



# REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Phase 1: Website Redevelopment

Phase 2: Support and Maintenance

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- *A Commonwealth of Virginia Nonprofit Corporation*
- *A Certified Community Development Financial Institution - (CDFI) via U.S. Department of Treasury's CDFI Fund*
- *An SBA Approved Intermediary Microlender*
- *A Virginia Department of Housing & Community Development (DHCD) Approved Small Business Resiliency Lender*
- *A Sponsored Program of the Mason Enterprise Center at George Mason University*

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## 1 – SEEKING

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Community Business Partnership (“CBP”) seeks an experienced website developer and administrator (“Contractor”) who will help the CBP expand its mission of helping people start, grow, and finance their businesses.

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## 2 – CBP’S WEBSITE MISSION

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The primary mission of a CBP website is to promote CBP’s financing products to small businesses, startups, and individuals wanting to start businesses.

The secondary mission of the website is to offer added services such as business incubation, educational, counseling, and networking services to the public as well as select audiences in the DMV/Washington MSA region.

The final mission of the website is to inform internal and external stakeholders about the CBP and its successes.

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## 3 – ABOUT CBP AND ITS IMPACT

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The CBP is a CDFI Loan Fund nonprofit certified by the U.S. Department of Treasury’s CDFI Fund and U.S. Small Business Administration’s Approved Intermediary Microlender. The organization is also an approved VA DCHD Small Business Resiliency Lender and the approved administrator for the Fairfax County Small Business Revolving Loan Fund (RLF).

The CBP is funded by federal, state, and local county funders along with multiple grants and sponsorship sources including banks, foundations, private companies, and individual donations.

Founded in 1995, the Community Business Partnership (CBP) is an independent nonprofit corporation and is a sponsor program of George Mason University’s Mason Enterprise Center. Located in Springfield, Virginia, the CBP’s mission is to be a strong community lending source that offers resources, access to technical training, and support for those seeking to start and grow successful small businesses.

The organization is focused on ‘Access to Capital Solutions’ for our underserved and underbanked community members as we seek to aid the upward financial mobility of our targeted population.

The CBP has served over thirteen (13) thousands small businesses in the Northern VA/Washington DC Metro region during the last four (4) years and helped deploy over \$55.9 million in loans and grants to over 4,900+ businesses.

During this period the CBP also provided over 560 training sessions, advised over 6,100 individuals and business owners either through group sessions or 1-on-1 counseling support that equated to over 3,400 hours. These activities resulted in 61 new businesses as well as the creation/retention of over 400 jobs.

## 4 – OUR VALUE PROPOSITION

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Dedication to Financial Advancement: Focused approach to expand and increase capital infusion opportunities to fund our economically challenged, underbanked, and underserved community served by the CBP’s qualified and expert staff who are dedicated to the mission in support of small businesses.

## 5 – WEBSITE OBJECTIVES

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Below is a list of objectives that will direct the design and layout of the CBP upgraded website.

- 1) Inspire audiences to start and grow businesses.
- 2) Inform audiences about our financing opportunities.
- 3) Inform audiences about upcoming CBP training options and direct them (or ideally embedded) to a calendar reservation system and payment portals.
- 4) Introduce audiences one-on-one counseling opportunities with CBP expert staff.
- 5) Highlight CBP staff expertise and skillsets.
- 6) Showcases CBP success stories.
- 7) Provide a password protected area for downloadable documents for the CBP Board of Directors.
- 8) Highlight CBP’s funders, affiliations, and donors.

## 6 – OUR AUDIENCES

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The CBP has two (2) primary audiences and one (1) secondary audience that the website should attract and inform. Finally, there is one (1) internal audience.

### Primary Audience:

#### a) **Small Business Owners**

This audience includes:

- Existing business owners and startups seeking to finance their companies.
- Existing business owners and startups seeking support services to expand their enterprises.
- Businesses must be based in the Washington DC/VA/MD MSA region.

Ideal audience: The companies must be considered ‘Small’ by the SBA standards and have less than 50 employees. These businesses operate in most industries including healthcare, cybersecurity, food, accommodation, HVAC, transportation, construction, retail, and others.

#### b) **Consumers**

This audience includes:

- Individuals seeking to start a business and in need of financing support.
- Individuals must be based in the Washington DC/VA/MD MSA region.

Ideal audience: Underserved and underbanked community members seeking to improve their financial standing.

### **Primary Audience Demography**

Specific demographic, ethnic, or underserved populations.

This primary audience includes:

- Women
- Underserved communities (African Americans, Hispanic Americans, and Asian Americans)

The website should provide the primary audience with information that helps to inform them on the following:

- |                                  |                                |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Financing Opportunities       | 5. Business Directory          |
| 2. Helpful Resources             | 6. Language Translation Option |
| 3. Training and Advising Options | 7. Future – eLearning access   |
| 4. Inspirational Stories         |                                |

### **Secondary Audience: Stakeholders and Funders**

This audience includes:

- Regional and local county Board of Supervisors and staff such as Fairfax County, Prince William County, and others within our approved lending markets.
- Federal and State Funders that includes the Small Business Administration, CDFI Fund, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development.
- Foundations and other Organizations that support or could support the CBP.
- Banks, Credit Unions, Corporate Funders, and individual donors.

The common needs of these groups are CBP success stories and the recognition of their assistance to the CBP’s mission.

### **Internal Audience: CBP Board of Directors**

The common need of this group is the same as the secondary audience that includes CBP client success stories. Other applicable access points or support can be determined at a later point.

## 7 – WEBSITE REQUIREMENTS

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1. Ability for donors to make financial contributions.
2. A simple, secure, and versatile content management system (CMS) in which CBP staff need no programming or coding skills to operate. CMS should also allow CBP staff to easily create new pages, edit or delete existing ones, and re-organize the site layout without programming or coding skills. Our current site runs on WordPress.
3. Use of CBP design elements including logo, colors, and fonts (to be supplied by CBP through a design guide).
4. Heavy use of pictures; a combination of stock photos and unique CBP images.
5. Design adherence to Section 508 compliance and branding guidelines.
6. Responsive to both desktop and mobile device use.
7. Each staff member has their own web page to edit in a typical CV format.
8. Blogging functionality with ease of use in creating and sharing content.
9. A search bar to help visitors navigate the site.
10. Easy navigation is necessary to help visitors, especially those who might be impaired.
11. Responsive design across different devices and platforms.
12. Intuitive user experience is also important.
13. Social media scrolling with automatic updating.
14. The ability of website users to download CBP supplied documents in MS Word, Excel, and PDF formats.
15. Adding a business directory that allows for showcasing key companies on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis that will be billed at a nominal cost to be included in the system.

### **Additional Requirements:**

- Website must be compliant with Accessibility Standards.

## 8 – USER INTERFACE FOR EVENT REGISTRATION AND PAYMENTS

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Interested registrants should be able to reserve space, pay for training classes, workshops, networking events, and topical conferences through a convenient user interface (UI). This UI should have events in multiple formats including list and calendar forms. The UI should also have a convenient filter function for events that should include chronological order, by CBP programs, by focus area, by instructor, and by other classifications to be determined. Visitors must register and log in to access payment options.

Ultimately, the UI should provide a seamless transition between the registration process and a payment process (through the CBP's credit card processing agency, [www.authorize.net](http://www.authorize.net)).

The resulting UI should either be embedded within the new website or have it as integrated as possible into the design of the website (colors, logo use, etc.).

## 9 – EXTERNAL DATABASE INTEGRATION

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Based on the CBP’s lending and government grant requirements, there are multiple databases or softwares we are required to use.

