,000 people, according to new census data released in March 2022. The poverty rate among kids under 18 is 48.4% in Syracuse, more than 14,000 kids in the city live below the poverty line (US Census). In addition, Syracuse tops the nation for poverty rates among Black and Hispanic people at 40% and 42.9% respectively.

According to the 2020 US Census, the Utica-Rome Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), which resides within the Mohawk Valley Region identifies 14% of its overall population and 20% of its children under 18years old live below the poverty level. The Utica-Rome unemployment rate as of January 2022 was 4.2%

The Syracuse population also has considerably high unemployment in comparison with the current US rate of 6.6%. The overall unemployment rate, according to the 2017 US Census American Community Survey, is 10.5%. For black and Hispanics, the unemployment rate is nearly 17%.

The current geography of economic growth limits access to opportunity, particularly in older

urban neighborhoods. National comparisons have identified the Syracuse area as one of the most racially and economically segregated regions in the country. To break the cycle of generational poverty in the City requires inclusive economic development.

The proposed curriculum

Critical to the success of the Syracuse MWBE Business Growth Accelerator program is ensuring that participants are receiving high-quality services from appropriately trained, professional instructors and counselors. The proposed curriculum was developed in consultation with CEO CenterState, the Neighborhood and Business Development and insights gleaned from partners and our experience in developing similar training programs over the years.

Prior to program implementation, the BGA Curriculum training providers will be evaluated for best practices and their ability to deliver robust technical assistance for a coordinated MWBE program that combines aggressive outreach to business and sustained engagement to all participants. The counseling and coaching skills of all consultants will include practice and experiential learning, and the socio-economic and cultural context setting necessary to serve the diverse needs and backgrounds of MWBE BGA participants.

OMNI Procurement Solutions will take the lead contracting role, providing assessment analysis, Training, and one-on-one consultation services to Syracuse BGA participants. The Upstate Minority Alliance (UMEA) will provide training in the Business Administration and Operational Capacity and Capability Module in addition to continual surveillance of the construction landscape to ensure the Syracuse BGA is aware and prepared to equip its participants for opportunities on projects.

As outlined in the ESD RFP (pages 5-7), the Syracuse BGA will implement a training curriculum designed to increase firm capacity through key performance indicators. One-on-one consultations will mirror the information provided. Training content will encompass the following modules (see Appendix D):

- **Business Administration and Operational Capacity and Capability:** assessing the company's administrative and operational strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to growth, including management of contract funds, monitoring, and evaluation of work performed, meeting contract and grant reporting requirements.
- **Procurement Processes and Responsiveness:** identify New York State Agencies and Authorities of interest, understanding of procurement processes, and best practices of respective Agencies and Authorities' contracts and grants awards. Identify current and future contracts and grants opportunities relevant to respective firms and how to develop a response strategy to maximize their responses and winning of bids with private and NYS Agencies and Authorities. Increasing and understanding use of industry procurement

applications and increasing capacity to respond to contract opportunities.

- **Financial & Accountancy Literature Competency and Systems Proficiency:** Assess the financial capability of participant firms and provide training to increase participants' financial competency regarding financial statements, operational cash flows, cash flow projections, and other related financial topics. Provide training and assistance to increase proficiency with the management of financial and accountancy systems and tools. Developing a financial plan (part of the Business Growth Plan). The financial plan will include a short (12 months)- and long-term (5 years) financial strategy.

- Access to Capital: provide training and guidance on program resources available through Empire State Development, the Small Business Administration (SBA), local lenders, and other entities or grant programs.

- Insurance/Bonding: The Incubator will provide information and guidance on business insurance, surety bonding, and other insurance or technical resources.

- **Marketing, Advertising, and Branding:** Assist participants to understand effective marketing strategy (marketing, advertising, and branding). The incubator will help assess the efficiency and effectiveness of a firm's marketing and branding strategy as it pertains to doing business with public and private entities. Help participants assess and consider their corporate brand, build stronger brands, and protect the integrity of a brand. Assist firms understand how public and private entities perceive their firm.

- **Relationship Maintenance and Partnership Development:** help participants, intentionally strengthen existing relationships and develop and broaden their business relationships with public and private partners within the Construction ecosystem, including accounting, legal, financial, and neighborhood community development organizations. Help broker new connections and relationships with relevant local and state-wide partners through events, industry discussions, and forums.

