



**Florida is for Veterans, Inc
dba Veterans Florida**

**Request for Qualifications (RFQ):
Veterans Florida Entrepreneurship Program**

July 18, 2023

1. RFQ Overview

The objective of this Request for Qualifications (RFQ) is to select qualified vendors, known as Partners, to administer the Veterans Florida Entrepreneurship Program (“Program”) throughout Florida. Veterans Florida seeks to contract with one or more Partners to administer the Program, and the resulting relationship is intended to last at least three years, depending on state appropriations. All relationships are reviewed and renewed on an annual basis.

2. About Veterans Florida

Veterans Florida is a non-profit created by the State of Florida to help military veterans and their families transition to civilian life and to promote Florida’s status as the nation’s most veteran-friendly state under Florida’s Veterans Employment and Training Services (VETS) Program, s. 295.22, F.S. Our mission can be summed up in the theme – Your Pursuit. Our Power. – because we recognize military veterans are incredibly focused and will succeed in achieving their personal and professional goals when they take advantage of our tools and resources.

For more information, visit <https://www.veteransflorida.org/>.

3. Veterans Florida Entrepreneurship Program Overview

The Program, established under [s. 295.22, F.S.](#), connects business leaders in the state with participants seeking to become entrepreneurs and may include activities and assistance such as peer-to-peer learning sessions, mentoring, technical assistance, business roundtables, networking opportunities, support of student organizations, speaker series, or other tools within a virtual environment. The Program purpose is to provide participants a comprehensive suite of training options designed to enhance their entrepreneurial skills wherever they may be in their entrepreneurial journey. The Program references the five most commonly used stages of business to determine a participant’s potential level of needed training: Idea, Startup, Growth, Maturity, and Exit.

Under the Program, a participant shall be an entrepreneur who is a veteran of the United States military, an active duty member of the United States military within 12 months of separation or retirement, a member of the Florida National Guard or United States Reserves, or a spouse who attends with another participant of a qualifying category, and who resides in Florida.

4. Key Principles of the Program

The driving principle for the Program is for training and assistance to meet the entrepreneur where they are at in the entrepreneurial journey. This approach favors tailored training over information overload and facilitated discussion over lecture-formatted instruction.

Training for participants in the Idea or Startup business stages shall be based on the Lean Startup method which uses the Business Model Canvas, Lean Canvas, or similar derivation to test an entrepreneur’s risks and assumptions about their idea or business. The general goal for

a participant in Lean Startup training is to determine the validity or marketability of their business idea or startup. Lean Startup is the “gateway” to the broader journey of entrepreneurship, and lays a foundation from which to build upon for validated businesses or business ideas. In some cases, it may be useful for an entrepreneur with an established business to receive Lean Startup training to confirm certain fundamental principles, such as key customer segments and unique value proposition, or to prepare for a new service or product launch.

Training for participants in the Growth business stage may be more flexible. The Program assumes that an entrepreneur in this stage may or may not have employees and has a business generating revenue. The Program will require an introduction or refresher to the Business Model Canvas to help the entrepreneur identify any risks or assumptions that may need addressing. While a finite goal for participants in Growth training is difficult to determine since all businesses grow at their own speed, entrepreneurs should come out of training with a general and practical understanding of scaling, streamlining, and expanding their business.

Lean Startup and Growth training shall be conducted in small groups, or cohorts. The training shall be through facilitated group discussion among the entrepreneurs with little to no lecture-formatted instruction. Guest speakers at the beginning of training modules are encouraged and may cover general business topics outside the specific training module, as long as the general business topic discussion is a small portion of the total time dedicated to the training module.

Ideally, Partners should understand that while the number of participants is important, quality of training and guidance is desired more. For example, if after an entrepreneur completes Lean Startup training and they do not have a business or idea that is viable or marketable, and not likely to be in the future, it is of no value for them to later be in Growth training with the same business idea. Instead, the entrepreneur with an unviable business idea, yet who demonstrates proper mindset and skills for owning their own business, may be better served by being directed to resources in franchising or acquisition.

5. Program Components

Cohorts. Cohort-based training provides multiple training modules to a small group of prescreened participants in a facilitated discussion environment. In addition to providing proficiency in the training topics, the cohorts should build camaraderie among participants. Training is likely to occur over several weeks and usually at a particular set time of the week for the participants. Lean Startup and Growth training shall be conducted in cohorts. Veterans Florida prefers that cohort training be offered to participants in-person. In-person cohorts are offered live and include a meeting location for all attendees to meet and participate. Partners may offer virtual cohorts with participation via Zoom, Teams, GoogleMeet, or similar software. Partners are encouraged to include mentorship opportunities for participants during the duration of the cohort from local business and community leaders, successful entrepreneurs, and other professionals.

