Partners for Rural Impact

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Architectural and Engineering Services

Economic Mobility and Resilience Hub

Rockcastle Business Park South, Rockcastle County, Kentucky

EDA Award No. ED26ATL0G0186

Proposals will be received until

December 9, 2026, 5:00 p.m. ET

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Partners for Rural Impact, Inc. (PRI) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization whose mission is to ensure all rural students succeed. PRI is the Recipient of an award from the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) to construct the Economic Mobility and Resilience Hub (the "Hub"), an approximately 33,000-square-foot facility at Rockcastle Business Park South in Rockcastle County, Kentucky.

PRI invites qualifications and proposals from licensed architectural and engineering firms (the "Firm") to partner with us in bringing the Hub to life through design, bidding, and construction-phase services. We seek a qualified Firm familiar with the Appalachian region that shares our commitment to creating a welcoming, functional space that serves the region and stays within the project budget. The work must meet applicable building codes and federal funding requirements, including EDA requirements and 2 CFR Part 200, with construction targeted for completion within **18–24 months.**

A. Schedule

Milestone	Date
RFP issued	Wednesday, November 18, 2026
Deadline for written questions	Wednesday, November 25, 2026, 5:00 p.m. ET
PRI responses to questions issued	Wednesday, December 2, 2026, 5:00 p.m. ET
Proposal submission deadline	Wednesday, December 9, 2026, 5:00 p.m. ET
Interviews with short-listed firms (if conducted)	On or before Wednesday, December 16, 2026
Selection of highest-ranked Firm	On or before Wednesday, December 23, 2026
Contract execution	On or before Friday, January 8, 2027

Questions. Direct written questions to Kayla Hamilton, Program Manager, at Kayla.Hamilton@partnersrural.org. Written responses to all questions will be issued to all Firms and posted on the RFP webpage, without identifying the Firm that asked.

Communication. From issuance until a Firm is selected, Firms must direct all communication about this RFP in writing to Kayla Hamilton. Firms may not contact other PRI staff, board members, or project partners about this solicitation.

Addenda. Any addendum issued by PRI before the proposal deadline becomes part of this RFP and must be acknowledged in the proposal. No instruction or change is binding unless issued in

a written addendum. All addenda will be posted on the RFP webpage. Firms are responsible for checking the webpage for addenda before submitting.

Publication. This RFP is posted on PRI's website, www.partnersrural.org. Notice is also provided through PRI's Facebook and LinkedIn pages, and email to qualified firms. All notices link to the website posting, which is the official source for this RFP and any addenda.

Reservation of rights. PRI issues this request with the intention to award a contract. PRI may reject any proposal, re-issue the request, or withdraw it due to funding stream complications.

II. BACKGROUND

PRI works for rural, with rural to ensure all rural young people are on a path to economic mobility. We build on the strengths, expertise, and leadership of rural communities to strengthen place-based partnerships, improve outcomes from cradle to career, and activate investment in locally driven solutions. Our work connects local, regional, and national partners around shared goals so rural communities have the relationships, resources, and capacity to create lasting change.

The Hub is funded in part by EDA Award No. ED26ATL0G0186, with a period of performance from September 1, 2026, through August 30, 2030. Additional project details are included in the Project Information Package, provided as Attachment A.

III. SCOPE OF SERVICES

The selected Firm will provide all architectural and engineering services required for the planning, design, bidding, and construction of the Hub, including:

A. Design Phase

- Preliminary plans and cost estimates, and final plans, specifications, and cost estimates, with the EDA award number on the face sheet and the Architect's or Engineer's stamp applied.
- Surveys, soil investigations, and supervision of any required subsurface explorations.
- State and local approvals and permits, and support for the historic, archaeological, and environmental reviews required by the award.
- Updated cost estimates for EDA review, and completion of Part I (Certificate of Architect/Engineer) of the EDA Site Certificate.

B. Bidding Phase

- Bid documents for sealed competitive bidding that include the items EDA requires (see Section IV), a clear method of award, and the required bonding: a 5% bid bond and 100% performance and payment bonds.

- Assistance with advertising, attendance at the bid opening, bid tabulation, review of bidder qualifications, and a written recommendation of award.

C. Construction Phase

- Site visits sufficient to determine whether the work conforms to the plans, specifications, and construction contract.
- Review of submittals, pay applications, and change orders; verification of Buy America compliance for materials and products; and substantial and final completion inspections.
- Quarterly written progress reports describing progress, problems, and any factors contributing to delay, and delivery of as-built drawings and closeout documents.

