



REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

Architecture & Engineering Design Services

INSPYRE INNOVATION HUB

Third Floor Build-Out

ISSUED BY	CenterState CEO
PROJECT ADDRESS	235 Harrison Street, Syracuse, NY 13202
DATE ISSUED	June 5, 2026
PROPOSAL DUE DATE	Friday, June 26, 2026, by 5:00 PM EST

Submit Proposals To:

Andrea Hahn, SVP Administration & Human Capital
CenterState CEO | 115 West Fayette Street, Syracuse, NY 13202
(315) 470-1945 | Ahahn@centerstateceo.com

1. Overview

CenterState CEO is soliciting qualifications from qualified Architecture & Engineering (A&E) firms to provide comprehensive Design Services for the build-out of the Third Floor of the INSPYRE Innovation Hub, located at 235 Harrison Street, Syracuse, NY 13202.

This RFQ is issued by CenterState CEO as a private, non-governmental organization. CenterState CEO is the direct recipient of Empire State Development (ESD) grant funds supporting this project. The resulting contract will be a private agreement between CenterState CEO and the selected firm. Certain ESD grant flow-down requirements apply and are described in Section 3.

Contact	Andrea Hahn, SVP Administration & Human Capital
Organization	CenterState CEO
Address	115 West Fayette Street, Syracuse, NY 13202
Phone	(315) 470-1945
Email	Ahahn@centerstateceo.com
Proposals Due	Friday, June 26, 2026, by 5:00 PM EST

Late submissions will not be accepted. CenterState CEO reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, to waive irregularities, and to accept the proposal deemed to be in the best interest of the organization.

2. Project Background

2.1 Facility History

The INSPYRE Innovation Hub, located at 235 Harrison Street, Syracuse, NY 13202, was originally a City of Syracuse parking garage that collapsed in 1994. The site sat vacant until the early 2000s when it was rehabilitated by the Syracuse Chamber of Commerce to become the Syracuse Technology Garden — a 30,000 SF high-tech business incubator funded through federal, state, and local grant sources.

After an extensive expansion and renovation, The Tech Garden reopened in 2025 as the INSPYRE Innovation Hub, providing access to business planning services, mentors, specialized advisory services, targeted referrals to consultants, a comprehensive Resource Pool of pre-selected specialists, and funding opportunities for entrepreneurs. There is a large and demonstrated market need for these types of services in Central New York, and INSPYRE has maintained a waiting list for resident-members since 2014. INSPYRE also hosts community innovation events, thought leader gatherings, and diverse business-building activities. More information at: <https://inspyrehub.com/amenities/>.

2.2 Third Floor — Existing Conditions

The Third Floor is an existing core and shell configuration offering significant flexibility due to its open floor plan, encompassing approximately 10,000 SF (to be confirmed during the design process). Existing infrastructure includes 5 heat pump units, 3 boiler units/systems, electrical panels, and occupancy-sensor-controlled lighting throughout. All mechanical and electrical infrastructure will require enclosure within a secured, restricted-access mechanical/electrical area as part of the proposed design. The Architect/Engineer should anticipate coordination with existing systems serving the floors below.

2.3 Project Goals

CenterState CEO seeks to complete the third floor to expand capacity for entrepreneurs, small businesses, and innovation-focused tenants across Central New York. The design shall reflect the Hub's mission of innovation and collaboration while meeting applicable building codes and ESD grant requirements. Key goals:

- Flexible, adaptable workspace for a range of tenant types
- Collaborative and event-capable spaces
- LEED Gold equivalent standards (without formal certification)
- Full ADA accessibility compliance throughout
- Efficient integration with existing building systems
- Cost-effective design aligned with the approved ESD project budget

3. ESD Grant Requirements

This project is supported in part by ESD grant funds awarded directly to CenterState CEO. Certain requirements from CenterState CEO's grant agreement flow down to contracted consultants and are outlined below. Final applicable requirements will be confirmed with CenterState CEO's ESD program officer prior to contract execution and communicated to the selected firm at that time.

3.1 MWBE Participation

NOTE: MWBE participation requirements will apply only if required under CenterState CEO's ESD grant agreement. Applicability will be confirmed with the selected firm prior to contract execution. The following language is included should these requirements apply.

