

# TXShare

Your Public Sector Solutions Center

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**  
**For**  
**GRANT MANAGEMENT & CONSULTING SERVICES**  
**RFP # 2023-028**

Sealed proposals will be accepted until **2:00 PM CT, Thursday, June 22, 2023**, and then publicly opened and read aloud thereafter.

Ascend Nonprofit and Business Solutions LLC

Legal Name of Proposing Firm

Arlene Siller Ph.D.

Founder & CEO

Contact Person

Title

210-610-2440

arlene.siller@ascendnbs.com

Telephone Number

E-Mail Address

13322 Sage Heights Dr.

San Antonio, TX

78230

Street Address of Principal Place of Business

City/State

Zip

13322 Sage Heights Dr.

San Antonio, TX

78230

Complete Mailing Address

City/State

Zip

Acknowledgment of Addenda: #1 AKS #2 \_\_\_\_\_ #3 \_\_\_\_\_ #4 \_\_\_\_\_ #5 \_\_\_\_\_

By signing below, you hereby certify that the information contained in this proposal and any attachments is true and correct, and may be viewed as an accurate representation of proposed services to be provided by this organization. You agree that failure to submit all requested information may result in rejection of your company's proposal as non-responsive. You certify that no employee, board member, or agent of the North Central Texas Council of Governments has assisted in the preparation of this proposal. You acknowledge that you have read and understand the requirements and provisions of this solicitation and that the organization will comply with the regulations and other applicable local, state, and federal regulations and directives in the implementation of this contract. And furthermore that I certify that I am legally authorized to sign this offer and to submit it to the North Central Texas Council of Governments, on behalf of said offeror by authority of its governing body.



Authorized Signature



## Statement of Understanding:

Ascend NBS understands that this RFP intends to establish contracts for Grant Management & Consulting Services as part of the TXShare Cooperative Purchasing Program. This program aims to enable any public entity or nonprofit to utilize the TXShare contract and its selected vendor(s) and pricing to pursue our grant projects. The services we propose to provide include: developing requests for application (RFA); grant submission approval workflow; Grants.gov interpretation; grant application writing and submission; business process automation, activity review, and tracking; grant application forms and data processing; panel review scorecard development; eligibility and award status tracking/monitoring; award document creation; grant audit review and recommendations; activity and task tracking; grant closeout checklist tracking; grant management and data reporting review and recommendations; conduct grant research; recommend training; and provide grant training and consultations.

### Summary of Qualifications:

Ascend NBS is well-equipped to provide the Grant Management & Consulting Services required for the TXShare Cooperative Purchasing Program. Our qualifications include the following:

**Established Experience:** Ascend NBS has operated as an S-Corporation since March 2019, delivering the requested services outlined in this RFP and proposed above. With four years of experience, we have successfully provided grant training, coaching, research, and writing services to diverse clients, including nonprofits, government entities, schools, and small businesses.

**Core Competencies:** Ascend NBS excels in several core competencies crucial for successful grant management and consulting services. We specialize in grant readiness, assisting organizations in developing the necessary infrastructure and capacity to compete for grant funding. Our grant strategy expertise ensures alignment with funders' priorities and the development of competitive proposals. We excel in grant research, identifying suitable funding opportunities, and evaluating their fit. Our grant writing skills encompass comprehensive proposal preparation, including project descriptions, goals, objectives, methodologies, budgets, and expected outcomes. Moreover, our Founder and CEO has extensive experience serving as a grant reviewer for various funders.

**Track Record:** Since 2019, Ascend NBS has secured over \$175 million in funding for our clients, demonstrating our proficiency in the grant application and submission processes. We leverage our expertise to optimize our client's chances of securing grant funding and assist them in achieving their missions.

As a Hispanic and woman-owned firm based in San Antonio, Texas, Ascend NBS holds multiple certifications, including WBE, MBE, ESBE, SBE, and HUB. We serve clients nationwide. Our team consists of experienced grant researchers, writers, strategists, and reviewers with a cumulative experience of over 75 years in the field. In conclusion, with our extensive experience, certifications, core competencies, and proven track record, we are well-qualified to provide comprehensive support in grant management, consulting, and securing funding for public entities and nonprofits.

## Tab B Executive Summary

Ascend Nonprofit and Business Solutions (NBS) is a leading grant management and consulting firm helping organizations secure grant funding and improve their program delivery capabilities. With a strong understanding of the grant application process and extensive experience in the field, Ascend NBS has secured over \$175 million in client funding since its establishment in 2019.

Our proposed services include comprehensive support in various grant management and consulting aspects. We offer expertise in developing Request for Application (RFA) documents, establishing efficient workflows for grant submission approval, interpreting Grants.gov guidelines, and providing grant application writing and submission services. Our team also excels in business process automation, activity tracking, and managing grant application forms and data.

Furthermore, Ascend NBS specializes in creating panel review scorecards, tracking eligibility, application, and award statuses, and generating award documents. We excel in activity and task tracking, grant closeout checklist tracking, and proper disposition of records. Our experts provide valuable insights through grant management and data reporting review, offer recommended training programs, and develop grant strategies to pursue funding opportunities aligned with organizational goals.

We emphasize grant readiness by preparing organizations to compete successfully for grant funding and offer comprehensive grant research services to identify suitable funding opportunities. With our experienced Founder and CEO, who has served as a grant reviewer for various entities, we bring a wealth of knowledge and insight to the table.

As a Hispanic and woman-owned business, Ascend NBS is committed to delivering exceptional service and has positioned itself as one of the most relevant and dynamic grant writing firms in the United States. Our certified status as a WBE, MBE, ESBE, SBE, and HUB further exemplifies our dedication to diversity and inclusivity.

With a combined 75 years of grant writing experience, our team of researchers, writers, and strategists possesses the expertise to support organizations in securing grant funding. We have a comprehensive understanding of the funding landscape and can help streamline the grant writing and review processes, increasing the likelihood of securing award-winning grants.

By leveraging our collective expertise and experience, Ascend NBS aims to help North Central Texas Council of Governments and its 236 members enhance their grant funding and improve their ability to deliver high-quality programs and services to their communities.

## TAB C Experience

### 1. Previous Project Experience- An overview and brief history of the Respondent, and a description of what uniquely qualifies the Respondent for this service.

**Background:** Established in March 2019, Ascend NBS has provided services this RFP requested for four years. Ascend NBS is a Hispanic and woman-owned grant training, coaching, research, and writing firm headquartered in San Antonio, Texas. Ascend NBS helps nonprofits, government entities, schools, and small businesses improve their grant writing skills and secure funding for their missions. Ascend NBS is a certified WBE, MBE, ESBE, SBE, and HUB in Texas.

Over the past two decades, Dr. Arlene Siller and the Ascend NBS team of grant researchers, writers, strategists, and reviewers have over 75 years of grant experience, offering valuable expertise and support to organizations seeking to secure grant funding. Since 2019, Ascend NBS has secured over \$175 million in funding for our clients, leveraging our strong understanding of the grant application and review processes.

**Unique Qualifications and Differentiators:** Our commitment to delivering results is evident in our track record of securing grant funding for organizations of all sizes and types. In addition, what further differentiates us is our comprehensive approach, expertise in diverse fields, and streamlined processes that ensure efficient and effective grant writing services:

**A Comprehensive Approach:** Ascend NBS takes a comprehensive approach to grant management, interpretation, training, and writing, including research, strategy development, proposal writing, organization readiness, and project management. This ensures that clients have a strong foundation for pursuing grant funding and are well-positioned to execute funded projects successfully.

**Expertise in Diverse Fields:** Grant funding Ascend NBS has written and secured funding for include:

**Infrastructure and Community Development:** Grants in this sector can support the improvement and development of public infrastructure, such as roads, bridges, water and wastewater systems, public buildings, parks, and community centers. Funding opportunities focused on revitalization, urban development, transportation, or environmental sustainability.

**Housing and Urban Development:** Grants in this sector can assist agencies in addressing affordable housing challenges, promoting community development, and supporting initiatives related to housing rehabilitation, homelessness prevention, neighborhood revitalization, and sustainable housing solutions.

**Environmental and Energy Initiatives:** Grants in this sector can support municipalities' efforts to implement sustainable practices, enhance energy efficiency, promote renewable energy projects, improve waste management systems, preserve natural resources, and mitigate the impact of climate change. Funding opportunities may be available through programs focused on clean energy, environmental conservation, and climate resilience.



**Public Safety and Emergency Services:** Grants in this sector can help clients strengthen public safety measures, enhance emergency response capabilities, improve infrastructure for fire and police departments, support crime prevention initiatives, and implement disaster preparedness and mitigation strategies.

**Education and Youth Programs:** Grants in this sector can support clients in providing quality educational programs, expanding access to early childhood education, enhancing after-school programs, promoting youth development, and improving educational infrastructure. Funding opportunities may be available through programs focused on education reform, literacy, STEM education, and youth engagement.

**Health and Social Services:** Grants in this sector can assist clients in addressing public health issues, expanding healthcare services, supporting mental health initiatives, combating substance abuse, and improving access to social services for vulnerable populations. Funding opportunities may be available through programs focused on healthcare innovation, community health improvement, and social welfare.

**Economic Development:** Grants in this sector can support clients' efforts to attract and retain businesses, promote entrepreneurship, create job opportunities, and stimulate economic growth. Funding opportunities may be available through programs focused on business expansion, workforce development, tourism promotion, and innovation.

At Ascend NBS, we understand that effective grant management requires a structured and streamlined approach. That is why we use monday.com, customized workflows, and standard operating procedures and processes to ensure consistent and efficient delivery of grant research and writing services. Our team has leveraged these tools and processes to manage multiple grant applications simultaneously, ensuring all requirements are met on time and within budget. Our commitment to excellence in grant writing has resulted in numerous successful grant awards for our clients. Using innovative tools and processes has been a critical factor in our success. As we continue to provide grant writing services, we will leverage monday.com and other cutting-edge technologies to ensure that our clients receive the highest quality of service and achieve their desired outcomes.

Ascend NBS has a proven track record of delivering grant writing services on time and within budget. Our team has completed numerous projects similar to the one described in this RFP, and we have consistently received positive feedback from our clients regarding the quality and timeliness of our work. We understand the importance of meeting project deadlines and budgetary constraints. We have established a robust project management and timekeeping process to ensure all tasks are completed efficiently and effectively. Our commitment to excellence and extensive experience in grant writing make us confident in our ability to perform the required services promptly and cost-effectively.

Ascend NBS clearly understands and can comply with state, federal, and grant funding requirements defined in this RFP. Our team is well-versed in the regulations and guidelines of various funding agencies. It has a proven track record of successfully navigating and adhering to these requirements in previous grant-writing projects. We are committed to ensuring that all proposals are developed in compliance with the highest standards of ethical and professional conduct.

Ascend NBS is a well-structured team with a manageable workload and ample resources to ensure the successful completion of the project within the defined time constraints. Led by Founder & CEO Arlene

Siller, Ph.D., the team has extensive experience in grant training, facilitation, and technical assistance. It has a proven track record of delivering successful outcomes for previous and current clients. Our Grants Manager oversees the process of researching, applying for, and managing grants. At the same time, the Lead Grant Writer ensures all grant proposals are completed accurately and efficiently. The Grant Coordinator supports a team of nine grant researchers and writers responsible for researching, writing, and submitting grant proposals and reports. Additionally, the team has two Virtual Assistants who provide administrative, technical, or creative assistance as needed. Together, the team has 75 years of experience relevant to the scope of services, is well-equipped to meet the project requirements, and has the necessary experience and expertise to ensure success. Please find the Resumes for team attached.

**I. Texas and/or other state registrations. Relevant testing accreditations and equipment certifications.**

Ascend NBS has established itself as a reputable provider of professional services in training, consulting, and technical writing. Our company was established in 2019 and is a Texas-registered business. Additionally, Ascend NBS has obtained several certifications, including HUB, ESBE, HABE, MBE, SBE, and WBE. In grant writing, it is essential to note that relevant testing accreditations and equipment certifications are not required. As members of the Grant Professionals Association and Fundraising Professionals Association, we leverage our expertise in grant writing and fundraising strategies to effectively secure funding for our clients. Our memberships in these professional associations demonstrate our commitment to staying updated on best practices, industry standards, and ethical guidelines in grant writing and fundraising. We prioritize continuous learning, networking, and professional development to deliver high-quality services and maximize the grant funding opportunities available to our clients.

**II. A description of services the Respondent has provided in the past five years that demonstrates the Respondent's capability to provide the proposed services. Include the nature of the services provided, scope of activities, and the organization for which the service was provided. Where possible, focus should be placed on relevant experience with governmental entities.**

Ascend Nonprofit and Business Solutions (NBS) currently provides clients with comprehensive grant management and consulting services in the table below. Our team is involved in various tasks supporting the department's grant processes. We are responsible for developing Request for Application (RFA) documents, which outline the requirements and criteria for potential applicants to submit proposals for specific grant opportunities. We facilitate the workflow for grant submission approval, ensuring compliance with guidelines and making informed funding decisions. Our expertise in Grants.gov and other funder's guidelines, applications, and portal interpretation enables us to analyze each agency's terms, conditions, and guidelines, clarifying their meaning and applying them to the department's specific projects and eligibility requirements. Grant application writing and submission are critical aspects of our services as we prepare compelling proposals that effectively communicate the department's goals, objectives, and expected outcomes. We also assist with business process automation and activity review, implementing automated systems and tools to streamline workflow management, track activities, and improve overall efficiency.

As part of our role, we receive, complete, and process grant application forms and data, ensuring accurate organization and information entry for further evaluation. We develop panel review scorecards, providing a standardized evaluation tool for experts or reviewers to assess and rate grant



applications based on predetermined criteria. Furthermore, we track and monitor eligibility, application, and award status, ensuring the department has real-time visibility into the progress of grant applicants and the status of awarded grants. Our team also generates award documents, such as contracts and agreements, formalizing the granting of funds to successful grant applicants. Activity and task tracking are integral to our services, enabling effective management and accountability throughout the grant lifecycle. We also oversee grant closeout checklist tracking, ensuring all necessary tasks and requirements are completed to ensure compliance and proper closure of grants. In addition to our hands-on support, we provide recommended training opportunities to the department, identifying specific learning and development initiatives that can enhance their grant management, research, and writing capabilities and address any identified needs.

*Organizations for which the service was provided, to name a few:*

City of Phoenix	Wilson County	Waterloo Greenway Park
Any Baby Can	BCFS	BioMedSA
Capital IDEA Houston	Children's Bereavement Center of South Texas	The Children's Shelter
CHR Partners	Community First	Da Vinci Schools
Dress For Success	Friedman & Associates	El Centro de Amistad
Endeavors	Guardian House	Localism
NCIA	New Earth	Pride Center
South Sudanese Foundation	St. Michael's Learning Academy	St. Vincent de Paul

- III. A summary listing of judgments or pending lawsuits or actions against; adverse contract actions, including termination(s), suspension, imposition of penalties, or other actions relating to failure to perform or deficiencies in fulfilling contractual obligations against Respondent. If applicable, include an explanation(s). If none, so state.**

We can confirm that no legal proceedings or contract actions have been filed or imposed on Ascend NBS.

- IV. Provide information on any claim submitted by any client against the Respondent within the past two years related to the services provided by the Respondent or its key personnel. For purposes of this request, "claim" means a sum of money in dispute in excess of 5% of the Respondent's fee for the services provided. If none, so state.**

No claims have been submitted by any client against Ascend NBS within the past two years related to the services provided by the Respondent or its key personnel.



## Ascend Nonprofit & Business Solutions LLC

# CAPABILITIES STATEMENT

Ascend Nonprofit and Business Solutions (NBS) is a Hispanic and woman-owned grant training, coaching, research, and writing firm headquartered in San Antonio, Texas. Ascend NBS has worked to establish itself as one of the most relevant, responsive, and dynamic professional grant writing businesses throughout the U.S. Ascend NBS' Founder and CEO has over 29 years of experience in the grant funding, organizational leadership and development industry, working with nonprofit organizations, for-profit businesses, higher education institutions, government, and individuals. Ascend NBS, a certified WBE, MBE, ESBE, SBE, and HUB, has helped numerous businesses and organizations evaluate their current positions, develop the skills to enhance revenue, and secure funding for their missions. Ascend NBS has raised \$100+ million to date.

## CORE COMPETENCIES

**GRANT STRATEGY:** understanding the funding landscape, identifying potential funding sources, and developing a plan to pursue funding opportunities that align with the organization's mission and goals.

**GRANT READINESS:** preparing the organization to successfully compete for grant funding by ensuring that it has the necessary infrastructure, resources, and capacity to deliver on the proposed project.

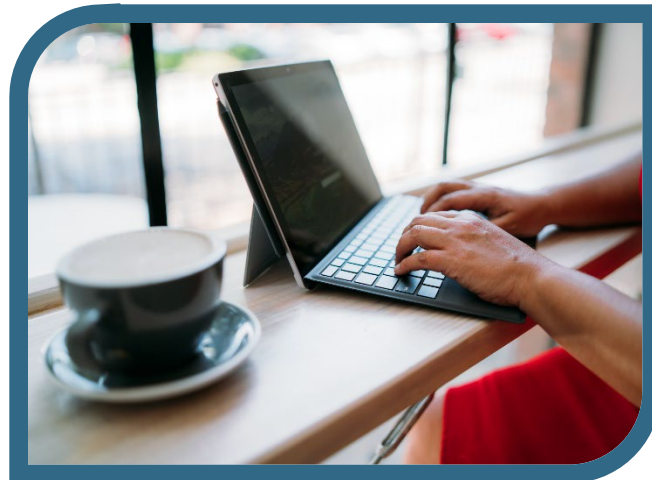
**RESEARCH AND WRITING:** conducting thorough research on the funding opportunity, crafting a compelling narrative that highlights the organization's strengths and addresses the funder's priorities, and ensuring that the proposal is well-written, error-free, and meets all application requirements.

**GRANT REVIEWER:** Founder & CEO has served as a reviewer for the federal government, institutions of higher education, foundations and corporations.

## DIFFERENTIATORS

**A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH:** Ascend NBS takes a comprehensive approach to grant writing, including research, strategy development, proposal writing, organization readiness and post-award support. This ensures that clients have a strong foundation for pursuing grant funding and are well-positioned to successfully execute funded projects.

**EXPERTISE IN DIVERSE FIELDS:** Ascend NBS has expertise in a wide range of fields, including economic development, healthcare, social services, and more. This enables the company to provide clients with targeted support that reflects their specific industry and funding landscape.



## Company Snapshot

Established: 2019  
EIN: 83-4087419  
DUNS: 096916800  
UEI: YM5USY7S2J15  
CAGE Code: 9HBZ6

## Pertinent Codes

### NAICS:

611430: Professional and Management Development Training  
611710 Education Consultants  
541618 Other Management Consulting  
541690: Other Scientific and Technical Consulting Services  
561410: Document Preparation Services  
711510: Independent Technical Writers  
812990: All Other Professional Services

## Certifications:

HUB #1834087419900, ESBE HABE MBE  
SBE WBE #223014763

## Contact

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Email: [arlene.siller@ascendnbs.com](mailto:arlene.siller@ascendnbs.com)  
Phone: 210-610-2440  
Address: 13322 Sage Heights Dr.  
San Antonio, TX 78230

### Visit Our Website:

[www.ascendnbs.com](http://www.ascendnbs.com)



**RESULTS-DRIVEN:** Ascend NBS is committed to delivering results for its clients, and has a proven track record of securing grant funding for organizations of all sizes and types. This is achieved through a combination of strategic thinking, attention to detail, and a deep understanding of the grant funding process.

## KEY CLIENTS

Any Baby Can, BCFS, Capital IDEA Houston, Children's Bereavement Center of South Texas, The Children's Shelter, LEAFFund, Latino Economic Development Corporation (LEDC), Dress for Success, Community First Health Plans, City of San Antonio, City of Dallas, NAWBO, Bexar County, South Sudanese Foundation, New Earth, Pride Center San Antonio, Bexar County Health Collaborative, Texas State, St. Edward's University, Waterloo Greenway, to name a few.

## PAST PERFORMANCE

### South Sudanese Foundation

Devised a strategy and mentored on grant readiness and fundraising to build organizational capacity and sustainability while simultaneously conducting grant research and award-winning grant writing resulting in increased revenue, improved governance, and enhanced community partnerships.

### Capital IDEA Houston

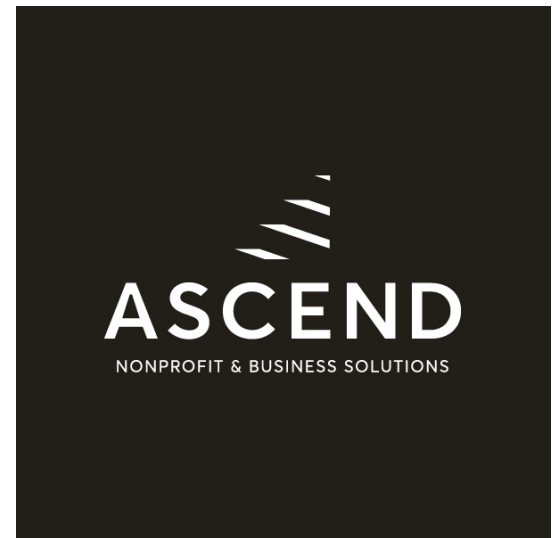
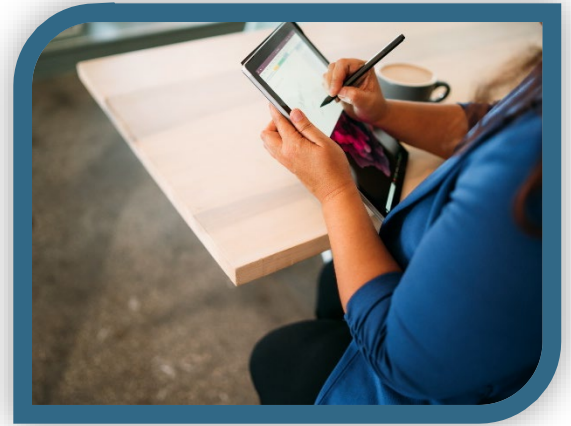
Developed a comprehensive grant strategy that aligned with the organization's mission and goals, and identified funding opportunities that were a good fit for its programs and initiatives resulting in increased revenue to expand its programming and hire additional staff.

### CDFI ERP

Secured \$6.2M in CDFI ERP funding for four community development nonprofits to support small business, food cooperatives, and affordable housing with loans, grants, and technical assistance. The organizations were also able to invest in new technology and infrastructure to improve their operations and better serve their clients.

## BIO

Our team of grant researchers, writers, and strategists have a combined 75+ years of grant writing experience offering valuable expertise and support to organizations seeking to secure grant funding. Writing for organizations across the country gives us a broad understanding of the funding landscape and the types of grants that are available to different types of organizations. Our grant management strategies prioritize high throughput with quality, helping organizations streamline their grant writing and review processes and increase their chances of securing award-winning grants. By leveraging our collective expertise and experience, Ascend NBS can help organizations increase their grant funding and improve their capacity to deliver high-quality programs and services to their communities.



# ARLENE SILLER

210-610-2440 | [Arlene.Siller@ascendnbs.com](mailto:Arlene.Siller@ascendnbs.com) | [www.ascendnbs.com](http://www.ascendnbs.com) | [LinkedIn Profile](#)  
GRANT WRITER | GRANT WRITING PROFESSIONAL | GRANT FUNDING EXPERT

## *Your Ally for Social Change*

*Grant writing leader that specializes in managing a team of grant writers committed to your organization's mission, priorities, and program effectiveness that genuine partnerships bring. Thought leader committed to efficient grant writing processes focused on submitting the best grants possible in support of award. Conscientious leader leveraging an expert team to save you time and money. Transformational leader committed to diverse perspectives in crafting your organization's story that invites philanthropists to advance your mission. Inspirational leader passionate about supporting capacity building and leadership development for BIPOC-led nonprofit organizations.*

### Core Competencies

Nonprofit Grant Writing  
Grant Funding Strategic Planning

Grant Research  
Grant Evaluation

Team Grant Writing  
Grant Editing

### Sectors of Experience

Affordable Housing	Diabetes	Prenatal Care
The Arts	Economic Development	Recidivism
Biomedical Devices	Education	Science
Capacity Building	Engineering	Small Business
Children and Youth	Financial Literacy	Smoking Cessation
Community Development	Health and Human Services	Specialized Learning
Community Improvements	Mental Health	Women
Community Health	Microlending	Workforce Development
Census 2020	Minorities	Veterans

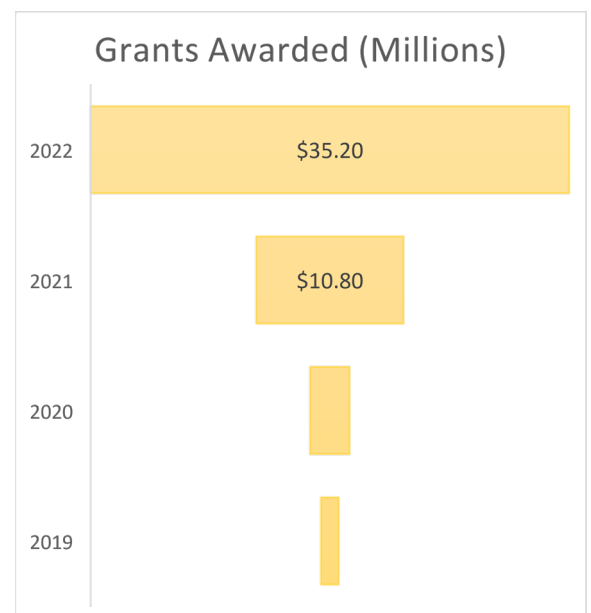
### Professional Experience

**Ascend Nonprofit and Business Solutions LLC**  
*Founder & CEO*

March 2019—Present

***“True philanthropy requires a disruptive mindset, innovative thinking and a philosophy driven by entrepreneurial insights and creative opportunities.” Naveen Jain.***

- Leads a Latina, woman-owned grant writing firm that supports nonprofits, ministries, and schools in fundraising through grants. Secured \$25M in awarded grant funds to date.
- Manages a team of grant writers who work on multiple grant opportunities simultaneously. The team approach provides a holistic vantage point to ensure all applicable grant opportunities are pursued.
- Facilitates networking, collaboration, and cultivation of authentic and collaborative partnerships benefiting the community.
- Develops a deep understanding of the intricacies of the client's organization and programs to submit exceptional proposals.
- Coaches and trains hundreds of fundraisers to increase their fundraising capacity through Grant Yourself Success® an 8-week masterclass in grant story telling.
- Works with Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Executive Director (ED), and Chief Development Officer (CDO) on achieving grant fundraising goals.





**LiftFund Inc.** November 2014-February 2019

*Vice President of Grants Administration*

- Executive-level fundraising officer of grants ensuring annual operational revenue in the range of \$5M-\$9M annually through grants across a 13 state, 15 city footprint.
- Secured approximately \$35M in grant funding over five years from corporations, foundations, and government. Worked closely with CEO and Chief Advancement Officer, liaison to board development committee and oversaw grant development staff and interns.
  - 2019 \$500,000 U.S. Economic Development
  - 2019 \$1.2M JPMorgan Chase & Co.
  - 2018 \$1.2M Woodforest National Bank
  - 2017 \$916,905 for U.S. Treasury's
  - 2016 \$4.6M grant from JPMorgan Chase & Co.
  - 2015 \$1M grant award from HUD

**Dental and Trauma Research Detachment at U.S. Army Institute of Surgical Research** August 2010—March 2014

*Scientific Program Coordinator*

- Program coordination for microbial biomedical research and the formulation and manufacture of Anti-plaque Chewing Gum, under the Food and Drug Administration's Investigational New Drug program for a Phase 1/2a clinical trial. Secured \$19.2M in funding.
  - 2014 \$2.2M U.S. Army Core Research Intramural Funding
  - 2012 \$1.5M Defense Health Program
  - 2011 \$3.0M Defense Health Program
  - 2011 \$1.1M National Institutes of Health

**National Research Council at U.S. Army Institute of Surgical Research**

July 2007—August 2010

*Postdoctoral Research Fellowship*

- Biomedical research and material evaluation for orthopedic applications
- \$141,000 National Research Council, Research Associateship Program

**Southwest Research Institute (SwRI®)**

April 1996—May 2003

*Research Scientist/Chemical Laboratory Supervisor*

- Biomedical research to develop and bring to market advanced biomaterials for medical applications.
- Secured over \$2M in funding from commercial, government and internal funding sources.
- Developed novel keratin biomaterials which resulted in 10 issued United States Patents.

**Education**

Doctor of Philosophy Biochemistry | University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio

- Secured \$135K in grant funding from National Institutes of Health

Bachelor of Science, Biology & Psychology, Chemistry minor | Texas State University

**Community Service & Civic Engagement Experience**

Social Venture Partners San Antonio, Board Member	2020—present
Latina Leadership Institute, San Antonio Hispanic Chamber of Commerce	2020—present
Grant Professionals Association, Member	2020—present
Association of Fundraising Professionals, Member	2020—present
The Nonprofit Council (TNC) and Business Influencers Group within the TNC, Board Member	2019—present

# HEATHER A. GOODEN

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204 Cedar Cliff Loop  
Hunt, TX 78024  
(210) 884-7857  
hagooden@gmail.com

## SUMMARY

Passionate nonprofit business solutions manager with 9 years in management, 5 years as a technical/nonprofit grant writer, 3 years classroom educator, and 13 years research experience conducting biomedical research, scientific writing, lab management, finance and accounting in the private, nonprofit and government sectors.

## EDUCATION

Texas Science 4-12 Teaching Certifications  
M.B.A., Health Management. University of Texas at San Antonio, San Antonio, Texas. May 2004.  
B.S., Biomedical Science. Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas. August 2000.

## EXPERIENCE

Ascend Nonprofit Business Solutions, LLC

*Grant Manager* (June 2022 - current)

- Manage and support grant requirements and submission utilizing Monday.com
- Provide technical assistance and troubleshooting for online grant applications
- Coordinate and manage timelines and deliverables with and between grant writers and clients
- Provide detailed reports to clients with respect to company progress
- Provide training to new staff on grants management and processes
- Coordinate and engage with grant writers and grant coordinator

Hunt Middle School (Aug 2019 – May 2022)

*Middle School Science & Biology (Grades 6, 7, 8) Educator, GT Facilitator, PBIS representative, & NJHS Advisor*

- Create daily lesson plans and learning opportunities based on state, local and school standards
- Design, develop, and deliver high-quality, engaging curriculum and instruction utilizing discussion, direct teaching, demonstrations, experiments, activities and independent practice
- Differentiate lessons and provide resources, support and interventions to ensure students reach expectations
- Create and utilize appropriate formal and informal assessments to provide feedback
- Establish, communicate and model expectations to ensure safe, orderly and supportive classroom
- Communicate clearly and timely with students, parents, administration and staff

LiftFund, Inc.

*Grant Writer* (2015 - 2019)

- Develop & write grant proposals, persuasively communicate mission, programs and needs
- Conducts research on grantor programs, goals and financial needs
- Writes clearly and informatively with attention to detail; varies writing style to meet needs
- Collects and researches data to complement proposals, presents numerical data effectively
- Generate supporting documents per solicitations to include creative collateral
- Assembles and submits grant requests, including letters, budgets, timelines and proposal
- Reviews grant proposals and supporting documents
- Identifies funding opportunities, reads and interprets written information
- Prioritizes projects to keep multiple projects moving in a timely manner, meet deadlines and manage supplemental material required for proposals
- Maintains communication and positive relationship with grantor agencies and donors

Caregiver/Homemaker

*Caregiver (Feb 2013 – Aug 2014)*

- Primary caregiver to 91-year old grandmother

Johnson Appraisal Group (Aug 2012 – Aug 2013)

*Contracted Commercial Real Estate Appraisal Writer*

- Research commercial properties, and comparisons for area real estate trends
- Calculate commercial real estate values
- Compile relevant data and write appraisal reports

Extremity Trauma & Regenerative Medicine; U.S. Army Institute of Surgical Research, Ft Sam Houston, TX.

*Program Officer & Lab Manager (2005 – Feb 2013)*

- Responsible for preparing, submitting, and managing grant proposals for government grants
- Analyze data and compile reports on progress of work
- Prepare, maintain, and review protocol and program budgets
- Track all incoming progress reports, invoices, contracts, and order requests
- Develop and analyze procedures and practices within the program
- Develop working relationships with other department to facilitate the program mission
- Coordinate and expedite the flow of work and materials within the program
- Coordinate work to ensure smooth operation, delivery of services, and customer support
- Resolve problems independently, rendering expert judgments and decisions
- Plan, organize, and accomplish assignments under general supervision
- Ensure fiduciary responsibility and allocation of task area and government funds
- Manage equipment acquisition and maintenance

Concentra Medical Center, San Antonio, TX.

*Center Administrator (2004 - 2005)*

- Develop, implement, and maintain new and existing policies, procedures, and training
- Manage 12-15 staff
- Monitor marketplace trends and gather competitive information
- Prepare and review annual budgets, operational reports and scheduling
- Provide technical support to clients
- Enhance communication between client and center to identify and prevent problems
- Maintain staff certification documentation
- Conduct on-site tours to prospective and current clients
- Ensure financial performance of the center

Bone & Soft Tissue Group; U.S. Army Institute of Surgical Research, Ft Sam Houston, TX.

*Research Assistant (2001 – 2004)*

- Perform ballistics, wound care, hemorrhagic and hibernation research
- Perform biochemical procedures and assays
- Manage supplies and equipment
- Develop and maintain research databases
- Data analysis

The Institute of Drug Development; Cancer Therapy and Research Center, San Antonio, TX.

*Research Assistant (2000 – 2001)*

- Maintain tumor and cell lines
- Test investigational drugs
- Perform *in vivo* and *in vitro* experimental studies
- Data analysis and report writing
- Collaborate with Biotech/Pharmaceutical companies



# Lourdes Paz

lourdes.p.paz@gmail.com

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## *Summary*

I am a natural born leader with extensive interpersonal relationship skills having worked in diverse areas such as economics, marketing and garment manufacturing. I graduated from St. Mary's University in San Antonio, Texas, with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Economics that set the knowledge foundation needed to solve real world problems.

### RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

#### 1. Job Title: Independent Contractor

**Place:** ASCEND Nonprofit Business Solutions

**Date:** April 2022 – Present

**Responsibilities:**

- Grant research and writing services.
- Coordinate information with Grant Coordinator and client to prepare the application for the grant writer.
- Train and create SOPs for new grant writers.

#### 2. Job Title: Medical Interpreter English/Spanish

**Place:** The Workloop, Tegucigalpa, Honduras

**Date:** August 2019 – August 2020

**Responsibilities:**

- Interpret from English to Spanish, through video calls, for the Medical Provider to the Patient who is mostly Spanish speaking
- Interpret from Spanish to English, through video calls, for the Patient to the Medical Provider who is mostly English speaking
- Be a cultural bridge between the Medical Personnel and patients in order to have a better communication and understanding.
- Mentor interpreters that are going through the final stage of their training process before starting production.

#### 3. Job Title: Administrative Services Manager

**Place:** Nuevos Horizontes, San Pedro Sula, Honduras

**Date:** August 2016 – March 2017

**Responsibilities:**

- Create and implement customer service departments for both residential and company projects
- Coordinate, supervise and audit the execution of procedures
- Resolve and follow up on customer complaints from both residents and company employees
- Review and improve the allocation of employee space in their work area
- Reports review and revision of team activities on a daily basis
- Staff coaching on customer service topics, writing and communication skills

#### 4. Job Title: Senior Account Manager

**Place:** Industrias de Exportación/Grupo Beta, Tegucigalpa, Honduras

**Date:** September 2010 – 2016

**Responsibilities:**

- Customer Service for the Under Armour sports brand
- Direct communication with the client on product development, production and brand growth
- Communicate all information from the client to factory directors, managers and all personnel at the factory
- Costing of new products in development process at the factory
- Supervise the development of raw materials used for garment manufacturing, such as fabric hang tags and labels
- Supervise product development of finished goods and printed graphics
- Follow up with production, from fabric receiving to shipping of finished goods
- Negotiation of shipping dates and agreement of production plans
- Analyze forecasts of goods in alignment with the company's objectives
- Supervise and follow up with the logistics of exporting finished goods

- Follow up with quality control in every process in both product development and production
- Lead a business team tailored to the Under Armour brand formed by coworkers from different departments

#### **5. Job Title: Marketing and Communications Coordinator**

**Place:** ASENZ Marketing, San Antonio, TX

**Date:** January 2006 – July 2010

##### **Responsibilities:**

- Develop and implement online marketing strategies
- Audit the quality content to be published in order to achieve the targeted market segment
- Manage public relations and media communication
- Provide a tailored customer service per account
- Train clients on data base management and E-Marketing
- Implementation of small business strategies for company growth

#### **6. Job Title: Configuration Specialist**

**Place:** The BottomLine on Marketing, San Antonio, TX

**Date:** August 2005 – December 2005

##### **Responsibilities:**

- Web Design and Configuration
- Marketing Data Base Management
- Create & Manage online product catalogs
- Customer Service

### **EDUCATION**

Bachelor of Arts in Economics with a Minor in Business Administration (December, 2004)

St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas

Cumulative GPA: 3.54

### **INTERSHIPS & SEMINARS**

- 2015– Conflict Resolution Seminar, Tegucigalpa, Honduras
- 2009– Sustainable Development Seminar, Lexington, KY
- 2005 – Online Marketing Internship, San Antonio TX
- 2004 – Internship in Economics, COHEP, Tegucigalpa, Honduras

### **SKILLS**

- High knowledge in PolyPM
- High skills in managing computers, text processors and spread sheet processors
- Ability to work under pressure
- Vast knowledge in logistics
- Ability to analyze and improve product development processes (garment)
- Excellent Interpersonal skills
- Committed to work
- Strong leadership to meet organizational goals
- Excellent negotiation skills with clients

### **LANGUAGES**

Spanish: Advanced conversation and public speaking, reading comprehension, and technical writing

English: Advanced conversation and public speaking, reading comprehension, and technical writing

French: Regular conversation, reading and writing








## CONTACT

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 (707) 836-6703

 [linkedin.com/in/valerie-craven](https://www.linkedin.com/in/valerie-craven)

## EXPERTISE

•••• Written and Verbal Communication

•••• Project Management

•••• Client and Donor Relationships

•••• Team Collaboration

•••• Environmental Engineer

# VALERIE CRAVEN

## GRANT WRITER AND PROJECT MANAGER

### PERSONAL PROFILE

Accomplished grant writer with expertise in successfully preparing and managing multiple high value proposal applications that create a compelling and well-researched case for support and strategically align project goals with funder priorities.

### SKILLS

#### Grant Writing

- Efficiently research and develop grant submissions to local, state, and federal government agencies, foundations, and corporate philanthropies
- Successfully secure multi-million dollar funding for a variety of projects and initiatives
- Passionate about helping non-profits achieve their goals with interest in environmental protection, social services, and children and youth programs
- Prepare grants, proposals, technical reports, websites, presentation decks, published journal articles, training materials, patents, marketing materials, press releases, and surveys
- Superior organizational skills and strong attention to detail
- Proficient in desktop and web-based writing, communication, analytical, and project management tools (Microsoft, Apple, Adobe, Google)

#### Project Management

- Nearly 20 years experience providing environmental and human health risk assessment consulting services
- Experience managing projects within budget and on-time for multi-billion dollar global corporations
- Successfully coordinate multiple projects simultaneously, each often involving significant deadlines and high-profile outcomes

#### Team and Client Relationships and Communication

- Developed and maintained successful client, customer, stakeholder, and donor relationships
- Lead projects involving 90+ team members in multiple disciplines toward unified goals
- Experience working with federal, state, and local governmental regulatory agencies
- Effective verbal and written communication skills

## WORK EXPERIENCE

### Grant Writer

Contractor with Ascend NBS | March 2022 - present

- Efficiently research and develop grant submissions to local, state, and federal government agencies, foundations, and corporate philanthropies
- Secured over \$6 million in funding for clients

### Travel Writer and Social Media Developer

Campfires and Sandcastles | 2017 - present

- Travel website documenting my travels in and around the Americas
- Author articles and create and develop the website
- Maintain social media presence

### Fundraiser and Grant Writer

Serve A Little | Jul 2015 - Jan 2018

- Serve A Little is a non-profit organization that launched an auto repair shop whose proceeds provided free auto repair to low-income single mothers
- Presented SAL Auto to public and private foundations, corporations, government entities, and the community to position the organization as a valuable public outreach program
- Identified and applied for grant opportunities
- Developed and maintained relationships with existing and potential donor populations

### Co-founder and COO

Man Down, LLC | 2014 - Dec 2017

- Man Down, LLC invented, developed, produced, and sold fitness equipment
- Developed manufacturing partnerships and coordinated product manufacturing from conception to completion
- Developed and implemented the marketing strategy (social media, newsletters, on-site events)
- Performed all logistical aspects of the corporation
- Prepared and filed design and utility patents

### Senior Managing Scientist

Exponent, Inc | April 1998 - Jan 2015

- Exponent, Inc. is a scientific and engineering consulting firm
- Specialized in assessing risk to human health from exposure to hazardous substances in the workplace and environment
- Managed multi-million dollar projects for national and global multi-billion dollar corporations requiring teams of staff and experts across multiple disciplines including epidemiology, medical, toxicology, industrial hygiene, and environmental science involving asbestos, talc, VOCs, and hydrocarbons, both in-person and remotely
- Developed and implemented scientific strategy for expert testimony in civil and criminal litigation in state and federal court proceedings
- Converted abstract and complex data and information into cohesive and understandable formats for expert, client and stakeholder education and utilization
- Extensive experience working with federal, state, and local governmental regulatory agencies
- Clients included consumer products, energy, automotive, manufacturing, and mining companies
- Authored published scientific journal articles, technical reports, proposals, training materials, surveys, and presentations

## WORK EXPERIENCE (CONT.)

### Engineer

McLaren/Hart Environmental Engineering Corp | May 1996 - Mar 1998

- Performed Phase I and II Environmental Site Assessments
- Prepared feasibility studies for CERCLA/Superfund sites
- Developed lead and asbestos abatement specifications
- Prepared SARA Title III/EPCRA reports
- 40-hour HAZWOPER certification

### Technical Assistant to Director of Environmental Activities

T&N Industries, Inc. | June 1994 - Jan 1996

- Developed an Environmental, Health and Safety database that networked all North American plants operated by T&N
- Researched data for Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS)
- Created a database for preparation of MSDSs
- Provided assistance to plant environmental coordinators regarding regulatory and technical issues

## EDUCATION

### University of Michigan

BS, Civil/Environmental Engineering | 1993 - 1997

- Magna Cum Laude
- Tau Beta Pi
- Engineer-in-Training (EIT) certification

### edX

Corporate Sustainability and Circular Economy | 2020 - 2021

- Completed courses in:
- Circular Economy: An Introduction
- Sustainability in Everyday Life
- Sustainable Packaging in a Circular Economy
- Introduction to Corporate Sustainability, Social Innovation and Ethics
- Circular Fashion: Design, Science and Value in a Sustainable Clothing Industry
- Feeding a Hungry Planet: Agriculture, Nutrition and Sustainability

## VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

### Finance Coordinator

Las Mujeres de Tierra Bomba | Oct 2018 - Dec 2019

- Local volunteer project helped women from the island of Tierra Bomba, an impoverished island adjacent to Cartagena, Colombia, to learn a new skill, generate income, and empower them to make a better life for themselves and their families.

### Board Member

Serve A Little | Feb 2015 - Jan 2018

### Leadership Team

Redwood Covenant Church | 2009 - 2012



## TAB D Technical Proposal

- 1. Description of the services for which the Respondent is able to provide. Respondent must follow industry accepted practices for those same services they are able to provide in responding, please use the service categories identified in Exhibit B of this RFP.**

Ascend Nonprofit and Business Solutions (NBS) specializes in providing comprehensive grant management and consulting services. We have a strong understanding of the grant application process and leverage our extensive experience to help organizations increase grant funding and improve their capacity to deliver high-quality programs and services to their communities. Since our establishment in 2019, we have secured over \$175 million in client funding. Ascend NBS proposes to provide the following services based on our experience:

- **Develop Request for Application (RFA)-** Creating a comprehensive document that outlines the requirements, objectives, and criteria for potential applicants to submit proposals for a specific grant or funding opportunity.
- **Workflow for grant submission approval-** The systematic process that governs the review, evaluation, and decision-making steps involved in approving grant submissions, ensuring compliance with guidelines, and making informed funding decisions.
- **Grants.gov interpretation-** Comprehending and analyzing the terms, conditions, and guidelines outlined in Grants.gov, clarifying their meaning, and determining how they apply to a specific project or organization's eligibility and implementation.
- **Grant application writing and submission-** Preparing and submitting a proposal to a funding agency or organization to request financial support for a project or program. The grant proposal typically includes a detailed description of the project or program, the goals and objectives, the methodology, the budget, and the expected outcomes. Effective grant writing requires strong writing, research, budgeting, project management skills, and a deep understanding of the funder's priorities and requirements. Grant writing aims to convince the funder that the proposed project or program is aligned with their mission and funding priorities and that the applicant has the capacity and resources to implement the project and achieve the desired outcomes successfully.
- **Business process automation and activity review and tracking-** Implementing automated systems and tools to streamline and monitor various business processes, allowing for efficient workflow management, performance evaluation, and tracking of activities within an organization.
- **Receive, complete, and process grant application forms and data-** Handling incoming grant applications, ensuring all necessary information is accurately entered and organized for further evaluation and decision-making.
- **Panel review scorecard-** Creating a standardized evaluation tool used by experts or reviewers to assess and rate grant applications based on predetermined criteria, providing a quantitative or qualitative assessment of the proposals.
- **Track/Monitor eligibility, application, and award status-** Systematically monitor and document the progress of grant applicants throughout the process, including assessing their eligibility, tracking the status of their application, and monitoring the progress and status of awarded grants.
- **Create award documents-** Generating the necessary paperwork, contracts, or agreements that formalize granting funds or resources to a successful grant applicant, outlining the terms, conditions, and obligations associated with the awarded grant.

- **Activity and task tracking-** Monitoring and recording the progress, status, and completion of various activities and tasks within a project or workflow, enabling effective management, accountability, and identification of potential bottlenecks or delays.
- **Grant closeout checklist tracking-** Monitoring and documenting the completion of specific tasks and requirements outlined in a checklist to ensure that all necessary actions are taken during the final stages of a grant, ensuring compliance, financial reconciliation, and proper closure.
- **Disposition of records-** Managing records at the end of their lifecycle, including deciding whether to retain, transfer, archive, or dispose of records based on legal, regulatory, and operational requirements.
- **Grant management and data reporting review and recommendations-** Assessing the processes and systems in place for managing grants and reporting data, identifying areas for improvement, and providing suggestions and guidance to enhance efficiency, accuracy, and compliance in grant management and reporting practices.
- **Recommended training-** Identifying and suggesting specific learning and development opportunities deemed beneficial for individuals or teams to acquire new knowledge, skills, or competencies to enhance their performance or address specific organizational needs.
- **Grant Strategy-** Develop a plan to pursue funding opportunities that align with the organization's mission and goal. Reviewing the application guidelines and requirements for each funder to ensure the proposal meets all criteria and developing a solid project or program concept that addresses the funder's priorities and demonstrates the potential for impact. The process also involves creating a detailed budget that aligns with the funder's guidelines and accurately reflects the costs of your proposed project or program.
- **Grant Readiness-** Preparing organizations to compete successfully for grant funding by ensuring they have the necessary infrastructure, resources, and capacity to deliver on proposed projects.
- **Grant Research-** Exploring and analyzing potential funding opportunities from various public and private sources for specific projects or programs. The process involves identifying grantmakers, researching their grant programs and funding priorities, analyzing grant requirements, determining eligibility, and evaluating the proposal's competitiveness. The purpose of grant research is to identify and select the most appropriate grants to apply for based on the match between the funder's priorities and the applicant's needs and goals. Effective grant research requires skills, knowledge, and resources, including experience in searching databases, networking, reading guidelines, and interpreting grant language.
- **Grant Reviewer-** Our Founder and CEO has served as a reviewer for various entities, including the federal government, institutions of higher education, foundations, and corporations for 29 years.

## 2. Description of the Respondent's process for responding to an order for services.

Ascend NBS' process for responding to an order for services involves several steps to ensure a comprehensive and well-prepared response:

**Order Review:** Ascend NBS carefully examines the order, thoroughly reviewing the specifications, requirements, and deliverables outlined by the client. This step aims to understand the client's needs and expectations clearly.

**Internal Assessment:** Ascend NBS assesses its internal capabilities, resources, and expertise to determine if it can meet the order requirements effectively. This evaluation includes considering

available personnel, equipment, technology, and potential constraints or limitations. Ascend NBS has a team in place once the Purchase Order is issued.

**Proposal Development:** Based on the order specifications and the internal assessment, Ascend NBS develops a detailed quote or proposal. This quote/proposal outlines the approach and methodology for delivering the services, including a description of the proposed activities, timelines, milestones, and anticipated outcomes. It also highlights the unique value proposition and competitive advantages that Ascend NBS brings.

**Cost Estimation:** Ascend NBS prepares a comprehensive cost estimate for services. This includes determining the necessary resources, labor, materials, and other associated costs. The cost estimate is aligned with the scope of work and deliverables defined in the order.

**Timely Submission:** Ascend NBS ensures that the response is submitted within the specified deadline, considering any additional requirements such as formatting, document structure, or submission method outlined by the client. Attention to detail and adherence to the submission guidelines are critical to making a positive impression.

