

# REBRANDING



**NMSDC**  
National Minority Supplier  
Development Council

## NMSDC Rebrand RFP

*Proposals Due: January 29, 2024*

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## Introduction and Company Background

The National Minority Supplier Development Council (NMSDC) is seeking a vendor partner or partners to assist in a complete rebrand of NMSDC and relaunch of the brand, which may include the following:

1. Name change evaluation.
2. Persona development.
3. Tag line development.
4. Logo redesign.
5. Rebrand launch communications.

You have been selected as a potential vendor to respond and prepare a proposal to accomplish these tasks. The following NMSDC Rebrand RFP (RFP) includes background information on our organization and describes the purpose of the project, the desired deliverables, specific requests and restraints, timelines, and requirements of your proposal.

We understand that details may be subject to change regarding vendor recommendations and discussions, additional research into various rebranding elements, etc. In your proposal, please feel free to suggest alternatives but also address the requests within.

Although NMSDC prefers to contract with one vendor for all areas of the RFP, it will accept bids from vendors that can team up with additional partners to provide a full-service solution.

### Company Background

Founded in 1972, NMSDC is the longest-operating business growth engine for the broadest group of systematically excluded communities of color (Asian-Indian, Asian-Pacific, Black, Hispanic, and Native American), and our impact goes far beyond supply chain. It's about upward mobility for the emerging majority of Americans, an equal shot at participating in the American experiment of free-market capitalism and entrepreneurship. Our work is about correcting the unequal access to wealth-building opportunities.

#### ***Our Mission and Vision***

NMSDC's mission is to serve as a growth engine for NMSDC certified minority businesses and enable our members to advance economic equity.

We create connections between minority business enterprises (MBEs) and corporations, MBEs and the public sector, and MBEs and other MBEs, to help them benefit from each other, stoking entrepreneurship, and growing wealth for these systemically excluded communities.

Our vision is to be the leading organization for driving socioeconomic equity and generational wealth in communities of color.

We build capacity and capabilities through our programs and other educational offerings that help close that wealth gap, the key to creating a more united and prosperous society for all.

#### ***Our Impact and Network***

For over 50 years, NMSDC has been advocating access to the American dream for MBEs. Our success is historic and unmatched: over 16,000 MBEs connected to more than 1,700 corporations, resulting in over \$482 billion in economic output annually, generating \$136 billion in total wages earned, and sustaining 1.8 million jobs (see our [2022 Minority Businesses Economic Impact Report](#) for more details). We are the

nation's largest, most impactful, and successful nonprofit advocacy organization for MBEs, proving growth for MBEs is growth for all.

We are supported by [23 regional affiliates](#) nationwide which are our boots on the ground, working in the field locally to ensure our certified MBEs reach their full potential. NMSDC also has several [strategic partners](#) we work with to advocate for, develop, and connect shared stakeholders.

For more information on NMSDC's rich history, please see our [50th Anniversary Coffee Table Book](#).

## Project Overview

NMSDC celebrated its 50th Anniversary in 2022 and has recognized that what got us here over the last 50 years will not get us through the next 50 years if we don't reevaluate and reimagine how we operate, deliver programs and services, and communicate our brand promise of being a growth engine for NMSDC-certified MBEs.

Over the last two years of anniversary planning and celebrations, we have embarked on several strategic initiatives that, in essence, will completely transform the organization over the coming years:

- A new CEO and president was hired to lead NMSDC into the next 50 years with the creation of more focused mission at the end of 2021 and [a new five-year strategic plan](#) started in 2022.
- New executive team leaders were identified and hired, with all ethnic minority groups that NMSDC serves now represented at the highest levels of leadership.
- We worked with BBDO, a worldwide advertising agency to write our narrative for the next 50 years (See Appendix A: Finding Our 'North Star' Story)
- We have set a bold goal of reaching \$1 trillion in NMSDC-certified MBE annual revenue, more than double the current amount which took 50 years to accomplish.
- An organizational redesign initiative kicked off in early 2022 to evaluate the current structure of NMSDC internally (board/committee structure, staff organizational structure, etc.) but also how the network of 23 independent 501(c)(3) regional affiliates operate as a whole and as one unified voice.
- A certification modernization initiative kicked off in early 2022 that evaluated the documents we require for certification, how certification is administered (decentralized vs. centralized vs. hybrid), etc. to see where we can streamline the process without compromising our gold standard certification model. NMSDC is currently moving to a centralized processing for certification, freeing up time for the regional affiliates to focus more on developing and connecting MBEs vs. processing certification paperwork.
- [An advocacy agenda](#) was created and promoted as the primary pillar of excellence, followed by our other pillars of excellence to certify, develop, and connect.
- Technology transformations have been initiated at every level across the organization.
- NMSDC launched [the inaugural Minority Business Economic Forum in 2022](#) to be the leading event where NMSDC and its partners tap the top leaders of corporate America, the U.S. Presidential Administration, and leading thought academic leaders to recalibrate the MBE narrative to be an integral part of the American economy.
- NMSDC executive leadership team embarked on the [Entrepreneurial Operating System \(EOS\)](#) in 2023, which aims to bring better focus, discipline, and accountability across the organization. And, as part of this work, we are relooking at our core values, vision, mission, 10-year/5-year goals to ensure they capture the future state of NMSDC.

