



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

FOR
Certified Sites Program

ISSUED BY:

WISCONSIN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

ON: **02/13/2026**

All questions regarding this RFP must be submitted in writing to Sarah Bowns at sarah.bownds@wedc.org by 2/27/2026 at 4:00 pm CT.

PROPOSALS MUST BE SUBMITTED BY:
03/13/2026, 4:00 PM CT

To:
Sarah Bowns
WEDC @ The Hub
2352 S. Park Street West Washington Avenue, Suite 303
Madison, WI 53713

LOOK FORWARD 

I. Scope

The purpose of this Request for Proposals (RFP) is to provide interested proposers with the information needed to prepare and submit a Proposal for the following:

The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) seeks proposals from qualified firms to provide site certification services in support of WEDC's Certified Sites Program and the statewide industrial site readiness pipeline for the period of April 21, 2026, through June 30, 2029. This RFP is issued to identify the firm best positioned to assist WEDC in the evolution and administration of an industrial site readiness program that strengthens the preparedness, competitiveness, and marketability of industrial sites across Wisconsin.

The Certified Sites Program establishes consistent statewide standards for industrial site readiness. A certified designation indicates that key approvals, documentation, and assessments commonly required for industrial uses are already in place. Certification criteria reflect the representative needs of advanced manufacturing projects and provide site selectors and corporate decision-makers with confidence that designated sites are "ready to go."

The selected proposer will support WEDC through program management, technical assistance, and community engagement services. Responsibilities may include coordinating and managing program activities; working directly with communities, local utilities, regional partners, and other stakeholders to assess site readiness needs; guiding due diligence, infrastructure planning, and site certification requirements; and delivering technical assistance and capacity-building support to participating communities. Additional responsibilities may include outreach, data collection, reporting, and contributing to continuous program improvement. The selected proposer will collaborate closely with WEDC staff to ensure alignment with statewide economic development strategies and effective implementation of WEDC's community-driven industrial site readiness objectives.

WEDC anticipates that industrial site readiness pipeline needs may vary throughout the contract term. WEDC reserves the right to modify, prioritize, or adjust specific activities annually based on budget availability, program needs, and strategic priorities. Accordingly, the selected proposer must demonstrate flexibility in scope execution and the ability to adapt services as program needs evolve.

II. Project Timeline

Proposers responding to this RFP must be prepared to conform to the following timeline.

Date	Event
2/13/2026	RFP Issued
2/27/2026	Deadline to Submit Questions
3/13/2026	Proposals Due
3/16/2026-3/27/2026	Committee Review of Proposals
3/30/2026- 4/10/2026	Possible Interviews with Proposers
4/21/2026	Approval of Award

III. Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation

The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) is a public body corporate and politic governed by Chapter 238 of the Wisconsin Statutes. WEDC was created under 2011 Wisconsin Act 7 and 2011 Wisconsin Act 32 to replace the economic and community

development operations of the former Wisconsin Department of Commerce and to serve as the State of Wisconsin's lead economic development organization. WEDC is governed by a sixteen-member Board of Directors. WEDC's Chief Executive Officer is appointed by the Governor.

WEDC provides financial and technical assistance and services to businesses and organizations in Wisconsin for the purpose of strengthening economic development and creating and retaining jobs. As of June 30, 2025 WEDC had approximately 155 employees and an operating budget of approximately \$10.5 million. Revenues to finance its operating budget are derived primarily from state appropriation, loan repayments, and other income.

WEDC operates five economic and community development divisions, and eight finance and administrative departments primarily in the Madison, Wisconsin location. WEDC provides grants, loans, loan guarantees, tax credits, and other financial and technical assistance to its customers. WEDC utilizes the Intacct accounting system as well as Salesforce and a grant and loan management system.

IV. Proposal Requirements

Proposers responding to this RFP must provide sufficient responses to all of the below requests for information. Failure to respond to any of the requests may result in disqualification of the proposal.