**Follow-up and Clarifications:** After submitting the response, Ascend NBS remains responsive to the client's inquiries or requests for clarifications. Promptly addressing any queries or concerns demonstrates commitment, professionalism, and a willingness to engage in further discussions if needed.

Throughout the process, Ascend NBS aims to clearly understand the order requirements, demonstrate the capability to deliver high-quality services and showcase its commitment to client satisfaction. By following this systematic approach, Ascend NBS increases the chances of providing an effective response that aligns with the client's expectations and positions itself favorably for potential selection.

### **3. Description of any automated systems the Respondent utilizes to facilitate fulfilling services under this RFP.**

When considering the automation of systems to facilitate the fulfillment of services under this RFP, Ascend NBS utilizes the following automated systems:

**Project Management Software:** Ascend NBS uses Monday.com, a comprehensive project management platform. This platform allows us to track and manage all aspects of the grant process efficiently. It helps streamline project planning, task assignment, progress tracking, and collaboration among team members, enhancing overall project efficiency.

**Customer Relationship Management (CRM) Software:** Adopting a CRM platform like Salesforce, HubSpot, or Zoho CRM enables effective management of client interactions, tracking of leads and opportunities, and organizing communication and documentation related to client engagements.

**Document Management System:** Ascend NBS uses Dropbox, a robust document management system that allows for centralized storage, version control, and secure sharing of project-related documents, ensuring easy access and collaboration among team members.

**Time Tracking Software:** Ascend NBS utilized Timesheets.com, a cloud-based time tracking and employee management software that simplifies capturing, managing, and reporting employee work hours and attendance data.



Financial Management Software: Ascend NBS uses QuickBooks, financial management software to streamline the management of project budgets, expenses, and invoicing, facilitating accurate financial tracking, reporting, and client billing processes.

Communication and Collaboration Tools: Ascend NBS leverages communication and collaboration tools like Slack, Zoom, and email to foster efficient and seamless communication among team members, clients, and stakeholders, facilitating real-time discussions, file sharing, and virtual meetings.

Data Analytics and Reporting Tools: Ascend NBS implements data analytics and reporting tools on Monday.com to enable Ascend NBS to track and analyze key performance indicators, project metrics, and grant outcomes, providing valuable insights for decision-making and reporting purposes.

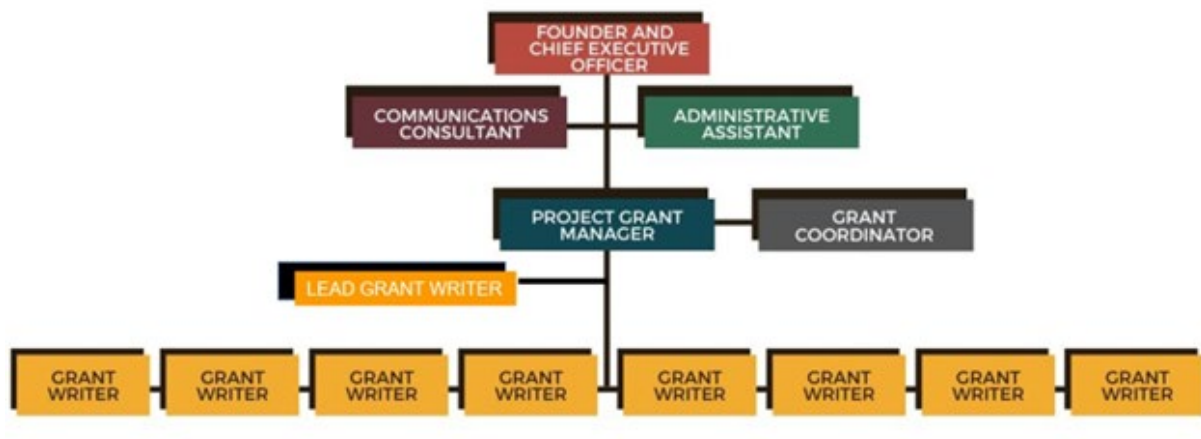
By leveraging these automated systems, Ascend NBS can enhance communication, streamline project management, improve document control, ensure financial accuracy, and derive actionable insights, ultimately enhancing the overall efficiency and effectiveness of fulfilling services under this RFP.

**4. Information showing the team's project understanding and approach for each work category being submitted; the project manager's experience with similar projects in the last five (5) years; similar project-related experience of the task leaders responsible for the major work categories in the last five (5) years; and other pertinent information. For each similar project referenced, identify either the project manager's or the task leader's specific role(s) and work contributed.**

Ascend NBS understands the scope of work outlined for grants management and consulting services as outlined by NCTCOG. Our team recognizes the vital role that NCTCOG plays as a voluntary association of local governments in the North Central Texas region, assisting in planning, cooperation, and coordination for regional development. Ascend NBS has a proven track record of successfully handling similar projects both in the past and currently, demonstrating their experience and expertise in various work categories, including developing Request for Applications (RFA), implementing a workflow for grant submission approval, interpreting Grants.gov guidelines, writing and submitting grant applications, automating business processes and tracking activities, efficiently processing grant application forms and data, utilizing panel review scorecards, monitoring eligibility, application, and award status, creating award documents, tracking activities and tasks, managing grant closeout checklists, managing the disposition of records, conducting grant management and data reporting reviews, and providing valuable recommendations for improvement, as well as offering recommended training opportunities.

Ascend NBS has a well-structured team where each member has specific responsibilities related to the work categories described above. The project organization chart below details the team assigned to NCTCOG and shows each member's chain of command and the title.

## ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



The roles within the team include:

**Project Manager:** The Project Manager oversees the overall project execution, coordinates tasks and timelines, ensures effective communication among team members, and monitors the progress and quality of deliverables across all work categories.

**Grant Manager:** The Grant Manager manages the grant lifecycle, including developing RFAs, interpreting grant guidelines, coordinating grant application writing and submission, monitoring eligibility and award status, and overseeing grant closeout procedures. They ensure compliance with grant requirements and foster strong relationships with funders.

**Grant Writers:** Grant Writers are skilled professionals who specialize in crafting compelling grant proposals. They work closely with the Grant Manager and team members to gather necessary information, develop comprehensive and persuasive grant applications, and adhere to funder guidelines, ensuring the proposals effectively communicate project goals, objectives, and expected outcomes.

**Administrative Assistants:** Admins support the team, assisting with tasks such as organizing documents, managing schedules, coordinating meetings, and facilitating communication within and with external stakeholders. They play a crucial role in maintaining the smooth operation of day-to-day activities.

**Grant Coordinator:** Grant Coordinator works closely with the Grant Manager and Grant Writers to track grant applications, manage documentation, and ensure the timely completion of required reports and deliverables. They are vital in maintaining accurate records and facilitating smooth communication between team members and funders.

**Contract Bookkeeper:** The Bookkeeper handles financial aspects of grant management, including tracking project budgets, managing expenses, reconciling accounts, preparing financial reports, and ensuring compliance with financial regulations and guidelines.

**HR Consultant:** The HR consultant provides expertise and guidance on human resources matters within Ascend NBS. They assist in areas such as talent acquisition, employee training and development, performance management, and ensuring compliance with HR policies and regulations.

With this well-defined team structure and the respective roles of each member, Ascend NBS ensures a collaborative and efficient approach to completing the work categories mentioned, ultimately leading to effective grant management and project delivery. Similar experience includes:

### Experience

Focus areas we have written and secured funding for include the following:

Small Business	Community Health	Workforce Development
Children and Youth	Mental Health	Community Improvements
Recidivism	Economic Development	Science
The Arts	Health and Human Services	Specialized Learning
Sustainable Projects	Capacity Building	Affordable Housing
Microlending	Community Development	Engineering
Financial Literacy	Community Development Block Grants	Census 2020
Disaster Relief	Parks and Recreation	Downtown/Community Revitalization
Education	Biomedical Devices	Education

### *Friedman & Associates for cities across the US*

Ascend NBS is a nationwide consultant for Friedman & Associates to many community development financial institutions (CDFIs). The CDFIs we work with provide financial services and support to underserved communities, such as low-income individuals, people of color, and rural communities. Ascend NBS works with CDFIs to help them achieve their goals by providing customized services, including grant planning and strategy, grant application development and writing, budgets, grant research, and development of grant management best practices. By leveraging our expertise, CDFIs effectively raised the necessary revenue to serve their communities and promote economic development. The CDFIs Ascend NBS works with are in the sectors of small business development, cooperatives for food and housing, and affordable housing. This, in turn, helps create jobs, increase economic activity, provide affordable housing, and build wealth in these communities. CDFIs provide services beyond traditional financial services, such as technical assistance, financial education, and other community-based programs, which further support community development—secured **\$6.9 million** in funding since 2022.

### *New Earth for Los Angeles County and Culver City*

New Earth is a nonprofit organization committed to significantly reducing youth recidivism and re-incarceration by providing education, arts, jobs, internships, counseling, mentorship, post-release reentry services, youth diversion, and wraparound support services to system-involved youth annually in Los Angeles County in collaboration with LA County and the Culver City Police Department. They offer these programs on-site at Los Angeles County schools, probation facilities, and the New Earth Campus in Culver City, California. Ascend NBS provides grant planning and strategy, grant application development and writing, budgets and budget narratives, identification of relevant grant opportunities, review and editing proposals written by New Earth's staff, manages multiple applications simultaneously, and develops grants management best practices for New Earth to secure contracts and grants to serve Los Angeles County and Culver City. Funding supports New Earth's transformative programs that reduce barriers to employment for justice and system-impacted youth and young adults in Los Angeles County, break poverty cycles, and reduce crime for communities. Ascend NBS has helped New Earth secure **\$1.9 million** in contracts and grant funding since 2022.

### *Community First Health Plans for Bexar County*

For nearly 30 years, Community First has provided evidence-based, person-centered care for STAR, CHIP, and STAR Kids Members in the Bexar County Service Delivery Area. Ascend NBS services included grant planning and strategy, grant application review, development, and writing for Community First to deliver high-quality integrated care to over 205,000 individuals in Bexar County. Their model enables them to identify low, moderate, and high-risk Members and address their healthcare needs. Through their collaborative approach with local government, Community First is driving optimal outcomes and contributing to a healthier community. Ascend NBS helped Community First secure a **\$3 million** contract from the State of Texas for the Bexar County service area in 2023.

### *LiftFund for the City of San Antonio and Bexar County:*

Services included grant planning and strategy, grant application development and writing, grant monitoring and reporting, development of benefit-cost analysis, internal training materials development, identification of relevant grant opportunities, and development of grants management best practices for Community Development Block Grants (CDBG); Economic recovery, disaster relief grant funding for acts of God and COVID; and Workforce and Economic Development by way of the Small Business Administration to support small business and entrepreneurs. These grants benefit low and moderate-income individuals and neighborhoods requiring infrastructure and economic and community development. The funds were used for various community development purposes, such as improving housing and public facilities, providing economic development opportunities, and enhancing public services. This work occurred over 4.5 years, raising \$35 million.

### *Waterloo Greenway Conservancy:*

Waterloo Greenway is a 1.5-mile-long urban park located in downtown Austin, Texas. Ascend NBS provided grant planning and strategy, grant application development and writing, and identifying relevant grant opportunities to provide recreational opportunities for visitors, improve water quality, and enhance the natural environment for various projects within the park. The park includes walking and biking trails, public art installations, playgrounds, performance spaces, and landscaped areas. We raised \$254,000 over six (6) months.

## **5. Description of the team's Quality Assurance/Quality Control procedures including what is standard practice for all stages of the project.**

At Ascend NBS, we prioritize quality assurance and quality control throughout all stages of the project lifecycle. Our dedicated team of experts collaborates to ensure the highest level of excellence in grant research and writing services. Here is an overview of our procedures:

- **Structured Processes and Workflows:** Our Grants Manager oversees the implementation of structured processes and workflows using monday.com and standard operating procedures. They ensure the team members follow the established guidelines and adhere to the defined project milestones.
- **Internal Review and Editing:** Our Lead Grant Writer plays a crucial role in the internal review and editing. Conducting a thorough review of the content for accuracy, clarity, and compliance with grant requirements and collaborating with the Grant Coordinator and other team members to address any identified issues or improvements.
- **Compliance Check:** Our team collectively ensures compliance with the regulations and guidelines of various funding agencies. The Grants Manager, Lead Grant Writer, and Grant Coordinator work closely to conduct comprehensive checks and verify that all necessary information is included and all eligibility criteria are met.