With so much change currently in progress, it is time to reimagine the NMSDC brand to ensure it encapsulates the future state of the organization. Our primary goals with this RFP are the following:

- Incorporate feedback from our various stakeholders but most importantly our regional affiliate presidents, board chairs, and minority business enterprise input committee (MBEIC) chairs, to ensure buy-in from the network on the new brand and brand elements.
- Realign and strengthen our brand to better resonate with prospective MBEs and corporate members while ensuring we can deliver on that brand promise to current certified MBEs and corporate members.
- Become a household name synonymous with shrinking the wealth gap for systematically excluded communities of color through the power of entrepreneurship.

The following rebrand components are up for discussion as part of that reimagined brand.

## **Name Change Evaluation**

What's in a name? Everything! Staff at NMSDC have had discussions over the past two years, weighing the pros and cons of a name change:

- **Pros of Keeping the Name**
  - Close to 50 years of brand equity within the current name.
  - All 23 independent 501(c)(3) regional affiliates currently have their regional identifier followed by Minority Supplier Development Council.
  - Supplier development is meaningful to the procurement world.
- **Cons of Keeping the Name**
  - It is an extremely long name to say audibly and shortening it to the acronym NMSDC does not roll off the tongue easily.
  - NMSDC defines minority very narrowly vs. the general public's definition and could cause confusion in who we serve as we expand our audience.
  - Minorities will become the new majority in the coming decades and could be problematic in making the case for our cause and for funding opportunities.
  - Supplier development is a foreign term to those outside of procurement so it could be difficult for folks to understand what we do as we expand our audience.
  - We are moving the conversation away from supplier diversity to business diversity, ensuring our corporate members understand the work of diversifying the supply chain is not one department's responsibility, procurement, but rather every business line's responsibility. As we move this point forward our name grounds us to the past way of thinking about supplier development/diversity.
  - In light of the recent assault on DEI, having minority in the organizations name immediately makes NMSDC a target for attacks.

Additional discussions with various stakeholders need to transpire to weigh the risk vs. reward of a name change. Therefore, NMSDC is seeking assistance in this area with the following deliverables.

### ***Name Change Evaluation Deliverables***

- Perform primary/secondary research to develop two-three alternative names for market testing.
- Perform initial copyright/trademark search to ensure alternative name options are available.

- Perform market testing to include at least three focus groups with various stakeholder groups: NMSDC board of directors, the National Minority Business Enterprise Input Committee (NMBEIC), regional affiliate presidents, regional affiliate board chairs, regional affiliate MBEIC chairs, and NMSDC staff (NMSDC Core Stakeholders).
- Recommend a final name, which could include a recommendation not to change the name.
- Recommend a new web domain if acronym changes.
- Recommend name changes to any ancillary programs that incorporate the full name or acronym.

## Persona Development

The NMSDC brand may be perceived differently depending on each of the five distinct ethnic minority groups we represent. Additionally, because each business may be in a different stage of growth, they may be looking to NMSDC to help them in different ways. Therefore, a persona development exercise will help ensure we craft the updated NMSDC brand and its related communications in a way that can resonate with all stakeholder groups.