If applicable, the selected firm will be required to include NYS-certified Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprise (MWBE) subconsultants. Respondents are encouraged to identify proposed MWBE subconsultants and their anticipated roles, and to describe any outreach efforts made to engage certified firms. Only firms certified as MBE or WBE by the NYS ESD Division of Minority and Women's Business Development are eligible (verify at <https://ny.newnycontracts.com/>). Specific participation goals and reporting requirements, if applicable, will be communicated to the selected firm prior to contract execution.

3.2 SDVOB Participation

CenterState CEO encourages respondents to identify and engage NYS-certified Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Businesses (SDVOBs). Any proposed SDVOB subconsultants should be identified in the submission.

3.3 Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)

The selected firm shall comply with all applicable federal and New York State EEO laws and shall not discriminate against any employee or applicant on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, military or veteran status, sexual orientation, or any other protected characteristic.

3.4 Record Keeping and Audit Access

The selected firm shall maintain all project-related records for a minimum of six (6) years following project completion and shall make records available to CenterState CEO.

3.5 Environmental Review — SEQR

NOTE: SEQR review will be required only if triggered by the nature, scale, or location of the project. Applicability will be determined during the design process. The following language is included should SEQR be required.

If applicable, the selected Architect/Engineer shall assist CenterState CEO with all required SEQR documentation, coordinate with appropriate agencies to obtain a Determination of Significance, and document SEQR compliance throughout the design process. The Phase II scope includes SEQR preparation and coordination if triggered.

4. Scope of Services

The selected A&E Firm shall provide CenterState CEO with a complete, accurate, and detailed set of design plans and specifications suitable for construction bidding. The Scope of Services shall include, but not be limited to:

- Architectural Design
- Civil & Structural Engineering
- Mechanical, Electrical, and Plumbing (MEP) Engineering
- Code Compliance Review and Permitting Support
- Sustainability / LEED Analysis

Services shall be delivered in four phases as described below.

Phase I — Schematic Design

Phase I encompasses discovery, programming, and schematic design. The discovery process shall gather all pertinent project information including functional programming, site data, building regulations, budget constraints, phasing, and aesthetic direction. The Architect/Engineer shall identify in their Statement of Work any additional professional services (testing, monitoring, surveying, etc.) required to perform their duties, arrange and pay for those services, and incorporate results into the design.

The Architect/Engineer shall:

1. Schedule and attend required meetings with CenterState CEO to discuss design parameters, functional programs, budget, and schedule.
2. Prepare preliminary schematic design plans, interior layout, project narrative, code review, and drawings sufficient to obtain approval to proceed to Phase II. Revise and resubmit until approved by CenterState CEO.
3. Prepare a construction cost estimate and preliminary schedule consistent with the ESD-approved project budget.
4. If MWBE participation is required under the ESD grant agreement, identify potential MWBE subconsulting opportunities within the design scope and document any initial outreach efforts.

Phase II — Design Development

Phase II brings greater detail and definition to the project design. If SEQR review is determined to be required, this phase will also advance the project through that process to obtain a Determination of Significance.

The Architect/Engineer shall:

5. Prepare design drawings and preliminary specifications.
6. Complete code reviews and submissions for required building permits.
7. Prepare an updated construction cost estimate and project budget.
8. Provide an updated project and construction schedule.
9. Conduct a LEED review targeting Gold equivalent standards (without formal certification) and review available NYSERDA incentives.
10. If SEQR review is determined to be applicable, prepare and process all required SEQR documentation and coordinate with appropriate agencies to obtain a Determination of Significance. If SEQR is not triggered, this task will not be required.
11. Conduct a full ADA compliance review and incorporate all required accessibility improvements.
12. Coordinate with CenterState CEO on required approvals before proceeding to Phase III.

Phase III — Construction Bid Document Development

Phase III completes all drawings and specifications required for CenterState CEO to accurately price, bid, and construct the project. Documents shall be fully coordinated and detailed and shall not result in significant design changes from approved Phase II documents.

