

Enterprising Women of Color

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NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Federal Agency Name(s): Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA), Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA), Department of Commerce

Funding Opportunity Title: Enterprising Women of Color

Announcement Type: Initial

Funding Opportunity Number: MBDA-OBD-2020-2006443

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 11.805, MBDA Business Center (MBC)

Dates: Full applications will be accepted in Grants.gov up to 11:59 p.m. Eastern Daylight Savings Time on May 30, 2020. Applications received after this time will not be reviewed or considered for funding under this Announcement.

Funding Opportunity Description: The purpose of this notice is to request applications for special projects and programs associated with the Minority Business Development Agency's (MBDA) strategic plans and mission goals, as well as to provide the general public with information and guidelines on how MBDA will select proposals and administer discretionary Federal assistance under this Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO).

FULL ANNOUNCEMENT TEXT

I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. Program Objective

The Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA), a bureau of the U.S. Department of Commerce, will provide Federal assistance to support Business Centers seeking to promote and ensure the inclusion and use of minority enterprises. The MBDA Minority Business Development Project provides technical assistance and business development services to minority business enterprises (MBEs). In accordance with Executive Order 11625 and 15 U.S.C. § 1512, MBDA is soliciting competitive applications from eligible organizations for the operation of a MBDA Minority Business Center as described in this Announcement. MBDA will award two (3) individual grants pursuant to this Announcement in any U.S. State or U.S. Territory.

The Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) seeks to provide Federal assistance in support of Business Centers that promote and seek to resolve the challenges faced by minority enterprises. The funds to be awarded by this program are not congressionally directed funds or designated for existing funded awards. In the Fiscal Year 2020 appropriations bill, Congress authorized MBDA to foster, promote, and develop minority business enterprises through grants, contracts, and other agreements with public or private organizations. See Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2020, Pub. L. No. 116-93 (December 20, 2019). MBDA is authorized pursuant to Executive Order 11625 to provide financial assistance to public and private organizations so that they may render technical and management assistance to minority business enterprises and defray all or part of the costs of pilot or demonstration projects conducted by public or private agencies or organizations which are designed to overcome the special challenges of minority business enterprises.

B. Program Priorities

MBDA, a bureau of the U.S. Department of Commerce, leads Federal Government efforts to promote the growth and global competitiveness of minority business enterprises (MBEs). MBDA has established key priorities designed to overcome the unique challenges faced by MBEs. MBDA is now initiating new approaches to serve MBEs that complement Presidential priorities and U.S. Department of Commerce goals. The Commerce Department and MBDA supports Minority Women in Business Goals of the Administration. MBDA has established the Enterprising Women of Color program as support.

Enterprising Women of Color – As part of the Administration’s focus on empowering

women, MBDA is seeking to promote minority entrepreneurs, with a focus on women entrepreneurs, to become engines of economic growth in their communities. As of 2019, 6.4 million minority-owned women businesses employed nearly 2.4 million people and generated \$422.5 billion in revenue according to the American Express State of Women-Owned Businesses Report (September 23, 2019). Women-owned businesses represent 42% of all businesses. This report also estimated that if the revenues generated by minority women-owned firms matched those currently generated by all non-minority women-owned businesses, they would add 4 million new jobs and \$981 billion in revenues to the U.S. economy. Women re-invest approximately 90% of their earnings into their family and their communities, creating a unique multiplier. Investments in women-owned businesses make communities prosper.

MBDA seeks to fund Business Center(s) with a particular focus on supporting minority women entrepreneurs in the U.S. and its territories to build their businesses, secure contracts and capital, and increase employment opportunities. The primary drivers of the Minority Business Center – Enterprising Women of Color are: (i) capacity building, and (ii) job creation/retention resulting from facilitating contracts and financing for medium-sized minority businesses. MBDA Centers provide technical business services including (but not limited to) the development of a pool of contracts and finance opportunities; direct matching of opportunities with qualified/vetted MBEs; relationship management and deal sourcing initiatives (e.g. industry clusters); facilitating MBE growth through exports (identifying global markets and financing); identifying, matching and securing alternative sources of capital and financing; educating MBEs on the benefits of strategic growth alternatives (e.g., mergers, acquisitions and/or joint ventures); MBE advocacy; and, providing service referrals to MBEs of all sizes.

Projects must be located in a U.S. State or U.S. Territory, and must provide services that benefit minority-owned businesses in any U.S. state or territory. Applicants are especially encouraged to provide services to women-owned MBEs.

MBDA anticipates making three (3) awards under this initiative, each for \$500,000 per year, for a total of \$1,500,000 per year (\$3 million total).

1. Agency Requirements for the Center

- a) Alignment to MBDA Mission – Each proposed project should align, complement, and support MBDA’s mission to promote the growth and global competitiveness of America’s growing minority business enterprise (MBE) community.
- b) Service Location - MBDA seeks to fund projects located in any U.S. State or U.S.

Territory.

c) Performance - Funded projects must align with the MBDA program priorities (I.A. and I.B. above).

d) Innovation - Applications must address the unique challenges faced by minority business enterprises (MBEs). Organizations that are owned or controlled by the following persons or groups of persons are the organizations that are considered MBEs for the purpose of this NOFO: African-American, Hispanic-American, American Asian and Pacific Islander, Native American (including Alaska Natives, Alaska Native Corporations and Tribal entities), Asian Indian American, and Hasidic Jewish American. See 15 C.F.R. §§ 1400.1, 1400.2 and Executive Order 11625 (1969). MBDA especially encourages applicants to address challenges faced by women-owned MBEs.

2. Performance Measures and Goals

In order to remain consistent with the Agency's mission, applications should allow for the measurement of growth of minority business enterprises (MBEs), especially women-owned MBEs. Applicants should plan projects that allow them to set goals in these areas and to capture success stories.

Measures and Goals

Number of Clients Served

Number of Contracts

Number of Success Stories

Number of Clients Served: the actual number of women-owned MBEs served during this funding period. The clients must complete a written engagement form with the center for specific services.

Number of Contracts: the number of awarded contracts and other binding procurement awards secured by clients.

Number of Success Stories: a qualitative measure of client success provided in a detailed narrative of the services rendered, the impact on MBE operations and/or revenue, and the actual outcome (i.e., contract or capital procurement).

C. Program Authority

In the Fiscal Year 2020 appropriations bill, Congress authorized MBDA to provide funding through grants, contracts, and other agreements with public or private organizations. See Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2020, Pub. L. No. 116-93 (December 20, 2019).

MBDA is authorized pursuant to Executive Order 11625 to provide financial assistance to public and private organizations so that they may render technical and management assistance to minority business enterprises and defray all or part of the costs of pilot or demonstration projects conducted by public or private agencies or organizations which are designed to overcome the special challenges of minority business enterprises.

II. Award Information

A. Funding Availability

MBDA expects to expend approximately \$3,000,000 (FY2020 \$1,500,000 and FY2021 \$1,500,000) to fund the financial assistance awards under this Announcement. The funding amounts referenced in this Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) are subject to the availability of appropriated funds. Publication of this NOFO 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.

B. Project/Award Period

MBDA will issue awards for a two-year term from September 1, 2020 through August 31, 2022. Receipt of any prospective funding also is contingent upon the availability of funds from Congress and continued relevance to program objectives and will be at the sole discretion of the Department of Commerce.

C. Type of Funding Instrument

Selected applicant(s) will receive funding through a grant under this Announcement. After the award is made, MBDA staff may assist or guide the Project by means of a post-award conference, ongoing collaboration, and communication.

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants include: For-profit entities (including but not limited to sole-proprietorships, partnerships, limited liability companies, and corporations), non-profit organizations, institutions of higher education, commercial organizations, state and local government entities, and quasi-government entities in any U.S. State or U.S. Territory.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement

Cost sharing is not required unless determined by the applicant that the project can only

be funded with matching/cost sharing funds.

C. Other Criteria that Affect Eligibility

None.

IV. Application and Submission Information

A. Address to Request Application Package

All application materials and forms are available at the grants.gov website (<http://www.grants.gov>). Helpful competition materials such as FAQs can be found on the MBDA Internet Portal (www.mbda.gov).

B. Content and Form of Application

General Requirements. The application must provide sufficient information for the agency to make a determination of merit of the proposal. Each applicant's proposal must describe in detail the programmatic deliverables that address "Agency Requirements for the Center" (See Section I.B.1 above) as well as meet content requirements below.