### ***Persona Development Deliverables***

- Develop personas for each of the five ethnic minority groups.
- Develop personas for each of the four MBE sales bands:
  - Firms with less than \$1 million in sales.
  - Firms with \$1 million to \$10 million in sales.
  - Firms with \$10 million to \$50 million in sales.
  - Firms with more than \$50 million in sales.
- Determine if Corporate Plus members, Growth Initiative MBEs, and/or Investment Fund MBEs need a separate persona or if they can be wrapped up in personas tied to sales bands.
- Develop personas for each of the five corporate member revenue bands:
  - Corporations with less than \$10 billion in sales.
  - Corporations with \$10 billion to less than \$50 billion in sales.
  - Corporations with \$50 billion to less than \$100 billion in sales.
  - Corporations with \$100 billion to less than \$150 billion in sales.
  - Corporations with \$150 billion in sales or more.
- Previous labeling for sales bands included the term class I-IV on the MBE side and class I-V on the corporate member side, which has a negative connotation in communications of color. Recommend a classification titling that does not use the term class.

## Tag Line Development

As NMSDC moved into its anniversary year, staff identified a new tag line, “Advancing Economic Equity Together,” which replaced our brand slogan of “Advancing Business Connections that Count” that had been used since 2014. Although the new tag line is visionary in nature, this was not market tested. Additionally, with the work we did with BBDO on our narrative for the next 50 years, another tag line surfaced: Growth for MBEs is Growth for All. But again, this has not been market tested.

Depending on where the name change evaluation discussions go, the current tag lines may need to be adjusted or replaced.

## Tag Line Development Deliverables

- Perform primary and secondary research to develop two-three alternative tag lines for market testing.
- Perform market testing to include at least three focus groups that include NMSDC Core Stakeholders.
- Recommend a final tag line, which could include a recommendation to use one of the two tag lines developed in the last couple years.

## Logo Redesign

The current NMSDC logo (three versions), and corresponding regional affiliate logos, were designed in 2014 (See Appendix B: Brand Style Guides). Since then, additional variations of the logo have been created for membership branding (See Appendix C: Various NMSDC Logos) and other programmatic logos have been created over the years that may or may not play well with the current NMSDC logo in terms of lockups or being used together to tie the program back to NMSDC (See Appendix D: Various Programmatic Logos). Additionally, some NMSDC committees have taken it upon themselves to create logos too (See Appendix E: Various NMSDC Committee Logos).

With a potential new name and tagline, it seems an appropriate time to redesign the logo to make a stronger connection with the community we serve. The following remarks regarding the logo are meant as commentary but not necessarily direction for this element of the project:

- Although the Brand Style Guides provides direction as to where each of the three versions of the NMSDC logo should be applied, it has never been applied consistently. Multiple versions of a logo are incredibly hard to manage and police.
  - Although the mark in the logo was defined as the trinity mark, representing corporate members, regional affiliates, and MBEs, as well as the strength of the network and our commitment to economic growth, it is not easily apparent to someone not already in the know.
  - The current mark does not seem to be unique to NMSDC as other organizations have used this in the past and present (two similar examples from the scientific nonprofit community: [ASPET's logo](#) and [ASM 2015](#)).
  - Are we trying to relay too much with the current color scheme?
    - Blue traditionally denotes professionalism, trust, authority, power, and loyalty.
    - Green traditionally denotes harmony, natural, healthy, renewal, and plentiful.
    - Orange traditionally denotes vibrant, playful, happy, artistic, and energetic.
- Add to the mix that every regional affiliate has a different set of three colors, yet we are aiming to be one unified network with one voice.
- The lockup with the full name when using the acronym logo, along with the tag line, is incredibly long and doesn't scale well for smaller placements.
  - Although membership and MBE related logos borrowed from the standard logo (See Appendix C: Various NMSDC Logos), we have packed a lot into a small space, which again does not scale well for smaller placements.
  - There does not seem to be any guidelines related to programmatic logos/type treatments which have made our offering very disparate (See Appendix D: Various Programmatic Logos).

With these in mind, NMSDC is seeking assistance on logo design with the following deliverables:

## **Logo Design Deliverables**

- Perform primary and secondary research to develop three-five initial design ideas with up to two rounds of revisions before market testing.
- Perform market testing to include at least three focus groups that include NMSDC Core Stakeholders.
- Based on the above, solve for the following:
  - Regional affiliate logos, so NMSDC can be seen as a unified network with one voice.
  - Membership related logos so corporate members and Corporate Plus members can proudly display their membership affiliation.
  - MBE, Growth Initiative, and Investment Fund related logos so certified MBEs can proudly display they are indeed certified minority owned.
  - Guidance on programmatic logos to ensure all NMSDC related logos work as a system.
- Perform trademark search to ensure logo can be protected.
- Provide a new digital NMSDC Brand Book using Frontify or similar online solution (including logo use, color palette, fonts, etc.).
- Provide presentation ready files to present the final logo(s) to NMSDC Core Stakeholders.
- Provide final native files for logo in appropriate formats for print, web, email, signature, etc., both vertical and horizontal styles, and color designs of 4-color, 2-color, greyscale, black, and reverse.
- Provide font files if customized fonts are used and/or instructions on how to secure fonts.
- Provide mockups of various logo applications to include NMSDC letterhead, business cards, PowerPoint templates, booth backdrops, email templates, website headers, etc.