- 1) Loan Application Portal: Individuals and business owners get access to our application portal via Lenderfit.io. Before interested sources can apply, they must provide an inquiry request as noted here: <https://cbponline.org/loans/>
- 2) Loan Clients Access: The CBP uses the Downhome Solutions Loan Portfolio Management system that allows borrowers to have access to their loans and loan records.
- 3) Technical Assistance Support: Provided via Outreach Systems, the provider of our Neoserra software which manages clients’ counseling sessions, training event attendance, counseling appointments, mailing lists, and impact and performance metrics.
- 4) Email Marketing: The CBP currently uses Constant Contact for email marketing support.
- 5) Elearning Access-point: The CBP plans to implement/connect to an LMS to help our clients with on-demand training opportunities. LMS suggestions would be appreciated though we do have a few in consideration.
- 6) Storage: File storage access point for board members via Box.com

## 10 – WEBSITE SECURITY MEASURES

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The website should have optimum security measures, applicable encryption, and firewall to safeguard from hacking and identify theft. We must always protect our clients’ personal and financial information along with protecting our proprietary information and access points. SSL certificates and other security measures are paid for directly by the organization.

## 11 – CURRENT URL & HOSTING

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Currently, the CBP utilizes a proprietary URL: [www.cbponline.com](http://www.cbponline.com). The CBP would consider alternative URL’s that are easier for our audiences to remember. The website is currently hosted by GoDaddy and uses an outdated WordPress theme that must be upgraded.

## 12 – SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION

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The CBP updates the current site regularly with training sessions and other relevant content specific to services, job offerings, and other information we must share.

- **KPIs should include** – page views, average time on page, average session duration, bounce rate, traffic sources, social media referral sources, new visitor sessions, unique vs. new visitors, device type, exit rate, top pages, conversion rate (e.g.: Registering for a class or loan inquiry submission)

- **SEO budget** – we will consider a budget of up to \$500 per month after the first three (3) months of the website going live.
- **Desired outcome** – Improved visitor experience, improved page load time, increased visitor engagement, month-over-month increase in new visitors, improved communication, and improved other KPIs as listed above.

## 13 – TRAFFIC STATISTICS REPORTING

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Awarded Contractor should support a robust visitor reporting analytics system that, at a minimum, provides the following reports: unique visits and total views, page views, and time spent on site.

## 14 – CURRENT SITE CHALLENGES

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The current website is running on a WordPress theme that is now outdated and that has caused the home page to not work properly. The site was originally designed around the organization’s historical operational processes that included multiple programs. The CBP services have been realigned and is now focused on its lending services as the primary service and technical assistance as a secondary component.

## 15 – SITE CONTENT

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The content for the new site will be gathered and formulated from the current site, plus new content to be developed to reflect the new services and financial products being offered. The primary content creation will be provided by the organization. We would also request content support and or guidance to help enhance the site’s overall information.

## 16 – WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT TIMELINE

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The timeline to launch this site should be within four (4) months to six (6) months. We prefer a faster timeline for launch. However, we recognize the following list of key areas of developmental timeline necessary to building a site that reflects CBP’s current and future trajectory.

- 1) Planning and Ideation | 2-4 Weeks
- 2) Design | 2-4 Weeks
- 3) Development and Programming | 3-6 Weeks
- 4) Content Support & Assembly | 2-4 Weeks
- 5) QA & Debugging | 1-2 Weeks
- 6) Beta Testing and Reviews | 1-2 Weeks
- 7) Site Launch – sooner than later!

The information shared below is a guide to layout the new site. The CBP is open to suggestions to help streamline the flow, visibility, and or need for page. Content will be provided for each page. However, feedback and or input would be a value-add.