Inspections. PRI may procure construction inspection services separately, including as part of the construction contracts. If the Firm proposes to provide inspection services, list the cost as a separate line in the Part 6 fee attachment so PRI can compare options.

Schedule. The agreement must state dates for preliminary plans and estimates, final plans and specifications, State and local approvals, and bid-ready documents. Proposals should describe how the Firm will meet the construction completion target.

IV. FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS

This procurement is governed by PRI's written procurement procedures, 2 CFR Part 200, and EDA's Construction General Terms and Conditions (March 17, 2026).

- **Qualifications-based selection.** Firms are ranked on qualifications; price is not a selection factor. PRI will negotiate fair and reasonable compensation with the highest-ranked Firm and, if unsuccessful, proceed to the next.
- **Compensation.** Compensation must be a fixed price, or cost reimbursement with an agreed maximum, tied to milestones. Percentage-of-construction-cost, cost-plus-percentage-of-cost, and multiplier-based fees are prohibited. The fee must cover all services necessary to complete the project and may not exceed the prevailing fee for comparable services in the area.
- **Contract provisions and certifications.** The contract will include multiple provisions required by 2 CFR Part 200. PRI will verify through SAM.gov that the Firm is not excluded. For contracts over $100,000, the Firm must submit the Certification Regarding Lobbying (31 U.S.C. § 1352), included in this package as Attachment B.
- **Other award requirements.** Design must comply with applicable local codes, the Architectural Barriers Act, federal energy standards, and Executive Order 13717 (seismic safety). Bid documents must include Davis-Bacon wage determinations, EDA's contracting provisions, the lobbying form (CD-512), site sign specifications, and the federal funding

statement. Environmental compliance requirements must be included in the construction documents.

Build America, Buy America (BABA). The project must meet the domestic sourcing requirements of 2 CFR Part 184 and the DOC General Terms and Conditions (G.05.a), which require:

- Iron and steel: All manufacturing processes, from initial melting through coating, must take place in the United States.
- Manufactured products: Products must be produced in the United States, with more than 55% of total component costs attributable to domestic components.
- Construction materials: All manufacturing processes must take place in the United States.

The BABA preference must be included in every project contract, subaward, and purchase order. The Firm will include these requirements in the specifications and bid documents, flag potential sourcing challenges early, support any waiver requests to EDA, and review contractor submittals for compliance.

V. INFORMATION REQUIRED OF RESPONDENTS

Responses should follow the format below and be **no more than 15 pages**, not including résumés, forms, or other attachments.

Part 1. Firm Qualifications and Personnel

- Firm background, including legal name, ownership, office locations, staff size, and years providing A/E services.
- Principal-in-charge, project manager, and lead discipline staff, with résumés, Kentucky licensure, and time commitment, plus a backup plan if personnel change.
- Subconsultants, by name and address, with the work each will perform and any MBE/WBE status. PRI retains the right to refuse a proposed subconsultant.

Part 2. Relevant Experience

- At least three comparable projects from the last ten years, preferably community, workforce, education, or economic development facilities of similar size. For each, provide the client, size, construction cost, performance against budget, and two references for comparable projects with contact information. *PRI will contact references as part of the scoring process*.
- Experience with federally funded projects, especially those funded by EDA, including working knowledge of 2 CFR Part 200, Davis-Bacon, EDA construction requirements, and BABA. Include an example of how BABA was addressed in design and specifications.

Part 3. Approach and Schedule

- Confirmation that the Firm can provide the Scope of Services, and any additional activities proposed.
- Approach to meeting the 18–24 month target, including a draft schedule of design milestones and approvals.
- Approach to cost control, including response to bids that exceed the estimate, and to documenting work by milestone to support EDA reimbursement.

Part 4. Knowledge of the Region and Nonprofit Experience

- Experience supporting nonprofit clients and meeting nonprofit construction and design needs, including limited budgets and phased funding.
- Knowledge of rural Appalachian Kentucky, including local codes, approvals, contractors, and site conditions.

Part 5. Disclosures

- Any actual or potential conflict of interest, including relationships with PRI's Board or staff, the County of Rockcastle, or the Rockcastle County Industrial Development Authority (RCIDA).
- Any regulatory discipline or professional-services litigation in the past five years, any change in firm ownership in the past three years, and the Firm's professional liability insurance coverage.

Part 6. Fee Information (not scored)

Fee information is requested only to prepare for negotiation. Please submit it as a separate attachment, which PRI will hold and review only after qualifications are scored.

Service	Basis	Estimated fee
Design and bidding	Fixed price by milestone	$
Construction administration	Fixed price, or cost reimbursement with a maximum	$
Other or extra services	Describe and justify	$
Construction inspection	Describe scope and basis	$
Reimbursable expenses	Not-to-exceed amount	$
Total		$

Please include hourly rates by position. Prices and terms must remain in effect for the duration of the contract unless both parties agree to an escalation, with at least 30 days' notice of any proposed increase.

VI. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Submit proposals by email to Roberta Walker at pripurchasing@partnersrural.org, with the subject line "Proposal Enclosed – Hub A/E Services." **Proposals must be received by December 9, 2026, 5:00 p.m. ET.** Proposals received after the deadline will not be considered. Include a signed Attachment B with the proposal. Submit fee information as a separate PDF labeled "Fee Information." PRI may interview any or all Firms, will select a Firm no later than December 23, 2026, and anticipates executing a contract by January 8, 2027.

VII. PROPOSAL REVIEW AND ASSESSMENT

PRI will evaluate firms based on their qualifications, project approach, and demonstrated ability to build a strong working partnership. References will help assess how firms communicate, solve problems, and follow through on commitments. A committee of PRI staff will score proposals using the criteria in Table 1. Firms will be ranked by total points, and the highest-ranked responsible Firm will be invited to negotiate a fair and reasonable fee. If interviews are held, the committee will use them only to confirm and finalize scores under the Table 1 criteria.

Table 1: Firm Selection Criteria

Points	Qualification	Standard
25	Relevant Experience	Successful delivery of comparable facilities within budget and schedule; demonstrated knowledge of federal funding requirements, including EDA, 2 CFR Part 200, Davis-Bacon, and BABA.
20	Partnership, Communication, and References	A collaborative approach that respects PRI's mission, priorities, and decision-making; clear communication, responsiveness, and practical problem-solving. Client references demonstrate strong working relationships, accountability, and effective resolution of challenges throughout design and construction.
20	Assigned Personnel	Licensure, relevant experience, and availability of the people who will work directly with PRI; a clear primary contact, defined team roles, continuity of staffing, and a backup plan.
20	Project Approach and Schedule	Understanding of the Hub's purpose and PRI's needs; a realistic plan to support construction completion within 18 to 24 months; thoughtful design, cost control, bidding support, and early identification of risks and decisions requiring PRI's input.

15	Regional Understanding and Nonprofit Experience	Understanding of rural Appalachian Kentucky and its construction market; experience helping nonprofits balance mission, budget, operational needs, and long-term building costs.
100	**Total**	

The contract will be awarded to the highest-ranked responsible Firm whose proposal is responsive, subject to agreement on fair and reasonable compensation and confirmation of eligibility in SAM.gov.

VIII. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Disposition and Confidentiality. All proposals become the property of PRI, and the successful proposal will be incorporated into the contract by reference. PRI treats proposals as confidential and will not share them outside PRI, except with EDA or as required by law.

Indemnification. The Firm shall indemnify and hold harmless PRI, its affiliates, and their officers, agents, and employees from losses, claims, suits, damages, and costs, including attorney fees, arising out of the Firm's proposal or its performance or failure to perform under the contract. This clause survives termination for as long as necessary to protect PRI.

Non-Discrimination and Small and Minority Businesses. The Firm and its subconsultants shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability, or veteran status. Consistent with 2 CFR 200.321, PRI takes affirmative steps to use small, minority-owned, women-owned, and labor surplus area businesses and encourages Firms to identify certified MBE/WBE subconsultants.

Conflict of Interest. By submitting a proposal, the Firm certifies that no relationship exists with PRI, the County of Rockcastle, or any other person or firm that creates a conflict of interest or impairs fair competition. PRI may terminate the contract if a related party violates laws on ethics in public procurement.

Cancellation and Default. PRI may withhold payment if the Firm fails to perform until the failure is cured, and may terminate the contract for unacceptable performance after providing written notice. Either party may cancel on thirty (30) calendar days' written notice. If the Firm delivers non-conforming services, PRI will issue a Notice to Cure and, if the default continues, may procure the services elsewhere and charge the cost difference to the Firm. Required insurance must remain in effect through the termination date.

Attachments

- **Attachment A**: Project Information Package (EDA Authorized Scope of Work, Attachment 1 to EDA Award ED26ATL0G0186; project description; site conditions and utilities; permit list)
- **Attachment B**: Certification Regarding Lobbying (Form CD-512)