

Briefing Q&A – FDR Professional Services

Question 1. FA-1 Form: Do we have to fill out if we have not made any political contributions?

There are boxes to check “No” to complete the political contribution form (FA-1Form).

Question 2. The RFP questions are due December 5th 2024, and the application is due on the 23rd 2024 over email, correct?

Yes, that is correct.

Question 3. Is there a minimum cash flow you are looking for from the FDR market vendors or business owners to receive professional tax services?

Are startup businesses eligible to receive the provider's tax services?

No minimum cash flow is required to be eligible for the tax services.

Most FDR vendors are sole proprietors and startups, tax service providers may only need to assist with Profit & Loss reports for tax return filing services, in addition to back tax issues if any.

In the proposal, the applicant should quote the cost based on the type of services.

Question 4. Any reason why the RFP requests the applicant's Statement of Financial Capacity?

We want to make sure that the awardee can take on this project on behalf of the City and isn't going to go out of business while waiting for payment, or that taking this project would jeopardize the awardee's other business.

Question 5. Will one or more than one awardee be selected, and will the cap be the same or split among multiple awardees?

We could award the contract to one Certified Public Accountant (CPA), who can either handle case management in-house or with subcontract, or award the contract to the CPA and case manager separately, or even multiple CPAs if it seems like it would work well.

Question 6. Is there already a list of the FDR market vendors and the awardee is not responsible for recruiting clients?

Yes, that is correct.

Question 7. If we do not do tax filing or are not Certified Public Accountants (CPA), should we still apply?

You are welcome to apply if you have another niche or specialty around bookkeeping or compliance, but tax compliance is a major goal.

The City is very limited in its ability to provide formal tax advice, we have more ability to provide advice on licensing and permits but our capacity is limited.

Questions 8. If there are languages where no RFP candidates can offer services in those languages, how will the project proceed?

The potential candidate can either partner with another firm that does interpretation services or make arrangements for a subcontractor with linguistic skills.

The awardee can also use the City's contracted translation service providers.

Question 9. Is CPA credentialing required?

It is required for tax services and tax compliance-related work.

Question 10. How will the information of the FDR market vendors (businesses) be prepared and provided?

The selected firm will be brought into the partnership with the FDR Vendor's Association and the Cambodian Association of Greater Philadelphia (CAGP) to begin working with the FDR market vendors.

Question 11. How much information do you already have about FDR market vendors' status, and how much will we be responsible for collecting?

In other words, how many FDR market vendors will need these services (BIRT/ City tax filing, etc.)
Commerce Department, FDR Market Vendor's Association, and CAGP have the information.
Approximately 80% of the total SEA FDR Market Vendors and Latino Market Vendors will need tax services.

Question 12. Will we be responsible for more than one year of tax filing?

This is only to file 2024 taxes, although it may include prior year filings and amendments.

We are leaving the market vendors the flexibility to remain with your firm in the future, but the cost would be paid from their own pocket.

Question 13. Is the awardee actually doing the bookkeeping for FDR vendors, or training them on what to track for proper bookkeeping?

Since most FDR market vendors are sole proprietors, the awardee will potentially provide the basic knowledge of bookkeeping and template for market vendors to record business expenses, cost of goods, etc.

Question 14. Are you open to AI copilots or other in-house tools developed to assist with the work?

It depends on whom the tool will be used.

Many FDR Vendors don't read or write and are seniors. AI is not likely to be a successful implementation directly to the market vendors. But if it will help the tax service provider, we are open to any innovations.

Question 15. Will we be measured on the business' growth/success?

Not directly - revenue growth is not a direct output to be measured although it is certainly nice.

Question 16. What is the business structure mix and revenue range?

85%-90% of the FDR Market Vendors are sole proprietors, and we have the remaining market vendors (businesses) structured as Limited Liability Corporation.

The annual Revenue ranges between \$50,000 to \$250,000 and is clustered towards the lower end.

Question 17. How willing are the FDR vendors to work with professional service providers (CPAs) outside their cultural and ethnic community?

Patience and building relationships are the key.

FDR market vendors grow a lot and there will be many market vendors working toward your success.

The elders will take more time and intentionality. The younger ones are more accustomed to a diverse community. The ethnic and national background of the applicant has no bearing on the selection process. But we will consider your language access plan and how you will engage productively with the FDR market vendors.

Questions 18. Where do the meetings with the FDR market vendors take place?

The Commerce Department's one-on-one assistance and workshops have occurred at CAGP (Cambodian Association of Greater Philadelphia) office at Oregon & 3rd both in person and virtually. It can be flexible, and we can provide a location if needed.

Question 19. How far back in time are we going for back taxes?

Only as far back as they registered BIRT -Business Income Receipt TAX ID within the City of Philadelphia.

Question 20. May I ask the vendor language breakdown at FDR Market: percentage speaking Khmer, Lao, Vietnamese, and Spanish?

Language breakdown of vendors at FDR market:

- Total 10 Spanish-speaking vendors at the Latino Market
- There are 74 Southeast Asian vendors at the SEA Market
 - Khmer languages: 77% of total SEA Market Vendors
 - Lao/Thai Languages: 16% of total SEA Market Vendors
 - Vietnamese language: the remaining SEA Market Vendors

Most of the vendors have different English proficiency levels and some are native speakers of English.