### Home

#### About

- Vision, Mission & Core Values
- History
  - Who We Are
  - What We Do
  - Who We Serve
- CBP's Impact
  - Impact Investing
- Board of Directors (Box integration)
- Staff
- Volunteers
- Memberships & Affiliations
- Careers at CBP
- Annual Reports

#### Financing

- Business Loans
- Consumer Loans
- Loan Programs
  - CBP Enterprise
  - SBA Microloan
  - VA Small Business Resiliency Fund
  - NOVA Freedom Fund
  - Fairfax County Small Business RLF
  - Helping Hands
  - Other

#### Programs

- Financial Tech Hub
  - Cohorts
  - Startup Accelerator
  - BizGrowth Accelerator
- Client Support/Technical Assistance
  - Advising / Mentorship
  - Training (Virtual & In-person)
  - On-Demand (LMS)

#### Incubator Services

- Mailbox Rentals
- Co-working Desk Rentals
- Conference Room Rentals
- Office Space Rental

#### Funders, Partners, and Sponsors

##### Events

- Featured Class(es)
- Networking Events
- Training Calendar

#### Directory/Featured Business

#### Contact CBP / Map

#### Blog

OTHER Pages or info to be added where applicable:

- Donate Button
- Privacy Policy
- Non-Discrimination Policy/Equal Opportunity Lender
- Support CBP
- News
- Media
- Community Services
- Success Stories
- Resources & FAQs

#### Social Media Links & Sharing Options:

- LinkedIn
- Facebook
- Twitter
- Instagram
- YouTube



## 18 – FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT (FOIA)

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The CBP is funded, in part, through the federal, state, and local governments, and as such, is subject to The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests.

## 19 – BUDGET DETAILS

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The CBP will entertain proposals that are less than \$25,000.

## 20 – PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

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All proposals should, at a minimum, address the following:

1. Company description and history of providing similar web design, maintenance, and hosting services.
2. Names and credentials of creative team as well as number of full-time employees.
3. A representative selection of websites created for current and past clients.
4. Current Business License and Insurance.
5. Reference List– please provide a list of references (3-5) to include the following: company name, contact, title, physical address, email address, and phone number.
6. Costs and length of time associated with design and creation of a website per the needs outlined in this RFP.
7. Costs for training up to three CBP employees in operating the website’s content management system.
8. Costs related to on-going support and maintenance of the website.

## 21 – EVALUATION CRITERIA

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The successful Contractor will be chosen based on:

1. The experience, knowledge, skills, and qualifications of the company and the individuals who will be available to provide these services.
2. Compliance with all applicable business requirements – e.g.: insurance, business license, State Corporation Commission ACTIVE status.
3. The competitive cost of services as well as best value.
4. The expertise of the firm in working with similar customers.
5. Project timeline and milestones options offered.
6. All submissions will be reviewed, graded, and the final decision will be made by the CBP’s Selection Advisory Committee (SAC). *(Please reference the anticipated award date in the next section)*

## 22 – RFP SUBMISSION DETAILS AND TIMELINE INSTRUCTIONS

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Proposals are due by the date below and should be emailed to the contact provided.

- Proposals should be submitted in PDF format and not exceed 20 pages.
- Proposals received after this deadline will not be considered.
- Questions about this RFP can be submitted up until 2:00 PM, Eastern Time on Monday, October 16, 2023, via the following email – [Karlene@cbponline.org](mailto:Karlene@cbponline.org).
  - Questions received and responses will be posted on the CBP website page/news and updates section by 5:00 PM, Eastern Time on Monday, October 23, 2023.

### **RFP SUBMISSION DEADLINE:**

5:00 PM - FRIDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2023

### **ANTICIPATED CONTRACT AWARD DATE:**

Contract award will be no later than November 30, 2023

*Proposals are to be emailed to the contact person noted below:*

The Subject line should state:

**“CBP Website RFP Proposal - Your Company Name”**

## 23 – CBP CONTACT

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Questions regarding this Request for Proposals can also be addressed to the CBP Authorized Representative:

Karlene Sinclair-Robinson

Director, Business Finance Center @ CBP

Phone: 703-459-9709

Email: [Karlene@cbponline.org](mailto:Karlene@cbponline.org)

### **PLEASE NOTE:**

- The CBP strongly encourages offerors to submit proposals well in advance of the proposal submission deadline.
- A proposal submission is not considered successful unless all necessary files have been received.
- Offerors are responsible for the consequences of any failure to plan ahead in the submission of their Proposal.

Thank You.