Bid Documents shall include:

- Construction plans and specifications
- Preliminary list of all required submittals for approval
- General Conditions — standard contract terms governing the owner-contractor relationship, including payment procedures, change order process, insurance, site safety, and dispute resolution (AIA A201 or equivalent)
- Supplemental General Conditions — project-specific modifications or additions to the General Conditions addressing CenterState CEO requirements, building access protocols, ESD-related provisions, or other terms unique to this project (included if the standard General Conditions require modification)
- Form of Proposal
- Construction duration period
- Code review documentation
- Bid review package
- If MWBE participation is required under the ESD grant agreement: appropriate participation language and reporting requirements for construction subcontractors, to be confirmed with CenterState CEO prior to bid document finalization

Phase IV — Construction Administration Services

CenterState CEO intends to manage project oversight in-house. The Architect/Engineer shall provide traditional Construction Administration services throughout the construction phase, including but not limited to:

- Shop drawing and submittal review
- Responding to CM/Contractor Requests for Information (RFIs)
- Review of payment requisitions and change orders
- Preparation of field drawings due to changes during construction
- Substantial and final completion inspections; preparation of punch lists
- Responding to code official inquiries
- Attending construction progress meetings as required
- Assisting CenterState CEO with ESD progress reports and project closeout documentation
- Working as a teammate with the Owner and Construction Manager throughout construction

5. Qualifications Submission Requirements

Qualifications may be submitted in standard office format on company letterhead or standard A/E qualification forms. All submissions must include the following information in the order presented:

A. Contact Information

Complete name, address, telephone number, and email of the firm and the designated primary contact for this project.

B. Service Capability

Evidence of the firm's ability to perform all required services, including all required NYS licenses and certifications. Any proposed outside consultants must be identified with their NYS registration or licensure status.

C. Qualifications

Names and qualifications, in resume format, of all professional staff to be engaged on this project, including the proposed Project Manager.

D. Prior Experience

Description of prior experience relevant to this project, including:

- Commercial and/or institutional interior build-out projects
- Projects involving state or federal grant funding (ESD, HUD, CDBG, or similar)
- MWBE participation and reporting on grant-funded projects
- LEED or sustainable design projects
- Historic or adaptive reuse projects
- Business incubator, co-working, or innovation center projects

E. MWBE / SDVOB Participation Plan

- Identification of proposed MWBE-certified subconsultants, their roles, and anticipated participation

- Description of outreach efforts to identify and engage certified MWBE firms
- Identification of any proposed SDVOB subconsultants
- Confirmation of familiarity with NYS MWBE certification requirements and willingness to cooperate with ESD reporting obligations

F. Time Schedule

Proposed schedule indicating availability to start and estimated completion dates for each phase, expressed as calendar dates or days after award of contract.

G. Fee Structure

Proposed fee structure or range by phase. Fee is not the primary selection criterion; this information will assist in subsequent contract negotiations. The selected firm will negotiate a final fee following selection.

H. Insurance Requirements

The selected firm must provide proof of the following minimum coverage prior to contract execution:

- Professional Liability (E&O): \$5,000,000 per occurrence
- Commercial General Liability: \$2,000,000 per occurrence / \$4,000,000 aggregate
- Workers' Compensation and Disability: As required by NYS law
- Automobile Liability: \$1,000,000 combined single limit

CenterState CEO shall be named as additional insured on all applicable policies. Certificate of Insurance required prior to contract execution.

I. Special Provisions

Identification of any special provisions or conditions that could affect the time schedule or ability to provide services.

J. Submission Format

Submit: (1) one electronic copy in PDF format emailed to Ahahn@centerstateceo.com.

6. Selection Criteria

Qualifications will be reviewed by a selection committee of at least three individuals with technical or management backgrounds. Interviews may or may not be required. Submissions will be evaluated on their own merit and ranked in order of overall qualifications using the following criteria, listed in order of importance:

1. Capability	Demonstrated ability to perform all required services, including ESD grant-funded project requirements and SEQR processes.
2. Qualifications	Individual qualifications and experience of proposed project personnel.
3. Experience	Extent and quality of prior relevant experience, particularly on grant-funded projects with MWBE participation.
4. MWBE Plan	Quality and credibility of the proposed MWBE participation approach and commitment to inclusion goals.
5. Availability	Timeliness of the proposed schedule and responsiveness to project needs.
6. Responsiveness	Overall completeness and quality of the qualifications submission.

Qualifications will be evaluated within two (2) weeks of receipt. The highest-ranked firm(s) will be contacted to negotiate contract terms. CenterState CEO reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and to negotiate with more than one firm simultaneously. The selected firm will negotiate a fee that is fair, reasonable, and consistent with the ESD-approved project budget.

7. Site Visits

CenterState CEO will offer two scheduled site visits to the 3rd Floor of the INSPYRE Innovation Hub prior to the proposal due date. Site visits are strongly encouraged so that firms may assess existing conditions and develop an informed submission.

