



CALIFORNIA
BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

California Permitting Academy Host Grant Request for Proposals (RFP)

GO-Biz Point of Contact:

1325 J Street, Suite 1800 Sacramento, CA 95814

RegionallInvestment@gobiz.ca.gov

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RFP Overview

The Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz) invites eligible non-profit organizations to review and respond to this Solicitation. In submitting a response, applicants must comply with the instructions found herein.

Before submitting a response to this solicitation, interested parties must read and review the entire solicitation.

This grant is projected to run through April 30, 2028.

Key Dates

RFP Released by GO-Biz	February 23, 2026
Deadline for Written Questions Please submit questions to Regionalinvestment@gobiz.ca.gov	February 27, 2026, at 5:00 PM PT
Letter of Intent Deadline (optional)	February 27, 2026, at 5:00 PM PT
RFP Submission Deadline	March 6, 2026, by 5:00 PM PT
Tentative Award Notice	March 16, 2026
Period of Performance	April 1, 2026 – April 30, 2028

Letter of Intent

Respondents are highly encouraged to submit a Letter of Intent by the deadline listed in the Key Dates section: **February 27, 2026, 5:00 PM PT.**

The Letter of Intent should be submitted via email to Regionalinvestment@gobiz.ca.gov with the subject line "**Permitting Academy RFP – Letter of Intent [APPLICANT NAME]**". The letter must include the following:

1. Name of the Applicant Organization
2. Primary Contact Name, Title, Email, and Phone Number
3. Statement of Intent: A typical statement is usually one (1) or two (2) sentences and does not need to include technical details or proposal content

While a Letter of Intent is highly preferred, failure to submit does not prohibit eligibility or negatively impacts your application.

Proposal Submission

All proposals must be electronically submitted via email to Regionalinvestment@gobiz.ca.gov with the subject line: **Permitting Academy RFP Response – [Applicant Name]**. No mailed/hard copy submittals will be accepted.

Proposals must be received by **March 6, 2026, 5:00 PM Pacific Time (PT)**. Late submittals will not be accepted under any circumstances. Respondents are solely responsible for ensuring the successful delivery of their proposal by the stated deadline.

It is recommended that applicants submit your proposal at least two business days in advance of the final deadline to receive confirmation of receipt and avoid potential delays due to technical difficulties.

Background

The Governor's Office of Business & Economic Development (GO-Biz) serves as the State of California's primary technical assistance provider to businesses and developers in navigating California's state and local permitting regimes. As part of this work, GO-Biz assists businesses in accessing information and resources related to permitting and regulatory compliance, provides mediation and third-party neutral facilitation to resolve conflicts between applicants and permitting and regulatory entities, and works with federal, state, regional, and local permitting and regulatory entities to exchange best practices and implement improvements to modernize permitting processes.

Over the past seven years, various units within GO-Biz have developed technical expertise and educational materials intended to help local governments with process improvements and streamlining efforts, specifically in support of zero-emission vehicles charging infrastructure and clean energy projects.

As we look to expand our efforts, GO-Biz is proposing the development of the "California Permitting Academy" to provide technical assistance to local governments, helping them streamline their permitting processes and equipping their permitting teams with tools, skills, and methods for ongoing continuous improvement. Our goal with this investment is to support local governments across the state in identifying long-term system improvements for their permit processes. This RFP outlines the initial structure, as outlined by GO-Biz, and the responsibilities of the academy host.

Academy Structure

The California Permitting Academy is intended to be structured as one-week intensive, in-person, training courses for representatives from up to five local governments per academy session.

This academy is designed to support local governments that are committed to permit streamlining. Local governments may apply to participate in the academy and will be required to identify an executive sponsor (city manager, county administrator, chief executive, etc.) and a specific project or permitting process they want to streamline.

The local government applicant must identify a minimum of three and up to six staff members (Director of Community Development, Director of Public Works, Fire Marshall, Building Division Manager, etc.) that have responsibilities for and/or oversight of permitting processes to participate in their cohort during the academy.

Each cohort will be required to complete pre-academy surveys outlining their goals and existing permitting timelines, as well as post-academy surveys outlining their implementation efforts, updated permitting timelines and plans to instill and measure continuous improvement opportunities.

