

BAA Questions and Answers – Received before July 9, 2018

Question: For the initiative of Sustainable Business Model, is MBDA seeking model(s) to help minority business development organizations, minority businesses, or both?

Answer: MBDA is seeking models that can be shared among minority business development organizations for their use in promoting sustainable business models for minority businesses.

Question: Under the Space Commerce initiative, is MBDA's goal to target minority business owners operating in 'space commerce' or those commercializing space technologies for non-space applications?

Answer: MBDA's goal is to fund innovative projects that promote minority business owners operating in space commercialization industries related to technological advancement.

Question: Is the goal to target only existing minority business owners or to also create new companies?

Answer: MBDA's goal and mission is to promote and support existing minority businesses; the agency does not provide funding for the creation of new businesses.

Question: Will a proposal that earmarks part of the grant to being allocated to an investment fund, to be directly invested into MBE's, be considered?

Answer: Projects that provide support for greater use of non-traditional funding for MBEs; that assist minority fund managers with accessing capital from institutions; and that assist investment managers or fund management firms to invest in minority businesses, projects and/or minority communities will be considered.

Question: The solicitation says funding may not be used for construction projects – would laying broadband infrastructure qualify as construction?

Answer: Yes. Broadband network installation would qualify as infrastructure.

Question: For the inclusive infrastructure initiative, do local government applicants have to partner with minority-owned businesses, or does their project have to benefit a minority-owned business?

Answer: Local government applicants are not required to partner with minority-owned businesses, however, their projects must benefit minority-owned businesses.

BAA Questions and Answers – Received before July 3, 2018

Question: Can a project cross state lines? For example, could a program implemented by an organization in D.C. benefit organizations in Maryland or Virginia?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Can capital be used for lending?

Answer: No. MBDA does not have lending authority and cannot provide grants to be used as loans.

Question: Would loan capital revolve/return to the grantee?

Answer: MBDA does not have lending authority and funding provided for the Broad Agency Announcement cannot be used to provide loans.

Question: How should project income (income from loan interest payments, for example) be treated?

Answer: See the response above.

Question: Can the grant award under the Capital Access initiative be used by a non-profit organization as capital in a revolving loan fund or patient capital fund for loaning or investing in for profit minority-owned businesses?

Answer: No. MBDA does not have lending authority and cannot provide grants to be used as loans.

Question: Page 14, bullet point ii references an approach with, "...the capability of being deployed in the near term (2-3 months of award)...". What does deployment within 2-3 months mean?

Answer: Deployment means implemented. The project must be started or implemented within 2 to 3 months from the date of the award.

Question: Where can I find the written responses to the Q&A that was held during the two teleconferences?

Answer: Responses to the questions submitted during the teleconferences can be found at www.mbda.gov.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Question: What is a Broad Agency Announcement (BAA)?

Answer: A BAA is a notice announcing the potential availability of funds that: (1) is general in nature; (2) identifies areas of policy and programmatic interest; (3) includes general criteria for selecting proposals; (4) seeks the participation of any interested, eligible entities; and (5) excludes currently existing assistance programs.

Question: How does a BAA differ from a Business Center Program Competition?

Answer: The BAA describes broad policy and program initiatives covering the Presidential and Agency Priorities. A BAA is a competitive mechanism to encourage new programs, education, outreach, innovative projects or sponsorships that are not addressed through the MBDA business center program.

Question: How will the BAA help minority entrepreneurs?

Answer: Proposals submitted in response to the BAA will support MBDA's mission by developing innovative and effective approaches that will strategically engage and encourage MBEs, entrepreneurs, and other eligible applicants to participate in the 14 initiatives:

- 1) a **capital access initiative** to support greater use of non-traditional funding for MBEs; to assist minority fund managers with accessing capital from institutions; and to assist investment managers or fund management firms to invest in minority businesses, projects, and/or minority communities;
- 2) Federal assistance to support innovative projects seeking to impact one or more core needs for **American Indian/Alaska Native/Native Hawaiian (AI/AN/NH)** entities and businesses;
- 3) an innovative project that demonstrates and executes a strategy to identify and promote minority business owners in **aquaculture** industries or research institutions with the goal of advancing U.S. marine aquaculture;
- 4) innovative **disaster readiness** project(s) that can increase MBE inclusion in pre/during/post contracting systems at the local, state, or federal level (e.g., National Emergency Resource Registry) ahead of any natural disaster;
- 5) **disaster recovery** projects that demonstrate a capability for improving local or regional minority businesses who have been affected by natural disasters;
- 6) entrepreneurship assistance for **formerly incarcerated individuals** including educational programs and workshops, entrepreneurial training, and coaching assistance;
- 7) support for **minority women entrepreneurs** in the U.S. and its territories to build their businesses, secure contracts and capital, and increase employment opportunities;
- 8) funding for innovative projects supporting the White House Initiative on **Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs)**, released February 28, 2017 to help HBCUs to compete for Federal research and development funds, leverage partnerships with Federal laboratories and/or technology related resources, develop and implement STEM entrepreneurship, and compete for Federal contracting opportunities;
- 9) Federal assistance to support innovative projects that promote and ensure the **inclusion** and use of minority enterprises in public and/or private **infrastructure projects**;
- 10) funding for **research project(s)** to identify and quantify industry-specific information for and about minority business enterprises that empirically define implications for the U.S. economy;
- 11) financial support for innovative project(s) that promote minority business owners operating in **space commercialization** industries related to technological advancement;
- 12) funding for innovative model(s) and plan(s) that can be readily shared among minority business development organizations to promote **sustainable business model(s)** for MBEs;
- 13) Federal assistance for innovative project(s) that demonstrate and execute a strategy to identify minority business owners in high-tech industries with the goal of having them engage with a **federal laboratory** to explore new product **development and commercialization**; and

- 14) support for the development of an innovative project that can be readily shared and that addresses the business development needs of minority businesses **virtually** through a cloud-based tool and applications that provide access to information and resources regarding contract opportunities, sources of financing and/or investment capital, and/or business knowledge.

Public/Stakeholder

Question: How can minority businesses take advantage of this opportunity?

Answer: Minority businesses, or any eligible applicant, can submit proposals to provide programs or services relating to the initiatives listed in the BAA. Alternatively, minority businesses can seek to participate as subrecipients, vendors, or direct beneficiaries of funded projects. Please visit our website at mbda.gov for more information on the agency, programs, and resources.

BAA Applicant

Question: How are the proposals evaluated?

Answer: Proposals are evaluated independently and based on criteria set forth in the BAA. Applications are scored against the criteria stated in the BAA.

Question: How much funding is available for the proposals submitted in response to the Announcement?

Answer: MBDA expects a total of approximately \$11,650,000 to fund the financial assistance awards under this Announcement utilizing FY2018 appropriated funds. The funding amounts referenced in this BAA are subject to the availability of appropriated funds. Publication of the Announcement does not obligate the U.S. Department of Commerce or MBDA to award any specific grant or cooperative agreement or to obligate all or any part of available funds.

Question: If I apply and am not selected, what recourse do I have?

Answer: An unsuccessful applicant can request a copy of their application and a debriefing from MBDA.

Question: What is the period of performance?

Applications should be submitted for a one (1) year award period.

The BAA published on June 11, 2018, is the official competition document. The information in this FAQ is not intended to conflict with or supersede the BAA in any way.