## **Rebrand Launch Communications**

With so many elements of the brand potentially changing, a robust marketing and communications plan will be needed to ensure there are no hiccups with the relaunch of the NMSDC brand.

Additionally, with 23 independent 501(c)(3) regional affiliates, any rollout timeline needs to consider a phased approach.

## **Rebrand Launch Communications Deliverables**

- Develop/design an omnichannel campaign to NMSDC Core Stakeholders, members, MBEs, and strategic partners that would include narratives on all elements that changed and the why behind the changes.
- Develop condensed narratives as talking points for NMSDC Core Stakeholders.
- Recommend imagery for future marketing and communications in line with the new brand.
- Assist NMSDC MarCom Department in creating various pitches to national news outlets for a public relations blitz to coincide with the rebrand launch communications.
- Provide guidance to NMSDC's web vendor on how to refresh the new NMSDC website to reflect the new brand (visually and narratively).
- Provide guidance to the regional affiliates on how to refresh their websites to reflect the new brand (visually and narratively).



## Other Rebrand Components

If you feel other rebrand components should be considered, additional deliverables recommended, or other deliverables are needed to accomplish the deliverables stated in each rebrand component, please be sure to call that out within your proposal.

Additionally, primary, and secondary research, as well as focus groups, for each rebrand component can be combined with other rebrand components of the project, when and where it makes sense (e.g., focus groups can review name change, tag line, and logo options all at once or through separate focus groups).

## Launch Timeline

NMSDC does not have a definitive timeline to launch, but rather we want to let the research and process determine the ultimate launch date. That being said, there are a few key events where primary research can be gathered or that could be leveraged for previewing the new brand ahead of launch that we wanted to share to inform your timeline:

- **Minority Business Economic Forum**
  - Audience: C-suite corporate members, supplier diversity practitioners, high-growth MBE owners.
  - Size: 500 attendees
  - Date: May 6-8, 2024
  - Location: Seattle
- **Business Diversity Leadership Summit**
  - Audience: supplier diversity practitioners
  - Size: 300 attendees
  - Date: July 9-11, 2024
  - Location: Pittsburgh
- **NMSDC Annual Conference & Exchange**
  - Audience: all NMSDC stakeholders
  - Size: 5,000 attendees
  - Date: October 20-23, 2024
  - Location: Atlanta

## Proposal Guidelines and Requirements

### Timeline

The following tentative timeline will govern the RFP process:

Date	RFP Process Component
Jan. 2, 2024	RFP Issued
Jan. 12, 2024	Intent to Bid Submitted
Jan. 13-17, 2024	Question Submission Period
Jan. 19, 2024	Questions & Answers Sent Back to All Companies with Intent to Bid

<b>Jan. 29, 2024</b>	Proposals Due
<b>Feb. 5-9, 2024</b>	Review Committee Scores Proposals
<b>Feb. 12-21, 2024</b>	Top Three Firms Present to Review Committee
<b>Feb. 22-29, 2024</b>	Top Firm Contract Negotiations
<b>March 5, 2024</b>	Tentative Kickoff Meeting with Top Firm

NMSDC reserves the right to adjust the timeline at any time and for any reason but will notify all firms that have submitted their intent to bid. NMSDC may at any time choose to discontinue this RFP process without obligation to any firm.

### Proposal Components/Deliverables

Please be sure to include the following in your submission:

- Describe your firm and its experience with rebranding services. If your firm is teaming up with another firm to cover all rebrand components requested, please specifically call out which services will be covered by which firm.
- List the people (principals and other staff) who will be involved and their roles.
- Describe your creative/design process and approach to the project.
- Provide a detailed timeline of planning, research, design/development, and execution/launch; including phases if needed.
- Define all costs associated with the project (including third party costs, if any), how they will be billed, and if they are associated with phases.
- Define your pricing structure, itemize where possible, and include all deliverables associated with each itemization; define estimates for all variable costs.
- Include at least three samples of rebranding work you have done with similar type organizations and two references. Ideally, one sample should include work associated with an organization that has components (chapters, affiliates, etc.).
- Mention any special awards, certifications, and experience with this type of project.
- List all subcontractors associated with the project.
- NMSDC certification status; if not NMSDC certified, please demonstrate how your organization cultivates and maintains a culture of inclusion and belonging, and how its principles and workforce are diverse. It will be vital for the consulting firm to share NMSDC’s commitment to inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility, as well as diverse sourcing of suppliers.

