



NEW MARKETS ACCELERATOR

A National Western Center program supporting Colorado food & farm businesses

An Overview for Interested Consultants

Introduction

Welcome to the National Western Center's New Markets Accelerator pilot program! Thank you for your interest in providing consulting services to farm, ranch, and intermediary food businesses in Colorado as part of this program. Read on for important information about the program, specific details about the consultant role, and operational next steps. Please read this document carefully before submitting your formal application to provide consulting services.

Program Background

In an effort to support the state's local and regional food systems through the COVID-19 crisis, the multi-sector Colorado Farm & Food Systems Response Team (CFFSRT) solicited over 400 submissions to its [Respond and Rebuild Fund](#). From these applications, as well as additional outreach and data analysis, the team has identified significant, ongoing needs amongst small- and mid-sized farmers, ranchers, and intermediaries across Colorado. Specifically, there is clear, significant, and ongoing need for technical assistance to farm and food businesses shifting strategies to focus on emerging direct-to-consumer markets. For both producers and intermediaries, the top two requests for support beyond funding was for consulting related to online sales and business strategy/operations.

To meet this need for support and also look ahead to the long-term rebuilding of Colorado's food economy, this pilot brings paid consultants trained in on-farm economics, online sales platforms, marketing, and other direct-to-consumer business strategies to provide focused, farm- and intermediary-specific technical assistance.

This pilot accelerator program focuses on the needs and opportunities of small- and mid-size growers, beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran farmers, farmers of color, LGBTQ+ farmers, and female farmers — producers who are often underserved by public programs and projected to bear the brunt of the crisis's impact.

The accelerator is intended to be intensive: it will take place between February 15 - March 31, 2021. Consultants will provide services between these dates.



This accelerator is a key component of the National Western Center’s broader *How the West Was One* [food systems vision](#), and it will involve significant collaboration and create shared benefit. We’re fortunate in Colorado to have so many assets throughout our food economy — from CSU Extension programming, to the Colorado Farm and Food Systems Respond and Rebuild Fund, to broad

coalitions of food systems stakeholders. We are excited to launch this accelerator and grow the knowledge, experience, and power of our state’s networks.

Program Overview for Consultants

The New Markets Accelerator provides resources for dedicated consultation services and technical assistance to 8-10 producers and intermediaries, each of which requested funds for business pivots and related technical assistance as part of the Respond and Rebuild Fund. The details of each business's circumstance is, naturally, unique to their individual operation. However, overarching themes include **support for accessing new direct-to-consumer market channels, online sales, on-farm operational pivots, and marketing.**

Each business selected to participate in the accelerator (“participant”) is allotted a total of 40 hours of paid consulting, and each contracted consultant is expected to be able to provide up to 10 hrs of consultation services per week, up to a total of 40 hours of billable time per participant.

In an effort to ensure that each consultant is well-matched for each participant and that consultation services are appropriate to the businesses’ needs, organizational culture, and communication styles, we will not assign consultants to participants. Rather, participants will rank the consultants that they wish to work with and we will facilitate introductions between each participant and their highest ranked consultant. After this introductory meeting, the participants will either select that consultant for the remainder of the program or request an introductory meeting with a different consultant.

Upon being selected by a participant(s), consultants will create a scope of work with each participating business with which they’re paired, and this scope of work must include clearly identified goals, deliverables, and expected time and cost. Consultants will be responsible for creating this document and — upon completion of the deliverables — securing the signature of the participant with which they’ve worked, signifying that the participant agrees the deliverables were completed.

Selected consultants will be required to have a one-hour onboarding call with National Western Center and program staff before beginning consultation services. Rather than require consultants to track hours worked and submit timesheets, we will compensate consultants for the deliverables they establish with a flat rate — not an hourly rate. The total compensation amount is **not to exceed \$7,500** per participant. Consultants will receive 25% of the total compensation per matched participant upon initiating the contract after an introductory call, and consultants will provide the amount of consultation services required to meet the deliverables outlined in their scope of work with each participant in order to receive the remaining 75% upon completion of the project.

Next Steps

The first step is to submit your application (please see the link below). By submitting the Application form, you are agreeing to have the information about you/your company's qualifications shared with the pool of participants. After participants have reviewed and ranked their top consultant choices, consultants will be contacted by Elliott Smith of Kitchen Sync Strategies (program lead for the accelerator) to schedule an introductory meeting(s) with the relevant participant. After this introductory meeting, the participant will either choose to work with their selected consultant for the duration of the program or request another introductory meeting before selecting a different consultant.

Below are key dates for consultants to consider:

- February 1-15: All consultant applications must be submitted during this period
- February 12-15: Elliott Smith will review consultant applications on a rolling basis
 - Consultants selected by accelerator participants will be contacted for onboarding and introductory meetings
- February 15: Participants begin finalizing their choice for consultant, and consultation services begin
- February 15 - April 15: Consultation services are to be completed during this window
- Before April 15: Consultants will participate in a one-hour exit interview with Elliott Smith and National Western Center staff.

Questions?

Please direct all questions to Elliott Smith, Program Lead at elliott@kitchensyncstrategies.com. We will respond to inquiries as soon as possible.

[APPLY HERE by FEBRUARY 15](#)