A. Organizational and Staff Capabilities

1. Provide a brief description of the proposer's history and organizational structure.
2. Describe the proposer's qualifications to develop and administer a site certification program, including pertinent prior experience, specialized expertise, and available resources.
3. Summarize the proposer's relevant experience, including work as an industrial site selection and site readiness consultant for private-sector clients, states, non-urban municipalities, utilities, and/or rail providers
4. Provide a list of at least three relevant engagements held by the proposer which indicate relevant experience.
5. Provide a list of all staff persons who will be involved in carrying out the tasks covered by this RFP, describing each in terms of their involvement in specific roles, and qualifications.
6. Provide a list of any subcontractors (individual or organizational) that the proposer intends to use when providing services under this RFP (Note: the proposer is not required to use subcontractor(s). However, no subcontractor may be used without WEDC's written approval.)

B. Technical Requirements/Approach to the Project

1. Describe, in detail, the proposer's technical approach to the project.
2. Provide a timeline for conducting the work under this RFP.

C. Documents

1. Provide a copy of the proposer's W-9 signed and dated in 2026.
2. Provide a copy of the proposer's standard contract documents.
3. Provide a completed Supplier Demographic Attestation Form if applicable.

V. Cost Proposal

Proposers should provide a fixed cost proposal for the services to be provided under this RFP, including anticipated out of pocket costs. The cost proposal should include the estimated number or hours and the billing rate for each level of team member assigned to the engagement.

Please provide estimated cost for the following:

- An annual program administration fee, quoted for each year of the contract term.

And on a per site/per community basis:

- Full Site Certification as outlined in the program materials available for download on wedc.org ([Establishing a Certified Site - WEDC](#)). Deliverables must include:
 - Desktop Site Review
 - On-site visit
 - Comprehensive Analysis & Report including
 - Executive Summary
 - Strategic Development Plan
 - Technical Site Readiness Evaluation
 - Industry Assessment
 - Labor Assessment
 - Competitive Assessment benchmarking against sites within Wisconsin as well as sites in competitor states.
- Early-Stage certification for sites beginning the path to industrial site readiness but not yet ready to apply for full certification, including an industry fit analysis, site visit, and readiness gap analysis
- Re-certification of previously certified site. Desktop Site Review only, no site visit or Comprehensive Analysis & Report
- Regional Industrial Site Readiness Seminar half day, in person event convened upon request of a Regional EDO partner organization.

VI. Terms and Conditions

The following terms and conditions affect responses to this RFP and any resulting contract. These terms shall be adhered to by any interested proposer and are non-negotiable.

A. Contract Term

The contract will cover April 21, 2026, through June 30, 2029.

B. Confidentiality

Proposer acknowledges that all information, data, records and documents disclosed by WEDC to proposer, or which come to proposer's attention during the course of its response to this RFP or performance under any resulting contract constitute valuable and proprietary assets of WEDC (Confidential Information). Proposer agrees not to disclose the Confidential Information, either directly or indirectly, to any person, entity or affiliate unless required to do so by legal process of law without prior authorization by WEDC. If required to disclose Confidential Information by legal process, Proposer shall provide WEDC with prompt notice so WEDC may seek an appropriate protective order. Except as required to respond to this RFP or during the course of its performance under the terms of any resulting Agreement, proposer shall not use any Confidential Information for its own purposes.

C. Conflict of Interests

Proposers' response to this RFP must include, in writing, disclosure of any potential conflict of interests that may arise from proposer's performing services for WEDC. Any resulting contract will require that if a vendor fails to disclose a potential conflict of interest, and if WEDC

determines such failure to disclose involves a material conflict of interest, the vendor's contract may be declared to be void by WEDC and any amounts paid under the contract may be recovered by WEDC. Vendors shall advise WEDC of any changes in potential conflicts of interest. This language may change with the new procurement policy.

D. Nondiscrimination

Pursuant to Wisconsin law, any contract resulting from this RFP will include the following language regarding nondiscrimination:

In connection with the performance of work under this contract, Licensor agrees not to discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of age, race, religion, color, handicap, sex, physical condition, developmental disability as defined in § 51.01(5), sexual orientation or national origin. This provision shall include, but not be limited to, the following: employment, upgrading, demotion or transfer; recruitment or recruitment advertising; layoff or termination; rates of pay or other forms of compensation; and selection for training, including apprenticeship. Except with respect to sexual orientation, Licensor further agrees to take affirmative action to ensure equal employment opportunities. Licensor agrees to post in conspicuous places, available for employees and applicants for employment, notices to be provided by the recipient officer setting forth the provisions of the nondiscrimination clause.

E. Public Records

Responses to this RFP, any communication with WEDC, and any resulting contract and work product are subject to the public records laws of the State of Wisconsin, § 19.31 et seq. Proposers shall mark documents "confidential" where appropriate for financial and other sensitive materials that should be, to the extent possible, be kept in confidence. WEDC will notify the proposer if it receives a public records request for materials marked confidential.

F. Insurance

If awarded the contract, the proposer shall maintain Worker's Compensation, Comprehensive General Liability, including Contractual Liability, and Automobile Liability insurance for any claims that may arise from operations under the contract.

VII. RFP Process

A. Reasonable Accommodations

WEDC will provide reasonable accommodations, including the provision of informational material in an alternative format, for individuals with disabilities upon request.

B. Communication with WEDC & Submitting Questions

All communication regarding this RFP shall be directed to WEDC's Business Attraction Director, Sarah Bownds at sarah.bownds@wedc.org. Information regarding this RFP obtained from other sources is unofficial and nonbinding. Communication with other sources may be cause for the rejection of a proposal. All questions regarding this RFP must be submitted in writing to WEDC's Business Attraction Director, Sarah Bownds by 2/27/2026 at 4:00 p.m. CT.

C. Incurring Costs

WEDC is not liable for any cost incurred by a vendor for responding to this RFP.

D. News Releases

News releases pertaining to the RFP or to the acceptance, rejection or evaluation of proposals shall not be made without the prior written approval of WEDC.

E. Submitting the Proposal

Proposers shall submit an electronic, PDF, version of their Proposal to WEDC's (Business Attraction Director, Sarah Bownds at sarah.bownds@wedc.org, no later than 3/13/2026 at 4:00 p.m. CT.

VIII. Evaluation of RFP

A. Proposal Review, Verification and Acceptance

WEDC shall review each proposal to verify that it meets all specified requirements in the RFP. Proposals that do not comply with instructions contained in the RFP may be rejected by WEDC. WEDC reserves the right to waive a particular specification if no proposer meets that specification. WEDC may request reports on the proposer's financial stability. WEDC may reject a proposal if the proposer is determined to have inadequate financial means to provide the required service. WEDC retains the right to accept or reject any or all proposals, or accept or reject any part of a proposal, determined to be in the best interest of WEDC. WEDC shall be the sole judge as to compliance with the instructions contained in this RFP. Proposals shall be firm for acceptance for sixty (60) days from the date of proposal opening unless otherwise noted. A proposer may not modify its proposal after submission except to correct minor omissions or miscalculations as directed in writing by WEDC.

B. Proposal Scoring

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- a) Relevant experience of the firm and of key personnel, including professional qualifications; specialized experience and technical competence; reputation of personnel for working in an efficient, effective, proactive, and ethical manner; experience; relationships or activities that might present a conflict of interest for the firm or WEDC.
- b) Ability to advise and represent WEDC in an effective and efficient way.
- c) Quoted fee rates as applied by WEDC to its proposed need for services.
- d) Any other factors relevant to the determination of which proposer should be selected.