### Evaluation Guidelines

All proposals will be evaluated by the NMSDC’s Marketing and Communications Department staff and Review Committee. The factors that will be taken into consideration are (in no particular order):

- Completeness of proposal.
- Design and appeal.
- Creativity and originality.
- Costs and associated value.

- Samples and references.
- Ability to meet the required timeline.

The evaluation process is not designed to simply award the contract to the lowest bidder, but to select the proposal with the best combination of attributes, including price, based on the evaluation factors.

Finalists will be required to present their solution in front of the Review Committee via video conference call.

NMSDC may choose not to disclose reasons for the rejection of any given proposal.

## Pricing

NMSDC is a nonprofit and holds a 501(c)(3) tax exemption certificate. Please be sure to apply any nonprofit/charitable/pro bono discounts where applicable. Sales tax should not be applied.

Proposals should include a breakdown of the applied pricing system(s) such as whether jobs are priced per project, by the hour, or a combination. Include a detailed description of the process and all revision rounds allowed in the pricing structure. All prices for consultancy, custom design, and development should include a binding “not to exceed” price.

If optional components are proposed, these should be clearly marked, listed, and priced separately.

## Questions

If you have questions regarding the RFP, please compile those and submit one document/email that contains all questions by the date/time listed under Timeline.

## Contact Information

All communications must be directed to:

Stefan Bradham  
vice president, Marketing and Communications  
[stefan.bradham@nmsdc.org](mailto:stefan.bradham@nmsdc.org)  
(301) 512-5762

The preferred method of communication is email.

## Appendix A: Finding Our ‘North Star’ Story

BBDO was hired to do pro bono work for NMSDC’s 50th Anniversary which included the anniversary logo, anniversary slide deck, and primary research into defining the narrative for the next 50 years. The following presentation describes the process, the problem we face, the moment that can catalyze a movement, what we believe, our model for change, a rallying cry, and an overarching message map:

- [Finding Our ‘North Star’ Story](#)

## Appendix B: Brand Style Guides

As part of the 2014 logo and brand development, the following style guides were developed:

- [NMSDC Corporate Brand Guidelines \(Implementing the NMSDC Brand in Communications\)](#)
- [Affiliate Branding Guidelines](#)

Although the Affiliate Branding Guidelines mention no alterations should be made, over the years, some regional affiliates have adjusted their logo by adding gradients, including alternative lockups, and/or layering additional marks onto of the logo. A current listing of regional affiliate logos can be viewed at <http://archive.nmsdc.org/nmsdc-regional-affiliates-list/> and entering password: NMSDC2023! (we are in the process of obtaining a security certificate for the archive site subdomain so ultimately, the link will be <https://archive.nmsdc.org/nmsdc-regional-affiliates-list/> if the first link no longer works when this RFP is distributed).

And with the introduction of NMSDC’s new website in October 2023, we have adjusted our brand style guide to incorporate additional elements related to the website and adjust some of the primary colors to be a secondary color palette: [Current NMSDC Brand Style Guide](#).

## Appendix C: Various NMSDC Logos

Below are variations of the logo that have been used for membership branding (please note, this may not be a full representation of all logos that have been in use since 2014):



National Minority Supplier  
Development Council

Advancing Economic  
Equity Together



Technology to  
Certify • Develop • Connect • Advocate



MEET THE  
NEW



## Appendix D: Various Programmatic Logos

Below are various programmatic logos that are used in conjunction with the standard logo as a lockup, separately, or not at all (please note, this may not be a full representation of all logos that have been in use since 2014):

NMSDC 50th Anniversary

Conference  
& Exchange

The Exchange



## Appendix E: Various NMSDC Committee Logos

Below are various NMSDC Committee logos that are currently in use (please note, this may not be a full representation of all logos that have been in use since 2014):



*NMSDC Affiliate Presidents Committee*



National Minority Business  
Enterprise Input Committee