Workshops. Workshops provide topical general business training to groups of participants of any size over the course of a few hours. Training in general business topics such as legal structures, stakeholders, launching, marketing, franchising, acquisitions, and other issues that

business owners frequently face shall be conducted in workshops. Workshops may also provide training for topics covered under the Lean Startup and Growth cohort training, but should not be conducted in a manner to replace cohort training. Specialized industry based workshops are also encouraged, such as government contracting, food services, or other, to address specific needs of local participants. Camaraderie building and networking is encouraged during the workshop, but training is the primary purpose of the workshop. Workshop events shall be open to any eligible participant. Veterans Florida prefers that workshops be offered to participants in-person. In-person workshops are offered live and include a meeting location for all attendees to meet and participate. Partners may offer virtual workshops with participation via Zoom, Teams, GoogleMeet, or similar software.

Networking. Networking provides opportunities for growing personal and professional connections and to build a sense of community to groups of participants of any size over the course of a few hours. General business topics may be presented during networking, but community building is the primary purpose of networking. Networking events shall be open to any eligible participant, mentors, entrepreneurs, and community business leaders.

6. Scope of Work

Veterans Florida Entrepreneurship Program (“Program”) is a comprehensive entrepreneurship program implemented across a network of Florida-based partner entities throughout the state of Florida. Veterans Florida’s objective is for veterans to finish the Program with the skills and confidence to become successful business owners or grow their business. The Program offers a pipeline for veteran entrepreneurs to take a business idea from conception through execution and scalability. The Program does not guarantee participants that an idea will turn into a fully operational business. Program participants can expect to understand the entrepreneurial process and put their newly learned entrepreneurial skills to work. Responsibility for facilitating this Program is extended to our Partners through this RFQ.

The Program fiscal year 2023-24 budget is \$550,000. Veterans Florida fiscal year is July 1 - June 30. Veterans Florida will determine the number of program offerings provided by Partners (“Partners”) based on the veteran needs in the state of Florida. These needs will determine the quantity of programs and geographic location within the state.

Entities may provide a proposal on one or all services included in the Program. Agreements will be customized based on the services provided by the Partner. The anticipated scope of work for services sought by Veterans Florida is listed below:

A. Facilitated Startup Program

Number of Participants	10 (minimum attendance) to 15
Training Modules	10
Training Module length	not less than 2 and no more than 3 hours
Participants' Business Stage	Idea, Idea to Startup, Startup, post Startup (if necessary)

The Partner shall conduct a facilitated startup program (Startup) of a cohort with 10-15 participants based upon the Lean Startup method and uses the Business Model Canvas, Lean Canvas, or similar derivation to test an entrepreneur's risks and assumptions about their idea or business. The goal for a participant in Startup training is to determine the validity or marketability of their business idea or startup and to complete and produce a Business Model Canvas (or similar Canvas) at the end of training.

Participants are expected to attend 70% of the cohort. The Partner is expected to develop the necessary curriculum and training schedule. The curriculum, attendance method (in-person or virtual), and timelines must be approved by Veterans Florida. The training schedule may adjust based on the needs of participants.

Veteran participants that do not attend 70% of the cohort are not included in the minimum attendance. Additionally, repeat veteran participants may not be considered for inclusion in the minimum attendance. Any and all exceptions must be approved by Veterans Florida.

The cohort shall include a maximum of ten (10) training modules, which include instruction on the following topics based on the Canvas offered to participants:

	Business Model Canvas	Lean Canvas
1	Customer Segments	Customer Segments; Early Adopters
2	Value Propositions	Problem; Existing Alternatives
3	Channels	Unique Value Proposition; High-Level Concept
4	Customer Relationships	Solution
5	Revenue Streams	Channels
6	Key Resources	Revenue Streams
7	Key Activities	Cost Structure
8	Key Partners	Key Metrics
9	Cost	Unfair Advantage

10	Prepare to Pitch Your Business Model
Additional concepts to be provided throughout these modules: Iteration, Pivoting, Minimum Viable Product, and others deemed necessary by Partner.	

The table above provides a generally recognized order for each of the two leading Canvas models, but Partners are allowed to deviate from these orders based upon their experience or other factors.

Guest speakers at the beginning of training modules are encouraged and may cover general business topics outside the specific training module, as long as the general business topic discussion is a small portion of the total time dedicated to the training module.

Partners are encouraged to include mentorship opportunities for participants during the duration of the cohort from local business and community leaders, successful entrepreneurs, and other professionals. Local resources are also essential to the success of Program participants, and Partners are encouraged to expose participants to ample follow-on services and support from outside entities upon completion (i.e. SBDC, local incubators or accelerators, co-working spaces, veteran business groups).

The Partner may host a business “pitch” competition in which program participants develop and make a presentation or “pitch” to a panel of judges. Pitch competitions are not required to include prizes or startup capital. Under no circumstances shall funding provided by Veterans Florida to the Partner be used as seed funding or capital for the pitch competition.

Startup participants must be vetted by the Partner and meet the following criteria:

- A Florida resident.
- Honorably discharged veteran; Partners must collect participant’s DD214 Member 4 copy or U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs letter verifying honorable discharge.
- Active duty member of the United States military within 12 months of End Term of Service (ETS), or a member of the Florida National Guard or United States Reserves; Partners must collect the letter confirming guard/reserve or active duty status.
- Spouse who attends with another participant of a qualifying category.
- An entrepreneur with an idea, startup business, or established business and a need to test their risks and assumptions for a new product or service.

The Objectives of Startup training are:

- Participants complete and produce a Canvas.
- Participants individually determine if their idea, business, or new product or service is or is not validated and marketable.
- Partner determination on each of the participants’ viability and marketability.

B. Facilitated Growth Program

Number of Participants	6 (minimum attendance) to 8
Training Modules	6
Training Module length	not less than 2 and no more than 3 hours
Participants' Business Stage	Growth, Maturity, Exit

The Partner shall conduct a facilitated growth program (Growth) of a cohort with 6-8 veterans in a program of training designed to provide participants plans to grow and expand their business. Participants in this training may or may not have employees and should have a business generating revenue.

Participants are expected to attend 70% of the cohort. The Partner is expected to develop the necessary curriculum and training schedule. The curriculum, attendance method (in-person or virtual), and timelines must be approved by Veterans Florida. The training schedule may adjust based on the needs of participants.

Veteran participants that do not attend 70% of the cohort are not included in the minimum attendance. Additionally, repeat veteran participants may not be considered for inclusion in the minimum attendance. Any and all exceptions must be approved by Veterans Florida.

The cohort shall include a maximum of six (6) training modules, which includes the following training:

Required:
Introduction or refresher to Business Model Canvas/Lean Canvas/Lean Startup
Combination of the following or optional topics:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Timing● Managing Stakeholders● Constraints● Growing your Team/Operations● Raising/Accessing Capital/Business Plans● Financials● Scalability● Infrastructure● Exit Strategy● Pitching Your Business

Guest speakers at the beginning of training modules are encouraged and may cover general business topics outside the specific training module, as long as the general business topic discussion is a small portion of the total time dedicated to the training module.

Partners are encouraged to include mentorship opportunities for participants during the duration of the cohort from local business and community leaders, successful entrepreneurs, and other professionals. Local resources are also essential to the success of Program participants, and Partners are encouraged to expose participants to ample follow-on services and support from outside entities upon completion (i.e. SBDC, local incubators or accelerators, co-working spaces, veteran business groups).

The Partner may host a business “pitch” competition in which program participants develop and make a presentation or “pitch” to a panel of judges. Pitch competitions are not required to include prizes or startup capital. Under no circumstances shall funding provided by Veterans Florida to the Partner be used as seed funding or capital for the pitch competition.

Growth program must be vetted by the Partner and meet the following criteria:

- A Florida resident.
- Honorably discharged veteran; Partners must collect participant’s DD214 Member 4 copy or U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs letter verifying honorable discharge.
- Active duty member of the United States military within 12 months of End Term of Service (ETS), or a member of the Florida National Guard or United States Reserves; Partners must collect the letter confirming guard/reserve or active duty status.
- Spouse who attends with another participant of a qualifying category.
- Registered business entity or incorporated with the State of Florida on Sunbiz and the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).

The Objectives of Growth training are:

- Participants complete and produce a Canvas.
- Participants individually determine if their business:
 - is or is not validated and marketable
 - is or is not scalable or expandable
- Partner determination on each of the participants’:
 - viability and marketability
 - scalability or expandability

C. Cohort Metrics and Reporting

The Partner shall collect metrics from the participants at the start of a cohort as a baseline and at the end of the training to measure growth. Additionally, the Partner shall collect participant satisfaction through surveys and other feedback. The Partner shall report activities, achievements, performance metrics, and quantitative data to Veterans Florida as requested and assist in the maintenance of data to keep up to date.

The Partner shall collect data/information about veteran applicants/program participants and their businesses. Partner shall be responsible for obtaining participants' program application, contact information, demographics, veteran verification, and confirm program eligibility. At a minimum Partner shall collect:

- Veteran name, address, email and phone number;

- Veteran verification documentation;
- Business legal name (doing business as name) used for state registration and federal tax identification number;
- Number of employees hired by business;
- Capital invested into business;
- Revenue generated by business; and
- Biography of cohort participants.

The Partner shall provide Veterans Florida the following reporting upon completion of the cohort:

Cohort reporting which includes:

- Veteran program application, if applicable;
- Veteran name, address, email and phone number;
- Veteran verification documentation;
- Business name, federal tax identification number, number of employees, capital invested, and revenue generated;
- Veteran biography;
- Total number of participants with detailed attendance records;
- Pitch competition (if any) participation, seed funding raised, and list of participants receiving funding (include amount);
- Results of participant survey, if any; and
- Documentation of the Objectives listed under Sections A and/or B.

Status reporting shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Any updates to future meetings or events, such as location, time or dates;
- Marketing and promotional activities to general public, local government officials, internal or external stakeholders;
- Recruitment and attendance efforts;
- Collaboration efforts with other organizations;
- Significant activities/achievements of Partner or veteran participant (past or present);
- Media coverage; and
- Local resources identified to the veteran.

Reporting listed above must be provided for payment processing.

D. Workshops

Number of Participants	minimum 10
Training Modules	minimum 4 workshops
Training Module length	not less than 2 and no more than 3 hours
Participants' Business Stage	Any

The Partner shall conduct workshops to include subject matter experts and topics such as legal structures, stakeholders, launching, marketing, acquisitions, or other issues that business

owners frequently face. Specialized industry based workshops are also encouraged, such as government contracting, fundraising, or franchising, to address specific needs of veteran entrepreneurs. Workshops should be treated as stand alone events and not as an extension to the cohort education materials. Workshops should be open to all interested veteran entrepreneurs. The Partner shall develop a workshop schedule to include topic list, location, date and time, and instructor information for workshops for Veterans Florida approval. Workshop minimum attendance is 10 veterans. Partners may not include the speaker(s), Partner staff/leadership, or Veterans Florida staff in the attendance count to reach minimum attendance. Veterans Florida allows for veteran self identification for workshop attendance.

Local Resources (SBA, SBDC, VBOC, Office of Supplier Diversity, etc.)	Required workshop topic
Government Contracting	Required workshop topic
Franchising & Small Business Acquisition	Required workshop topic
Legal Structures Stakeholders Accounting Marketing Website and Social Media Food Services Etc.	optional - potential but not mandatory topics, provided as examples

The Partner shall be responsible for collecting and reporting the following information upon completion of the workshop and must be provided for payment processing:

- Workshop topic with date, time and location;
- Veteran name, address, email and phone number;
- Business name, number of employees, capital invested, and revenue generated, if applicable;
- Total number of participants;
- Any updates to future meetings or events, such as location, time or dates;
- Marketing and promotional activities to general public, local government officials, internal or external stakeholders;
- Recruitment and attendance efforts;
- Collaboration efforts with other organizations;
- Significant activities/achievements of Partner or veteran participant (past or present);
- Media coverage;
- Local resources identified to the veteran; and
- Results of participant survey, if any.

E. Networking

Number of Participants	minimum 10
Training Modules	minimum 4 networking
Training Module length	not less than 2 and no more than 3 hours
Participants' Business Stage	Any

The Partner shall conduct networking events to provide veterans interested in entrepreneurship the ability to learn about Veterans Florida Entrepreneurship Program opportunities, network with peers, and connect with resources or information to assist them on their entrepreneurial journey. Veterans Florida encourages the Partner to invite local resource providers, subject matter experts, vendors, and other successful entrepreneurs to participate in networking events. These events can be a morning coffee and mingle, after hours networking, or other similar format. Veterans Florida allows for veteran self identification for attendance at networking events. Networking minimum attendance is 10 veterans. Partners may not include the guest speaker(s), Partner staff/leadership, or Veterans Florida staff in the attendance to reach minimum attendance.

The Partner shall be responsible for collecting and reporting the following information upon completion of the networking event and must be provided for payment processing:

- Networking date, time and location;
- Veteran name, address, email and phone number;
- Business name, number of employees, capital invested, and revenue generated, if applicable;
- Total number of participants;
- Any updates to future meetings or events, such as location, time or dates;
- Marketing and promotional activities to general public, local government officials, internal or external stakeholders;
- Recruitment and attendance efforts;
- Collaboration efforts with other organizations;
- Significant activities/achievements of Partner or veteran participant (past or present);
- Media coverage;
- Local resources identified to the veteran; and
- Results of participant survey, if any.