It is WEDC's intent to have its Supplier Diversity Program reflect its commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion, therefore, proposals from Diverse Businesses will receive a Five Percent (5%) preference during the proposal scoring process. WEDC strongly encourages Diverse Businesses to apply/submit proposals. (See Supplier Demographic Attestation attached)

In addition, WEDC values maximizing opportunities in Wisconsin for businesses, therefore a Five Percent (5%) bid preference will be given to proposers that are located in Wisconsin (Ten Percent (10%) cumulative if the proposer is diverse and located in Wisconsin).

The Diversity and Wisconsin Location bid preferences must be added to the scoring sheet.

- Five Percent (5%) – Diverse Business
- Five Percent (5%) - Wisconsin Business
- Ninety Percent (90%) – other scoring criteria

C. Evaluation Criteria

Mandatory requirements must be met in order for a proposal to be considered for award under this RFP. Evaluation of the proposals will be based on the proposer's technical expertise and

experience providing site readiness and site selection services across a diverse private and public sector client base, with an emphasis on engagement and active coaching.

D. Right to Reject Proposals and Negotiate with Proposers

WEDC reserves the right to reject any and all proposals. WEDC may negotiate with multiple vendors regarding the terms of the contract and the cost proposal before determining the highest-scoring proposer. WEDC shall not, under any circumstances, reveal a proposer's cost proposal to any other proposer prior to contracting for services.

E. Award Decision

WEDC will make the award to the proposer deemed to provide the services described in this RFP at the best value to WEDC, taking into consideration the proposers' experience, expertise, and cost proposals.

F. Notice of Intent to Award

All proposers who respond to this RFP will be notified in writing of WEDC's intent to award the contract as a result of this RFP.

Supplier Demographic Attestation

Vendor Name: _____

Procurement Description: _____

Please complete the following questions to assist the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation more accurately track its procurement spending with diverse businesses.

The Vendor identified above is a:

Yes	No		Notes/Comments:
		<p>Minority-Owned Business Enterprise (MBE)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sole proprietorship, partnership, corporation, limited liability company or joint venture; • Belong to an ethnic minority group: Native American, Black, Hispanic, Asian Indian, Asian Pacific, Aleut, Eskimo, Middle Eastern, North African, or Native Hawaiian; and • Be at least 51% owned, controlled, and actively managed by minority group members for at least the last one (1) year or the full term of the businesses' s existence. 	
		<p>Woman-Owned Business Enterprise (WBE)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sole proprietorship, partnership, corporation, limited liability company or joint venture; and • Be at least 51% owned, controlled, and actively managed by women group members for at least the last one (1) year or the full term of the businesses' s existence. 	
		<p>Disabled Veteran-Owned Business Enterprise (DBV)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sole proprietorship, partnership, corporation, limited liability company or joint venture; and • At least 51% owned, controlled, and actively managed by disabled veteran group members for at least the last one (1) year or the full term of the businesses' s existence. 	
		<p>Veteran-owned business (VB)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sole proprietorship, partnership, corporation, limited liability company or joint venture; and • At least 51% owned, controlled, and actively managed by one or more veterans for at least the last one (1) year or the full term of the businesses' s existence. 	
		<p>LGBT-Owned Enterprise (LGBTE)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sole proprietorship, partnership, corporation, limited liability company or joint venture; and • At least 51% owned, controlled, and actively managed by one or more person(s) who identifies as lesbian, gay, bisexual, and/or transgender for at least the last one (1) year or the full term of the businesses' s existence. 	
		<p>Disability-Owned Enterprise (DE)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sole proprietorship, partnership, corporation, limited liability company or joint venture; and • At least 51% owned, controlled, and actively managed by one or more person(s) with a disability for at least the last one (1) year or the full term of the businesses' s existence. A person with a disability is defined as a person with a physical and/or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. 	

- Unable to identify Vendor's demographics due to organization status specified here (i.e. non-profit, government entity, etc.):_____
- Please check here if you are choosing not to provide demographic information.

I certify that the information provided is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge, and that I am authorized to execute this Attestation on behalf of the Vendor.

Signature:_____

Date:_____

Name:_____

Position:_____