

City Of Pendleton, Oregon
Request For Qualifications for
Executive Director for the Oregon UAS Accelerator



SUBMIT PROPOSAL TO:

Steve Chrisman, Economic Development & Airport Director
City of Pendleton

500 SW Dorion Ave, Pendleton, Oregon 97801

Email: Steve.Chrisman@ci.pendleton.or.us

Due Date: March 20, 2024, 5:00 PM PDT

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BACKGROUND

The City of Pendleton is pleased to offer an exciting opportunity for a well-qualified individual or firm to submit a proposal to serve as the Executive Director for the Oregon UAS Accelerator (OUA) at the Pendleton UAS Range (PUR) located at the Eastern Oregon Regional Airport (EORA).

The Oregon UAS Accelerator is a pioneering initiative to drive innovation in the Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) market. Established in 2023 with a \$2.25M grant from Business Oregon, the accelerator provides startups access to workspace, partners, facilities, range staff, financial support, and mentorship opportunities. The accelerator aims to establish Oregon as the nation's premier destination for UAS development and integration.

Overview

Introduction

The Accelerator aims to help small to mid-sized startups commercialize their technologies in the autonomous unmanned aerial system sector. Accomplishing those many critical tasks will require a visionary contractor with proven experience, creativity, and a desire to help shape the future of aerospace. Finding the right contractor will ultimately determine the OUA's success. This is a 14-month contract with future biennial funding from Business Oregon, dependent upon performance. Measurable and achievable OUA metrics have been established as part of the CIE grant award.

The OUA aims to capitalize on Oregon's competitive advantages and establish a premier UAS development center in the United States. Recognizing the significant growth potential of UAS in both the defense industry and commercial markets, this initiative leverages Oregon's existing strengths in the UAS supply chain and the popularity of the Pendleton UAS Range. The vision is to position Oregon as the Nation's leading destination for UAS development, fostering innovation and driving economic growth.

Objectives

- Provide support services to entrepreneurs through technical support and services to include physical space, mentoring, education and training, introductions to potential investors, and access to resources for commercialization.
- Building an innovation ecosystem for unmanned aerial systems technology through strategic statewide partnerships, marquis events, marketing, and communications to attract and retain businesses in the sector.
- Support entrepreneurs and innovators financially through Center of

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Innovation Excellence grant funds.

- Site renovation of the existing hangar to establish permanent space for cohorts of innovators to work and collaborate. Site renovation is an OUA objective but not the responsibility of the OUA contractor.

Metrics

The table below represents the Metrics the OUA has committed to achieving as part of the grant funding. The contractor will prepare a quarterly report outlining where the OUA is at in attaining the metrics to Business Oregon and presenting them to the OUA Governance Board every three months via an in-person and virtual meeting.

The Biennium and Stretch Goals are being established in the ongoing contract negotiation process with Business Oregon.

CIE Metric Categories	Description	Measurement
Commercialization	Impact on Startups/Entrepreneurship	# of touchpoints, due diligence, revenue, and investments in portfolio companies
Innovation Environment	Partnerships, Networking building, Education	# of Events, education, shared services, corporate partnerships
Economic Prosperity Sector Growth	Job growth, wage growth, company growth	# of jobs, wages, companies
Leveraged Funds + Sustainability	leveraged funds to organization and portfolio companies, grants, new relationships, outside funding	\$ raised and leveraged
DEI	Diversification of sector accessibility, participation, impact	TRACK BIPOC mentors, startups, EIRs, partner orgs
Communications	Biennium plan for shared storytelling and communications	methods and frequency

Funding

In October 2023, as directed by Oregon’s 10-year Innovation Plan Roadmap, the Oregon Innovation Council awarded five Center of Innovation Excellence grants to entities supporting innovation within emerging or established industrial sectors important to the state’s economy. The City of Pendleton received \$2.25 million for the 2023-2024 biennium to establish the Oregon UAS Center of Innovation Excellence, now known as the Oregon UAS

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Accelerator. This project was funded in part by the Oregon State Lottery and administered by the Oregon Business Development Department.

Use of Funds

- Technical assistance to innovators;
- Grants to innovators, \$40,000 each, target ten (10) in the biennium;
- Two grants to solve a big industry problem, \$100,000 each;
- Build out facilities to support the accelerator;
- Staffing for the Accelerator.

Accelerator Purpose

The Oregon UAS Accelerator is designed to facilitate innovation and expedite the commercialization process for UAS technologies. Collaborating closely with the Pendleton UAS Range, the accelerator provides startups and innovators comprehensive support, including access to development space, subject matter experts, launch and recovery sites, and capital introductions. The accelerator aims to create an ecosystem conducive to growth, positioning Oregon as a hub for UAS innovation and development.