F. Marketing/Promotion

The Partner shall market and promote their program offerings and services available to veterans, veterans groups, and their families. The Partner shall promote the economic benefits of the Program to the community and state through marketing efforts and communications to the general public, local government officials, and internal and external stakeholders. All promotion/marketing efforts must be co-branded with Veterans Florida in accordance with Veterans Florida's brand guideline, see Attachment 1. Veterans Florida may provide supplemental marketing support on a case by case basis.

Veterans Florida must approve and provide at least one quote for press releases. The Partner must report to Veterans Florida contacts with media personnel, media outlets, and scheduled press conferences or press releases in their reporting.

G. Veterans Florida Expo

Veterans Florida will host an annual statewide pitch competition during the Veterans Florida Expo where the Partner may recommend a pitch contestant. Partners conducting cohort-based training will be expected to attend and participate in the annual Expo which is a two day event targeting veterans, separating or retiring service members, entrepreneurs, and spouses by hosting a career fair, entrepreneur resource fair with a pitch competition, and benefits exhibition to showcase everything veterans and their families need to know about working and living in Florida. Veterans Florida Expo 2024 will be held in Tampa, FL on June 7-8, 2024. In lieu of reimbursing for travel expenses, Veterans Florida shall compensate the Partner a participation fee.

5. RFQ Schedule and Process

A. Schedule

Activity	Dates
RFQ Issued	Tuesday, July 18, 2023
Webinar	Tuesday, July 25, 2023 at 11AM ET
Questions Due	Monday, July 31, 2023 at 5PM ET
Veterans Florida Question Response Deadline	Friday, August 4, 2023 by 5PM ET
Proposal Deadline*	August 31, 2023 at 5PM ET
Award Notification	On or before September 15, 2023

*Proposals will not be accepted after close of business on August 31, 2023. Should any funds remain after the award notification, Veterans Florida may seek and negotiate agreements for services directly with potential Partners.

Interested entities must direct any and all communications relating to this RFQ to the designated Procurement Officer:

Heather Collins, Director of Administration
itn@veteransflorida.org
 Subject Line: Entrepreneurship Program RFQ

Ms. Collins is the sole contact for entities. All other Veterans Florida team members, including evaluators are prohibited from discussing the RFQ with entities outside of the scheduled process.

B. RFQ Issued and Webinar

Veterans Florida shall issue/post the RFQ on <https://www.veteransflorida.org/about/submit-a-proposal/> in accordance with the Schedule.

Veterans Florida will host a webinar on the date and time listed in the Schedule. The webinar will include a program overview, program goals, procurement method, and timeline. Information regarding the webinar will be posted on <https://www.veteransflorida.org/about/submit-a-proposal/>, including login information. Within 24 hours after the webinar, Veterans Florida will post a link to recording of the webinar.

C. Questions and Responses

Veterans Florida will accept written questions pertaining to this RFQ. All questions must be submitted via email to the Procurement Officer at itn@veteransflorida.org on or before the deadline listed in the Schedule. Questions and answers will be posted on <https://www.veteransflorida.org/about/submit-a-proposal/> for all interested parties on or before the response deadline listed in the Schedule.

D. Proposal Deadline and Submission Process

Veterans Florida will accept proposals on or before the deadline listed in the Schedule. Proposals may be submitted prior to the deadline, however early submission does not guarantee funds to be awarded.

All proposals should be submitted electronically as a PDF to itn@veteransflorida.org in accordance with the Proposal Format listed below.

Veterans Florida will notify each entity that their proposal has been received via email within two business days. Please be sure to include a contact person and their email address with the proposal.

Veterans Florida will review proposal submissions against the Evaluation Criteria.

6. Proposal Format

Proposal submissions should be submitted in the format described below and include all of the information requested. As mentioned above, entities may respond to Startup Cohort or Growth Cohort, workshops, networking, or a combination of services. Total page count for Proposal submission should not exceed ten (10) pages.

No	Proposal Section	Content/Deliverables
1.	Authorization Letter and Signature	Include a letter signed by an authorized representative with authority to negotiate on behalf of the organization.
2.	Executive Summary	Include a summary of the proposal.
3.	Organization Information and Overview	Provide the information requested in section 6.A.
4.	Organization Experience	Provide the information requested in section 6.B.
5.	Organization Capabilities	Provide the information requested in section 6.C.
6.	Pricing	Provide the information requested in Section 6.D.
7.	Letters of Support	Optional and does not count against Proposal Submission page count.

A. Organization Information

Organization information must include:

1. **Organization Information:** Legal name, address, primary contact for RFQ purposes, and company history information.
2. **Organization Overview:** Include history of organization, specialized resources, collaborators, and outcomes of entrepreneur clients, and number of clients/entrepreneurs served annually.
3. **Proposed Team:** Include a staffing plan that clearly identifies:
 - a. Facilitators and instructors who are sufficiently knowledgeable and experienced with entrepreneurship;
 - b. Staff members who will serve as a liaison with Veterans Florida for reporting and invoicing;
 - c. Primary point of contact with program participants; and
 - d. Identify mentors, local resource providers, and potential guest lecturers.

4. **References:** Provide contact information for at least **two current clients and two former clients** that Veterans Florida can contact. For each reference, indicate the following:
 - Client Name;
 - Contact Name and Title;
 - Contact Phone Number and Email Address;
 - Industry of Client;
 - Service Description;
 - Length of Relationship; and
 - Brief explanation regarding the end of the business relationship, if applicable.

B. Organization Experience

Organizations must demonstrate their relevant experience to the Scope of Work detailed in this RFQ.

1. Discuss organization's history of providing cohort based instruction, workshops, networking, or coworking space. Detail any previous experience working with veteran entrepreneurs.
2. Discuss organization's success of collaborating with other organizations to provide necessary support or services to Program participants for mentorship, local resource providers, and other opportunities. Provide an example relevant to Scope of Work.

C. Organization Capabilities

Organizations should include relevant information on service(s) to be provided. Organizations may provide a proposal on one or all services outlined in the Scope of Work.

1. Discuss organization's ability to provide service(s) as outlined in the Scope of Work including information regarding administrative support and staffing, additional resources/relationships to benefit veterans, and reporting capabilities.
2. Discuss organization's data collection methods and reporting capabilities. Provide samples of reporting.
3. Discuss organization's plan to facilitate cohort training. Specify if attendance will be in-person or virtual. Provide a sample curriculum for cohorts that includes topics outlined in the Scope of Work, if applicable. Provide cohort training timeline and location.
4. Describe the process used to ensure veteran participation meets minimum attendance expectations for cohorts.
5. Discuss organization's plan to recruit and secure veteran entrepreneur participation. Provide samples of recruitment efforts with demonstrated success.
6. Discuss organization's plan to market and promote programs and services to veterans, veterans groups, and their families; program benefits to the community and state; and increase attendance and participation. Provide samples of marketing efforts with demonstrated success.
7. Discuss organization's workshop plan. Specify if attendance will be in-person or virtual. Provide workshop topic list, location, proposed timeline (assume starting October 1, 2023 and ending June 30, 2024), and instructor information for workshops, if applicable.
8. Discuss organization's networking plan. Provide networking proposed timeline (assume starting October 1, 2023 and ending June 30, 2024), location, and potential attendees, if applicable.

9. Program participation does not need to be exclusively made up of veterans. Veterans Florida welcomes proposals from organizations that can show a clear path to incorporating veterans into existing programs. Veterans Florida funding must only be used to fund veteran's attendance in courses, workshops, and networking events. Clearly describe the financial management structure and internal controls to ensure appropriate record keeping of Program funds.

D. Pricing

Veterans Florida shall compensate Partners using a fixed fee format for services outlined in the RFQ as follows:

- Facilitated Startup Program
 - In-person cohort: \$25,000/cohort (minimum 5 modules in-person)
 - Virtual cohort: \$12,500/cohort
- Facilitate Growth Program
 - In-person cohort: \$15,000/cohort (minimum 3 modules in-person)
 - Virtual cohort: \$7,500/cohort
- Workshops
 - In-person workshop: \$1,500
 - Virtual workshop: \$750
- Networking: \$750/networking event (in-person only)
- Expo Participation Fee (Cohort Partners only): \$1,500

As outlined above, in-person cohorts or workshops are offered live and include a meeting location for attendees to meet and participate. Virtual cohorts or workshops are offered via online participation only, using Zoom, Teams, GoogleMeet or similar software.

Veterans Florida will determine the number of program offerings provided by Partners based on the veteran needs in the state of Florida.

Entities are also invited to recommend program elements that exceed the requirements outlined in the Scope of Work, however Veterans Florida will only fund the portion of the program that aligns with requirements outlined in the Scope of Work.

For example, a Partner may propose a Startup Cohort that has 13 modules and aligns with the requirements outlined in the Scope of Work. Veterans Florida would only fund 10 out of the 13 modules for a total not to exceed the fixed fee outlined above. Partners may seek an additional funding source from other entities or organizations.

