



## **Consultant to Support Technology Operations**

### **Request for Qualifications**

**9/15/2022**

Grounded Solutions Network seeks to retain a Managed IT Services Provider to support our growing staff of 23 who work from offices in Washington DC, Oakland, and home offices across the country. Respondents should be Microsoft certified technology firms with experience working with non-profit organizations and remote organizations.

#### **I. ABOUT GROUNDED SOLUTIONS NETWORK**

[Grounded Solutions Network](#) is a national nonprofit membership organization of community land trusts, municipal housing programs, and nonprofits that support housing with lasting affordability. Our mission is to cultivate communities — equitable, inclusive and rich in opportunity — by advancing affordable housing solutions that last for generations. We promote housing solutions that will stay affordable for generations so communities can stabilize and strengthen their foundation, for good.

#### **II. BACKGROUND**

Grounded Solutions Network is seeking a Managed IT Services Provider (“MSP”) that can serve as a partner to our organization in delivering, maintaining, supporting, and securing our technology operations on a remote basis. This activity includes maintaining our cloud-based network infrastructure, delivering and maintaining our computer hardware assets, responding to helpdesk requests from users, and being a strategic partner for growth, security and resiliency.

Grounded Solutions Network has contractual agreements with government institutions and government sponsored enterprises that have high levels of cyber security and risk management requirements to maintain, including but not limited to user access standards and data maintenance and transport restrictions.

Grounded Solutions Network has one internal IT support staff / Salesforce administrator and uses a managed service provider for remote helpdesk and limited project implementation support. Grounded Solutions Network is interested in both fully managed services and blended IT options. Preliminary proposals and bids can include either or both options.

Grounded Solutions Network is also looking to conduct an IT assessment (last completed in 2020) to recommend and help implement enhanced infrastructure and security that meets industry standards and improves the end-user experience. Services to be provided include but are not limited to support in the following areas:

- Network Management (Azure Active Directory)
- Security & Social Engineering
- Email management, including spam protection
- Application Management (Office 365, Dropbox, Lastpass, Adobe)
- Home Office & Co-working space infrastructure support & optimization
- Backup Management & Disaster Recovery
- Remote Support (Help Desk), including during travel
- Additional remote management, access, reporting, and automation
- Maintained network documentation

Grounded Solutions Network has a growing staff, currently 23 FTE, working from home offices across the country and co-working space offices in Washington DC and Oakland CA. Each staff member is issued a Windows-based laptop, with some exceptions for Apple products. Each home office and coworking space is generally located in a metropolitan area and supported through stipends and equipment reimbursements, although there is variation in quality of and access to network services. Consistent, reliable, and secure access for all staff at any location is critical to the scope of work.

### **III. QUESTIONS**

#### **III.A Experience and Resources**

Provide a brief description of your firm, including but not limited to an overview of your firm, name of the principal(s) of the firm, address, total number of employees, overall industry experience, certifications, and any affiliations.

1. Describe your firm and its capabilities. Demonstrate your capacity to perform the services detailed in this RFQ.
2. Indicate which employees from your firm would be involved in providing services to Grounded Solutions Network, including their designated roles, qualifications, and experience. Submit a resume of the primary individual(s) who will be responsible for the Grounded Solutions Network account.
3. Provide a list of references, with names and contact information, for organizations or businesses for whom you have performed similar work. A minimum of three references are required; references from nonprofit organizations and/or housing organizations are preferred.

#### **III.B Services**

1. Describe your firm's capabilities to conduct network and security assessments and ability to complete any necessary system enhancements.
2. Describe your firm's experience in planning and deploying technology roadmaps for clients.
3. Describe your approach to provide installation, configuration management, patching, monitoring, optimizing and ongoing maintenance for network devices for a disbursed staff.
4. Detail the process of providing services, as outlined in section II, including remote support availability and expected response times. Define standard service hours during regular business hours, weekends and holidays. Any applicable Service Level Agreement (SLA) for response time options should be included.

5. Detail your firm's proposed approach to offering end-users a uniform working experience at any location throughout the United States, providing consistent, reliable, and secure access to files, folders, and emails, in particular home offices with variable network conditions.
6. Describe any software utilized for routine patching and updates, as well as software for communication and remote support, such as help desk ticketing system.
7. Outline your firm's procurement and purchase ordering process, if defined.
8. Describe any additional service items, with associated cost, that may be of interest to Grounded Solutions Network.

### **III.C Fee Structure**

Provide a clear fee schedule that outlines all monthly service delivery costs as well as any proposed one-time software or start-up costs. The fee schedule should include a breakdown of pricing structure (per user, per hour, etc.) and any additional billing rates, hourly costs, and additional expenses for each individual or service.

Provide any other fee information applicable to the proposal that has not been covered.

Outline all provisions, termination clauses, and/or penalties for closing or changing the number of services as needed.

### **III.D Additional Considerations**

Describe any additional facets relevant to this RFP, which have not been previously mentioned that you feel warrant consideration or add to your firm's value as a strategic partner to Grounded Solutions Network and its mission and values.

## **IV. CAPABILITIES AND QUALIFICATIONS**

Applicants will be evaluated based on how well they demonstrate the following criteria:

- Have the expertise, licenses, and resources to provide managed IT services to Grounded Solutions current and future operations as a partner,
- Be licensed to do business in the contiguous United States,
- Consistently maintain and allocate sufficient staff resources to provide timely service,
- Maintain required business insurance coverage,
- Experience supporting remote organizations required

## **V. SUBMISSION**

Please submit responses to [info@groundedsolutions.org](mailto:info@groundedsolutions.org) by October 15, 2022. Please contact Tom Tosuksri at [ptosuksri@groundedsolutions.org](mailto:ptosuksri@groundedsolutions.org) with any questions about this engagement.

Grounded Solutions Network encourages participation of Minority Owned Business Enterprises (MBE) and Women's Business Enterprises (WBE) businesses in its procurement opportunities. Our procurement policy and outreach efforts ensure that these businesses have equal opportunity to compete for and do business with the Grounded Solutions Network. If you qualify as one of those types of business, please identify yourself as such in the vendor application.