

client engagement letters, other standard correspondence, etc.), and the center is ready to open its doors to the public (5 points);

- **Work Requirement Execution Plan**—The applicant will be evaluated on how effectively and efficiently all staff time will be used to achieve the work requirements (5 points).

4. *Proposed Budget and Supporting Budget Narrative (10 points).*

The applicant's proposal will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- Reasonableness, allowability and allocability of costs (10 points).

Bonus Points

Proposed cost sharing, although not a requirement for NABDC application will be awarded bonus points on the following scale: more than 0–5%—1 point; 6–10%—2 points; 11–15%—3 points; 16–20%—4 points; and over 20%—5 points.

Key Points to Remember

- The Federal amount is not negotiable! The full amount of Federal funds designated for the award *must* be used in its entirety in the proposal.

- All proposed costs must be accompanied by written narrative. Read the budget narrative requirements in the application kit carefully. All costs must be explained in writing.

- **Indirect Costs.** The indirect cost policies contained in OMB Circulars A–21, A–87 and A–122 will apply to MBDA awards for its business development programs. Indirect costs are those costs proposed for *common* or *joint* objectives and which cannot be readily identified with a particular cost objective. Therefore, if the MBDA award is to be the sole source of support for the applicant organization, all costs are direct costs and no indirect costs should be proposed.

Organizations with indirect costs that do not have an established indirect cost rate negotiated and approved by a cognizant Federal agency may still propose indirect costs. For the recipient to recover indirect costs, however, the proposed budget must include a line item for such costs. Also, the recipient must prepare and submit a cost allocation plan and indirect cost rate proposal as required by applicable OMB circulars (A–21, A–87 and A–122). The allocation plan and the rate proposal must be submitted to the Department's Office of Acquisition Management within 90 days from the effective date of the proposed award.

- **Audit Costs.** Audits shall be performed in accordance with audit requirements contained in Office of

Management and Budget Circular A–133, Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations, revised June 27, 2003. OMB Circular A–133 requires that non-profit organizations, government agencies, Indian tribes and educational institutions expending \$500,000 or more in federal funds during a one-year period conduct a single audit in accordance with guidelines outlined in the circular. Applicants are reminded that other audits may be conducted by the Office of Inspector General.

- **Management Fee.** For-profit as well as not-for-profit organizations may negotiate their management fees, but they shall not exceed 7% of *total* estimated direct costs (Federal plus non-Federal) for the proposed award.

- **Program Income.** Many of MBDA's business development services programs allow their awardees to charge a fee for services rendered to clients. Where applicable, fees are considered program income and shall be accounted for and may be used to finance the non-Federal cost-share of the project. Any excess fee income shall be used to further the program purpose in accordance with the terms and conditions of the award.

Selection Procedures

Prior to the formal paneling process, each application will receive an initial screening to ensure that all required forms, signatures and documentation are present. Each application will receive an independent, objective review by a panel qualified to evaluate the applications submitted. MBDA anticipates that the review panel will be made up of at least three independent reviewers who are Federal employees who will review all applications based on the above evaluation criteria. Each reviewer will evaluate and provide a score for each proposal. The Director of MBDA makes the final recommendation to the Department of Commerce Grants Officer regarding the funding of applications, taking into account the following selection criteria:

1. The evaluations and rankings of the independent review panel;

2. The following funding priorities: (1) Identifying and working to eliminate barriers which limit the access of minority businesses to markets and capital; (2) Identifying and working to meet the special needs of minority businesses seeking to obtain large-scale contracts (in excess of \$500,000) with institutional customers; and (3) Promoting the understanding and use of Electronic Commerce by the minority business community. The National Director or his designee reserves the

right to conduct a site visit (subject to the availability of funding) to applicant organizations receiving at least 70% of the total points available for each evaluation criterion, in order to make a better assessment of the organization's capability to achieve the three funding priorities.

3. The availability of funding.

Unsuccessful Competition

On occasion, competitive solicitations or competitive panels may produce less than optimum results, such as competition resulting in the receipt of no applications or competition resulting in all unresponsive applications received. If the competition results in the receipt of only one application, it may or may not require additional action from MBDA depending upon the competitive history of the area, the quality of the application received, and the time and cost limits involved. In the event that any or all of these conditions arise, MBDA shall take the most time and cost-effective approach available that is in the best interest of the Government. This includes, but is not limited to: (1) Re-competition or (2) Re-Paneling or (3) Negotiation.

Universal Identifier

Applicants should be aware that they may be required to provide a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number during the application process. See the June 27, 2003 (68 FR 38402) **Federal Register** notice for additional information. Organizations can receive a DUNS number at no cost by calling the dedicated toll-free DUNS Number request line at 1-866-705-5711 or on MBDA's website at <http://www.mbda.gov>.

Intergovernmental Review

Applications under this program are not subject to Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs."

Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements

The Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements contained in the **Federal Register** notice of October 1, 2001 (66 FR 49917), as amended by the **Federal Register** notice published on October 30, 2002 (67 FR 66109), are applicable to this solicitation.

Executive Order 12866

This notice was determined to be not significant for purposes of E.O. 12866.