Unique Advantages of Oregon and the Pendleton UAS Range

Oregon offers a unique combination of affordability, a UAS-friendly environment, and a UAS supply chain, making it an attractive destination for technology companies. The City's airport is currently the headquarters for one of the busiest UAS test ranges in the United States, the Pendleton UAS Range (PUR), which gives the Accelerator a solid competitive advantage. PUR provides diverse testing environments, high altitude limits, and a range of landscapes, appealing to innovators worldwide.

Oregon is the home of three FAA-approved UAS test ranges. It has a robust UAS supply chain with an epicenter in the Hood River region of the Columbia River Gorge. Oregon's investments in UAS infrastructure and supportive communities enhance its appeal to companies seeking conducive environments for innovation. The OUA is building upon an autonomous technology incubation that has operated in Pendleton since 2014.

Market Opportunities and Potential Impact

The UAS industry presents significant opportunities in defense and commercial sectors, including emerging markets such as UAM/AAM, regional air mobility (RAM), medical sample transport, last-mile delivery, agriculture, firefighting, and infrastructure inspection. The OUA aims to capitalize on these opportunities by supporting innovators in bringing their products to market successfully. By fostering innovation and overcoming regulatory challenges, the accelerator seeks to drive economic growth, create high-paying jobs, and establish Oregon as a global leader in UAS innovation.

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Program Structure

Autonomous technologies are poised to revolutionize various aspects of everyday life; however, considerable barriers remain before the numerous commercial UAS markets can open and the economic impacts on the US economy can be fully realized. A large part of the Oregon UAS OUA's mission will be awarding ten \$40,000 (\$400,000 total) innovator grants per biennium and two \$100,000 grants to break down a barrier or facilitate the opening of an addressable market. In addition, the OUA director will also create a nexus between innovators, technical experts, business training, and funding opportunities (capital access).

Accelerator Timeline

With the help of an interim contractor, the PUR staff has established an initial schedule for the accelerator.

- March 1st – Applications open for Cohort 1
- March 31st – Applications close
- April – interview applicants
- May 1st – notify applicants
- June 3rd – 12- week program for Cohort 1 begins
- September 10th - Pendleton Investor Roundup (pitch event)

UAS Industry Issue Grant

In addition to the smaller innovator grants, the Oregon UAS CIE will also offer two grants of \$100,000 to individuals, startups, educational institutions, or collaborative teams working to solve major UAS industry barriers that prevent the development of addressable markets. Example topics could include systems for improving unmanned traffic management, detect and avoid technology, electric and/or hydrogen propulsion, and carbon sequestration measurement. The ED will be responsible for the disbursement of the grant.

Conclusion

The Oregon UAS Accelerator represents a strategic initiative to harness Oregon's competitive advantages and propel the state to the forefront of UAS development in the United States. Through collaboration with the Pendleton UAS Range and other partners, the accelerator aims to support innovators, accelerate the commercialization process, and unlock the tremendous potential of the UAS industry. By establishing Oregon as a premier hub for UAS innovation, the accelerator promises to drive economic growth, foster technological advancements, and create opportunities for the state's residents and businesses.

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Additional Information

More information on the Pendleton UAS Test Range can be found at

- Website <https://www.pendletonuasrange.com/>
- LinkedIn <https://www.linkedin.com/company/pendleton-uas-test-range/>

More information on the Oregon UAS Accelerator can be found at

- Website <https://www.pendletonuasrange.com/innovation>
- LinkedIn <https://www.linkedin.com/company/oregon-uas-accelerator/>

RFQ SPECIFICATIONS

Proposed Timelines

- March 1, 2024: Advertisement and release of the RFQ;
- March 20, 2024, 5:00 PM PDT: Deadline for submission of proposal;
- March 26-28, virtual interviews for submitters;
- March 29, notice of final award;
- April 1-3, on-site interview;
- April 5, 2024, award of contract;
- May 1, start of the contract, ED on-site in Pendleton.

Proposal Deadline

No later than 5:00 pm Pacific Time on March 20, 2024, the applicant must submit one (1) electronic copy of the proposal to Steve.Chrisman@ci.pendleton.or.us. Applicants will receive notices stating the final decision after Friday, March 29, 2024.

Proposal Format

Use letter-sized (8-1/2 X 11") pages, single-spaced, with one-inch (1") margins. The submission shall be in PDF format compatible with the latest Adobe Acrobat Reader.

Number the pages consecutively and use a 12-point font size (no reduction permitted) in Calibri, Arial, Verdana, or Times New Roman font. Charts and tables may use a 10-point font size in Calibri, Arial, Verdana, or Times New Roman font (no reduction permitted).

Page Limit including resumes, cover letter, and cost – 20 pages.

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Requirements for the Proposal

Qualifications must include the following information:

1. Name, address, telephone number, and e-mail address of the individual or firm; a description of how the entity is organized (sole proprietor, corporation, partnership, etc.) and the names of the principal officers;
2. Name and current resume of the individual who will be assigned to work on this project;
3. Three professional references for the individual, with names and phone numbers, at least two of which should be former clients or employers;
4. State that the awardee can procure Professional Liability Insurance and applicable business licenses;
5. Respond to the Questions below.

Scope of Work

See Appendix A

Selection Process

Proposals will be evaluated and chosen according to their overall responsiveness to the above criteria. The selected proposal will be at the discretion of the OUA staff, who will negotiate and execute a contract. Business Oregon will be a part of the selection process and approve the selected contractor.

Right To Award or Reject

This RFQ does not commit the City of Pendleton to award a contract. City reserves the right to reject any or all proposals. All proposals will become a part of the City government's public record.

Cover Letter

A cover letter must be submitted with the proposal. The cover letter should be limited to one page. It must include the contractor's name, company address, and the name, telephone number, and e-mail address of the person(s) authorized to represent the firm on all matters relating to the RFQ and any contract awarded pursuant to this RFQ. A person authorized to bind the proposer to all commitments made in the proposal must sign the letter.

All proposals shall be reviewed to determine that minimum eligibility requirements have been met. Ineligible proposers will be informed via email. Proposals shall be evaluated on the categories listed and may include consideration of any or all listed factors at the City's discretion.

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Questions

Address the following questions as part of your response:

- Describe your previous accelerator, incubator, and/or startup experience;
- Provide examples of your experience in strategic planning and leadership, particularly within the innovation sector;
- How have you successfully managed fundraising efforts in previous roles, and what strategies would you implement to secure additional funding for the OUA;
- Describe your experience in advocacy and navigating relationships with various stakeholders, including State and Federal Government agencies and private sector entities;
- How do you plan to promote the OUA...;
 - a. To attract innovators to the program;
 - b. To attract mentors;
 - c. To attract investors;
- What are the key challenges and opportunities in executing the OUA?
 - Given a Program Budget of \$500,000, which does not include salary, innovation, solution grant awards, and other administrative and facility costs, let us know how you would allocate the Program Budget over the following categories to maximize success for the Accelerator over the 14-month period. The categories are Contract Services and Consultants, Marketing, Travel & Training, Industry Network Subscription (a.k.a. Industry Group Memberships), Mentor Stipends, Education Grants. Summer Interns (5), and Events.

COST

Projected Allocation of Time or Staffing Plan

Individual or firm will be provided an office at Eastern Oregon Regional Airport from which to provide services. The contractor will be supplied with a computer and data services, which will be used to conduct all OUA business. The contractor is responsible for all other costs to provide services and operate that office (insurance and business license.)

Monthly Budget for Executive Director Salary

\$16,667

INQUIRIES

Questions concerning this Request for Qualifications should be addressed to Steve Chrisman, steve.chrisman@ci.pendleton.or.us, or at 541-966-0292.

GENERAL RFP AND CITY CONTRACT INFORMATION

The following terms and conditions will apply to the agreement entered into between the successful proposer and the City of Pendleton:

Term

The term of this contract shall be 14 months to the end of the biennium on June 30, 2025.

Budget

The parties will enter into contract negotiations upon selection by the Economic Development & Airport Director. Total expenditures under the term of this contract cannot exceed the budgeted amount. No guarantee can be given that this total will be reached. If additional funds become available to the City for services supplemental to the original project budget, then the City and the contractor may mutually agree to include additional services within the scope of the agreement.

Laws and Policies

In the performance of this agreement, the selected entity must abide by and conform to any and all applicable laws of the United States, State of Oregon, and the City of Pendleton, including all requirements for an independent contractor.

Costs Incurred by Proposers

All costs of proposal preparation shall be the responsibility of the contractor. The City shall not, in any event, be liable for any pre-contractual expenses incurred by proposers in the preparation and/or submission of the proposals. Proposals shall not include any such expenses as part of the proposed budget.

Workplace/Base of Operations

The contractor is expected to maintain an office at Eastern Oregon Regional Airport and is responsible for any costs associated with that office. The contractor is expected to work from that office when not conducting off-site accelerator-related business or overseeing operations.