- **Proofreading and Formatting:** Our team includes skilled proofreaders who carefully review all documents for grammatical and typographical errors. They collaborate with the Lead Grant Writer and the Grant Coordinator to ensure the final deliverables are error-free and meet professional formatting standards.
- **Team Collaboration and Peer Review:** Collaboration and peer review are essential to our quality assurance process. Our team members actively communicate and collaborate throughout the project. They provide valuable feedback to each other, conduct peer reviews, and share insights to enhance the quality of the deliverables.
- **Client Review and Approval:** Our team fosters a collaborative relationship with our clients. During the review process, our clients can provide feedback, suggest revisions, and ensure the alignment of the final documents with their vision and objectives. The Grants Manager and Lead Grant Writer actively engage with clients to address their feedback and incorporate necessary changes.
- **Continuous Professional Development:** The entire team at Ascend NBS is committed to continuous professional development. Each team member stays updated on the grant writing field's latest best practices, trends, and regulations. This ongoing learning ensures that our services are of the highest quality and reflect industry standards.

By leveraging our team members' expertise and collaborative efforts, Ascend NBS maintains a consistent and robust approach to delivering exceptional grant research and writing services. We are dedicated to upholding the highest quality, accuracy, and compliance standards throughout the project lifecycle.

**6. Any assumptions made in responding to the requirements.**

No assumptions were made in responding to the requirements of the RFP.

**7. Any exceptions to the requirements. If there are no exceptions, Respondent shall explicitly state that no exceptions are taken to any part of this RFP. Offer must be in compliance with stated term and conditions unless NCTCOG accepts identified exceptions of Ascend NBS.**

Ascend NBS takes no exceptions to any part of this RFP. The offer fully complies with the stated terms and conditions unless NCTCOG accepts any exceptions.

**8. Any special features or services the Respondent is proposing in response to the requirements that are included within the pricing provided.**

In response to the requirements outlined, we are proposing the following special features and services that are included in the pricing provided:

- **Customized Solution:** We prepare the organization by offering a customized solution to address NCTCOG's project requirements. We will work closely with your team to design and develop a solution that aligns with your objectives and maximizes the value delivered.
- **Project Management:** Our pricing includes dedicated project management services to ensure the smooth execution and timely delivery of the proposed solution. Our experienced project manager, Dr. Arlene Siller, will oversee all aspects of the project, including planning, resource allocation, coordination, and communication. Arlene will act as the main point of contact, informing you of project progress and addressing any concerns or issues.
- **Training and Support:** As part of our proposal, we offer comprehensive training programs to equip your staff and stakeholders with the necessary skills and knowledge for the grant application process.



- **Grant and bid application and portal evaluation:** This evaluation involves reviewing funding agency's applications to ensure ease of use and equity for respondents, assessing the technical use of the portal and application/bid itself, assessing the application/bid process, selecting qualified reviewers or panelists, utilizing and training on a standardized scoring system, conducting meetings for discussions and clarification, making funding decisions based on evaluations, providing feedback to applicants, and assessing grant and bid portals for user-friendliness, functionality, and security. These processes enable fair competition, transparency, and efficient management of applications, ensuring the allocation of funds or contracts to deserving applicants aligned with the funder's objectives.

We believe these unique features and services, included in the provided pricing, will meet your requirements and help prepare your organization for success.

## TAB E REFERENCES

### 1. Children's Bereavement Center of South Texas

<b>Reference</b>	Kristina Hernandez
<b>Title</b>	Development Director
<b>Email Address</b>	<a href="mailto:khernandez@cbcst.org">khernandez@cbcst.org</a>
<b>Telephone</b>	210-736-4847 (ext. 233)
<b>Project Description</b>	Assessed funding needs of the Children's Bereavement Center of South Texas and identified priority programs and initiatives that required additional funding. Researched and prepared executive summaries of new government funding prospects to explore potential sources of financial support. Generated compelling proposals and supporting documents in response to funding opportunities, ensuring thorough research, well-written content, and proper documentation. Leveraged these efforts to generate revenue for programs and services, enabling the center to provide vital support to children and families in need.

### 2. Capital IDEA Houston

<b>Reference</b>	Michelle Paul
<b>Title</b>	Executive Director
<b>Email Address</b>	<a href="mailto:mpaul@capitalideahouston.org">mpaul@capitalideahouston.org</a>
<b>Telephone</b>	832-280-5343
<b>Project Description</b>	Collaborated with key stakeholders to evaluate the validity of existing funding priority areas, identifying any necessary changes and new priority areas for funding. Conducted thorough research to uncover potential grant resources, utilizing research tools to identify funding opportunities and new program areas aligned with Capital Idea Houston's priorities. Generated proposals and supporting documents in response to funding opportunities, ensuring the submission of well-researched, well-written, well-documented proposals to generate revenue for programs and services. Additionally, Ascend NBS provided comprehensive reports to government funders, showcasing the impact and outcomes of funded initiatives.

### 3. South Sudanese Foundation

<b>Reference</b>	Matuor Alier
<b>Title</b>	Executive Director
<b>Email Address</b>	<a href="mailto:matuor20@gmail.com">matuor20@gmail.com</a>

<b>Telephone</b>	484-366-3285
<b>Project Description</b>	Analyzed the funding requirements of the South Sudanese Foundation's various departments and identified key priority areas for funding. Conducted in-depth research into potential grant resources, including federal, state, and foundation opportunities, using research tools to identify funding opportunities and new program areas that matched institutional priorities. Provided comprehensive grant proposal writing services, crafting compelling narratives and persuasive proposals to secure additional funding. Actively disseminated program information to ensure program clarification and grant compliance. Developed and coordinated presentations for grant meetings and trainings, effectively communicating grant objectives, goals, activities, and action plans to grant owners and stakeholders. Maintained open lines of communication between grant owners, departments, and other stakeholders, fostering collaboration and successful grant implementation.

## Tab F –Proposal Pricing

We charge hourly for our services and work with clients on a budget not to exceed a specific dollar amount.

**Hourly Rate Schedule:** For agreements based on actual hours expended, the following hourly rates shall apply:

<i>Grant Training and Consulting</i>	<i>\$270.00</i>
<i>Program/Project Manager</i>	<i>\$185.00</i>
<i>Grant Manager</i>	<i>\$170.00</i>
<i>Lead Grant Writer</i>	<i>\$155.00</i>
<i>Grant Coordinator</i>	<i>\$140.00</i>
<i>Grant Writers</i>	<i>\$135.00</i>
<i>Virtual Assistant</i>	<i>\$70.00</i>

Ascend NBS uses Monday.com and timesheets.com to track team members' time and expenses for each grant project. These platforms are designed to streamline workflow, tasks, schedules, billing, and invoicing processes and manage project costs and budgets. Team members log their time and expenses for each task they work on. The platforms allow users to track their time in increments of tenths an hour or quarter. Using QuickBooks Online, Ascend NBS will provide an invoice to the client at the end of the billing period. Ascend NBS shall submit an invoice every two weeks of each invoice period or at a frequency agreed to by both parties, with a 30-day net payment term. Ascend NBS recognizes the significance of complying with the established invoicing processes, as stipulated by relevant federal and state regulations governing grant programs.

The itemized invoice will include the following:

- The service performed by the Contractor.
- Indicate the labor cost (number of hours) allocated to each task.
- Show the cumulative cost for all tasks performed to date.
- Provide any additional information and data requested by the client to evaluate or process Ascend NBS' claim properly.

In addition to the invoice, Ascend NBS will submit Form W-9 after signing the contract. Payment may be remitted by electronic fund transfer/deposit, ACH, Bill.com, or other payment processing software made payable to Ascend NBS.

To effectively manage federal and local grants, Ascend NBS has a solid infrastructure, including experienced staff, strong project management systems, and robust compliance and reporting procedures.

Firstly, the team has extensive knowledge and experience in the grant-making process, including understanding federal and local regulations, guidelines, and requirements. This includes expertise in identifying and researching grant opportunities, developing grant proposals, managing timelines and budgets, complying with reporting and compliance requirements, and maintaining grant files and databases.

Secondly, the team has a robust project management system, including processes for setting project goals and objectives, developing timelines and budgets, tracking progress, and communicating with stakeholders. This will ensure that projects are completed on time, on budget, and meet the needs of the grant funder.

Thirdly, the team has robust compliance and reporting procedures to ensure we meet the grant funder's requirements. This includes maintaining accurate records, providing timely and accurate reports, and complying with all federal and local regulations. Ascend NBS is committed to maintaining adequate records to justify all charges, expenses, and costs incurred in estimating and performing the work outlined in this RFP. We will diligently ensure that these records are kept for a minimum of three (3) years following the completion of the later of the final grant closeout or final audit of any project work conducted under the resulting contract.

As part of our commitment to transparency and accountability, Ascend NBS will provide the public entity with access to all records, documents, and information collected and/or maintained by us or any other involved parties during the administration of the agreement.

To effectively manage federal and local grants, Ascend NBS has a well-established infrastructure, experienced staff, and a deep understanding of the grant-making process, compliance and reporting requirements, and the specific requirements of different grant programs.

## Tab G REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS

- ✓ Attachment I: Instructions for Proposals Compliance and Submittal
- ✓ Attachment II: Certification of Offeror
- ✓ Attachment III: Certification Regarding Debarment
- ✓ Attachment IV: Restrictions on Lobbying
- ✓ Attachment V: Drug-Free Workplace Certification
- ✓ Attachment VI: Certification Regarding Disclosure of Conflict of Interest
- ✓ Attachment VII: Certification of Fair Business Practices
- ✓ Attachment VIII: Certification of Good Standing Texas Corporate Franchise Tax Certification
- ✓ Attachment IX: Historically Underutilized Businesses, Minority or Women-Owned Or Disadvantaged Business Enterprises
- ✓ Attachment X: Attestation of Contracts Nullifying Activity
- ✓ Exhibit A: Service Area Designation Forms
- ✓ Exhibit B: Description of Desired Services for Proposed Pricing
- ✓ Exhibit C: Service Questionnaire
- ~~✓ Exhibit D: TXShare Pricing Proposal Instructions Not applicable~~
- ✓ Respondent recognizes that all proposals must be submitted electronically through Public Purchase by the RFP due date and time. All other forms of submissions will be deemed nonresponsive and will not be opened or considered.
- ✓ Discrimination Against Firearms Entities or Firearms Trade Associations
- ✓ Boycotting of Certain Energy Companies



**ATTACHMENT I:  
INSTRUCTIONS FOR PROPOSALS COMPLIANCE AND SUBMITTAL**

**Compliance with the Solicitation**

Submissions must be in strict compliance with this solicitation. Failure to comply with all provisions of the solicitation may result in disqualification.

**Acknowledgment of Insurance Requirements**

By signing its submission, Offeror acknowledges that it has read and understands the insurance requirements for the submission. Offeror also understands that the evidence of required insurance may be requested to be submitted within ten (10) working days following notification of its offer being accepted; otherwise, NCTCOG may rescind its acceptance of the Offeror's proposals. The insurance requirements are outlined in Section 6.04.

Name of Organization/Contractor(s):

Ascend Nonprofit and Business Solutions LLC

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Signature of Authorized Representative:



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Date: 06/08/2023

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**ATTACHMENT II:  
CERTIFICATIONS OF OFFEROR**

Name of Organization/Contractor(s):

Ascend Nonprofit and Business Solutions LLC

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Signature of Authorized Representative:



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Date: 06/08/2023

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NOT APPLICABLE

Question #2

Attachment II does not provide any instructions - what is desired/required for completion of this form?

Jun 1, 2023 10:43:44 AM CDT

Answers

Disregard references to attachment II. There is no attachment II.

Jun 6, 2023 10:01:50 PM CDT

**ATTACHMENT III:  
CERTIFICATION REGARDING DEBARMENT, SUSPENSION AND OTHER RESPONSIBILITY MATTERS**

This certification is required by the Federal Regulations Implementing Executive Order 12549, Debarment and Suspension, 45 CFR Part 93, Government-wide Debarment and Suspension, for the Department of Agriculture (7 CFR Part 3017), Department of Labor (29 CFR Part 98), Department of Education (34 CFR Parts 85, 668, 682), Department of Health and Human Services (45 CFR Part 76).

The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that both it and its principals:

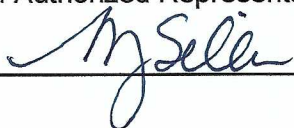
1. Are not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by any federal department or agency;
2. Have not within a three-year period preceding this contract been convicted of or had a civil judgment rendered against them for commission of fraud or a criminal offense in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a public (Federal, State, or Local) transaction or contract under a public transaction, violation of federal or State antitrust statutes or commission of embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification, or destruction of records, making false Proposals, or receiving stolen property;
3. Are not presently indicated for or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a government entity with commission of any of the offense enumerated in Paragraph (2) of this certification; and,
4. Have not within a three-year period preceding this contract had one or more public transactions terminated for cause or default.

