

MBDA no later than 5:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time. Applications postmarked later than the closing date or received after the closing date and time will not be considered.

ADDRESSES: Applicants must submit one signed original plus two (2) copies of the application. Completed application packages must be submitted to: Office of Business Development, Native American Business Development Center Program Office, Office of Executive Secretariat, HCHB, Room 5063, Minority Business Development Agency, U.S. Department of Commerce, 14th Street and Constitution Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20230.

If the application is hand-delivered by the applicant or his/her representative, one signed original plus two (2) copies of the application must be delivered to Room 1874, which is located at Entrance #10, 15th Street, NW., between Pennsylvania and Constitution Avenues.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For further information or to obtain an application package, contact the MBDA National Enterprise Center (NEC) for the geographic service area in which the project will be located or visit MBDA's Minority Business Internet Portal (MBDA Portal) at <http://www.mbda.gov>.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Electronic Access

Applicants are encouraged to submit their proposal electronically via the Internet and mail or hand-deliver the original proposal with original signatures by the closing date and time stated above. Applicants may submit their applications on MBDA's website: www.mbda.gov. All required forms are located at this web address. However, the following paper forms must be submitted with original signatures in conjunction with any electronic submissions by the closing date and time stated above: (1) SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance; (2) the SF-424B, Assurances-Non-Construction Programs; (3) the SF-LLL (Rev. 7-97) (if applicable), Disclosure of Lobbying Activities; (4) Department of Commerce Form CD-346 (if applicable), Applicant for Funding Assistance; and (5) the CD-511, Certifications Regarding Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters; Drug-Free Workplace Requirements and Lobbying.

Pre-Application Conference: A pre-application conference will be held for the NABDC project solicitation. Contact the MBDA Regional Office for the geographic service area in which the project will be located to receive further information. Proper identification is

required for entrance into any Federal building. Notice of the pre-application conference will be available on the MBDA Portal at <http://www.mbda.gov>.

Authority: Executive Order 11625 and 15 U.S.C. 1512.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA): 11.801 Native American Business Development Center Program.

Program Description

MBDA is soliciting applications for the following geographic service areas: North Carolina Cherokee/Ashville, Minnesota Statewide, New Mexico Statewide, North/South Dakota Statewide, Oklahoma Statewide, California Statewide, Arizona Statewide, Northwest (Washington, Oregon, and Idaho).

Through this NABDC Program, MBDA is improving the traditional NABDC Program, by leveraging the full benefit of telecommunications technology, including the Internet, and a variety of online computer-based resources to dramatically increase the level of service that the Centers can provide to Native American and minority-owned firms.

This Program shall also incorporate an entrepreneurial approach to building market stability and improving quality of services delivered. This strategy expands the reach of the Centers by requiring project operators to develop and build upon strategic alliances with public and private sector partners, as a means of reaching out and serving Native American and minority-owned firms with rapid growth potential within the project's geographic service area. In addition, MBDA will establish specialized advanced programs for growth assistance to clients with the capacity to grow and expand. These programs are designed to foster growth assistance to its clients. The NABDC will also encourage collaboration and referrals of clients and non-clients that meet the requirements of these specialized programs and other MBDA sponsored networks. This will provide a comprehensive approach to serving the emerging sector of the Native American business community.

The NABDC will operate through the use of trained professional business consultants who will assist minority entrepreneurs through direct client engagements.

Entrepreneurs eligible for assistance under the NABDC Program are Native Americans, Eskimos, African Americans, Puerto Ricans, Spanish-speaking Americans, Aleuts, Asian Pacific Americans, Asian Indians and Hasidic Jews. References throughout this Notice to provide assistance to

Native Americans also include the eligible non-Native Americans listed in the preceding sentence. No service will be denied to any member of all eligible groups listed above.

MBDA's new strategic growth initiative is focused on serving emerging minority and Native American firms capable of impacting economic growth and employment. MBDA wants to ensure that NABDC clients are receiving a consistent level of service throughout its funded network. To that end, MBDA will require NABDC consultants to attend a series of training courses designed to achieve standardized services and quality expectations. Further information about the training is provided in this document under the heading of Work Requirements.

Background

Under the NABDC Program, MBDA has selected locations for the establishment of Centers based on the size of the population in those markets and the density of Native American-owned companies, as established by U.S. Census Bureau. While this approach to site selection continues, MBDA shall fund a consistent level of projects from prior years. The NABDC Program stands to gain from the increased use of technology, training and strategic partnering in support of its prescribed performance measures.

The NABDC Program is a mainstay of MBDA's overall business development efforts. The NABDC Program is at the core of the Agency's comprehensive strategy for addressing the needs of growing Native American firms. Under this strategy, the NABDC will be expected to provide the following four types of client services:

1. **Client Assessment**—This new activity requires the NABDC to conduct a standardized client assessment, which includes identifying the client's immediate and long-term needs, and establishes a projected growth track. MBDA shall provide a new and innovative electronic tool to support this function (see Business Needs Analyzer under the heading of Enhancing the NABDCs through Technology for more details). This activity shall be conducted three times for each client on an annual basis: one at the onset of service delivery, one prior to the end of the second quarter and one prior to the end of the funding year. This process may also include referring the client to any of MBDA's other funded projects that specialize in specific growth assistance and/or strategic partners that are capable of continuing client growth. The referral