



WILMINGTON RENAISSANCE CORPORATION

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Wilmington Renaissance Corporation
Request for Proposals & Qualifications
Effective Date: 06/05/2017
Submissions due by: 07/10/2017

Overview

The Wilmington Renaissance Corporation is currently seeking an Operator for its Kitchen Incubator (“Operator”) to execute its mission and objectives to serve the potential food entrepreneurs in Wilmington, Delaware.

About Wilmington Renaissance Corporation and the Creative District

Wilmington Renaissance Corporation (WRC) was founded in 1993 as Wilmington 2000, a public-private partnership between The Office of the Mayor and the corporate community. The mission of Wilmington Renaissance Corporation is to develop and implement strategies that will increase the economic vitality of Downtown Wilmington, strengthen its role as a center of educational, cultural and social activity, and enhance its reputation as an exciting place to live and visit by marketing Wilmington’s unique history and character.

WRC’s geographic focus area is the Creative District. Wilmington’s Creative District is a part of a national wave of creative placemaking initiatives that seek to transform urban areas. The Creative District is defined by the area bounded by Fourth, Ninth, Market and Washington Streets.. With the active engagement of a variety of partners from the private and public sectors, the Creative District will continue the momentum of urban revitalization started by LOMA and Market Street.

The Creative District is focused on creative production and consumption, developing a place where creative entrepreneurs — artists, musicians, designers, tech innovators, makers and manufacturers — and neighborhood residents thrive and where locally designed goods and original works are made and consumed.

Project Background

A kitchen incubator was identified as a key economic development project as one outcome of the Creative District community planning process undertaken in 2014. In 2016 WRC commissioned a feasibility study for a potential kitchen incubator in Wilmington, DE. WRC plans to develop an 8,000 square foot kitchen incubator in Wilmington’s Creative District. WRC is seeking an operator to manage the kitchen incubator while meeting the overarching goals that WRC has outlined regarding business incubation, employment opportunities and brick and mortar business creation in Wilmington.

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Project Objectives

Mission statement: The Wilmington Kitchen Incubator (WKI) will address the challenges faced by small food businesses and the ongoing demand for economic and employment opportunities in Wilmington by providing needed facilities and food-business skills and training opportunities. Through the support of the WKI, small food businesses will develop the skills and connections they need to be successful in the future, while providing new economic activity in the region. As a facility, the WKI will be a project that is of net community benefit for the Quaker Hill neighborhood, Creative District, and Wilmington as a whole.

Expected Outcomes and Metrics: Members of the WKI will be expected to:

- Grow faster and stay in business longer than industry average for respective food businesses
- Add jobs to the local economy, particularly jobs that will be available to people unemployed and/or lacking higher-education degrees
- Expand into physical locations within Wilmington and the greater Wilmington area and elsewhere across the state of Delaware and the region.

WRC's Expectations and Roles

Wilmington Renaissance Corporation is currently in the pre-development stages of the construction of kitchen incubator. WRC will lead efforts to secure funding to construct and equip the kitchen incubator. In addition, WRC will work with the Operator within the expectations and roles described below:

- WRC will own the kitchen incubator facility and all kitchen equipment including but not limited to stoves, ovens, fryers, grills, refrigerators, freezers, shelving/storage racks, and smallwares
- WRC will work with the selected operator to design the kitchen incubator space, including but not limited to kitchen layout, dry and cold/frozen storage areas, office layout, loading and receiving areas, and event space
- WRC is developing the preferred business model. However, WRC will work with the selected operating in finalizing the operating plan and membership charging model.

WRC will support the operator to develop and form partnerships that will expand the capacity of the kitchen incubator to provide resources and guidance to attract and retain food businesses for the kitchen incubator.

Kitchen Incubator Operator Expectations and Roles

Wilmington Renaissance Corporation will expect the Operator to assume the following responsibilities in managing the Wilmington Kitchen Incubator:

- The Operator will carry out WRC's Kitchen Incubator mission and objectives.
- The Operator will apply for, pay for, and maintain good standing with all required business permits and health certifications for the kitchen incubator
- The Operator will assist in identifying potential partners for tenant attraction, business services to the tenant, and kitchen and health certifications for the tenants
- The Operator will attract and retain food entrepreneurs to use the kitchen incubator to the terms of an executed rental contract or similar
- The Operator will work with partners to facilitate a technical assistance program for food businesses.
- The Operator will hire appropriate staff to manage, clean, maintain, and run the kitchen incubator and related events.
 - The Operator will establish and follow HR policies and procedures, and execute payroll consistent with WRC policies

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- The Operator will perform the day to day operations of the kitchen incubator including:
 - Tenant agreement (or similar) execution
 - Tenant scheduling,
 - Rent collection and enforcement,
 - Ordering of supplies necessary for the regular operation of the facility including but not limited to cleaning supplies, light bulbs and other sundry items
 - Scheduling any and all deliveries and use of any loading dock/area
 - The Operator will maintain a level of cleanliness satisfactory to any health codes applicable during the period of operation
 - Operate in a manner that does not violate any applicable fire, health or building safety codes
- The Operator will assist with selection of equipment with for the kitchen incubator
 - Develop a schedule of equipment useful life and forecast and schedule regular maintenance
 - Coordinate any and all repairs related to the facility, including but not limited to kitchen equipment, HVAC, electrical and plumbing systems

RFP Requirements

WRC requests the following items to assess the applicant's interest and experience in being the Operator for the Wilmington Kitchen Incubator:

- Cover letter expressing interest, business type, and contact information (name, company or organization name (if applicable), address, phone, email address)
- Statement of Qualifications and Experience (up to five pages)
- List of potential staff resumes
- Sample marketing and operation plans including an operating pro-forma
- Last three years of audited financial statements
- Five references with contact information

Evaluation Criteria

The following criteria will be used to assess the applicant's qualifications and experience to run the Wilmington Kitchen Incubator:

- Statement of Qualifications and Experience
 - Experience in operating a Kitchen Incubator or related business. Please state dates, locations, meeting tenant attraction and retention goals, and further details on prior experience of running a kitchen incubator or related operation.
 - Demonstration of job and/or revenue growth over a sustained period (3+ years) by client/member businesses
 - Current health/professional and kitchen certifications & qualifications
 - Any relevant training or technical assistance programs you or your organization has organized for food entrepreneurs or entrepreneurs in general
- List of potential staff resumes
 - Culinary, business, technical training, operations management, or other relevant experience for potential staff members

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- References
 - Five individuals/organizations that can confirm your experience and qualifications to operate a kitchen incubator or similar and run technical assistance programs
- Sample marketing and operations plan
 - Plan to recruit food entrepreneurs to use the Kitchen Incubator
 - Understanding of the needs of food entrepreneurs in Wilmington
 - Financial feasibility of operations plan and pro-forma with realistic goals

Submissions & Questions

Applicants are requested to mail three (3) printed hard copies of their proposals, inclusive of all requested materials by July 10, 2017 to:

Daniel Levin
Project Director
100 W. 10th St, Suite 206
Wilmington, DE, 19801

Email submissions are also acceptable by the July 10 deadline, however these submissions must be followed by hard copy submissions. Emails may be sent to:

Dan@bigideaswilmington.com

Applications submitted after the deadline may not be considered.

Please email all questions to Dan at Dan@bigideaswilmington.com with the subject line WRC Kitchen Incubator RFP.

This RFP RFQ does not commit WRC to select or contract with any of the potential applicants. Wilmington Renaissance Corporation is a privately funded, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization.