

# Market Assessment and Workforce Development Plan RFP

All submissions must be made via email to Garth Wadsworth by **April 19th, 2024** to be eligible for consideration.

## Garth Wadsworth

Elevate Rapid City

[Garth.wadsworth@elevaterapidcity.com](mailto:Garth.wadsworth@elevaterapidcity.com)

605-651-0961

## Intent:

This project will develop a workforce development strategy for the mining technologies industry in Rapid City, SD. The project is part of the Economic Development Administration's Tech Hubs program, respondents to this RFP should be qualified and eligible to work on federally-funded projects. The strategy should help Rapid City and the Black Hills Region apply for and achieve designation status as an EDA Tech Hub. This plan should establish global and local market trends, workforce requirements and the industry jobs of the future, and strategies and recommendations to maintain and improve the region's continued competitiveness in the industry.

The Market Assessment and Workforce Development Plan RFP is being published in conjunction with a request for proposals for a place-based innovation strategy and Innovation District plan. The market assessment and workforce needs and employment projections developed as a result of this project are intended to help inform the Innovation District planning efforts. Qualified firms are encouraged to submit responses to both RFPs.

The workforce of future industries will require coordinated investments in education, research, and workforce skilling initiatives. The program seeks to develop an inclusive employment sector that provides opportunities for individuals of all backgrounds. The Plan should help decision makers coordinate investments to ensure the long-term workforce pipelines aligns with the needs of the industry.

1. Market Assessment
2. Workforce Supply Analysis
3. Industry Demand Analysis
4. Gap Analysis
5. Strategies & Recommendations

## Background:

### Rapid City & The Black Hills

Rapid City is the second largest community in South Dakota with a population of 78,800 (2022). Despite being the most geographically remote metropolitan area in the US, the community is known for extraordinary amenities including a vibrant downtown and recreational opportunities. Rapid City serves as a retail and healthcare hub for almost 400,000 people in 32 counties across 5 states.

Rapid City recently received a strategy development grant as part of the Economic Development Administration's Tech Hubs program. The Deep Underground Frontier Tech Hub seeks to develop a mining-technology hub that will be crucial to the nation's safe and efficient supply of critical minerals in the future. The Deep Underground Frontier Consortium includes the following partners:

- [Elevate Rapid City](#)
- [The City of Rapid City](#)
- [South Dakota Mines](#)
- [Western Dakota Technical College](#)
- [Sanford Underground Research Facility](#)
- [Caterpillar](#)
- [RESPEC](#)
- [The SD Department of Labor & Regulation](#)

## Objectives:

We seek a consulting firm or team to conduct an in-depth market demand assessment and delineate a workforce development strategy for the Technology Hub Innovation District Plan. The consultants should clearly describe the nature and magnitude of the mining technologies' economic opportunity, including, but not limited to, reasonable, data-based, and justified forecasts of the future size of the global market, the region's future share of that market, and the number and earning potential of related jobs. Ideally, this organization's final product would include both an assessment of the Innovation District RFP as well as the Marketing Assessment and Workforce Development RFP. If that is not feasible, the outcome should, at a minimum, refer to one another.

## Key Technology Focus Area (KTFA)

The transition to renewable energy sources and electrification of fossil fuel-based machinery and equipment will require significant increases in the supply of critical minerals and alternative energy storage solutions. With the goal of furthering autonomous mining, underground operations, and safety technologies, the key technology areas of focus include: autonomous equipment and robotics; anthropogenic disaster prevention and mitigation; and advanced energy and industrial efficiency.

## Scope of Work:

### 1. Market Assessment

The purpose of the Market Assessment is to identify global market trends and local market shares that will significantly impact the future workforce within the KTFA. The identified job sectors will serve as the basis for evaluating the economic impact, workspaces, and required amenities for the innovation district plan.

We aim to determine the expected industry growth and market potential within the KTFAs. An understanding of market and industry trends in the KTFA is necessary to help better project the jobs of the future and the expected workforce demands. The Market Assessment should inform the recommended strategies for workforce development.

**Deliverables:**

- Identify and define priority industry sectors within the KTFA.
- Inventory of research capacity and education programs relevant to the KTFA.
- Evaluate global and local market potential including long-term demand, customer base, existing and potential global market share.
- Identify existing or emerging regulations related to priority industry sectors.
- Identify priority job sectors and necessary skills

## 2. Workforce Supply Analysis

The Workforce Supply Analysis aims to provide insights into the local market share, leveraging demographic trends and existing workforce development pipelines. Considering demographic and socio-economic trends, the analysis seeks to determine the number of individuals, including graduates and employees, that the region can reasonably contribute to the industry.

**Deliverables:**

- Identification and inventory of demographic trends, research capacities, and workforce pipelines to assess the local capacity to meet the industry's employment needs.
- Development of an asset map detailing partnerships, programs, and research capacities.
- Identification of local workforce competitive advantages within the KTFA.
- Recognition of populations and jobs at risk of automation, serving as potential opportunity groups.
- Identification of transferable skills conducive to high-growth industries within the KTFA.
- Identification of federal funding initiatives related to KTFA that will assist in workforce development.

## 3. Industry Demand Analysis

The Industry Workforce Demand Analysis aims to proactively anticipate future industry demands within the KTFA, ensuring that workforce programs remain competitive.

**Deliverables:**

- What is the projected total industry employment within the KTFA?
- What specific skills and at what volume will the industry require to maintain competitiveness?
- Projected total industry employment figures.
- Identification of priority industry skills essential for competitiveness.
- Analysis of shifting market trends and changes in industry needs to ensure that local talent pipelines contribute to improving national and regional competitiveness.

## 4. Gap Analysis

The Gap Analysis should align the findings from the market assessment, supply analysis, and demand analysis to pinpoint deficiencies in the current workforce pipeline, hindering the region's capacity to capture the maximum feasible local market share.

### **Deliverables:**

- Identification of education and skills gaps that could impede the growth of the local industry.
- Evaluation of programs that are either missing or require expansion to achieve the local market share outlined in the market assessment.

## 5. Recommendations

Recommendations should provide a plan that helps education, industry, and community partners coordinate investments to maximize the local workforce supply in the future.

### **Deliverables:**

- Recommendations for the reskilling and inclusion of workers displaced due to automation.
- Strategies to improve the coordination of industry and workforce efforts.
- Recommendations for enhancing participation in existing and industry-relevant programs.
- Identification of key education & workforce facilities
- Recommendations for remaining agile, overcoming barriers to entry, and ensuring long-term sustainability.

## 6. Final Presentations

The consultant shall provide a digital copy of the draft document one month prior to the agreed upon project completion date for preliminary review. The consultant will present the findings of the study to the Rapid City Council at a public meeting and Elevate Rapid City Executive Board. The consultant will make available all digital content, GIS files, one electronic copy of all GIS shapefiles, maps, and other supplementary data.

## Staff Responsibilities

The Regional Innovation Officer will serve as the primary point of contact between the consultant and the consortium. The Regional Innovation Officer will assist in the scheduling and facilitation of stakeholder meetings and data collection. The Regional Innovation Officer will provide:

1. Community plans, studies, and technical documents.
2. Stakeholder and consortium member information.
3. Additional program and technical resources as requested.

## Community Engagement & Steering Committee

An initial steering committee consisting of consortium members has been established to review project progress. The steering committee helps schedule and facilitate stakeholder meetings. Elevate's Regional Innovation Officer will serve as the primary point of contact between consultants and the steering committee. Additional members may be added as stakeholders are identified through engagement efforts.

The consultant will undertake a meaningful, inclusive public participation program to engage stakeholders and community members. To understand the perspectives, preferences, and perceptions of area residents, a public engagement strategy should be planned. Careful attention should be given to soliciting responses and participation from residents that may be immediately impacted by the development of the district or by the growth of the key technology focus area.

## Procurement Schedule

The schedule for the RFP is given below. Dates are tentative and may be modified as necessary. The consultant may include an alternative timeline in the proposal if they believe it will better accommodate the intended outcome.

- **Submissions Requested:** March 8 – April 19, 2024.
- **Submission Deadline:** April 19, 2024.
- **Submissions Reviewed:** April 22 – April 26, 2024.
- **Interviews Scheduled:** April 29 – May 3, 2024.
- **Contract Awarded:** May 6, 2024.
- **Project Begin:** May 8, 2024.
- **Draft Review:** November 2024.
- **Project Completion:** December 2024.

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## Submissions

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Submissions shall include the following information:

### 1. Title Page

List the RFP subject, the name of the firm, address, telephone number, name of contact person and the date.

### 2. Letter of Transmittal

Make a positive commitment to perform the required work within the time period. Also give the name(s) of the person(s) who will be authorized to represent the firm, their title, and telephone number if selected.

### 3. Project Statement

A project narrative that describes the respondent's understanding of mining technology and development, as well as the value the respondent will bring to the creation of the Plan.

### 4. Qualifications

1. Name, address and telephone number of the firm's owners, and full information about the corporate structure of the submitting firm.
2. Names, qualifications, and experience of personnel relative to project requirements, who are to be assigned to the project.
3. Description of similar project experience and the names, addresses, and telephone number of owners for all projects described (references will be checked).
4. Project team availability and capacity.
5. If subcontracts are utilized, the position in the project team and identity of the sub-contractor shall be stated.
6. A statement that the firm is qualified and eligible to receive federal funds.

### 5. Project History and References

1. Provide a summary of qualifications, including a complete project history for minimum three (3) projects from the consultant which meets the minimum qualification requirements. These projects will be considered in evaluating the qualifications. The information must include:
  - a. Project name and location

- b. Name, address, and telephone number for project contact person.
- c. Description of the project including:
  - i. Type of project.
  - ii. Initial and completion project budget and schedule.
  - iii. Name, title, and role of personnel used to perform services.
  - iv. Project design and delivery method used.

## 6. Budget Proposal

Proposed contract fees specifying a fixed fee shall be submitted containing a schedule of the estimated hours required and are to be broken down by type of personnel to be used for the proposed services. Expected cost range: \$75,000 - \$125,000.

1. Breakdowns are to be shown separately for each Task listed under "Scope of Work." Overhead factors and other multipliers shall be identified. The contract will be awarded as fixed-price based on deliverables.
2. The consultant shall be responsible for all required resources to include but not limited to computers, surveys, outside consultants, etc.
3. While cost will not be the sole determining factor, cost will be considered.

## 7. Project Schedule

Included as part of the response, the proposer shall provide a schedule to ensure that the project can be completed by December 2024. If the consultant believes this will adversely affect the quality of the project, the consultant should explain why.

## 8. Proposed Modifications

Any proposed modifications to the project scope, including additions to or deletions from the scope in this RFP. If scope modifications are proposed, please provide reasoning or rationale. It is recommended that the submission address the scope of services and budget included with this RFP in addition to the alternative scope and budget.

## 9. Additional Information

Any additional information that will allow the commission to accurately evaluate the firm's capability.

## Evaluation Procedure

All submissions will be evaluated to determine if they meet the requirements of the Request for Proposal. Elevate may, as it deems necessary, conduct discussions with the consultants it deems reasonably suspected of being selected for award, for the purpose of clarification and responsiveness to requirements.

Submissions will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

### *General Quality & Adequacy of Response - 10%*

- a. Completeness and thoroughness
- b. Responsiveness to terms and conditions

- c. Overall impression

*Personnel, Experience & Project Management – 30%*

- a. Qualifications and experience of proposed personnel, including project manager
- b. Demonstrated capacity to do the work
- c. Plan area understanding and experience

*Technical Approach, Work Plan & Budget – 60%*

- a. Clarity and organization in concept development
- b. Approach to scope of work, including the ability to derive creative solutions
- c. Addresses expected outcomes
- d. Relevant knowledge, skills and experience with the project
- e. Proposed budget based on proposed scope
- f. Submission is in the best interest of Elevate Rapid City and the Consortium

## Proposal Terms & Conditions

The scope of work contained in this document is predicated upon the following provisions, assumptions, and conditions that should be part of any submission and budget submitted by a Consultant.

*Evaluation of Proposal Compliance with Specifications*

Understanding that no consultant may completely meet all requirements of the specifications, Elevate and the Consortium reserve the right to determine whether a submission substantially complies with the specifications; accept, negotiate modifications to, or reject the terms of any submission; and waive the right to accept a part, or parts, of a submission, unless otherwise restricted in the submission.

Elevate reserves the right to reject any or all responses and to waive any informality in the process when to do so would be to the advantage of the consortium. Elevate, in its sole discretion, may choose not to award a contract at any time because of unforeseen circumstances or if it is determined to be in the best interest of the commission not to do so.

*Applicant Qualifications*

Elevate may require all proposers to submit evidence of qualifications, and may consider any evidence of the financial, technical, and other qualifications and abilities. Elevate will not award a contract to a proposer who, in its opinion, is not fully qualified on the basis of financial resources and responsibility, possession of adequate equipment, personnel, experience, and past record of performance to perform the obligation to be undertaken competently and without delay.

*Confidentiality*

All information, not in the public domain, disclosed to the consultant for project completion purposes or information that comes to the attention of the consultant during the course of performing such work is to be kept strictly confidential.

*Award of Contract*

Each consultant acknowledges that Elevate and the Consortium will use their discretion and judgment in making the final decision and further acknowledges that no claim by the consultant will arise in any way relating to the exercise of that judgment by Elevate. Elevate's Board of Directors must approve any expenditures greater than \$10,000. No cost chargeable to the proposed contract may be incurred before receipt of either a fully executed contract or a specific, written authorization to proceed.



### *Ownership of Products*

Elevate will retain the copyright for all data, materials, information, processes, studies, reports, surveys, proposals, plans, codes, scientific information, technological information, regulations, maps, equipment, charts, schedules, photographs, exhibits, software, software source code, documentation, and other materials and property that are prepared, developed or created under or in connection with this project. Therefore, the submitter should anticipate that all products of this work effort will become the property of Elevate who will make them available to other government agencies and their contractors.

## Contracting Requirements

The following are not part of the proposal requirements but will be requirements in the contract in addition to other contractual requirements.

### *Contract Decision*

Elevate and the Consortium shall have the final authority and discretion to make a selection based upon the qualifications and proposals, responsibility, and capabilities of respondents, the fairness of price and other factors. Any decision by Elevate and the Consortium shall be final.

### *Cancellation & Rejection*

Elevate and the Consortium reserve the right to cancel any contract for failure or refusal of performance, fraud, deceit, misrepresentation, collusion, or any other misconduct on the part of the consultant.

Elevate and the Consortium reserve the right to reject any proposals, in whole or in part. Submissions received from federally debarred or suspended firms will be rejected. Elevate may reject any proposal that is not responsive to all the material and substantial terms, conditions, and performance requirements of the RFP.

### *Contract Negotiation & Clarification*

A fixed-price contract amount based on satisfactory work performed and services delivered will be entered into after negotiations between Elevate, the Consortium, and the selected firm. Alternative compensation models may be considered.

In order to determine if a submission is reasonably amenable for award, communications by Elevate or the evaluation committee are permitted with any Applicant to clarify uncertainties or eliminate confusion concerning the contents of a submission and determine responsiveness to the RFP requirements. Clarifications may not result in a material or substantive change to the submission. The initial evaluation may be adjusted because of a clarification under this section. After final evaluation, Elevate intends to negotiate with the highest ranked submission(s). Negotiations, if held, will be within the scope of the request for submissions and limited to those items that would not influence the ranking of submissions.

Elevate may terminate negotiations with the highest-ranked applicant and commence negotiations with the next highest ranked applicant, if the selected applicant does not respond in a timely manner, fails to negotiate in a good faith manner, or if the parties cannot, after a good-faith effort, cannot come to terms.

### *Covenants of Consultant*

The consultant will be required to covenant and warrant the following:

1. Consultant is not debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in any contract, supported in whole or in part by the funding sources for this project;
2. Consultant must have an active registration in SAM.gov;
3. Consultant will comply with the Procurement Standards (Sections 2 CFR §200.317- 200.327) in the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards. Specifically, 2 CFR §200.321, contracting with small and minority businesses, women's business enterprises, and labor surplus area firms requires all necessary affirmative steps to assure that minority businesses, women's business enterprises, and labor surplus area firms are used when possible. If subcontracts are to be let, Consultant must take the following affirmative steps:
  - a. Placing qualified small and minority businesses and women's business enterprises on solicitation lists;
  - b. Assuring that small and minority businesses, and women's business enterprises are solicited whenever they are potential sources;
  - c. Dividing total requirements, when economically feasible, into smaller tasks or quantities to permit maximum participation by small and minority businesses, and women's business enterprises;
  - d. Establishing delivery schedules, where the requirement permits, which encourage participation by small and minority businesses, and women's business enterprises; and
  - e. Using the services and assistance, as appropriate, of such organizations as the Small Business Administration and the Minority Business Development Agency of the Department of Commerce.
4. Consultant has not within a three (3) year period had one or more public transactions terminated for cause or default;
5. Consultant will comply with the provisions of Section 1352, Title 31 of the U.S. Code, which prohibits the use of federal funds to lobby any official or employee of any federal agency, or member or employee of Congress; and to disclose any lobbying activities in connection with federal funds.
6. Consultant must carry insurance policies which protect Elevate and employees from any claims, suits, etc. of the consultant's employees or equipment used for the project on those items listed in the Scope of Work. In addition, liability insurance coverage must be provided to protect itself from claims under workers compensation acts; claims for damages because of bodily injury including personal injury, sickness or disease, or death of any of its employees or of any person other than its employees; and from destruction of tangible property including loss of use resulting therefrom; and from claims arising out of the performance of professional services caused by any errors, omission, or negligent acts for which they are legally liable.