

Opportunity system on the MBDA Portal located at <http://www.mbda.gov>; (5) Work closely with the MBDC to establish a system in which procurement and contract opportunities can be shared with the network of MBDCs. This system will include opportunities identified throughout the MBDA network using the Phoenix and Opportunity system located at <http://www.mbda.gov>; (6) Help promote special events to be scheduled at the local community, state and national levels in celebration of MED Week, which occurs annually; and (7) Identify Federal, state and local governments, and private sector market opportunities to the MBDC using the Capital Locator, Resource Locator, Phoenix and Opportunity system on the MBDA Portal located at <http://www.mbda.gov>.

Project Monitoring

MBDA will systematically monitor the performance of the MBDC. This monitoring includes regular review of data input to the performance system, assessment of the end of the second quarter progress report, an on-site review of the center's client files to verify MBDC performance, reported assistance and interviews with clients assisted. In consultation with clients of the individual MBDC, MBDA will assess the Center's effectiveness in providing business development services to their respective minority business communities. MBDA will then provide a report of findings and recommendations for improvement as a result of evaluations and monitoring visits. MBDA will also assess the MBDC's performance for the first and third quarters of performance data (as recorded in the Performance System) and provide a written report of findings. MBDA will approve qualifications of key MBDC staff and respond in a timely manner to correspondence requesting MBDA action.

Eligibility Criteria

For-profit entities (including sole-proprietorships, partnership, and corporations), and non-profit organizations, state and local government entities, American Indian Tribes, and educational institutions are eligible to operate MBDCs.

Award Period

The total award period is three (3) years. Funding will be provided annually at the discretion of MBDA and DoC, and will depend upon satisfactory performance by the award recipient, availability of funds to continue the project, and Agency priorities. Project proposals accepted for funding will not

compete for funding in subsequent budget periods within the approved award period. Publication of this notice does not obligate MBDA or DoC to award any specific cooperative agreement or to obligate all or any part of available funds.

Indirect Costs

The total dollar amount of the indirect costs proposed in an application under this program must not exceed the indirect cost rate negotiated and approved by a cognizant Federal agency prior to the proposed effective date of the award or 100 percent of the total proposed direct costs dollar amount in the application, whichever is less.

Proposal Format

The structure of the proposal should contain the following headings and information, in the following order:

- I. Table of Contents
- II. Program Narrative
 - a. Applicant Capability—Include a resume setting forth the qualifications of the project director as part of the application, along with a copy of a college transcript, as appropriate. Position descriptions and qualification standards for all staff should be included as part of the application. Applicants must provide a copy of their Articles of Incorporation, by-laws and IRS 501(c)(3) non-profit letter or other evidence of non-profit status.
 - b. Resources—Include original commitment letters from those resources listed and indicate their willingness to work with the applicant. These resources can include such items as facilities, equipment, voluntary staff time and space, and financial resources. One to two letters of support (with contact information) from prior assisted larger minority firms and community organizations should be included from those resources willing to work with the applicant.
 - c. Techniques and Methodologies—The applicant's proposal shall include a specific plan-of-action detailing *how* the work requirements will be met and how those techniques will be implemented. MBDA requires the applicant to provide a quarterly breakdown of the goals.
 - d. Costs—Include how client fees will be used to meet the cost-share.
- III. Forms

Note: Pages of the proposal should be numbered consecutively.

Application Forms and Package

One (1) original and two (2) signed copies of the application must consist of: Standard Forms 424, Application for Federal Assistance; 424A, Budget Information-Non-Construction Programs; and 424B, Assurances-Non-Construction Programs, SF-LLL (Rev. 7-97); Department of Commerce forms, CD-436, Applicant for Funding Assistance, CD-511, Certifications Regarding Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility matters: Drug-Free Workplace Requirements and Lobbying, CD-512, Certifications Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion-Lower Tier Covered Transactions and Lobbying. These forms may be obtained by (1) contacting MBDA as described in the **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** section above; (2) by downloading Standard forms at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants> and Department of Commerce at <http://www.doc.gov/forms>, or (3) by applying on-line via the World Wide Web at MBDA's web site located at <http://www.mbda.gov>.

Failure to submit a signed, original SF-424 with the application, or separately in conjunction with submitting a proposal electronically, by the deadline will result in the application being rejected and returned to the applicant. Failure to sign and submit with the application, or separately in conjunction with submitting a proposal electronically, the forms identified above by the deadline will automatically cause an application to lose two (2) points. Failure to submit other documents or information may adversely affect an applicant's overall score. MBDA shall not accept any changes, additions, revisions or deletions to competitive applications after the closing date for receiving applications, except through a formal negotiation process.

Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated and applicants will be selected based on the following criteria. An application must receive at least 70% of the total points available for each evaluation criterion, in order for the application to be considered for funding.

1. Applicant Capability (45 Points)

The applicant's proposal will be evaluated with respect to the applicant firm's experience and expertise in providing the work requirements listed. Specifically, the proposals will be evaluated as follows:

- MBE Community—experience in and knowledge of the minority business