- **Project Management:** Provide advanced Construction project management training to enhance participants' skills and capabilities to oversee projects to completion. Includes schedule management, as well as managing budgets, risks, regulations, and personnel in a Construction industry related projects.

The upcoming contract opportunities in the industries chosen;

The Central New York and Mohawk Valley Region are posed for unprecedented opportunities in the construction industry underway and posed to start within the next two years. Among these is these in the \$2.2 billion Interstate 81 project. While funded by the US Department of Transportation (USDOT), there will be MWBE opportunities within the overall project. Attachment B identifies approximately 70 projects totaling over \$455 million dollars. These projects are being funded in whole or part by NYS in the amount of approximately \$92 million. In accordance with the NYS law 30% of this funding will support MWBE work on the projects at approximately \$28 million. (See Attachment B)

The NYS Regional Economic Development Council initiative (REDC) is a transformative approach to state-wide investment and economic development. 10 Regional Councils to develop long-term strategic plans for economic growth for their regions through public and private partnerships. The CNY REDC is committed to the vitality and economic development of Cayuga, Cortland, Madison, Onondaga and Oswego Counties. The Mohawk Valley REDC encompasses Fulton, Herkimer, Montgomery, Oneida, Otsego, Saratoga and Schoharie Counties. The Councils are public-private partnerships made up of local experts and stakeholders from business, academia, local government, and non- governmental organizations. Between Rounds 8 and 9 of the Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) requests to Empire State Development (ESD), a total of \$37,925,000 in funding comprised of 53 projects in Central New York; while a total of \$32,835,000 in funding comprised of 44 projects were awarded in the Mohawk Valley. This will result in a minimum of \$11,377,500 of these contracts in CNY and \$9,850,000 in the Mohawk Valley respectively being awarded to New York State Certified MWBE firms in order to comply with ESD’s 30% utilization requirement.

REDC Region	ESD Round 9 Award Totals	ESD Round 8 Award Totals	Est. MWBE Contracts (30% of Round 9/8 Totals)	Total Number of Projects
Central New York	\$21,607,000	16,318,000	\$11,377,500	53
Mohawk Valley	\$15,560,000	17,275,000	\$9,850,000	44

These Projects Categories include...

- **Empire State Development (ESD) Capital Grant Funding** helps drive regional and local economic development across New York State in cooperation with ten Regional Economic Development Councils (“Regional Councils”). Capital grant funding is available for capital-based economic development projects intended to create or retain jobs; prevent, reduce or eliminate unemployment and underemployment; and/or increase business or economic activity in a community or Region.
- **Excelsior Jobs Credits-Excelsior Jobs Program Tax Credits** will be reserved for future projects including business investments in targeted industries that are within the region and that create or retain jobs, create capital investment and are consistent with the Strategic Plan.
- **Low Cost Economic Development Financing-Federal Industrial Development Bond (IDB) Cap** will be made available for state and local government issuers to sell tax-exempt bonds for eligible economic development, infrastructure and community revitalization efforts.
- **NYSERDA Energy Efficiency Projects-NYSERDA’s Commercial and Industrial (C&I) Programs.** NYSERDA’s Commercial and Industrial (C&I) programs offer businesses in New York State solutions to improve energy efficiency and save money through design, new construction, renovation, and process improvements to commercial and industrial buildings. The Commercial New Construction Program can help building owners make informed decisions about designing and renovating sustainable buildings. The FlexTech Program offers energy-saving opportunities through consultation and cost-shared studies. The Industrial and Process Efficiency Program can help organizations increase manufacturing output and data processing efficiency.
<https://regionalcouncils.ny.gov/sites/default/files/2019-10/2019CentralNYProgressReport.pdf>

The proposed one-on-one counseling sessions outline;

The Syracuse MWBE Business Growth Accelerator program, in partnership with OMNI Procurement Solutions, CenterState CEO and UMEA, will conduct a minimum of 35 and up to 50 hours of one-on-one coaching sessions with each participant firm as determined by their need. The Syracuse MWBE BGA Proposed Class Program Schedule (Appendix D) lists twenty distinct One-on-One Consultation Topics. Not all consultation topics will be required for every MWBE BGA participant. Each participant will have consultations, dependent on the results of their company’s pre-assessment business assessment. Each participant will have an individualized program, with a minimum of 35 hours of one-on-one consultations.

The Syracuse MWBE BGA program budget reflects 35 hours of one-on-one consultation for thirty (30) participants at a total of 1,050 hours.