General City Reservations

City reserves the right to extend the submission deadline should this be in the best interest of the City. Proposers have the right to revise their proposals in the event that the deadline is extended.

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City reserves the right to withdraw this RFP at any time without prior notice. The city makes no representation that any contract will be awarded to any proposer responding to the RFQ. City reserves the right to reject any or all submissions. If an inadequate number of proposals are received or the proposals received are deemed non-responsive, not qualified, or not cost-effective, the City may, at its sole discretion, reissue the RFQ or execute a contract with a vendor of their choice. City reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and the right to waive any informality when to do so would be advantageous to the City.

Contract Award Process

The Economic Development & Airport Director and Business Oregon will be free to accept or reject all proposals. The proposer selected to perform the services outlined in this RFP will enter into an agreement, approved as to form by the City Attorney, directly with the City of Pendleton. The City reserves the right to verify the information received in the proposal. If the proposer knowingly and willfully submits false information or data, the City reserves the right to reject that proposal. If it is determined that an agreement was awarded as a result of false statements, or other data submitted in response to this RFP, the City reserves the right to terminate the agreement.

The City of Pendleton does not discriminate on the basis of disability and, upon request, will provide reasonable accommodations to ensure equal access to its programs, services, and activities. Please contact the City at least 72 hours in advance to request an accommodation.

Licensing

The contractor is required to hold a business license for the City of Pendleton. The license can be obtained after the awarding of the contract but no more than ten (10) days after the award.

The contractor must register with the State of Oregon Secretary of State as a business entity after the award of the contract but no more than ten (10) days after the award.

Termination

Any contract awarded pursuant to this RFQ may be terminated by the City without cause upon 30 days prior written notification by the City to the contractor.

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APPENDIX A – SCOPE OF WORK

The Oregon UAS Accelerator (OUA) Executive Director oversees and executes the organization's activities to achieve the Vision, Mission, and Objectives established by the Governance Board.

Specific responsibilities include:

- Orchestrate OUA personnel, processes, and resources to achieve organizational objectives.
- Create Standard Operating Procedures and supplemental documentation
- Recruit innovator cohorts for the Accelerator.
 - Document the process for innovators to apply, onboard, perform, and exit.
 - Award grants.
 - Track innovator performance over time, record, and report to the Governance Board.
 - Execute two cohorts per year.
- Support Governance Board meetings with requested budget and execution data necessary to fulfill its oversight responsibilities.
 - OUA Executive Director will serve on the Governance Board.
 - Support Governance Board ad hoc and permanent committees or forums to gather feedback information from UAS stakeholders from across the innovation ecosystem.
 - Monitor, assess, mitigate, and report on risk factors that may negatively affect OUA execution. Notify the Governance Board if a risk cannot be mitigated and report on potential impacts to executing OUA's mission and goals.
 - Generate OUA budgets for Board approval and manage the expenditure of funds against the approved budgets.
- Establish Partnerships – outreach to partners in the following areas to establish a pipeline of opportunity. Industry partners include
 - Investors – including venture capital firms, angel groups, corporate strategic investors;
 - Government – introduce OUA to State and Federal Government entities for additional funding, pipeline of applicants, and mutual cooperation;
 - Mentors – establish a cadre of business and technical mentors.
- Planning and managing OUA events and activities – ensuring that all events are well planned, successfully implemented, and meet budget requirements, as well as managing appropriate follow-ups
- Recruiting, motivating, and managing staff, interns, and/or contractors
- Tracking performance against metrics in the organizational strategic plan and contract with Business Oregon, including providing performance

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updates and regular reporting to the Board, Business Oregon, and the Oregon Audit Committee. Act as the primary interface with Business Oregon.

- Collaborate with the State Center of Innovation Excellence and Regional Innovation Hubs to facilitate cooperation in achieving shared objectives.

Qualifications for the Executive Director

- Demonstrated management, strategic planning, leadership, and operational skills;
- Ability to manage the day-to-day affairs of an emerging organization
- Fundraising experience preferred;
- Emerging technology, aerospace, or UAS industry experience;
- Ability to work with tech startups;
- Advocacy experience including navigating various agencies and levels in the public sector as well as high levels of the private sector;
- Preferred experience working with State and Federal Government, including the US Department of Defense;
- Outstanding ability to build and maintain relationships with diverse stakeholders;
- Marketing experience;
- Exceptional time management skills;
- Experience working with a Board of Directors or Governing Boards;
- Outstanding written and oral communication, listening, and presentation skills;
- Availability/flexibility to work long and/or odd hours and to travel inside the State of Oregon and other locations in the United States.