Veterans Florida will allow Partners to charge reasonable fees for workshops, lectures, and other events to participating veteran entrepreneurs. Partners must clearly identify in the proposal any fees that are proposed to veteran entrepreneurs for these activities. All funds collected through official Program activities shall be used for further enhancing the Program at the entity locations.

E. Payment Terms and Financial Consequences

All payment terms will be outlined in a signed agreement between Veterans Florida and Partner.

Partners offering Startup and/or Growth Cohorts may invoice Veterans Florida upon the start of the cohort for 50% of the cohort fee. The invoice must include a list of participants and documentation outlined in the Scope of Work. Upon completion of the cohort, the Partner shall invoice Veterans Florida for the balance of the cohort fee and provide any additional documentation as outlined in the Scope of Work. Workshops and networking events are invoiced by the Partner upon conclusion and must provide documentation outlined in the Scope of Work.

In the event the Partner fails to meet the minimum attendance requirement for a cohort, workshop or networking event as outlined in the Scope of Work, Veterans Florida may withhold 10% of the total cohort, workshop or networking fee. As a reminder, participants that do not attend 70% of a cohort are not included in the minimum attendance. The financial consequence for cohorts may be applied to the final payment.

Additionally, Veterans Florida may impose financial consequences for any declared in-person cohort that offers less than 70% of the instruction modules actually in-person. Attendance sheets should indicate if the participant attended in-person or virtually. The financial consequences for failing to secure in-person participation is 10% of the total cohort fee. The financial consequence for cohorts may be applied to the final payment.

All invoices will be paid via check within thirty (30) days upon receipt of invoice and proper reporting documentation outlined in the Scope of Work. Failure to provide invoice and reporting as indicated will delay payment processing.

8. Evaluation Criteria

Veterans Florida is committed to fairness, objectivity, and impartiality. Veterans Florida will assess proposals on the following criteria:

Criteria	Weight
Experience and Capabilities	Heavy
Entrepreneurship Community Connectivity	Moderate
Recruitment Plan	Heavy
Promotion/Marketing Plan	Moderate
Implementation of Program	Heavy
Data Collection and Reporting	Moderate

9. RFQ Terms

Veterans Florida may adjust the specifications of this RFQ throughout the process. This RFQ does not constitute an offer by Veterans Florida to agreement, but rather represents a definition of the specific services being sought and invites entities to submit proposals. Issuance of this RFQ, the preparation and submission of proposals and the subsequent receipt and evaluation of any such proposals by Veterans Florida does not commit Veterans Florida to award an agreement to any entity. Entities, by submitting a proposal, agree that any cost incurred by it in responding to this RFQ or participating in the RFQ process, is to be borne solely by the Entity. Veterans Florida shall incur no obligations or liability whatsoever to anyone by reason of the issuance of this RFQ or the actions of anyone relative thereto. Only the execution of a written agreement with an entity related to one or more services described herein will obligate Veterans Florida and then only in accordance with the terms and conditions contained in such agreement.

No action or communication of Veterans Florida other than the execution of a written agreement shall constitute acceptance of such offer, and even then, shall legally obligate Veterans Florida only in accordance with the terms and conditions contained in the written agreement.

Veterans Florida adheres to Chapter 119, F.S., and those portions of Chapter 286, F.S., relating to public meetings and records, and may only withhold and keep confidential those records in its possession that are made confidential or exempt from disclosure by Florida law. The entity shall fully cooperate with Veterans Florida regarding its efforts to comply with the requirements of Florida's public records laws. In the event of a dispute concerning the disclosure of a document in Veterans Florida's possession that entity asserts is confidential under Florida law, the entity shall be responsible for taking the appropriate legal action and agrees to fully defend, hold harmless and indemnify Veterans Florida in connection with any legal proceeding and/or disclosure. All communications and any other information concerning this RFQ provided to Veterans Florida may be made public at any point in time unless otherwise made confidential by Florida law.

Attachment 1: Entrepreneurship Program Brand Guideline

OVERVIEW

The **Veterans Florida Entrepreneurship Program (“Program”)** is a statewide program and must be marketed accordingly. All promotion/marketing efforts must be co-branded with Veterans Florida in accordance with the Brand Guideline.

As a statewide collaborative program, it is essential that the Program be marketed and branded consistently to build the statewide equity needed to ensure continued state investment. Entrepreneur Partners (Partners) must include the Veterans Florida logo and tagline on all websites, emails, social media marketing when promoting the Program to veterans, veteran groups, and their families, governmental officials, stakeholders, or general public. Partners must tag Veterans Florida when promoting the Program by posting content on social media platforms.

