

CENTRO COMMUNITY PARTNERS MICROENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP) SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
Due March 13, 2015

OVERVIEW

CAMEO in partnership with Centro Community Partners (Centro) seeks to develop a one-year demonstration project in Southern California to study the integration of mobile technology as a viable teaching platform to deliver business and credit technical assistance to underserved entrepreneurs in a structured entrepreneur education program. The mobile application is the *Centro Business Planning Tool (BPT)* that directs the user through 25 teaching activities that will result in a basic business plan. Also included with the mobile application is a facilitator's guide that helps trainers integrate the activities into their microenterprise development organization (MDO) programs.

CAMEO seeks organizations that provide services to rural, refugee, and low-income populations in Southern California, and will cover up to 90% of the \$10,000 program cost of adopting the BPT to use with their clients. Six organizations will be selected that have demonstrated capacity to deliver training services to entrepreneurs seeking to build their first business plan, and to provide feedback on the program results. Southern California area CAMEO member organizations with a proven track record of providing business assistance and/or capital to low and moderate income populations are encouraged to apply.

This Southern California demonstration project is an expansion of a demonstration program in the San Francisco Bay Area that was initiated in May 2014 with initial funding from Citi.

ACTIVITIES AND DUTIES

This program is expected to generate outcomes and insights into how mobile technology can be used to enhance the delivery of TA to underserved entrepreneurs. By the end of the pilot, CAMEO, Centro and the participating MDO would like to gather the following insights:

- Efficiency of mobile technology to deliver TA
- Level of satisfaction with BPT activities
- Scalability of TA programming
- Efficiencies gained (if any) in TA productivity
- Ability to learn business competencies and financial literacy through BPT
- Number of users that obtain a business plan

In addition, we expect to measure the following economic impacts:

- Number of users that obtained a microloan after using the BPT
- Number of users that applied for microloans after using the BPT

The participating MDO will need to provide minimal staff-time to successfully participate. The entrepreneur trainer or facilitator will be trained to use the Centro mobile TA application in two sessions:

- Web-Based Results Viewer (one hour)
- Facilitator's Guide (depends on trainer's experience; from 2 to 4 hours)

In addition, the trainer or facilitator may need to field basic questions from program participants regarding the BPT. The trainer will be expected to report any challenges with the BPT to Centro on a regular basis, and to participate in quarterly peer calls with the pilot cohort.

Both a mid-point progress report and a final report will be drafted comprised of the user survey results and the overall efficiency of the mobile TA app. This will help the MDO understand the utility of the BPT for long-term use in their entrepreneur development programs.

The cost to implement and access the Centro BPT is \$10,000 per organization for this project. CAMEO will subsidize 50%-90% of this fee per organization (\$5,000-\$9,000) based on a sliding scale.

To be considered for this program an organization must demonstrate the following:

- Organizational capacity to implement and deliver training
- Desire to achieve greater efficiency and scale in training
- Dedicated trainer or staff person
- Discretionary training budget to allow for participation in demonstration project

REVIEW PROCESS

The Applicant must have experience providing microenterprise training and business assistance, and have nonprofit, 501(C)(3) status. Only applications from organizations either located in, or providing services in California within Southern California will be considered. Organizations will be expected to be or become CAMEO members.

Proposals are due March 13, 2015 and will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Demonstrated track record of producing successful outcomes with microenterprise training e.g. numbers of business start-ups.
- Track record serving minority, women, disabled, and low/moderate income persons that experience barriers to starting and growing a business.
- Proven ability to track progress and document outcomes.
- Participants must be willing to commit to attending facilitated peer exchange conference calls to share information on program implementation with other providers.

- Serve a minimum of 25 low-to-moderate income individuals.

The application should not exceed two (2) pages and should address the following:

1) Description of the microenterprise training, business assistance or financing programs that your agency has administered in the last three (3) years, especially those programs which have been targeted to low-to-moderate income, disabled and women business owners. Include annual number of clients and business outcomes achieved.

2) Description of the current population that your organization targets for technical assistance programs.

3) Experience of staff person or facilitator who will manage pilot.

Please include

- Cover page introducing the organization and or, most recent annual report.
- 501(c) (3) letter from IRS.
- Organization's current microenterprise program operating budget.

ABOUT CENTRO COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Centro Community Partners (Centro) is an Oakland-based non-profit 501(c)(3) that provides entrepreneurship education, microenterprise development services and access to capital to underserved individuals. Centro creates mobile apps to help entrepreneurs launch, grow and manage their businesses using mobile devices. Centro has developed a platform that allows other organizations providing entrepreneurship support services to reach more entrepreneurs while also increasing their effectiveness and efficiency. (www.centrocommunity.org)