The expected outcomes of the program;

Expected outcomes for the City of Syracuse MWBE Business Growth Accelerator program include the following:

1. The City of Syracuse MWBE BGA will enroll 15 MWBE Firms
2. A minimum of 85% of participants will be retained/graduated in the City of Syracuse

MWBE BGA program for the 12-month program completion.

3. As a result of completing the City of Syracuse MWBE BGA program, we will be able to share a minimum of 10 success stories within the two-year reporting period.
4. At least 10 MWBE firm principals will increase their credit score and/or will have increased their capacity for credit growth within the two-year reporting period.
5. The number of MWBE firms with secured contracts from New York State funded projects will be at least 10 within the two-year reporting period.
6. At least 8 MWBE businesses will receive either loan or capital investment within the two-year reporting period.
7. The MWBE BGA participants will experience at least a 30% increase projected per annum revenue, within the two-year reporting period.
8. At least 10 MWBE BGA participant firms will experience expanded employment within the two-year reporting period.
9. A minimum of 5 new jobs will be created among the MWBE BGA participant firms within the two-year reporting period.
10. All graduating participants will have a completed Business Growth Plan

The plans for supplementing grant funding through matching funds and program income

The local match of 20% or \$70,000 will supplement the grant funds using \$40,440 as an in-kind match of existing City of Syracuse staff salary to plan, implement and manage the BGA program and OMNI Procurement labor costs. With this match comes years of combined experience from the Deputy Commissioner of Business Development, and of the Deputy Mayor of Syracuse, Ms. Sharon Owens. Ms. Owens is deeply committed to this Business Growth Accelerator Program and held the position of Director of Minority Affairs under a previous mayoral administration. Mr. Wilson, CEO of OMNI Procurement has a successful history in procurement, business and compliance management. The City of Syracuse has committed \$35,000 of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Workforce Development Funds in order to partially fund 1 FTE BGA Specialist to manage and coordinate incubator activities and 25% of an existing Division of Business - Business Specialist to assist with data collection and reporting.

The business growth plan Incubators must also submit a detailed plan explaining how the MWBE subcontracting goals established would be met.

The City of Syracuse Ordinance Chapter 42, requires that the Office of Minority Affairs ensures MWBE utilization compliance in accordance with the thresholds required by local, state and federal regulations on all projects under contract with the city of Syracuse. The office's Compliance Officer, the Director of Minority Affairs is responsible for the overall operation of the office and its functions. A large part of the plan to meet or exceed the training and sub-contractual goals for this program will be to connect the trained MWBEs to NYS funded projects and ensure they benefit from the 30% utilization goal. The city of Syracuse will accomplish this by embedding the operations and objectives of the Syracuse MWBE BGA into the function of the Office of Minority Affairs.

The office and its Compliance Officer are directly supervised by the city's office of Budget and Purchasing and therefore aware in real time of bid and contract opportunities. Likewise, the office works closely with the Onondaga County Division of Purchasing which serves as the source of bids for county government. Our partnership with the Onondaga County Purchase Department will also open the opportunity for the trained and registered MWBE's to bid on the State MWBE funded projects and be awarded state funded contracts. In order to ensure successful subcontracts for NYS MWBE certified companies, the BGA will provide support for these companies to register as a vendor with Onondaga County or any other Central New York municipal registration process. Currently many are not, therefore prohibiting them from real-time notification of available bids and subcontracting opportunities. City, County, and regional governments rely extensively on state funding to finance projects throughout this community. Additionally, the BGA will ensure that businesses are aware of any pre-bid and project "walk-through" opportunities.

This is a direct path and capable way to meet the contracting goals, along with all of the goals listed. We will also rely on all local partners to assist in meeting the goals to increase the capacity of each company that takes part in the BGA training program. These are key pieces of the plan to meet the goals of the BGA training and to grow State MWBEs in the area.

Building the capacity of MWBE firms in the CNY and Mohawk Valley regions will create a sustainable cohort of companies prepared to successfully complete and execute state funded contracts now and in the future.

E. Budget

In this section of the Technical Proposal, Incubators should provide a detailed budget for the entirety of the program, which includes the applicant's plans for supplementing grant funding through matching funds and program income.

The City of Syracuse has developed a program budget (Appendix E) which enables its ability to administer the Business Growth Accelerator program and support the service delivery of its implementation partners.

Program Income

The maximum allowable budget for the BGA is \$350,000. The program requires a 20% match of non-NYS funds. 50% of the match can be attributed to the cost of in-kind services.