Site Visit 1	June 10, 2026, at 3PM
Site Visit 2	June 15, 2026, at 1:30 PM
Location	INSPYRE Innovation Hub, 235 Harrison Street, Syracuse, NY 13202 — 3rd Floor

Please notify CenterState CEO of your intent to attend by emailing Andrea Hahn at Ahahn@centerstateceo.com no later than 24 hours prior to the scheduled visit, indicating which date you plan to attend. Firms that do not attend may still submit qualifications, but no additional site access will be provided outside these scheduled dates.

8. Questions and Clarifications

All questions must be submitted in writing to Andrea Hahn at Ahahn@centerstateceo.com no later than Friday, June 12, 2026, at 5:00 PM EST. Questions received after this date may not be addressed. Written responses will be distributed to all known interested parties no later than Friday, June 19, 2026. No oral interpretations shall be binding on CenterState CEO. All addenda issued in response to questions become part of the RFQ and contract documents.

9. General Terms and Conditions

9.1 Right to Reject / Cancel

CenterState CEO reserves the right to: (a) reject any and all qualifications; (b) re-advertise this RFQ; (c) postpone or cancel this procurement at any time; and (d) waive irregularities in any submission, in the best interest of the organization.

9.2 Costs of Preparation

All costs incurred in preparing and submitting qualifications are the sole responsibility of the respondent. CenterState CEO will not reimburse any firm for response costs.

9.3 Confidentiality

All materials submitted become the property of CenterState CEO. Respondents should not include proprietary or confidential information unless clearly marked; such information may still be subject to disclosure if required by law.

9.4 Conflict of Interest

By submitting qualifications, the respondent certifies that no employee or officer of CenterState CEO has a direct or indirect financial interest in the firm or the contract. Any actual or potential conflict of interest must be disclosed in writing at the time of submission.

9.5 Non-Discrimination

CenterState CEO is an Equal Opportunity Employer and requires all contractors to comply with applicable federal, state, and local non-discrimination laws throughout the duration of the contract.

9.6 Contract Requirements

The selected firm will execute a formal contract with CenterState CEO incorporating, at a minimum:

- Full scope of services as described in this RFQ
- Agreed-upon fee schedule and payment terms
- MWBE participation commitments and reporting requirements consistent with ESD obligations
- SDVOB participation encouragement provisions
- Insurance requirements as specified in Section 5.H
- Records retention requirements (minimum 6 years)
- Audit access provisions for CenterState CEO, ESD, and NYS Comptroller
- Non-Collusion and Non-Discrimination certifications

- Termination for cause and termination for convenience provisions
- Dispute resolution procedures
- Compliance with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations

9.7 Designated Contact

All communications regarding this procurement must be directed to the designated contact below. Unauthorized contact with CenterState CEO staff or board members may result in disqualification.

Name	Andrea Hahn
Title	SVP, Administration & Human Capital
Organization	CenterState CEO
Email	Ahahn@centerstateceo.com
Phone	(315) 470-1945

10. Required Submission Checklist

Respondents are encouraged to use the following checklist to verify completeness before the deadline. Incomplete submissions may be deemed non-responsive.

<input type="checkbox"/>	ITEM
<input type="checkbox"/>	A. Contact information — firm name, address, phone, email, and primary contact
<input type="checkbox"/>	B. Evidence of service capability and required NYS licenses/certifications
<input type="checkbox"/>	C. Qualifications and resumes of proposed project personnel, including Project Manager
<input type="checkbox"/>	D. Prior experience — relevant project descriptions with client references
<input type="checkbox"/>	E. MWBE/SDVOB participation plan, including subconsultant identification and outreach description
<input type="checkbox"/>	F. Proposed time schedule for each phase of services
<input type="checkbox"/>	G. Proposed fee structure or range (by phase)
<input type="checkbox"/>	H. Confirmation of ability to obtain required insurance coverage
<input type="checkbox"/>	I. Disclosure of any special provisions or conditions affecting schedule or capability
<input type="checkbox"/>	J. One (1) electronic copy (PDF) emailed to Ahahn@centerstateceo.com

Thank you for your interest in the INSPYRE Innovation Hub Third Floor project.

CenterState CEO looks forward to reviewing your qualifications and partnering with a talented A&E team to advance this important project for the Central New York entrepreneurial community.

CenterState CEO

115 West Fayette Street | Syracuse, NY 13202

www.centerstateceo.com | 315) 470-1800