

**(C) Financial Services**

The TEAM will provide assistance to small and disadvantaged businesses, including women-owned in order to participate in OSDBU's financial assistance programs. Also, firms certified by the U.S. Small Business Administration's 8(a) program, Small Disadvantaged Businesses (SDBs), HubZone Empowerment Contracting Program and Service-Disabled Veterans are eligible to participate in the following financial assistance services.

(1) *Bonding Assistance.* The TEAM will provide firms access to bonding information on the program to obtain bid, performance and payment bonds for transportation-related contracts up to \$1,000,000.

(a) Deliver at least five bonding workshops on package preparation and completion of applications. The DOT bond agents will participate in the workshop presentations *only* when it is feasible for them to attend, or when a training session is scheduled in their locations.

(b) Provide a checklist of items and documents that each participant must bring to the work sessions and which must be approved by the TEAM prior to attendance.

(c) Produce at least 10 complete bond packages from 10 separate firms for approval by the DOT bond agent.

(d) Secure training and/or other assistance from technical assistance providers, educational institutions, and/or the private sector to ensure that firms will submit quality applications to the bond agents for approval.

The proposed plan of action of how the above will be accomplished must receive approval from OSDBU's COTR prior to implementation.

(2) *Short-Term Lending.* The TEAM will provide firms access to lending information on the program to obtain guaranteed lines of credit up to \$500,000 for accounts receivable financing.

(a) Deliver at least five workshops on package preparation and completion of applications. The DOT banks will participate in the workshop presentations *only* when it is feasible for them to attend, or when a training session is scheduled in their locations.

(b) Provide a checklist of loan documentation required by the participants that should accompany firms to each work session. The TEAM will coordinate the checklist with the Lead Participating Bank and receive their input before proceeding with the work sessions.

(c) Produce at least 10 complete loan packages from 10 separate firms in the for approval by the DOT banks.

(d) Secure training and/or other assistance from technical assistance providers, educational institutions, and/or the private sector, to ensure that firms submit quality applications to the banks for approval.

The proposed plan of action of how the above will be accomplished must receive approval from OSDBU's COTR prior to implementation.

**(D) Referral to Technical Assistance Agencies**

The TEAM shall refer small and disadvantaged firms seeking contracts with mega projects to technical assistance

providers from Federal, State and local agencies such as Minority Business Development Centers (MBDCs), Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs), and State DOT highway supportive services contractors, Minority Education Institutions, Procurement Technical Assistance Centers (PTACs), and private sources. Assistance shall include management and other business related information, including completion and submission of DOT Bonding Assistance and Short Term Lending Applications in order to qualify for financial help. Documentation of each referral must be reported on a referral form indicating to whom the referral was made, the organization and name of the contact person, and the reason(s) for the referral. The technical assistance agency must verify (counter sign the form) to document receipt of the referral, and return it to the TEAM.

**(E) Follow Up**

The TEAM will track each firm's progress and report on any assistance provided by the TEAM, such as technical assistance referrals to service providers, referrals to financial institutions, counseling, and referrals to OSDBU's website. Also, report the number and type of contract awards received by clients as a result of TEAM's involvement, including the kind of assistance provided to the small business. Reports must be submitted to OSDBU using the monthly Reporting Form (to be provided). The numerical data on the form must be accompanied by narrative information regarding each activity and should highlight the problems, concerns and successes encountered by the small business person. Follow-up must be conducted on all referrals made by the TEAM.

**(F) Success Stories**

The TEAM must develop a minimum of three success stories each quarter that highlights the accomplishments of DBEs who participate in the assigned mega project(s). The stories shall be submitted to OSDBU for review and approval by the Director, prior to publication in the TEAM's newsletter and/or on OSDBU's Website and the Transportation Link Newsletter.

**(G) Teleconferencing**

Each TEAM will be responsible for teleconferencing calls with other team members and will document best practices that are derived from the interaction with peers. Each TEAM will be responsible for one teleconferencing call per month on a rotating basis during the course of this agreement. The purpose of the teleconference calls is to assist the TEAMS in working together as a cohesive unit, in exchanging ideas, in discussing on-going activities in respective regions and in sharing actions that are successful in one area, which may be replicated in another location. The TEAMS responsible for hosting the teleconferences are as follows:

1st month—Eastern TEAM  
2nd month—Western TEAM  
3rd month—Northern TEAM  
4th month—Southern TEAM  
5th month—Midwest TEAM  
6th month—Southeast TEAM

7th month—Southwest TEAM  
8th month—Northwest TEAM  
9th—month Mid-Atlantic TEAM

At the completion of the 9th month the schedule will rotate back to the first TEAM and the process will continue throughout the period of the Cooperative Agreements. The TEAM that is responsible for placing the call will develop an agenda and transmit it by e-mail to each Project Director prior to teleconference. A written summary of the discussion will be submitted to OSDBU by the host TEAM and the report must include areas such as, discussion highlights, project accomplishments, problems or concerns, and recommendations for improvement.

**2.3 Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU) Responsibilities**

The OSDBU will perform the following roles as its contribution to the attainment of the TEAM objectives:

1. Provide consultation and technical assistance in planning, implementing and evaluating activities under this announcement.
2. Provide orientation and training, as appropriate, to applicants awarded funding for participation as TEAMS.
3. Systematically monitor the performance of successful applicants' activities and program compliance.
4. Assist successful applicants in collaborating and developing or strengthening linkages with State DOTs, technical assistance agencies and DOT grantees and recipients within geographical areas served.
5. Facilitate the exchange and transfer of successful TEAM activities and program information among other TEAMS.

**3. Submission of Proposals****3.1 Content and Format for Proposals**

Each proposal submitted to DOT must be in the format and must contain the information set forth in the application form attached as Appendix A to this announcement.

**3.2 Address; Number of Copies; Deadlines for Submission**

Any applicant (as defined in section 1.6 of this announcement) will submit only one proposal, not to exceed 35 single-sided pages, for consideration by DOT. Applications should be double spaced, and printed in a font size not smaller than 12 points. One unbound copy of the proposal with original signatures suitable for reproduction, and four bound copies, should be submitted. All pages should be numbered. All documentation, attachments, or other information pertinent to the application must be included in a single submission. Proposals should be submitted to: Arthur D. Jackson, Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (S-40) Department of Transportation, 400 7th Street, SW., (Rm. 9414), Washington, DC 20590.

Proposals must be received by DOT/OSDBU no later than March 24, 2003, 4 p.m., e.s.t. Due to security concerns, proposals should be submitted via overnight courier.