The City of Syracuse will contribute \$35,000 (10%) of cash from its Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) allocation and \$35,000 in in-kind services which includes: 5% of the Deputy Mayor, Sharon Owens' time and 10% of the Deputy Commissioner of Neighborhood and Business Development - Division of Business Development Eric Ennis. \$22,100 in in-kind contributions will be provided in labor costs from OMNI Procurement CEO Edmund Wilson.

Total cash contribution equals 10% of the grant amount and total in-kind equals 12%.

Program Expenditures

Personnel - Salaries encompass the following expenses and funding sources:

- 1FTE Business Specialist who will be responsible for overall program coordination data collection and reporting requirements and
- .25FTE of the existing Business Specialist who will assist with data collection and reporting

71% of these two salaries are paid by ESD and 29% by City of Syracuse cash

5% of Deputy Mayor who manages the overall operation of the Department of Neighborhood and Business Development and 10% of the Deputy Commissioner who is responsible for the overall operations of the Division of Business Development; both will be expensed as in-kind.

Fringe Benefits - The city of Syracuse has a 40% fringe rate for all salaries
ESD: \$14,022; Incubator cash: \$10,000; Incubator in-kind: \$5,240

Contractual Services - the City of Syracuse will contract with OMNI Procurement Solutions

(OMNI) and the Upstate Minority Economic Alliance (UMEA)

OMNI will serve as program implementation lead providing training, consultation, and Business Growth Plan development. The fee structure is as follows:

- Training cost per participant: \$3,000.00 x 30 = \$ 90,000.00
- Business analysis, one-one consulting, support and business growth plan development \$4,470/participant x 30 = \$ 134,010
- Total Fixed Price: \$224,100.00 (Includes full proposed services, Labor and O/H, NTE 3500 hrs, 12 month Period of Performance) In-kind contribution (Labor): -\$22,100.00

Contract total: 202,000

UMEA will provide training in the Business Administration and Operational Capacity and Capability Module, provide consultation in addition to continual surveillance of the construction landscape to ensure the Syracuse BGA is aware and prepared to equip its participants for opportunities on projects. UMEA will use its expertise as the regional Black Chamber of Commerce to provide training specifically related to marketing and branding and will directly assist in the recruitment of MWBE participants in the Business Growth Accelerator program.

UMEA will be contracted at a flat fee of \$70,000 to enhance its organizational capacity via staffing or consultants, equipment and supplies.

Supplies/Materials - \$5,000 - Office and program supplies to assist City of Syracuse staff implement the program

Participant Supplies - Cost of \$500/participants - \$15,000 - to supply them with instruction materials required for completion of assessment, training and business growth plan.

Cell phone - \$1,080 cell phone for BGA Specialist - \$90/mo x 12 months

Equipment - \$2,500 - BGA Specialist desktop computer or laptop

Rental - \$2,500 - Classroom space at The Mohawk Valley Resource Center for Refugees , located at 309 Genesee Street Utica, NY for 10 hours per month per 12 months is \$2,000, plus \$500 access to office equipment and supplies.

Printing - \$1,000 - printing costs incurred by promotional materials, etc.

Advertising - \$1,000 - costs incurred for program advertising

Mileage - federally approved 2022 rate of \$.58.5/mile to Utica, NY (55miles one-way). We anticipate approximately 12 roundtrips. - \$772

Total Personnel Costs

ESD: \$349,927 COS Cash: 35,000 In-kind: \$40,440

Total Program Expenses: \$425,367

Summary

The City of Syracuse stands by its guiding principles that include its vision: **“Syracuse will be a growing city that embraces diversity and creates opportunity for all”**. We believe that vision for all New Yorkers.

The City of Syracuse is proud to present this public-private partnership with individuals, government, businesses, but is especially of this opportunity with OMNI Procurement Solution a proven minority-owned NYS Certified MWBE firm and the Upstate Minority Economic Alliance (UMEA) the only Minority Chamber of Commerce in the sixteen county Upstate New York Region. This partnership embodies our commitment to expanding the capacity and capabilities of MWBE construction firms in the Central New York and Mohawk Valley Regions.

The Syracuse MWBE Business Growth Accelerator program will through business assessment, training, consultation, and business growth plan development provide opportunities can build capacity, competency and connections that lead to working relationships among prime and subcontractors, employers, and prospective workers. A legacy of geographic and social segregation that created a cultural and economic divide begs for repair and renewal.

We thank you for your consideration of this proposal.