OFFICIAL LOGO



[Download the Veterans Florida Logo here](#)

- Alterations to the logo are prohibited.
- The full color logo is to appear on a white or light neutral background.
- Logos must be surrounded by clear area; no other graphic or words are permitted to touch, appear, or overprint in this area.

NOTE: UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES WILL U.S. MILITARY SERVICE BRANCH LOGOS BE USED. THEY ARE TRADEMARKED AND USAGE WOULD IMPLY ENDORSEMENT. THE ONLY LOGOS THAT ARE AUTHORIZED FOR USE ARE VETERANS FLORIDA AND ENTREPRENEUR PARTNER LOGOS.

PRIMARY COLORS

The official Veterans Florida Entrepreneurship Program colors are red, white, blue, and yellow. These are the foundational colors of the Veterans Florida brand and should be used as the primary colors in the Program’s marketing. Only official Pantone Matching Ink colors or their corresponding values as noted below are to be used for the Program’s branding.

<p>Royal Blue – Pantone 660C Process (print) C: 88 M: 62 Y: 3 K: 2 RGB (web) R: 40 G: 102 B: 172 Hex Color (web) #2866ac</p>	<p>Red – Pantone 186C Process (print) C: 15 M: 100 Y: 90 K: 10 RGB (web) R: 189 G: 32 B: 46 Hex Color (web) #c8102e</p>
<p>Navy – Pantone 280C Process (print) C: 100 M: 100 Y: 29 K: 21 RGB (web) R: 40 G: 37 B: 98 Hex Color (web) #012169</p>	<p>White – Opaque White Process (print) C: 0 M: 0 Y: 0 K: 0 RGB (web) R: 255 G: 255 B: 255 Hex Color (web) #ffffff</p>
<p>Yellow – PMS 7548C Process (print) C: 0 M: 23 Y: 100 K: 0 RGB (web) R: 255 G: 199 B: 0 Hex Color (web) #ffc700</p>	

FONTS

The Veterans Florida Entrepreneurship Program uses the following fonts in all materials:

- Anton Regular – Headings; added emphasis
- Arial Regular – Body text
- Arial Black -- Headings
- Calibri Regular -- Body Text
- Nunito Sans - Headings

PROGRAM MESSAGING

The Program is a unique, statewide program. The collective statewide efforts offer a competitive advantage and must be capitalized on it by using same language to speak to customers and stakeholders. Partners should use the following language as outlined below when communicating to customers or stakeholders:

- The Veterans Florida Entrepreneurship Program should always be written out completely and never abbreviated.
- To help translate the skills learned in the military to entrepreneurship, *Veterans Florida and statewide partner organizations*, have joined forces to offer the Veterans Florida Entrepreneurship Program.
- Program expenses for all participants will be covered *through funding provided by the Florida Legislature and Veterans Florida*.

Partners may request additional messaging guidance at any time.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is an important part of how we, as a Program, communicate with to applicants, participants, stakeholders, and other key audiences. Social media can help enhance the Program’s reputation, increase initiative visibility, engage new audiences, and promote news and participant or Program accomplishments.

Veterans Florida’s marketing team will manage all Veteran Florida official social media channels. Partners are not permitted to create individual accounts but are encouraged to promote the Program through their existing social media platforms. Partners must tag Veterans Florida when promoting the Program by posting content on social media platforms.

Branding Standards

Hashtag - #FloridaVetBiz is the Veterans Florida Entrepreneurship Program’s official hashtag.

Vanity URL - veteransflorida.org/entrepreneurship is the Veterans Florida Entrepreneurship Program’s official URL

Press releases - articles that mention the Veterans Florida Entrepreneurship Program must include the following:

About Veterans Florida

Veterans Florida is a non-profit created by the State of Florida to help military veterans transition to civilian life and to promote Florida’s status as the nation’s most veteran-friendly state. Veterans Florida provides powerful tools for veterans to take advantage of the benefits of living and working in the Sunshine State.

Through our Career Services Program, we connect veterans with employers who are eager to hire veterans for jobs that put their particular military skills to use. We also assist veterans in creating a winning resume and preparing for job interviews. Employers receive veteran recruiting assistance and may apply for our Workforce Training Grant.

The Veterans Florida Entrepreneurship Program provides all the knowledge needed to successfully launch and operate a business. As soon as their business is up and running we keep them connected with mentors and resources.

Veterans Florida’s mission can be summed up in our theme – Your Pursuit. Our Power. – because we recognize military veterans are incredibly focused and will succeed in achieving their personal and professional goals when they take advantage of our tools and resources.

For more information, visit www.veteransflorida.org.

There may be exceptions to some of these standards; however, prior approval by the Veterans Florida is required.