Where the prospective recipient of federal assistance funds is unable to certify to any of the qualifications in this certification, such prospective recipient shall attach an explanation to this certification form.

Name of Organization/Contractor(s):

Ascend Nonprofit and Business Solutions LLC

Signature of Authorized Representative:



Date: 06/08/2023



**ATTACHMENT IV:  
RESTRICTIONS ON LOBBYING**

Section 319 of Public Law 101-121 prohibits recipients of federal contracts, grants, and loans exceeding \$100,000 at any tier under a federal contract from using appropriated funds for lobbying the Executive or Legislative Branches of the federal government in connection with a specific contract, grant, or loan. Section 319 also requires each person who requests or receives a federal contract or grant in excess of \$100,000 to disclose lobbying.

No appropriated funds may be expended by the recipient of a federal contract, loan, or cooperative agreement to pay any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any federal executive department or agency as well as any independent regulatory commission or government corporation, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with any of the following covered federal actions: the awarding of any federal contract, the making of any federal grant, the making of any federal loan the entering into of any cooperative agreement and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.

As a recipient of a federal grant exceeding \$100,000, NCTCOG requires its subcontractors of that grant to file a certification, set forth in Appendix B.1, that neither the agency nor its employees have made, or will make, any payment prohibited by the preceding paragraph.

Subcontractors are also required to file with NCTCOG a disclosure form, set forth in Appendix B.2, if the subcontractor or its employees have made or have agreed to make any payment using non-appropriated funds (to include profits from any federal action), which would be prohibited if paid for with appropriated funds.

**LOBBYING CERTIFICATION  
FOR CONTRACTS, GRANTS, LOANS, AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS**

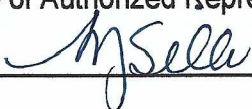
The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge or belief, that:

1. No federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an officer or employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any federal contract, the making of any federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative Contract, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification or any federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative contract; and
2. If any funds other than federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this federal contract, grant, loan, and or cooperative contract, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form – LLL, “Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying”, in accordance with the instructions.
3. The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all sub-awards at all tiers and that all sub-recipients shall certify accordingly.

Name of Organization/Contractor(s):

Ascend Nonprofit and Business Solutions LLC

Signature of Authorized Representative:



Date: 06/08/2023

**ATTACHMENT V:  
DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE CERTIFICATION**

The Ascend Nonprofit and Business Solutions LLC (company name) will provide a Drug Free Work Place in compliance with the Drug Free Work Place Act of 1988. The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession or use of a controlled substance is prohibited on the premises of the Ascend Nonprofit and Business Solutions LLC (company name) or any of its facilities. Any employee who violates this prohibition will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination. All employees, as a condition of employment, will comply with this policy.

**CERTIFICATION REGARDING DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE**

This certification is required by the Federal Regulations Implementing Sections 5151-5160 of the Drug-Free Workplace Act, 41 U.S.C. 701, for the Department of Agriculture (7 CFR Part 3017), Department of Labor (29 CFR Part 98), Department of Education (34 CFR Parts 85, 668 and 682), Department of Health and Human Services (45 CFR Part 76).

The undersigned subcontractor certifies it will provide a drug-free workplace by:

Publishing a policy Proposal notifying employees that the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession or use of a controlled substance is prohibited in the workplace and specifying the consequences of any such action by an employee;

Establishing an ongoing drug-free awareness program to inform employees of the dangers of drug abuse in the workplace, the subcontractor's policy of maintaining a drug-free workplace, the availability of counseling, rehabilitation and employee assistance programs, and the penalties that may be imposed on employees for drug violations in the workplace;

Providing each employee with a copy of the subcontractor's policy Proposal;

Notifying the employees in the subcontractor's policy Proposal that as a condition of employment under this subcontract, employees shall abide by the terms of the policy Proposal and notifying the subcontractor in writing within five days after any conviction for a violation by the employee of a criminal drug abuse statute in the workplace;

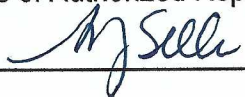
Notifying the Board within ten (10) days of the subcontractor's receipt of a notice of a conviction of any employee; and,

Taking appropriate personnel action against an employee convicted of violating a criminal drug statute or requires such employee to participate in a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program.

Name of Organization/Contractor(s):

Ascend Nonprofit and Business Solutions LLC

Signature of Authorized Representative:



Date: 06/08/2023



**ATTACHMENT VI:  
CERTIFICATION REGARDING DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

The undersigned certifies that, to the best of his or her knowledge or belief, that:

"No employee of the contractor, no member of the contractor's governing board or body, and no person who exercises any functions or responsibilities in the review or approval of the undertaking or carrying out of this contract shall participate in any decision relating to this contract which affects his/her personal pecuniary interest.

Executives and employees of contractor shall be particularly aware of the varying degrees of influence that can be exerted by personal friends and associates and, in administering the contract, shall exercise due diligence to avoid situations which give rise to an assertion that favorable treatment is being granted to friends and associates. When it is in the public interest for the contractor to conduct business with a friend or associate of an executive or employee of the contractor, an elected official in the area or a member of the North Central Texas Council of Governments, a permanent record of the transaction shall be retained.

Any executive or employee of the contractor, an elected official in the area or a member of the NCTCOG, shall not solicit or accept money or any other consideration from a third person, for the performance of an act reimbursed in whole or part by contractor or Department. Supplies, tools, materials, equipment or services purchased with contract funds shall be used solely for purposes allowed under this contract. No member of the NCTCOG shall cast a vote on the provision of services by that member (or any organization which that member represents) or vote on any matter which would provide a direct or indirect financial benefit to the member or any business or organization which the member directly represents".

No officer, employee or paid consultant of the contractor is a member of the NCTCOG.

No officer, manager or paid consultant of the contractor is married to a member of the NCTCOG.

No member of NCTCOG directly owns, controls or has interest in the contractor.

The contractor has disclosed any interest, fact, or circumstance that does or may present a potential conflict of interest.

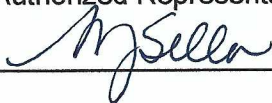
No member of the NCTCOG receives compensation from the contractor for lobbying activities as defined in Chapter 305 of the Texas Government Code.

Should the contractor fail to abide by the foregoing covenants and affirmations regarding conflict of interest, the contractor shall not be entitled to the recovery of any costs or expenses incurred in relation to the contract and shall immediately refund to the North Central Texas Council of Governments any fees or expenses that may have been paid under this contract and shall further be liable for any other costs incurred or damages sustained by the NCTCOG as it relates to this contract.

Name of Organization/Contractor(s):

Ascend Nonprofit and Business Solutions LLC

Signature of Authorized Representative:



Date: 06/08/2023



**ATTACHMENT VII:  
CERTIFICATION OF FAIR BUSINESS PRACTICES**

That the submitter has not been found guilty of unfair business practices in a judicial or state agency administrative proceeding during the preceding year. The submitter further affirms that no officer of the submitter has served as an officer of any company found guilty of unfair business practices in a judicial or state agency administrative during the preceding year.

Name of Organization/Contractor(s):

Ascend Nonprofit and Business Solutions LLC

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Signature of Authorized Representative:



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Date: 06/08/2023

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**ATTACHMENT VIII:  
CERTIFICATION OF GOOD STANDING  
TEXAS CORPORATE FRANCHISE TAX CERTIFICATION**

Pursuant to Article 2.45, Texas Business Corporation Act, state agencies may not contract with for profit corporations that are delinquent in making state franchise tax payments. The following certification that the corporation entering into this offer is current in its franchise taxes must be signed by the individual authorized on Form 2031, Corporate Board of Directors Resolution, to sign the contract for the corporation.

The undersigned authorized representative of the corporation making the offer herein certified that the following indicated Proposal is true and correct and that the undersigned understands that making a false Proposal is a material breach of contract and is grounds for contract cancellation.

Indicate the certification that applies to your corporation:

- X                The Corporation is a for-profit corporation and certifies that it is not delinquent in its franchise tax payments to the State of Texas.
- The Corporation is a non-profit corporation or is otherwise not subject to payment of franchise taxes to the State of Texas.


Type of Business (if not corporation):      ☐      Sole Proprietor

☐      Partnership

☐      Other

Pursuant to Article 2.45, Texas Business Corporation Act, the North Central Texas Council of Governments reserves the right to request information regarding state franchise tax payments.

Arlene Siller Ph.D. Founder & CEO Ascend Nonprofit and Business Solutions LLC  
(Printed/Typed Name and Title of Authorized Representative)

  
Signature

Date: 06/08/2023

**ATTACHMENT IX:  
HISTORICALLY UNDERUTILIZED BUSINESSES, MINORITY OR WOMEN-OWNED OR DISADVANTAGED  
BUSINESS ENTERPRISES**

Historically Underutilized Businesses (HUBs), minority or women-owned or disadvantaged businesses enterprises (M/W/DBE) are encouraged to participate in the solicitation process. Representatives from HUB companies should identify themselves and submit a copy of their certification.

NCTCOG recognizes the certifications of both the State of Texas Program and the North Central Texas Regional Certification Agency. Companies seeking information concerning HUB certification are urged to contact:

State of Texas HUB Program  
Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts  
Lyndon B. Johnson State Office Building  
111 East 17th Street  
Austin, Texas 78774  
(512) 463-6958  
<http://www.window.state.tx.us/procurement/prog/hub/>

Local businesses seeking M/W/DBE certification should contact:


North Central Texas Regional Certification Agency  
624 Six Flags Drive, Suite 100  
Arlington, TX 76011  
(817) 640-0606  
<http://www.nctrca.org/certification.html>

**Submitter must include a copy of its minority certification documentation as part of this solicitation.**  
If your company is already certified, attach a copy of your certification to this form and return with your proposal.

**Indicate all that apply:**

☒ Minority-Owned Business Enterprise  
☒ Women-Owned Business Enterprise  
☐ Disadvantaged Business Enterprise

**ATTEST TO Attachments of Certification:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Authorized Signature

Arlene Siller Ph.D.

06/08/2023

Typed Name

Date

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 9 day of June (month), 2023 in

San Antonio (city), Betar (county), Texas (state).

Notary Public in and for Betar (County),

State of Texas Commission expires: 07-06-2025

SEAL





# South Central Texas Regional Certification Agency of Bexar County, Texas hereby duly affirms that:

## Ascend Nonprofit & Business Solutions, LLC

has successfully met the established requirements of SCTRCA's Business Enterprise Certification Program to be  
certified as a

### \*ESBE HABE MBE SBE WBE

#### Certified NAICS Codes

NAICS 541611: ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGEMENT AND GENERAL MANAGEMENT CONSULTING SERVICES  
NAICS 541611: STRATEGIC PLANNING CONSULTING SERVICES  
NAICS 541690: OTHER SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL CONSULTING SERVICES  
NAICS 561410: DOCUMENT PREPARATION SERVICES  
NAICS 611430: PROFESSIONAL AND MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT TRAINING  
NAICS 711510: INDEPENDENT TECHNICAL WRITERS



Certification Number: 223014763

Effective Date: January 23, 2023

Expiration Date: January 31, 2025

Sandra Ramos  
Executive Director

Note: This certificate is the property of the South Central Texas Regional Certification Agency and may be revoked should the above named firm graduate from or fails to comply with SCTRCA's Business Enterprise Program. A Certification Renewal Application is required every two years.

# Texas Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) Certificate



Certificate/VID Number: 1834087419900  
Approval Date: January 23, 2023  
Scheduled Expiration Date: January 31, 2025

In accordance with the Memorandum of Agreement between the  
SOUTH CENTRAL TEXAS REGIONAL CERTIFICATION AGENCY (SCTRCA)  
and the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts (CPA), the CPA hereby certifies that

## Ascend Nonprofit & Business Solutions, LLC

has successfully met the established requirements of the State of Texas Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) Program to be recognized as a HUB. This certificate printed **January 23, 2023**, supersedes any registration and certificate previously issued by the HUB Program. If there are any changes regarding the information (i.e., business structure, ownership, day-to-day management, operational control, addresses, phone and fax numbers or authorized signatures) provided in the submission of the business; application for registration/certification into SCTRCA's program, you must immediately (within 30 days of such changes) notify SCTRCA's program in writing. The CPA reserves the right to conduct a compliance review at any time to confirm HUB eligibility. HUB certification may be suspended or revoked upon findings of ineligibility. If your firm ceases to remain certified in SCTRCA's program, you must apply and become certified through the State of Texas HUB program to maintain your HUB certification.