1. Content Requirements

a) **A Complete Application** - An application must be submitted for each proposal under this Announcement. Applications should include the elements for each section as described below in order to be eligible for the maximum consideration. Applications that fail to include all the necessary elements may not be reviewed or considered and may be disqualified (see Section V. Application Review Information). A complete application should contain the following:

(1) Title Page (One (1) page limit)

At a minimum, the application title page must provide the applicant's name, address, telephone number, email address, date of submission, and the Funding Opportunity Number. Applicants are also encouraged to provide the following additional information: project's title, total budget, start and end dates, and the names, affiliations, complete mailing addresses, email addresses, and telephone numbers of all persons affiliated with the proposal.

(2) Table of Contents (One (1) page limit)

a. Under the Table of Contents, applicants should outline the full contents of the application and provide corresponding page numbers. All pages of the application must be

consecutively numbered.

(3) Applicant Narrative (Ten (10) page limit)

A detailed narrative with defined sections as described below.

(a) Project Synopsis (Two (2) paragraph limit). It is critical that the project synopsis accurately summarize the project being proposed and convey all essential elements of the activities. The narrative must identify the designated service location of the project.

(b) Project Description. The applicant should fully describe and explain the project being proposed, including:

- (i) a description of the proposed project that thoroughly explains the approach, methodology, implementation and operation of the proposal over the entire period of performance;
- (ii) clear and accurate identification of the designated service location of the project;
- (iii) an approach that clearly demonstrates innovation, creativity, cost-efficiency, a strong likelihood of achieving the desired outcome, and the capability of being deployed in the near term (2-3 months of award) and of having an impact in the near term (6-12 months of award) or long term (within 1-2 years of award);
- (iv) a concept of operations that clearly describes a process, method, or model upon which the project will meet specific objectives (i.e., defined measures), outputs, and outcomes or goals;
- (v) a description of specific work requirements from beginning to end and how the proposed project will accomplish the stated initiative;
- (vi) success indicators using the defined measures and goals as noted above; and
- (vii) a description of how the project will be able to adapt to any operational and/or performance challenges.

Literature cited in the project description may be submitted to support the project description statements in this section.

(c) Applicant Capability. The applicant must present information describing the experience and qualifications of the applicant organization to carry out the proposal. The application should include the following information.

- (i) Organizational Outline. A concise outline of what the applicant organization does, a discussion of experience with similar projects or services as those proposed, an explanation of experience dealing with the specific issues facing minority business enterprises, and a list of previous or current projects or services relevant to the proposal.
- (ii) Organizational Background. An organizational background that emphasizes the

applicant's knowledge of the minority business sector and strategies for enhancing its growth, expansion, and capacity building related to the MBDA initiative under this NOFO.

(iii) **Organizational Structure.** A chart showing the applicant's organizational structure during the period for which the proposal applies, along with a functional statement noting the duties and/or responsibilities of all units that comprise the organization. Applicants must also provide a brief narrative background statement outlining the financial operation of the organization.

(iv) **Organizational Value.** A section that highlights the applicant's organizational contribution to partner with MBDA (and other relevant and established/proposed partnerships). If the applicant proposes to leverage third-party partnerships and their respective resources to accomplish the proposed project under this NOFO, the applicant will need to provide proof of commitment by the third party as an attached document in the proposal.

(v) **Biographies or Resumes for Major Participant(s).** The applicant should provide a one-page bio or resume showing only relevant experience of the major project participants. Major participants include the organization leader, financial management officer, and/or project manager/daily supervisor of the proposed project.

(vi) **Proof of Capability.** Applicants are also encouraged to provide proof of capability such as (but not limited to) public records of accomplishments, public citations, and/or letters of referrals as attachments in the proposal.

III. **Project Goals and Objectives.** The applicant must provide a detailed list of project components and a statement of objectives for each component. This statement must include:

(i) clear objectives and specific approaches to achieving its project description and those objectives;

(ii) an implementation schedule that specifically outlines the coordination of all project components, organizational activities, timelines, relevant measures with expected outputs, projected outcomes and impact; and

(iii) annual goals and a breakout of the goals in six-month increments

(4) **Supporting Documents (Three (3) page limit)**

Literature Cited (if applicable). The applicant may provide additional information that supports the proposed project. If submitted, literature cited in the proposal may support scoring under the Applicant Narrative – Project Description criterion as noted above.

(5) **Standard Forms (SF) and Budget Narrative**

The applicant must provide the required SF, attachments, and budget information as described in the section below.

(a) Standard Application Forms. Please refer to the application package available through www.Grants.gov. Please review each form to determine which are required with a submission. Each applicant may not be required to submit all forms listed, depending on the project type or the applicant type.

(i) Signed SF-424. The SF-424 must be signed by the authorized representative. Electronic signatures submitted through grants.gov satisfy this requirement. One form will cover all funding periods.

(ii) SF-424A. Budget Information-Non-Construction Programs.

(iii) SF-424B. Assurances for Non-Construction Programs. Budget Narrative Must be completed and submitted for all non-construction applications.

(iv) SF-LLL Disclosure of Lobbying Activities.

(v) Commerce Department (CD)-511. Certification Regarding Lobbying. Certification regarding debarment, suspension and other responsibility matters, drug free workplace requirements, and lobbying.

(b) Budget Breakdown. The applicant must submit the SF-424 (application package) and initial breakout via the SF-424A form (SF-424A non-construction, as appropriate). The applicant must indicate matching funds if provided in the appropriate areas of the SF-424 and SF424A. Costs must align.

(c) Budget Narrative. (Five (5) page limit). The applicant must provide justifications for all budget items in enough detail to enable the proposal reviewers to evaluate the appropriateness of the funding requested. The budget justification must be broken-out and detailed using the same budget categories as the SF-424A. Costs must align.

All the applicant's proposed expenditures for the project must be broken-down into their individual units and discussed. The budget narrative must match the proposed line item budget (as found in the SF-424A). The budget narrative must also align with work activities, goals, staffing, and other proposed resources. Fringe benefits and other percentage item calculations must match the SF-424A for the proposal year.

(d) Required Travel Item(s). Each applicant should include travel costs for (2) key personnel to attend the following items:

(i) Minority Enterprise Development Week, Awards Program; and

(ii) National Training Conference.

All costs included in the proposed budget must be allowable, allocable, and reasonable. Each item of cost must be accompanied by a sufficiently detailed description in the budget narrative and align with the SF-424A to enable proposal reviewers to determine if the cost is allowable, allocable, and reasonable. One-word descriptions and lump sum amounts are not

adequate for justifying costs or narrative descriptions. Each budget item should be broken out and described fully so that there is no ambiguity or question regarding its relevance or reasonableness to the project and its objectives.

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Uniform Guidance will be used to determine allowable costs and will apply to the entire amount of the award, including both the federal and non-federal costs. See Uniform Guidance: Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Uniform Guidance), 2 CFR Part 200 (2015).

Please refer to section H. "Other Information" of this Announcement for additional information pertaining to required travel.

(6) Format Requirements

All pages should be single-spaced and should be composed in at least 11-point font with one-inch margins on 8-1/2 inch x 11-inch paper. The total proposal shall not exceed 20 pages, including the title page, table of contents, applicant narrative, literature cited, budget narrative, letters of support or letters of commitment (if any), and organizational structure. The following items are not included in the 20-page limit: resumes/bios of key personnel and required forms. Failure to follow the requirements may result in the rejection of the application. Any PDF or other attachments that are included in an electronic application must meet the above format requirement when printed.

C. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)

Each applicant (unless the applicant is a Federal awarding agency which has an exception from the requirements of 2 CFR § 25.110(b) or (c), or an exception approved by the MBDA under 2 CFR § 25.110(d)) is required to:

- (i) Register in SAM before submitting an application;
- (ii) Provide a valid unique entity identifier in the application; and,
- (iii) Continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by MBDA (or any other Federal agency).

MBDA may not make a Federal award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier and SAM requirements. If an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time MBDA is ready to make the award, MBDA may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a Federal award and use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant.

D. Submission Dates and Times

All proposals must be received on or before May 30, 2020 at 11:59:59 pm Eastern Daylight Time (EDT). Applications may be submitted starting from the publication date of this NOFO up to the deadline above. Applications received after this time will not be reviewed or considered for funding. Applications must be submitted electronically via www.grants.gov. The electronic submission will receive a date and time stamp at www.grants.gov and will be processed after it is fully uploaded. Applicants should anticipate receiving confirmation of successful submission within forty-eight (48) hours. It is imperative that applicants obtain this confirmation as proof of successful submission. Waiting to submit an application until the end of the competition period puts an application at risk; be sure to allow ample time.

E. Intergovernmental Review

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

F. Funding Restrictions

Applicants requesting an indirect cost rate (IDC) are required to submit a copy of their current and signed indirect cost rate agreement with the application package.

If an applicant does not have a current Facilities and Administrative (Indirect) Cost Rate Agreement that was negotiated and approved by the Department of Commerce (or by the applicable cognizant Federal agency), please provide a statement to this effect. The applicant must prepare and submit a cost allocation plan and rate proposal or a negotiated indirect cost rate as required by 2 CFR Part 200 “Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards.” See 2 CFR § 200.414. The allocation plan and the rate proposal must be submitted to MBDA (or applicable cognizant Federal agency) within ninety (90) days from the award start date. Alternatively, in accordance with 2 CFR § 200.414(f), a non-Federal entity that has never received a negotiated indirect cost rate may elect to charge a de minimis rate of 10 percent of modified total direct costs. Applicants proposing a 10 percent de minimis rate pursuant to 2 C.F.R. § 200.414(f) should note this election as part of the budget and budget narrative portion of the application.

Indirect costs proposed under the award must be clearly identified as a separate budget line-item.

G. Other Submission Requirements

The time it takes to completely upload an application will vary depending on several factors, including the size of the application, the speed of the applicant's Internet connection, and the time it takes www.grants.gov to process the application. If www.grants.gov rejects the application, the applicant must resubmit the entire application and receive a date and time stamp from www.grants.gov. The www.grants.gov time stamp will be considered the date and time of submission receipt. Before beginning to apply through www.grants.gov, please review the application instructions posted at www.grants.gov and in this NOFO.

1. Grants.gov Registration - To apply through www.grants.gov, you must register for a user ID and password. This process can take between three to five business days and up to four weeks if all steps are not completed correctly. Information about the registration process can be found at http://www.grants.gov/applicants/get_registered.jsp.

Before applying, your organization needs to register with Grants.gov, which requires appointing one or more Authorized Organization Representatives (AOR). Applicants should register as organizations, not individuals. You must register an Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) for your organization. The AORs registered at www.grants.gov are the only officials with the authority to submit applications for your organization. Your organization may authorize multiple AORs for www.grants.gov purposes. Below are instructions for registering as an organization.

i. Electronic Submission - The electronic submission date is the date that applications have been submitted electronically and received by www.Grants.gov. Proof of timely submission shall be the official date and time that www.Grants.gov receives your application. You must save and print the proof of submission from/on www.Grants.gov. If problems occur while using www.Grants.gov, the applicant is advised to (i) print any error message received and (ii) call www.Grants.gov at 1-800-518-4726 for immediate assistance.

If you experience a [grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) "systems issue" (technical problems or glitches with the [grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) website) that you believe threatens your ability to complete a submission, you must (i) print any error message received and (ii) call the Grants.gov Contact Center at 1-800-518-4726 for immediate assistance. Ensure that you obtain and document a case number regarding your communications with [grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov).

Important note: problems with an applicant organization's computer system or equipment are not considered "systems issues." Similarly, an applicant's failure to: (i) complete the required registration, (ii) ensure that a registered AOR submits the application, or (iii) receive an email message from [grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) are not considered systems issues. A [grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) "systems issue" is an issue occurring in connection with the operations of [grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) system,

such as the temporary loss of the service by grants.gov due to unexpected volume of traffic or failure of information technology systems, both of which are highly unlikely.

Confirmation of successful submission requires 48 hours. Applicants are advised to review the Grants.gov tutorial to minimize risk of an unsuccessful submission. Please visit <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-tools-and-tips.html>.

3. **Returning Grants.Gov Users - Organizations already registered with Grants.gov do not need to re-register, but the organization must maintain a current System for Award Management (SAM) registration (formerly Central Contractor Registration (CCR)).** If the applicant's SAM registration is not up to date the application will not be accepted by Grants.gov. An applicant's CCR username will not work in SAM. Applicants must create a new SAM user account to renew or update registration. To obtain additional information and to verify that all required registrations are current, please visit www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM. SAM is the official U.S. Government system that consolidated the capabilities of CCR Federal Agency Registration (FedReg), Online Representations and Certifications Application (ORCA), and Excluded Parties List System (EPLS).

Potential applicants should begin registration early, as the complete registration process takes between three business days and three weeks. Before applying for a funding opportunity, your organization needs to register with grants.gov and assign one or more Authorized Organization Representatives (AOR). We recognize registration activities take extra time; however, this is part of the security process the U.S. Government must use to prevent fraud and abuse of funds. The Grants.gov application process is outlined below.

Obtain a DUNS Number. Call 1-866-705-5711 or access the Dun & Bradstreet website <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform> (1-2 business days).

Register with SAM. Access <https://www.sam.gov>. You'll also need the authorizing official of your organization and an Employer Identification Number (EIN) (7-10 business days).

Create Grants.gov Username and Password. Complete your Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) profile and create your username and password. You will need to use your organization's DUNS Number (same day).

Authorize the AOR. Request approval, then your organization's E-Biz POC must log in to Grants.gov to confirm you as an AOR (same day).

Track AOR Status. Log in to Grants.gov and look at the Applicant welcome box for your

current status (same day).

Download an application package. Use Funding Opportunity Number MBDA-OBD-2020-2006443 and Download a Grant Application Package (same day).

Complete your application package. Write your proposal and fill out ALL the required forms, fields, and certifications (allow 3 days).

Submit your application package. Access your completed application package, ensure all the necessary information is entered, check the package for errors, then click the "Save & Submit" button on the cover page (3 days).

Track my application package. Enter the tracking number you received after the step above and click the "Submit Tracking Number(s)" button. Note, confirmation of successful submission may require 48 hours (allow 2 days).

Applications must be submitted electronically via www.grants.gov.

V. Application Review Information

A. Evaluation Criteria

A. Evaluation Criteria

The successful applicant will possess experience that is substantive to the area(s) related to the MBDA's Priorities (see section I.B.) and the "Agency Requirements for the Center" (see section I.B.1), and will be evaluated based on the evaluation criteria included below. It is also anticipated (although not mandatory) that the mission of the successful applicant organization will align with the mission of MBDA. The successful applicant also will ensure alignment of budget, resources, objectives, outcomes, or goals and timelines to accomplish the proposed project.

1. Applicant Narrative (65 points) - This section of the Project proposal will be evaluated on the criteria identified below.

a) Project Description. (25 Points). The applicant should fully describe and explain the proposed Project, including:

(i) description of the proposed Project that thoroughly explains the approach, methodology, implementation, and operation of the proposal over the entire period of performance; (5 points)

(ii) an approach that clearly demonstrates innovation, creativity, cost-efficiency, a strong

likelihood of achieving the desired outcome, and the capability of being deployed in the near term (2-3 months of award) and of having an impact in the near term (6-12 months of award) or long term (within 1-2 years of award); (5 points)

(iii) a concept of operations that clearly describes a process, method, or model upon which the Project will meet specific objectives (i.e., defined measures), outputs and outcomes, or goals; (5 points)

(iv) a description of specific work requirements from beginning to end and how the proposed project will accomplish the stated initiative; (5 points)

(v) success indicators using defined and relevant measure(s) and goal(s); (3 points) and

(vi) a description of how the project will be able to adapt to any operational and/or performance challenges. (2 points)

Literature cited in the project description may be submitted to support the project description statements in this section.

b) Applicant Capability. (25 points). The applicant must present information describing the experience and qualifications of the organization to carry out the proposal. The application should include the following information:

(i) Organizational Outline. A concise outline of what the applicant organization does, a discussion of experience with similar projects or services as those proposed, and an explanation of experience dealing with the specific issues facing minority business enterprises and a list of previous or current projects or services relevant to the proposal. (5 points)

(ii) Organizational Background. An organizational background that emphasizes the applicant's knowledge of the minority business sector and strategies for enhancing its growth, expansion, and capacity-building related to the MBDA initiative under this NOFO. (5 points)

(iii) Organizational Structure. A chart showing the applicant's organizational structure during the period for which the proposal applies, along with a functional statement noting the duties and/or responsibilities of all units that comprise the organization. Applicants must also provide a brief narrative background statement outlining the financial operation of the organization. (5 points)

(iv) Organizational Value. A section that highlights the applicant's organizational value to partner with MBDA and other relevant and established/proposed partnerships. If the applicant proposes to leverage third-party partnerships and their respective resources to accomplish the proposed Project under this NOFO, the applicant will need to provide proof of commitment by the third party as an attached document in the proposal. (5 points)

(v) Biographies or Resumes for Major Participant(s). The applicant should provide a one-page bio or resume showing only relevant experience of the major Project participants.

Major participants can be defined as the organization leader, financial management officer,

and/or project manager/daily supervisor of the proposed Project. (0 points)

(vi) Proof of Capability. Applicants are also encouraged to provide proof of capability such as (but not limited to) public records of accomplishments, public citations, and/or letters of referrals as attachments in the proposal. (5 points)

c) Project Goals and Objectives. (15 points) The applicant must provide a detailed list of Project components and a statement of objectives for each component. This statement must include:

(i) clear objectives and specific approaches to achieving its Project description and those objectives; (5 points)

(ii) an implementation schedule that specifically outlines the coordination of all Project components, and organizational activities, timelines, relevant measures with expected outputs, projected outcomes and impact; (5 points) and

(iii) annual goals and a breakout of the goals in six-month increments (5 points)

Evaluation Criteria Points

Project Description (up to 25 points)

Applicant Capability (up to 25 points)

Project Goals and Objectives (up to 15 points)

Applicant Narrative Total 65

2. Applicant Budget (35 points) - This section of the Project proposal will be evaluated on the criteria identified below. Section IV.B.1(c)(iii)(5), Standard Forms, and Budget Narrative, which provides detailed budget and cost proposal requirements.

a) Budget Breakout (15 points). The applicant must submit the SF-424 (application package) and initial breakout via the SF-424A form (SF-424A non-construction, as appropriate). The applicant must indicate matching funds if provided in the appropriate areas of the SF-424 and SF424A. Costs must align.

b) Budget Narrative (20 points). The applicant must provide justifications for all budget items in enough detail to enable the proposal reviewers to evaluate the appropriateness of the funding requested. The budget justification must be broken out and detailed using the same budget categories as the SF-424A. Costs must align.

All the applicant's proposed expenditures for the Project must be broken out into their individual units and discussed. The budget narrative must match the proposed line item budget (as found in the SF-424A). The budget narrative must also align with work activities,

goals, staffing, and other proposed resources. Fringe benefits and other percentage item calculations must match the SF-424A, for the proposal year.

- (i) Required Travel Item(s). Each applicant should include travel costs for key personnel to attend the following two items:
 - (a) Minority Enterprise Development Week; and
 - (b) MBDA National Training Conference

All costs included in the proposed budget must be allowable, allocable, and reasonable. Each item of cost must be accompanied by a sufficiently detailed description in the budget narrative and align with the SF-424A to enable proposal reviewers to determine if the cost is allowable, allocable, and reasonable. One-word descriptions and lump sum amounts are not adequate for justifying costs or narrative descriptions. Each budget item should be broken out and described fully so that there is no ambiguity or question regarding its relevance or reasonableness to the Project and its objectives.

Evaluation Criteria Points

- Budget Breakout (up to 15 points)
- Budget Narrative (up to 20 points)
- Applicant Budget (35)
- Total Available Points 100

All applications must adhere to the submission guidelines provided in this section and section IV.B.1.a., “A Complete Application.” Omissions will result in the deduction of points from the final score according to the table below up to and including disqualification of the entire application.

Mandatory Item	Failure to Adhere Shall Result In
Title Page	5 Point Deduction
Table of Contents	5 Point Deduction
Applicant Narrative	Disqualification
Budget Narrative	Disqualification
Required Standard Forms (SF) and Attachments	Disqualification

All Project proposals will be evaluated, and applicant(s) will be selected based on the level at which the proposal addresses the evaluation criteria above, less any points deducted for failure to include the mandatory items noted above.

B. Review and Selection Process

1. Initial Screening – Prior to the formal review process, each application will receive an initial administrative screening to ensure that all required forms, signatures, and documents are present. An application will not be evaluated by the review panel if:

- a) The application is received after the closing date;
- b) The application package is not complete;
- c) The project synopsis/description fails to address one of the above-listed agency program objectives (see Section I.B., “Program Priorities” and Section I.B.1., “Agency Requirements for the Center”);
- d) The application falls within the scope of an existing MBDA competitive program or announcement for Federal Funding or duplicates a project previously awarded; or
- e) The principal purpose of the activities in the application is to provide a direct benefit or service to MBDA.

2. MBDA Merit Review Panel - Each responsive application will receive an independent, merit review by a panel qualified to evaluate the applications submitted based on the published criteria. The review panel will consist of at least three (3) individuals, all of whom could be a combination of full-time Federal employees and/or non-Federal civilians, at least one of the reviewers will be an MBDA employee. Each reviewer shall evaluate and provide individual scores for each proposal based on the criteria set out in this Section (see Application Review Information, above) for a maximum of 100 points. The Applicant Narrative section of the application will be eligible for a total of 65 points, the Applicant Budget section will be eligible for 35 points. The review panel may discuss the application(s) but will not provide a consensus on scores for each applicant. Each application will be reviewed against the criteria individually.

Applications will be ranked by averaging the scores of all reviewers for each application. The Chairperson of the merit review panel will be responsible for averaging reviewers’ scores and collating reviewer comments. Applications that receive an overall average of 75 points or more will be considered for funding. Applications receiving an average score of 60 to 74 points may be given a second consideration for funding if the panel requests additional information or clarification and if the applicant is able to respond to the panel’s request for additional information/clarification within an allotted time. Thereafter, the Merit Review Panel may rescore these applications. Applications receiving fewer than 60 points will not be considered for funding.

C. Selection Factors

The ranked applications receiving an average score of 75 points or higher or given a second consideration (as noted above) will be forwarded to the Office of the Associate Director, Office of Business Development for review and consideration of the merit panel evaluation and overall average score. Upon completion, the Office of the Associate Director, Office of Business Development will forward funding recommendations to the Selecting Official.

The MBDA National Director is the MBDA Selecting Official and makes the final recommendation to the Grants Officer regarding the funding of applications under this Announcement. The Selecting Official will recommend funding for applications evaluated as meritorious based on the final ranking prepared by the Merit Review Panel; however, the Selecting Official may recommend an application for an award outside the rank order recommended by the Merit Review Panel based on one or more of the following selection factors: the availability of funds, and/or Presidential, Department of Commerce, and MBDA priorities.

Prior to making a final recommendation for funding to the Grants Officer, MBDA may conduct negotiations with an applicant regarding the elements of the application and/or may request that the applicant provide written clarifications regarding its application.

3. Federal Awarding Agency Review of Risk Posed by Applicants - After applications are proposed for funding by the Selecting Official, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Grants Management Division (GMD) will conduct pre-award risk assessments in accordance with 2 C.F.R. § 200.205, which may include a review of the financial stability of an applicant, quality of the applicant's management systems, history of performance, and the applicant's ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements imposed on non-Federal entities. In addition, for any Federal award under this notice where the Federal share will be greater than the simplified acquisition threshold (currently \$250,000.00; see 2 CFR § 200.88) over the period of performance: (1) MBDA is required to review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM (currently FAPIIS) (see 41 U.S.C. § 2313); (2) an applicant, at its option, may review information in the designated integrity and performance systems accessible through SAM and comment on any information about itself that a Federal awarding agency previously entered and is currently in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM; and (3) MBDA will consider any comment(s) by the applicant, in addition to the other information in the designated integrity and performance system, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants as described in 2 CFR § 200.205.

D. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

Anticipated time for processing awards is one hundred twenty (120) days from the receipt of applications. MBDA anticipates that the awards under this NOFO will be made with start dates of September 1, 2020. Successful applicants may be eligible for pre-award costs.

VI. Award Administration Information

A. Award Notices

The notice of award (CD-450) is executed by the Department of Commerce Grants Officer and is the authorizing document. It is generally provided electronically via the Grants Online system to the Authorized Representative of the recipient organization. The Authorized Representative for a successful applicant will receive instructions from MBDA on how to access the Grants Online system to accept the award.

MBDA will notify unsuccessful applicants, in writing, after a final selection has been made and after an offer has been accepted. Those applications that are not ultimately selected for funding will be retained by MBDA for a period of three (3) years after which they will be destroyed.

On occasion, competitive solicitations or competitive panels may produce less than optimum results, such as a competition resulting in the receipt of no applications or a competition resulting in all unresponsive applications received.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Administrative and national policy requirements for all Department of Commerce awards contained in the Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements, published in the Federal Register on December 30, 2014, effective December 26, 2014 (79 FR 78390) are applicable to this solicitation and may be accessed online at: <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2014/12/30/2014-30297/department-of-commerce-pre-award-notification-requirements-for-grants-and-cooperative-agreements>

Awards made under this announcement are subject to the Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions. This document will be provided in the

award package. This document can be found at:

http://www.osec.doc.gov/oam/grants_management/policy/documents

Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements: Through 2 C.F.R. § 1327.101, the Department of Commerce adopted Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards at 2 C.F.R. Part 200, which apply to awards in this program. Refer to <http://go.usa.gov/SBYh> and <http://go.usa.gov/SBg4>

C. Reporting

1. Reviews - The Project is funded for two-years. MBDA will conduct performance assessments every 6 months from the start date of the project.

MBDA will conduct periodic assessments of the Project to verify progress. MBDA will conduct ongoing monitoring throughout the funding award period and maintain open communications with key project staff. The level of monitoring will be dependent on the awarded applicant's proposed performance measures, milestones (e.g., outputs and outcomes), and goals.

2. Reporting Requirements - The Center is required to provide the following reports:

a) Financial Reports – The financial report shall include details on the use of Federal funds and contributions of non-Federal funds (if proposed). The financial reports are to be submitted to the Department of Commerce via Grants Online on a semi-annual and annual basis. The semi-annual report is due forty-five (45) days after the end of the initial six-month period. The annual report is due within ninety (90) days after the expiration of the award.

b) Progress Performance Report. The progress performance reports are to be submitted to the Department of Commerce via Grants Online on a semi-annual and annual basis. The semi-annual report is due forty-five (45) days after the end of the initial six-month period. The annual report is due within ninety (90) days after the expiration of the award.

The semi-annual and annual reports must include data and information to determine Project progression and success. MBDA will rely on these reports, data, and information as evidence for future program design, policy recommendations, and/or statistical purposes.

Note: Failure to submit reports in a timely manner may result in MBDA award enforcement and/or delay access to Federal funds.

c) Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 Reporting - The

Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006, 31 U.S.C. § 6101 note, includes a requirement for awardees of applicable Federal grants to report information about first-tier sub-awards and executive compensation under Federal assistance awards. All awardees of applicable grants and cooperative agreements are required to report to the Federal Sub-award Reporting System (FSRS) available at www.FSRS.gov on all sub-awards over \$25,000. Please see the OMB guidance published at 2 CFR Parts 170 and 200, which can be accessed at http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr200_main_02.tpl.

d) Restrictions Governing Making Grants to Corporations Convicted of Felony Criminal Violations and/or Unpaid Federal Tax Liabilities - In accordance with current Federal appropriations law, execution by an applicant of the Representation by Corporations Regarding an Unpaid Delinquent Tax Liability or a Felony Conviction Under Any Federal Law will be required in a format requested by NOAA before any award will be made under this NOFO.

VII. Agency Contacts

Prospective applicants may contact:

Nakita Chambers
MBDA Program Manager
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave., N.W., Room 5079
Washington, DC 20230
Email: nchambers@mbda.gov
Tel: 202-482-0065

VIII. Other Information

1. Pre-Application Teleconference

MBDA will conduct a pre-application teleconference on April 14, 2020. The time of the pre-application teleconference is 2:00 – 3:00 p.m. E.D.T. Participants must register at least 24 hours in advance of the teleconference. Please visit the MBDA Internet Portal at www.mbda.gov to register and view additional information.

2. Post Award Teleconference

MBDA shall conduct a mandatory post-award teleconference to ensure that the successful

applicant has a clear understanding of the project award, terms, conditions and expectations. During the post-award teleconference, MBDA will: introduce Federal officers, orient the project operator and key project staff, explain project reporting requirements and procedures, identify available Federal resources that can enhance the capabilities of the project, and provide detailed information about MBDA's virtual marketing/promotion resources, branding and logo requirements, and other online systems.

3. National Minority Enterprise Development (MED) Week Conference

The Project operator and key Project staff will be required to attend the MED Week conference unless otherwise noted by MBDA. MED Week is a national recognition of the success and contributions of minority business enterprises to the U.S. economy. The President of the United States designates the specific dates on which MED Week falls. MBDA conducts an annual conference featuring workshops, seminars, and business matchmaking activities that inform minority business attendees of new opportunities and information related to contracts, capital, and markets. MED Week also hosts a celebratory awards program in recognition of MBE clients that have made significant economic impact and minority business advocates that have supported supplier diversity. The location of MED week varies annually in major cities across the country.

Note: Applicants should include expenses to accommodate two (2) individuals to travel to the MED Week Conference in the proposed budget, including travel and registration. The duration of the Conference is approximately three (3) days.

4. MBDA National Training Conference

The project operator and key project staff will be required to attend the MBDA National Training Conference (NTC), unless otherwise noted by MBDA. The NTC is a 2-3-day conference designed to review key MBDA initiatives among all MBDA sponsored programs and MBDA staff. Specialized programmatic training as well as formal meetings and/or training with the MBDA Office of Business Development are also offered at this event. The NTC is held once a year, depending on the availability of funds. The location of this event varies.

Note: applicants should include expenses related to the NTC in the proposed budget to accommodate (2) individuals to travel, including travel. The duration of the conference is approximately 2-3 days.

B. Collaboration with MBDA

MBDA welcomes working collaboratively with each award recipient and project to serve the minority business community. The project and its staff are encouraged to support MBDA by communicating the mission and values of the MBDA to the minority business community. Collaboration with MBDA may include items such as: pre-award and award review site visits, promotion of MBDA sanctioned events and conferences, annual nomination of minority businesses for MED Week recognition, inclusion of MBDA to project-lead activities, submission of project success stories and/or profiles for MBDA social media promotion, and co-promotion of project and MBDA lead activities.

C. Past Performance and Non-Compliance with Award Provisions

A consistent pattern of unsatisfactory performance under prior federal awards may result in an application not being considered for funding. Failure to comply with any or all of the provisions of an award may have a negative impact on future funding by the Department of Commerce (or any of its operating units) and may be considered grounds for any or all of the following actions: establishment of an account receivable, withholding payments under any Department of Commerce awards to the recipient, changing the method of payment from advance to reimbursement only, imposition of other special award conditions, suspension of any active Department of Commerce awards, and termination of any active Department of Commerce awards.

D. Limitation of Liability

In no event will MBDA or the Department of Commerce be responsible for preparation costs for the Applicant's proposal. All funding periods under the award are subject to the availability of funds to support the continuation of the project. Publication of this Announcement does not obligate MBDA or the Department of Commerce to award any specific project or to obligate any available funds.

E. Audit Costs

Audits shall be performed in accordance with audit requirements contained in the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements found in 2 CFR Part 200, Subsection F. Recipients expending \$750,000 or more in federal funds during the recipient's fiscal period must conduct a single audit in accordance with guidelines outlined in 2 CFR §§ 200.500-.520. For-profit organizations not covered by the audit requirements in 2 CFR §§ 200.500-.520 are subject to the audit requirements set forth in the terms and conditions of the award. Recipients that expend less than \$750,000 during the recipient's

fiscal year in Federal awards are exempt from Federal audit requirements for that year, except as noted in 2 CFR § 200.503, but records must be available for review or audit by appropriate officials of the Federal agency, pass-through entity, and Government Accountability Office (GAO). Applicants are also reminded that other audits may be conducted by the Department of Commerce Office of Inspector General and by other authorized federal agencies.

F. Right to Use Information

DOC reserves the right to use information contained in applications submitted under this opportunity as well as all reports and performance data submitted by recipients to undertake an evaluation of its programs, either through its staff or by hiring a third party. The applicant acknowledges and understands that information and data contained in applications for financial assistance, as well as information and data contained in financial, performance, and other reports submitted by applicants, may be used by the DOC in conducting reviews and evaluations of its financial assistance programs. For this purpose, applicant information and data may be accessed, reviewed and evaluated by DOC employees, other Federal employees, Federal agents and contractors, and/or by non-Federal personnel, all of whom enter into appropriate confidentiality and nondisclosure agreements covering the use of such information. As may be provided in the terms and conditions of a specific financial assistance award, applicants are expected to support program reviews and evaluations by submitting required financial and performance information and data in an accurate and timely manner and by cooperating with DOC and external program evaluators. In accordance with 2 C.F.R. § 200.303(e), applicants are reminded that they must take reasonable measures to safeguard protected personally identifiable information and other confidential or sensitive personal or business information created or obtained in connection with a DOC Federal financial assistance award.

G. Freedom of Information Act Disclosure

Department of Commerce regulations implementing the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. Sec. 552, are found at 15 C.F.R. Part 4, Public Information. These regulations set forth rules for the Department regarding making requested materials, information, and records publicly available under the FOIA. Applications submitted in response to this Notice of Funding Opportunity may be subject to requests for release under the Act. In the event that an application contains information or data that the applicant deems to be confidential commercial information that should be exempt from disclosure under FOIA, that information should be identified, bracketed, and marked as Privileged, Confidential, Commercial or Financial Information. In accordance with 15 CFR § 4.9, the

Department of Commerce will protect from disclosure confidential business information contained in financial assistance applications and other documentation provided by applicants to the extent permitted by law.

Appendix A

Business Center Trademark and Licensing Requirements

The “MBDA Business Center” logo and the phrase “MBDA Business Center” are trademarks of the Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA), U.S. Department of Commerce. MBDA reserves exclusive rights in the use of the “MBDA Business Center” logo, the phrase “MBDA Business Center,” and all associated marks and representations (hereafter “MBDA trademarks”). The Award from MBDA includes the terms of this Appendix covering the trademark and licensing requirements for use of the MBDA trademarks. By signing the Award, the operator of the MBDA Business Center agrees to the terms and conditions related to the use of the MBDA trademarks as stated in this Appendix.

This appendix covers only the MBDA trademarks and does not authorize an MBDA Business Center to use the Department of Commerce seal or the MBDA Headquarters logo on any electronic or printed communications for any purpose.

Grant of License: Pursuant to the acceptance of the terms of the Award, MBDA (hereafter “Licensor”) grants to the operators of each MBDA Business Center (hereafter “Licensee/Center”) a non-exclusive, royalty-free right to use the MBDA trademarks for the following purposes:

1. Business materials and products – business cards, letterhead, folders, programs, bulletins, and newsletters.
2. Event and workshop signage – flyers, publications, and signs announcing events sponsored or organized by or on behalf of the Licensee/Center. Licensee/Center must be an active participant in the event.
3. Electronic communications – email signature blocks, webpages, announcements, and signs regarding events sponsored or organized by or on behalf of the Licensee/Center.
4. Center signs and markers – signs and print information to indicate or describe the location of the Licensee/Center or an event sponsored or organized by the Licensee/Center.

The MBDA trademarks may be used to advertise the Licensee/Center’s participation on a per event basis in collaboration with a third party.

Assignment and Sub-licenses: This license is not assignable. Notwithstanding this provision, the Licensee/Center may hire subcontractors to perform manufacturing and distribution activities, only in connection with items (1) – (4) above, under this License. Any attempt by the Licensee/Center to assign any portion of this License or to grant an improper sub-license to a third party shall be deemed a breach of this License and may constitute cause for termination of the Award.

Quality Control: Licensor has the right to inspect the Licensee/Center's goods, services, and promotional activities employing the MBDA trademarks to ensure that such uses are of proper quality and otherwise consistent with the terms of the Award and this License. Licensor may terminate this License should Licensor determine that the MBDA trademarks have been used in a manner that is inconsistent with the terms of the Award or this License.

Duration and Termination: This License is effective upon the execution of the Award and shall terminate on the close out date of the Award. Upon termination of this License to use the MBDA trademarks, all rights of the Licensee/Center to use the MBDA trademarks shall immediately terminate. In the event of a breach of any of the terms and conditions of this License by the Licensee/Center, the Licensor shall give Licensee written notice of such breach. In the event Licensee/Center does not cure such breach within thirty (30) days, Licensor may immediately terminate this License and shall notify the Licensee/Center in writing of such termination.

Validity and Ownership of Mark: Licensee/Center is prohibited from interfering with Licensor's rights in the MBDA trademarks, including challenging Licensor's use, registration of, or application to register the licensed MBDA trademarks, alone or in combination with other words or designs, anywhere in the world. The Licensee/Center is further prohibited from attempting to register the licensed MBDA trademarks, or any derivatives thereof, or any confusingly similar mark, whether or not registered by MBDA, alone or in combination with other words or designs, as a U.S. or foreign trademark, and from asserting any intellectual property rights in the MBDA trademarks through Licensee/Center's use. Any rights asserted by the Licensee/Center in the MBDA trademarks shall vest in the U.S. Department of Commerce, and any goodwill from use of MBDA trademarks by Licensee/Center shall inure to the benefit of the U.S. Department of Commerce.

Use of Mark: In addition to the above provisions of this License, the Licensee/Center shall abide by the following guidelines:

1. The Licensor considers the licensed MBDA trademarks to be its trademarks and service marks and holds them out to the public as such.
2. The Licensee/Center in using the licensed MBDA trademarks that are or hereafter become federally registered shall clearly indicate that the marks are federally registered with the U.S. Patent & Trademark Office and that they are the property of the U.S. Department of Commerce. Such indication of registration shall be in the form of the “®” (“R in a circle”) designation. The Licensee/Center in using the licensed MBDA trademarks that are not federally registered shall clearly indicate that the marks are the property of the U.S. Department of Commerce. Such indication shall be in the form of the “TM” or “SM” designation.

Indemnification: By signing the Award, the Licensee/Center agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the Licensor, any of its employees, agents, and contractors, against any and all claims, damages (including attorneys’ fees) asserted by or paid to any party on account of a breach or alleged breach of the above warranties regarding the use of the MBDA trademarks.

Appendix B

Information Technology and Computer Requirements

MBDA requires that all Center operators meet certain requirements related to the acquisition, installation, configuration, maintenance and security of information technology (IT) assets within thirty (30) calendar days after receipt of the award, in order to ensure seamless and productive interface between and among all grant recipients, minority-owned businesses, the MBDA Federal IT system and the public. These required assets and their configuration are hereinafter referred to as the “enterprise.” The basic components of the enterprise are the mobile workstation, the server (where applicable), local area network (LAN) (where applicable), and a source for web enablement.

At a minimum, the Center operator shall provide one (1) business-grade mobile workstation (“workstation”) (e.g. business grade laptop), for the exclusive use of each Center employee delivering minority business assistance to the public under an award from MBDA. All mobile workstations shall be web enabled and can take form in one or more service platforms including: (i) connected to a client/server network using an Ethernet protocol enabling communication with all workstations on the operator’s network; or (ii) using wireless protocol devices allowing direct access to the internet. The server shall have a constant, high-speed broadband Internet connection. The Center operator may also ensure that each Center employee performing business development activities (e.g. business

development consultants/specialist) has access to business grade tablets capable of logging into MBDA's CRM system and other tools supported by MBDA.

The Center operator shall ensure that each of the Center employees (including management, administrative personnel, contractors, full-time, part-time, and non-paid (volunteer) staff) have a unique electronic mail (email) address that is available to the public. The designated email address(s) shall utilize a Microsoft 2010 platform (or later version) and be able to interface with Salesforce or any other technology platforms implemented by MBDA. The Center operator shall design, develop and maintain, in accordance with the computer requirements, a presence on the Internet's World Wide Web that conforms to MBDA's current branding policy. The Center operator shall also maintain appropriate computer and network security precautions during all periods of funding by MBDA. All IT requirements, as described herein, shall be met by the Center operator within thirty (30) calendar days after the award.

A Center operator's failure to adhere to the MBDA Business Center program computer requirements as set forth herein may result in enforcement action under the award, including but not limited to the withholding of award payments until full compliance is reached.

A. Cloud Based Solution: A cloud-based solution is any resource that is provided over the Internet. The most common cloud solution resources are Software-as-a-Service (SaaS), Platform-as-a-Service (PaaS) and Infrastructure-as-a-Service (IaaS).

B. Network Design: All locations where services are delivered to the eligible organization as defined by Executive Order 11625 and 15 CFR § 1400.1, the Center operator can operate a Client Server Network that provides shared disk drives and the setup of print queues for a network printer(s) (if individual printers are not provided) for each staff person delivering services to the eligible public. MBDA shall, from time to time, specify certain configurations of the enterprise hardware and software to meet interface requirements.

MBDA requires servers using an operating system that is fully compatible with Microsoft Windows 2010. Any server providing principal service to the desktops shall contain one (1) or more terabytes (TB) of hard drive space using two or more disks configured appropriately to ensure data retention should one disk fail. At least one (1) Quad-Core Intel central processing unit (CPU) or any other server providing principal service to the workstations shall be used. Web servers, mail servers and/or servers maintained by a third party such as an Internet Service Provider (ISP) shall meet the minimum server specifications as stated herein.

C. Mobile Workstations: All workstation systems shall not be more than four (4) calendar years old at time of award and shall contain an Intel Cores Quad Processor class central processing unit (CPU), operating at speeds not less than 2.4 Gigahertz (GHz). Each workstation system shall contain a hard drive with a storage capacity of at least five hundred (500) GB and 1 Gigabyte (GB) of RAM and a CD or DVD reader/writer. All workstation systems shall have installed an operating system fully compatible with Microsoft Windows 10 64 bit Professional or higher Operating System, MS Office 2010 Professional or higher, Microsoft Internet Explorer 9.x, Anti-Virus software, software or hardware-based Firewall and Adobe Reader 9.1 or higher. Additionally, it is suggested that a full-page scanner, along with software fully compatible with Adobe Acrobat (Standard or Professional, 10.2 or higher) be installed on a minimum of one workstation to produce electronic document submissions.

The Center operator shall refresh (i.e. replace) all related computing devices (mobile workstations, tablets, etc.) designated to support the Center every four years or sooner if it is determined that the technology is no longer compatible with updated security standards or computing requirements. The Center operator shall provide evidence of their system refresh to their assigned Program Analyst and the MBDA Program Management Supervisor.

D. Maintenance and Security: An enterprise map (“as-built”) reflecting adherence to the computer and networking requirements set forth herein shall be maintained by the Center operator for review by MBDA at any time. The Center operator shall designate and train one administrative person competent in the operation of an Operations System fully compatible with Windows 2010 network (or higher) and local area network (LAN) technology as described herein. From time to time, MBDA may require that certain software be loaded on servers and desktops. In any given year, the cost of this additional software may be \$600.00 or higher per mobile workstation and \$1000.00 or higher per server. Applicants should include amounts for potential software upgrades for outer years in their proposed budget.

Every employee of the Center shall be assigned a unique username and password to access the computing device and enterprise. Every Center employee shall be required to sign a written computer security agreement (the computer security agreement will be provided at the time of award and/or on the MBDA Portal). Every Center manager, employee, and contractor and any other person given access to the enterprise shall sign the security agreement and an original copy of the signed agreement shall be kept in the MBDA Business Center files. A photocopy of the signed agreement shall be submitted to MBDA, no later than thirty (30) calendar days after receipt of the award. The original agreement shall be maintained on file by the Center operator. All subsequent new hires and associations requiring access to the Center or MBDA systems shall read, understand, and sign the

security agreement prior to issuance of a password no more than fourteen (14) calendar days after the start of their employment. No Center employee shall have access to any MBDA system(s) without a signed security agreement on file at MBDA.

E. Web Site: The Center operator shall create and maintain a public web site using a unique domain/address (e.g., www.center-name.com), that will conform to MBDA web standards (A comprehensive listing of MBDA web standards can be found on the MBDA Portal). MBDA Web standards may include, but are not limited to the following:

- 1) The first page (Index page) of the web site shall clearly identify the Center as a MBDA Business Center funded by the U.S. Department of Commerce's Minority Business Development Agency." The index page of the web site shall load on software fully compatible with Microsoft Internet Explorer 9.x browser software using a normal home computer with 56 Kb/s analog phone- line connections in less than five (5) seconds.
- 2) The web site shall contain a "Contact" page with the names of all Center employees, the business and mailing address of the Center, business phone and fax numbers and email addresses of the Center and Center employees, a statement referencing the services available at the Center, the hours under which the Center operates and a link to the MBDA homepage at www.mbda.gov.
- 3) For purposes of electronically directing clients to the appropriate Center staff, the Center web site shall also contain a short biographical statement for each Center employee including management, contractors, part-time, full time, and non-paid (volunteer) personnel, providing services directly to the eligible public under an award from MBDA. This biographical statement shall contain: the full name of the Center employee, and a brief description of the expertise of the Center employee to include academic degrees, certifications and any other pertinent information with respect to that employee's qualifications to deliver minority business assistance services to eligible members of the public.
- 4) No third-party advertising of commercial goods and services shall be permitted on the site. All links to websites other than federal, state or local government agencies and non-profit educational institutions must be requested, in advance and in writing, through the MBDA Office of Public Affairs and the website must provide an external link policy or notice stating that they will be redirected to an external website. Specifically, a notice like the following must be provided:

The appearance of hyperlinks to other sites does not constitute endorsement by the [Center

operator's company name] or by the Minority Business Development Agency of these web sites or the information, products or services contained therein. Regarding such external web sites, we do not exercise any editorial control over the information you may find at these locations. These links are provided consistent with [Center operator's company name] stated purpose as shown on our web site. We recommend that you review the website's information collection policy or terms and conditions to fully understand what information is collected and/or provided.

5) Furthermore, the approval for the placement of such links shall not be unreasonably withheld but is subject to withdrawal if MBDA determines the linked site is unsuitable. No employee of the Center operator, nor any other person, shall use the Center web site for any purpose other than that approved under the terms of the agreement between the Center operator and MBDA.

6) Every page of the web site shall comply with Federal standards of the American With Disabilities Act, Section 508, and be reviewed by the Project for accuracy, currency, and appropriateness every three (3) months. In addition, MBDA's Section 508 Officer may occasionally review the project web site to ensure that it is Section 508 Compliant. For additional information and guidelines, please visit www.section508.gov. Appropriate privacy notices and handicapped accessibility will be predominantly featured. In general, MBDA may audit the Center web site and recommend changes in accordance with the guidelines set forth herein.

7) The Center operator will also be responsible for informing their assigned MBDA Program Analyst and the MBDA Program Management Supervisor of any changes in operations such as location, contact information or otherwise.

F. Time for Compliance Regarding IT Requirements: Within thirty (30) calendar days after receipt of the award, the Center operator shall report via email to the Federal Program Officer to the MBDA Business Center Program Management Supervisor that he/she has complied with all technical requirements as specified herein (a checklist will be provided at the Post Award Conference). Within thirty (30) calendar days after receipt of the award, the operator shall report the name, contact telephone number and email address of the Center director, Network or System Administrator.

G. Performance System: All required performance reporting to MBDA shall be conducted via the Internet using the Performance system to be found at a secure web site (www.mbd.gov).

H. Data Integrity: The Center operator shall take the necessary steps to ensure that all data entered into MBDA systems, and systems operated by the Center operator in support of the award, or by any employee of the Center operator is verified, accurate and timely.

I. Personally, Identifiable Information (PII) and Business Identifiable Information (BII): The Center shall configure systems to protect the PII/BII contained in the system from unauthorized access. The Center should employ best-practice techniques to protect confidentiality of sensitive PII and BII information. A Center, when it designs, develops, or operates a system of records on individuals or entities, or otherwise collects or has access to personally identifiable information (PII) or Business Identifiable Information (BII) in the performance of this grant shall, prior to taking such action, comply with the following requirements:

1. The Center shall have established policies and procedures in place to safeguard MBDA client PII/BII. The policies and procedures shall describe the Center's processes for identifying, assessing and mitigating privacy risks associated with PII. The policies and procedures shall also describe training that will be provided to Center staff and consultants on their roles and responsibilities for safeguarding MBDA client PII/BII and incident management of suspected or confirmed loss of MBDA client PII/BII in accordance with OMB's Recommendations for Identity Theft Related Data Breach Notification, September 20, 2006, and OMB Memorandum M-07-16, Safeguarding Against and Responding to the Breach of Personally Identifiable Information, May 22, 2007.

2. The Center shall also ensure that all processes, procedures and equipment associated with PII/BII comply with all laws, regulations, and MBDA security mandates as defined by National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Special Publication (SP) 800-61 Revision 1 and are aligned with the incident categories and timelines referenced in Table J-1 of NIST SP 800-61, as well as U.S. government policies developed to safeguard the confidentiality, integrity and availability of MBDA data that may contain PII/BII. In support of these requirements, the Center shall have:

- a. Policies, procedures, and mechanisms designed to restrict access to MBDA data exclusively to authorized personnel;
- b. Policies, procedures, and mechanisms that prevent transmission or disclosure of MBDA data to an unauthorized party;
- c. Policies, procedures, and mechanisms that ensure MBDA data on portable devices are encrypted using methods compliant with Federal Information Processing Standard 140-2;
- d. Policies, procedures, and mechanisms that ensure any sensitive MBDA data transmitted across public networks (i.e., the Internet) by Business Center staff and Center

consultants are protected using encryption compliant with Federal Information Processing Standard 140-2;

e. Annual assessments to the MBDA demonstrating that the policies, procedures, and mechanisms required by continuing to be functional, that the Center is compliant with these requirements, and that these requirements are effective.

f. Copies of its privacy policies to MBDA Headquarters at the time of award. The Center shall also provide a copy of the policies and procedures (or otherwise make such policies and procedures available) to all of its staff and consultants.

g. Ensure that those individuals adhere to the Center's policies and procedures relating to PII/BII and to MBDA-prescribed policies and procedures for the safe handling of MBDA PII/BII, including privacy and MBDA security training requirements and privacy incident management.

h. Immediate alerts to MBDA of any event, including the suspected or confirmed loss of MBDA PII/BII, that could potentially affect the privacy rights of individuals or which violates any federal law, regulation, mandate or requirement as defined in NIST 800-122 by contacting the MBDA designated point of contact. The Center shall act in accordance with its policies and procedures in the event of any suspected loss of MBDA PII/BII and shall support the MBDA's investigation and resolution of reported incidents as requested by the MBDA. For purposes of this Clause, a "suspected loss of PII/BII" shall be interpreted liberally to mean any situation in which the loss of PII/BII or unapproved access to PII/BII is deemed a reasonable possibility.

J. Time for Compliance Regarding IT Requirements: Within sixty (60) days after receipt of the award, the Center operator shall report via email to the Federal Program Officer and the MBDA CIO of the Office of Information Technology, Research and Innovation and to the MBDA Program Manager that he/she has complied with all technical requirements as specified herein (a checklist will be provided at the Post Award Conference). Within thirty (30) days after receipt of the award, the Center operator shall report the name, contact telephone number and email address of the Center director, Network or System Administrator.

K. Data Integrity: The Center operator shall take the necessary steps to ensure that all data entered into MBDA systems, and systems managed by the Center operator in support of the award, or by any employee of the Center operator is verified, accurate and timely.

L. Training Definitions

1. Post-Award Conference: This session, held once in the first year, is designed to review the grant award and key issues pertaining to the successful management of the award.

Failure to attend shall designate the Center operator as non-compliant with the award and may result in award termination. A change in Center director will require the Center director to attend a post-award conference as soon as practicable following the commencement of his/her duties. The anticipated location of training is Washington, D.C.

2. **Grants Online System Orientation:** This session, held once in the first year, is designed to review basic access, navigation and understanding of the Grants Online (GOL) system. The GOL system is utilized by MBDA and the Grants Office to manage all financial assistance awards administered by the Agency. This training will be conducted via webinar and will not require travel.
3. **MBDA CRM Performance System Orientation:** This training is designed to review basic access, navigation and understanding of the MBDA CRM Performance system. This system is a tool developed to enhance the client intake and relationship management processes across MBDA. The system is also used to capture and track Center performance. This training will be conducted via webinar and will not require travel.
4. **Monthly Business Center/Project Teleconferences:** MBDA will conduct monthly Business Center Teleconferences with all Centers/Projects to provide updates on upcoming events, training, system enhancements, policy developments, and to offer a forum for Center questions and feedback. Travel will not be required.
5. **MBDA National Training Conference (NTC):** This training is designed to review key MBDA initiatives among all the Centers/ Projects and MBDA staff. Specialized programmatic training as well as formal meetings and/or training with the MBDA Office of Business Development are also offered at this event. The NTC is held once a year, depending on the availability of funds. The location of this event varies. However, the Center should anticipate travel related costs to this activity. This session is normally a 3- day event, not including travel days.
6. **MBDA National MED Week:** This is an annual program typically conducted in Washington, D.C. and is a culmination of all MED Week celebrations. The event features workshops, seminars, and business matchmaking activities that inform attendees of new opportunities and information related to contracts, capital and markets. MED Week also hosts a celebratory awards program in recognition of MBE clients that have made significant economic impact and minority business advocates that have supported supplier diversity. The Center will nominate MBE clients in the pre-planning stages of the conference and support the promotion of the conference through outreach efforts to its respective clients. The Center will be required to attend the full conference unless otherwise noted by MBDA.

This event is held once a year, depending on the availability of funds for approximately 1-4 days. The Center attendees should anticipate travel related costs.

7. E-Tools: This refers to any online application in which all or some parts of the application is downloaded from the web each time it is run. It may refer to browser-based apps that run within the user's web browser, or to "rich client" desktop apps that do not use a browser or to mobile apps that access the web for additional information. Training will be conducted at the NTC or via webinar.

8. IT Security Training PII/BII: The Center shall have established policies and procedures in place to safeguard MBDA client PII/BII. The policies and procedures shall describe the Center's processes for identifying, assessing and mitigating privacy risks associated with PII. The policies and procedures shall also describe training that will be provided to Center staff and consultants on their roles and responsibilities for safeguarding MBDA client PII/BII and incident management of suspected or confirmed loss of MBDA client PII/BII in accordance with OMB's Recommendations for Identity Theft Related Data Breach Notification, September 20, 2006, and OMB Memorandum M-07-16, Safeguarding Against and Responding to the Breach of Personally Identifiable Information, May 22, 2007. Training will be conducted at the NTC or via webinar.

If the Center staff fails to participate in the required training indicated above the Center shall lose a maximum of two (2) points from the performance assessment score during each evaluation period. The Center personnel professional and educational experience shall not be accepted as substitutions for attending the training .

Appendix C

Representation by Corporations Regarding an Unpaid Delinquent Tax Liability or a Felony Conviction Under Any Federal Law

Pursuant to the current Appropriations Act, funds made available by the Act are prohibited from use to enter into a cooperative agreement with or make a grant to any corporation that:

1. was convicted of a felony criminal violation under any Federal law within the preceding 24 months, unless any agency has considered suspension or debarment of the corporation and made a determination that this further action is not necessary to protect the interest of the Government; and/or,
2. has any unpaid Federal tax liability that has been assessed, for which all judicial and

administrative remedies have been exhausted or have lapsed, and that is not being paid in a timely manner pursuant to an agreement with the authority responsible for collecting the tax liability, unless an agency has considered suspension or debarment of the corporation and made a determination that this further action is not necessary to protect the interest of the Government.

The Applicant represents that:

It is or it is not a corporation that was convicted of a felony criminal violation under a Federal law within the preceding 24 months.

It is or it is not a corporation that has any unpaid Federal tax liability that has been assessed, for which all judicial and administrative remedies have been exhausted or have lapsed, and that are not being paid in a timely manner pursuant to an agreement with the authority responsible for collecting the tax liability.

[Signature of person who has authority to certify on behalf of the corporation] [Typed name of the signing individual]

[Typed title of the signing individual] [Typed name of corporation]

[Typed phone number of the signing individual] [Typed email address of the signing individual]

Appendix D

Program Performance Measures and Performance Ratings

1. Performance Measures

The program performance of each Center is evaluated by MBDA based on the specific performance elements proposed by the applicant. The Center operator will be rated with respect to each performance element through defined work activities that lead to successful client outcomes as defined in the application.

Measures and Goals

Number of Clients Served

Number of Contracts

Number of Success Stories

Specifically, performance ratings will be assigned by MBDA in proportion to the Center operator's satisfaction of the performance goals set forth in the application and incorporated into the terms and conditions of the award.

MBDA Business Center Performance Scale

Performance Ratings	Goal Met	Points Assigned
Outstanding	100%	100.0
Commendable	80% - 99.9%	80.0 - 99.9
Satisfactory	60% – 79.9%	60.0 – 79.99
Unsatisfactory	0% - 59.9%	0 – 59.9

Failure to maintain at least a “Satisfactory” performance rating may result in designation of the Center award recipient as high risk and/or placed on a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP), assignment of special award conditions, and other further action under the award, up to and including award termination.

Points will be assigned based on the actual goals met in relationship to the proposed goals. For example, a proposed goal of 100 clients served, 50 contracts, and 25 success stories would result in 100 points if all goals are met ($100 + 50 + 25 = 175$ or (100% of the proposed goals). Using these hypothetical goals, a center that obtains 90 clients served, 25 contracts, and 15 success stories met would have achieved 74.2 percent of their proposed goal of 175 and a Satisfactory rating (90 points for clients served + 25 points for contracts, 15 points for success stories = 130. These amounts are added, then divided by 175 to determine the percentage of the proposed goals achieved and the rating ($90 + 25 + 15 = 130/175 = 0.742 \times 100 = 74.2\% = \text{Satisfactory}$).

2. Performance Goals

Applicants must propose performance goals by category for the funding period according to the categories in the announcement stated above. Applicants should carefully consider the feasibility of the performance goals proposed in the application.