The curriculum must include sessions on best practices in permit streamlining/modernization, review of the California Permitting Guides developed by GO-Biz and other state agency entities, process mapping of the attendees' current internal procedures, and process mapping a streamlined approach. The curriculum should also include training and education to assist with compliance on new rules and laws.

Following the academy sessions, the cohorts will be provided with between one and three months of technical assistance from the academy host and GO-Biz.

GO-Biz anticipates the academy implementor hosting a minimum of six in-person academy cohorts during the contract period, rotating across Northern, Central, and Southern California. An example schedule is outlined below:

Activity	Month
One-Week Intensive – <i>Central California</i>	May 2026
Technical Assistance	May – July 2026
One-Week Intensive – <i>Southern California</i>	September 2026
Technical Assistance	September – November 2026
One-Week Intensive – <i>Northern California</i>	January 2027
Technical Assistance	January – March 2027
<i>Repeat for year two, and provide additional sessions and technical assistance through April 2028</i>	

Minimum Qualifications

To be considered for this RFP, applicants must meet all the following minimum qualifications. These requirements are essential to ensure that the selected organization possesses the expertise and capacity to successfully fulfill the objectives of the project.

Organizational Qualifications

1. Must be a nonprofit organization (501c(3), c(4), and c(6)), or other community-based organizations.
2. Must be located with primary operations in the State of California.
3. Must have an active status with the California Secretary of State.
4. Must not be presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in public procurement or contracting by any government department or agency.

Organizational Capacity

1. Must have sufficient staff and resources to effectively track, manage, and execute the workload required to execute on this grant.
2. Must demonstrate the ability to provide timely reporting, ensuring that all deliverables meet the expectations outlined in the scope of work.
3. Must designate a Project Manager to lead and coordinate efforts, with additional support as needed to complete curriculum development, academy execution and reporting efficiently and effectively

Professional Experience

1. Must have a proven track record of leading certificated professional development and continuing education programs in support of local government staff.
2. Must have experience helping economic development and/or governmental modernization processes.
3. The Project Manager must have professional experience in one of the following:
 - a. Communications; or
 - b. Business; or
 - c. Political science; or
 - d. Economics; or
 - e. Community development; or
 - f. Public policy; or
 - g. Land use planning

Budget

GO-Biz has allocated a total of five million dollars (\$5,000,000) in state funds to award one organization for supporting the implementation of this program. GO-Biz expects applicants to provide a detailed, and justified, deliverables-based budget. The budget should include how the applicant plans to utilize funds to incentivize local government participation and implementation of the academy programs.

Payment Terms

Payments will be reimbursement-based upon proof of completion of mutually agreed deliverables. Payments may be withheld if the reports are deemed incomplete or inadequate.

Invoices shall be submitted 30 days after the quarterly period.

Scope of Work

The applicant will be responsible for the following tasks:

- A. In consultation with GO-Biz, develop a robust curriculum for the California Permitting Academy, and a work plan for execution including but not limited to, developing and managing an application process for local governments, identifying faculty to teach the curriculum, identifying program partners to

support the cohorts and their learning experiences, coordinating room blocks for cohort participants, and more.

- B. Develop marketing materials to promote the program among local government staff and collaborate with GO-Biz to identify the cohorts for each academy session.
- C. Execute the workplan and host a minimum of six in-person academy cohorts during the performance period, rotating across Northern, Central, and Southern California. Execution of each cohort includes cohort recruitment, pre and post survey work, curriculum modifications, supporting on program meals and accommodations, and coordinating post session technical assistance.
- D. Collaborate with GO-Biz to coordinate post-academy technical assistance and reporting. The awardee should consider utilizing expertise from GO-Biz staff and outside experts for this assistance.
- E. Participate in quarterly check-ins with GO-Biz staff to review pre-post survey results, consider curriculum modifications, and plan future cohorts.

Proposal Content

The individual responding to this RFP ("Respondent") must submit the following information with the written proposal:

- A. **Exhibit A - Cover Letter** (1 page)
 - i. Basic Information:
 - o Organization's Full Legal Name
 - o Primary Address
 - o Entity Type (as reflected in tax documents)
 - ii. Details:
 - o Website: Provide the URL for the organization's website
 - o Established Date: The year the organization was founded
 - o Size: Identify the number of employees working in the organization
 - iii. Proposal Contacts:
 - o Primary Proposal Contact – must be the Authorized Representative:
 - 1. Name
 - 2. Title
 - 3. Email Address
 - 4. Direct Phone Number
 - o Secondary Proposal Contact:
 - 1. Name
 - 2. Title
 - 3. Email Address
 - 4. Direct Phone Number
- B. **Exhibit B - Key Personnel** (1-2 pages)

Table that identifies all key personnel (primary points of contact and other individuals who contribute to the development or execution of a project in a substantive, measurable way), must include the name, title, and role in the project).

Identify the designated Project Manager that will lead and coordinate efforts.

Use [Key Personnel Template](#) (see Exhibit B below).

C. Exhibit C - Resume

- i. Resume for each staff person identified in Key Personnel.
- ii. Each resume should include a summary of relevant experience, highlighting past projects similar in scope to the work outlined in this RFP.
- iii. Experience should demonstrate expertise in education and training, process improvements, meeting facilitation.

D. Exhibit D – Technical Proposal (no more than 10 pages)

- i. Experience
 - o Outline the organization's (and any included partner entities) experience in conducting professional development and continuing education programs.
- ii. Implementation Plan
 - o Provide a detailed breakdown with descriptions of how the organization would deliver on the scope of work outlined above, including how the applicant intends to collaborate with GO-Biz to develop the work plan.
 - o An explanation of how the regular and final deliverables will be presented to GO-Biz, including reports, visualizations, and briefings.
- iii. Implementation Timeline
 - o Provide an overview of the implementation schedule for the development of curriculum, development of the marketing materials, implementation of the program activities, as well as reporting timelines. A Gantt chart is encouraged but not required.
- iv. Sample Work
 - o Provide a sample analysis or case study demonstrating the firm's expertise in professional development and/or developing and implementing governmental modernization processes.

E. Exhibit E – Budget Overview (using the [Budget template identified as Exhibit E](#))

- i. Provide a detailed and deliverable-based budget that aligns proposed costs with tasks and timelines outlined in the Scope of Work.

F. Exhibit F – Budget Justification (1 page)

- i. Outline the approach to maximizing impact within the proposed budget (including any proposed costs to local governments and how the grant may

be used to subsidize those fees), detailing the scope of work achievable at various funding levels to ensure transparency in cost-effectiveness and realistic expectations.

G. Exhibit G - References

- i. Letters from at least three entities with past experience participating in professional development offerings the applicant has hosted.

Evaluation

Proposals will be evaluated by individuals in a committee. The committee will evaluate each proposal and score each proposal individually using the Evaluation Criteria Score Sheet. Proposals will be considered based on their merits in accordance with the Scope of Work.

Evaluation Score Sheet		Maximum Possible Score	Score
1.	How well does the Proposer's experience directly relate to the scope of work?	30	
2.	How well does the proposal address the requirements of the RFP?	30	
3.	Does the proposer include the required reference letters?	10	
4.	Are the budget/cost estimates provided realistic and well-justified?	30	

Administration

RFP Response Requirements

This RFP and the Proposer's response to this document will be made part of GO-Biz's grant application file. Responses must contain all requested information and data and conform to the format described in this section. It is the Proposer's responsibility to provide all necessary information for the State to evaluate the response, verify requested information, and determine the Proposer's ability to perform the tasks and activities defined in the State's Scope of Work. The Proposer must submit their response electronically to the department contact name and email address indicated on the cover sheet to this RFP.

Plagiarism, including but not limited to taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as one's own, and failure to cite someone else's work or ideas, is prohibited and is grounds for disqualification. Using Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) tools to complete any portion of an application, without citation, may be considered plagiarism and may also be grounds for disqualification.

Reservation of Rights and RFP Amendments

GO-Biz reserves the following rights, which may be exercised at its sole discretion and without liability to any Applicant:

1. Right to Amend, Supplement, or Cancel the RFP

GO-Biz reserves the right to amend, supplement, clarify, revise, delay, or cancel this Request for Proposals (RFP), in whole or in part, at any time prior to the proposal submission deadline or prior to execution of a final grant agreement. Amendments may include, but are not limited to, changes to the scope of work, key dates, funding availability, evaluation criteria, or submission requirements. Issuance of this RFP does not obligate GO-Biz to make an award or to enter into any agreement.

2. Notice of Amendments

All official amendments, addenda, and clarifications to this RFP will be posted on the GO-Biz website at: **[Business.ca.gov/publications](https://business.ca.gov/publications)**

It is the sole responsibility of each Applicant to monitor the website for updates, amendments, or additional information related to this RFP. GO-Biz is not responsible for failure of an Applicant to receive notice of an amendment. Failure to acknowledge or respond to an amendment may result in disqualification.

3. Right to Reject Proposals

GO-Biz reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, to waive minor irregularities or technical defects in proposals received, and to request clarification of information submitted.

4. Right to Award in Whole or in Part

GO-Biz reserves the right to:

- a. Award funding in whole or in part;
- b. Award less than the total amount requested;
- c. Make multiple awards under this RFP;
- d. Not award all available funds; or
- e. Issue additional solicitations for similar services.
- f. Selected Applicants may be required to negotiate scope or budget adjustments consistent with available funding.

5. Right to Negotiate and Request Additional Information

GO-Biz may request additional information, conduct interviews, seek clarifications, or enter into negotiations with one or more Applicants prior to final award. Failure to respond timely to such requests may result in disqualification.

6. Proposal Preparation Costs

All costs incurred in the preparation and submission of a proposal are the sole responsibility of the Applicant. GO-Biz shall not be liable for any costs incurred in connection with this RFP, including in the event of amendment or cancellation.

Public Records Act

By submitting an application, the applicant acknowledges that GO-Biz is subject to the California Public Records Act (PRA) (Government Code section 7920.000 et. seq.). Consequently, materials submitted by an applicant to GO-Biz may be subject to disclosure pursuant to a PRA request. In the event that records of the applicant are requested, GO-Biz will notify the applicant, as soon as practicable, that a PRA request for the applicant's information has been received, but not less than five (5) business days prior to the release of the requested information, to allow the applicant to seek an injunction. GO-Biz will work in good faith with the applicant to protect any confidential information to the extent an exemption is provided by law.

GenAI Disclosure

The State of California seeks to realize the potential benefits of GenAI, through the development and deployment of GenAI tools, while balancing the risks of these new technologies.

Applicant must notify the State in writing if it: (1) intends to provide GenAI as a deliverable to the State; or (2), intends to utilize GenAI, including GenAI from third parties, to complete all or a portion of any deliverable that materially impacts: (i) functionality of a State system, (ii) risk to the State, or (iii) Contract performance. For avoidance of doubt, the term "materially impacts" shall have the meaning set forth in State Administrative Manual (SAM) § 4986.2 Definitions for GenAI.

Failure to report GenAI to the State may result in disqualification. The State reserves the right to seek any and all relief to which it may be entitled to as a result of such non-disclosure.

Upon notification by an applicant of GenAI as required, the State reserves the right to incorporate GenAI Special Provisions into the final contract or reject bids/offers that present an unacceptable level of risk to the State.

Government Code 11549.64 defines "Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI)" as an artificial intelligence system that can generate derived synthetic content, including text, images, video, and audio that emulates the structure and characteristics of the system's training data.

Proposal Templates

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Exhibit B – Key Personnel

Key Personnel

Authorized Representative – Primary Proposal Contact		
Last Name, First Name	Title	Role on Project & Area of Responsibility
Key Organizational Personnel		
Last Name, First Name	Title	Role on Project & Area of Responsibility
Key Sub-Contractor/Sub-Recipients Personnel		
Last Name, First Name	Title	Role on Project & Area of Responsibility

Add more rows above if necessary

Exhibit E – Budget Overview

Deliverable Budget for Project Period

ITEM #	DELIVERABLE DESCRIPTION FOR YEAR 1 (4/01/2026 – 4/30/2027)	AMOUNT	DELIVERY DATE
1.1		\$0	
1.2		\$0	
1.3		\$0	
1.4		\$0	
	<i>Insert additional rows above if needed</i>	\$0	
TOTAL COSTS FOR YEAR 1 (4/01/2026 – 4/30/2027)		\$	

ITEM #	DELIVERABLE DESCRIPTION FOR YEAR 2 (5/01/2027 – 4/30/2028)	AMOUNT	DELIVERY DATE
2.1		\$0	
2.2		\$0	
2.3		\$0	
2.4		\$0	
	<i>Insert additional rows above if needed</i>	\$0	
TOTAL COSTS FOR YEAR 2 (05/01/2027 – 4/30/2028)			

TOTAL BUDGET

Deliverable	Amount
Total Budget (Year 1 and 2)	\$