*Statewide HUB Program  
Statewide Procurement Division*

Note: In order for State agencies and institutions of higher education (universities) to be credited for utilizing this business as a HUB, they must award payment under the Certificate/VID Number identified above. Agencies, universities and prime contractors are encouraged to verify the company's HUB certification prior to issuing a notice of award by accessing the Internet (<https://mycpa.cpa.state.tx.us/tpasscmbisearch/index.jsp>) or by contacting the HUB Program at **512-463-5872** or toll-free in Texas at **1-888-863-5881**.



**ATTACHMENT X  
ATTESTATION OF CONTRACTS NULLIFYING ACTIVITY**

The following provisions are mandated by Federal and/or State of Texas law. Failure to certify to the following will result in disqualification of consideration for contract. Entities or agencies that are not able to comply with the following will be ineligible for consideration of contract award.

**PROHIBITED TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND VIDEO SURVEILLANCE SERVICES OR EQUIPMENT CERTIFICATION**

This Contract is subject to the Public Law 115-232, Section 889, and 2 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 200, including §200.216 and §200.471, for prohibition on certain telecommunications and video surveillance or equipment.

Public Law 115-232, Section 889, identifies that restricted telecommunications and video surveillance equipment or services (e.g. phones, internet, video surveillance, cloud servers) include the following:

- A) Telecommunications equipment that is produced by Huawei Technologies Company or ZTE Corporation (or any subsidiary or affiliates of such entities).
- B) Video surveillance and telecommunications equipment produced by Hytera Communications Corporations, Hangzhou Hikvision Digital Technology Company, or Dahua Technology Company (or any subsidiary or affiliates of such entities).
- C) Telecommunications or video surveillance services used by such entities or using such equipment.
- D) Telecommunications or video surveillance equipment or services produced or provided by an entity that the Secretary of Defense, Director of the National Intelligence, or the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation reasonably believes to be an entity owned or controlled by the government of a covered foreign country.

The entity identified below, through its authorized representative, hereby certifies that no funds under this Contract will be obligated or expended to procure or obtain telecommunication or video surveillance services or equipment or systems that use covered telecommunications equipment or services as a substantial or essential component of any system, or as a critical technology as part of any system prohibited by 2 CFR §200.216 and §200.471, or applicable provisions in Public Law 115-232 Section 889.

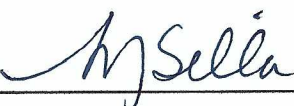
☒ The Contractor or Subrecipient hereby certifies that it does comply with the requirements of 2 CFR §200.216 and §200.471, or applicable regulations in Public Law 115-232 Section 889.

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED  
PERSON:

NAME OF AUTHORIZED PERSON:

NAME OF COMPANY:

DATE:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Arlene Siller Ph.D.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Ascend Nonprofit and Business Solutions LLC  
\_\_\_\_\_  
06/08/2023  
\_\_\_\_\_

-OR-



**EXHIBIT A**  
**Service Area Designation Forms**

Texas Service Area Designation or Identification			
<b>Respondent Name:</b>	Ascend Nonprofit & Business Solutions LLC		
<b>Notes:</b>	<b>Indicate in the appropriate box whether you are proposing to service the entire State of Texas</b>		
	<b>Will service the entire State of Texas</b> YES	Will not service the entire State of Texas	
	If you are not proposing to service the entire State of Texas, designate on the form below the regions that you are proposing to provide goods and/or services to. By designating a region or regions, you are certifying that you are willing and able to provide the proposed goods and services.		
<b>Item</b>	<b>Region</b>	<b>Metropolitan Statistical Areas</b>	<b>Will You Serve This Designated Service Area?</b>
1.	North Central Texas	16 counties in the Dallas-Fort Worth Metropolitan area	
2.	High Plains	Amarillo Lubbock	
3.	Northwest	Abilene Wichita Falls	
4.	Upper East	Longview Texarkana, TX-AR Metro Area Tyler	
5.	Southeast	Beaumont-Port Arthur	
6.	Gulf Coast	Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land	
7.	Central Texas	College Station-Bryan Killeen-Temple Waco	
8.	Capital Texas	Austin-Round Rock	
9.	Alamo	San Antonio-New Braunfels Victoria	
10.	South Texas	Brownsville-Harlingen Corpus Christi Laredo McAllen-Edinburg-Mission	
11.	West Texas	Midland Odessa San Angelo	
12.	Upper Rio Grande	El Paso	

Nationwide Service Area Designation or Identification Form			
<b>Respondent Name:</b>	Ascend Nonprofit & Business Solutions LLC		
<b>Notes:</b>	Indicate in the appropriate box whether you are proposing to provide service to all Fifty (50) States.		
	Will service all Fifty (50) States      yes		Will not service Fifty (50) States
	<p>If you are not proposing to service to all Fifty (50) States, then designate on the form below the States that you will provide service to. By designating a State or States, you are certifying that you are willing and able to provide the proposed goods and services in those States.</p> <p>If you are only proposing to service a specific region, metropolitan statistical area (MSA), or city in a State, then indicate as such in the appropriate column box.</p>		
<b>Item</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Region/MSA/City</b>	<b>Designated as a Service Area</b>
1.	Alabama		
2.	Alaska		
3.	Arizona		
4.	Arkansas		
5.	California		
6.	Colorado		
7.	Connecticut		
8.	Delaware		
9.	Florida		
10.	Georgia		
11.	Hawaii		
12.	Idaho		
13.	Illinois		
14.	Indiana		
15.	Iowa		
16.	Kansas		
17.	Kentucky		
18.	Louisiana		
19.	Maine		

20.	Maryland		
21.	Massachusetts		
22.	Michigan		
23.	Minnesota		
24.	Mississippi		
25.	Missouri		
26.	Montana		
27.	Nebraska		
28.	Nevada		
29.	New Hampshire		
30.	New Jersey		
31.	New Mexico		
32.	New York		
33.	North Carolina		
34.	North Dakota		
35.	Ohio		
36.	Oregon		
37.	Oklahoma		
38.	Pennsylvania		
39.	Rhode Island		
40.	South Carolina		
41.	South Dakota		
42.	Tennessee		
43.	Texas		
44.	Utah		
45.	Vermont		
46.	Virginia		
47.	Washington		
48.	West Virginia		
49.	Wisconsin		
50.	Wyoming		



**EXHIBIT B**  
**Description of Desired Services to be Priced**

Responses to this Exhibit should be addressed in Tab F.

Respondents should furnish a price proposal that specifies pricing at an hourly rate for the various services they propose to offer. This pricing shall be available for the same rate at any location in the United States unless designated otherwise in your proposed pricing.

*Examples of position pricing proposal format:*

<u>Position</u>	<u>Hourly Rate</u>
<i>Project Executive</i>	<i>\$XXX.XX per hour</i>
<i>Project Manager</i>	<i>\$XXX.XX per hour</i>
<i>Damage Estimator</i>	<i>\$XXX.XX per hour</i>
<i>Grant Management Specialist</i>	<i>\$XXX.XX per hour</i>
<i>Senior Engineer/Planner</i>	<i>\$XXX.XX per hour</i>
<i>Engineer Analyst</i>	<i>\$XXX.XX per hour</i>
<i>Administrative Assistant</i>	<i>\$XXX.XX per hour</i>

The actual cost to each member agency will be negotiated between the awarded Contractor and the member agency based on the size and scope of the specific services needed to successfully complete the work using the hourly rates provided in Tab F.

Not Applicable

**Question #11**

Exhibit B gives examples of position pricing proposal format. Is the proposer able to define their own titles for positions, or must we use titles that are shown in the list of examples?

Jun 7, 2023 11:05:36 AM CDT

**Answers**

Yes you may create your own. The Exhibit B is only for example purposes.

Jun 7, 2023 8:02:56 PM CDT

Arlene Siller Ph.D.

06/08/2023

**EXHIBIT C**  
**Service Questionnaire**

Respondents are encouraged to consider that cooperative contracts are able to be offered to any public-sector agency that can benefit from them, anywhere in the nation.

In Exhibit B, you provided your standard rates for services. For any or all of these services, you may therefore provide a percentage discount off of this standard pricelist. A 0% discount must still be denoted on the line item(s) with the number zero. Respondents are not required to propose a discount.

Indicate the services you are able to offer, as well as any Proposed % Discount from the pricing offered on Exhibit B. If you are not proposing a percentage-discount, please mark that field as "0".

Category #	Description	Yes	No	Proposed % Discount
1	Grant Management & Consulting Services	X		10%

Respondents should address the following items in Tab D: Technical Proposal if they are applicable for the service(s) being proposed.

- Respondents are asked to identify services that they are able to provide.
- Respondents are not required to be able to respond to all services in order to provide a proposal to this RFP.
- Those Respondents that are capable of providing more than a single service, indicate which in the table above, and provide an individual narrative relating to the needs of each Service Category as described in Exhibit B.
- Responses should consist of detailed descriptions of what a Respondent's firm is capable of providing to the TXShare Public Purchasing Cooperative. The numbered activities in each Service Category must be addressed, but Respondents are encouraged to provide additional detail about their operation and capabilities.
- Respondents who wish to propose additional services or pavement analysis services are encouraged to do so by attaching additional (as many as necessary) to describe said products or services and their associated pricing structures.

Note: Respondent is not required to complete any questions that are not applicable to the services you are bidding.

## DISCRIMINATION AGAINST FIREARMS ENTITIES OR FIREARMS TRADE ASSOCIATIONS

This contract is subject to the Texas Local Government Code chapter 2274, Subtitle F, Title 10, prohibiting contracts with companies who discriminate against firearm and ammunition industries.

TLGC chapter 2274, Subtitle F, Title 10, identifies that "discrimination against a firearm entity or firearm trade association" includes the following:

A) means, with respect to the entity or association, to:

- I. refuse to engage in the trade of any goods or services with the entity or association based solely on its status as a firearm entity or firearm trade association; and
- II. refrain from continuing an existing business relationship with the entity or association based solely on its status as a firearm entity or firearm trade association; or
- III. terminate an existing business relationship with the entity or association based solely on its status as a firearm entity or firearm trade association.

B) An exception to this provision excludes the following:

- I. contracts with a sole-source provider; or
- II. the government entity does not receive bids from companies who can provide written verification.

The entity identified below, through its authorized representative, hereby certifies that they have no practice, policy, guidance, or directive that discriminates against a firearm entity or firearm trade association; and that they will not discriminate during the term of the contract against a firearm entity or firearm trade association as prohibited by Chapter 2274, Subtitle F, Title 10 of the Texas Local Government Code.

☒ The Contractor or Subrecipient hereby certifies that it does comply with the requirements of Chapter 2274, Subtitle F, Title 10.

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED  
PERSON:

NAME OF AUTHORIZED PERSON:

NAME OF COMPANY:

DATE:



Arlene Siller Ph.D.

Ascend Nonprofit & Business Solutions LLC

06/08/2023

-OR-

☐ The Contractor or Subrecipient hereby certifies that it cannot comply with the requirements of Chapter 2274, Subtitle F, Title 10.

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED PERSON:

NAME OF AUTHORIZED PERSON:

NAME OF COMPANY:

DATE:



## BOYCOTTING OF CERTAIN ENERGY COMPANIES

This contract is subject to the Texas Local Government Code chapter 809, Subtitle A, Title 8, prohibiting contracts with companies who boycott certain energy companies.

TLGC chapter Code chapter 809, Subtitle A, Title 8, identifies that "boycott energy company" means, without an ordinary business purpose, refusing to deal with, terminating business activities with, or otherwise taking any action that is intended to penalize, inflict economic harm on, or limit commercial relations with a company because the company:

- I. engages in the exploration, production, utilization, transportation, sale, or manufacturing of fossil fuel-based energy and does not commit or pledge to meet environmental standards beyond applicable federal and state law; and
- II. does business with a company described by paragraph (I).

The entity identified below, through its authorized representative, hereby certifies that they do not boycott energy companies, and that they will not boycott energy companies during the term of the contract as prohibited by Chapter 809, Subtitle A, Title 8 of the Texas Local Government Code.

☒ The Contractor or Subrecipient hereby certifies that it does comply with the requirements of Chapter 809, Subtitle A, Title 8.

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED  
PERSON:

NAME OF AUTHORIZED PERSON:

NAME OF COMPANY:

DATE:

  
Arlene Siller Ph.D.

Ascend Nonprofit and Business Solutions LLC

06/08/2023

-OR-

☐ The Contractor or Subrecipient hereby certifies that it cannot comply with the requirements of Chapter 809, Subtitle A, Title 8.

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED PERSON:

NAME OF AUTHORIZED PERSON:

NAME OF COMPANY:

DATE: