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MBDA Announces Grant Competition to Create Jobs and Grow Businesses

Agency makes \$1.02 million available to launch MBDA Business Center in one location with Large American Indian and Alaska Native Populations

WASHINGTON (May 23, 2013) — The U.S. Department of Commerce’s Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) today announced a solicitation for applications from prospective candidates **to operate a new MBDA Business Center in one National location with a significant American Indian or Alaska Native population.** Applicants are required to choose one of the following locations: Bridgeport, Conn., Buffalo, N.Y., Green Bay, Wis., Jackson, Miss., Milwaukee or Portland, Ore. The successful applicant will join a network of more than 30 MBDA Business Centers across the United States and Puerto Rico. The grant amount will be \$255,000 per year for a four year cycle.

“The American Indian and Alaskan Native business community comprises approximately 200,000 companies and generates nearly \$27 billion in annual revenue,” said David A. Hinson, MBDA National Director. “It is our goal to ensure the continued success of all minority-owned firms who in turn strengthen the economy and create American jobs.”

The MBDA helps to create and maintain jobs by supporting the growth and global expansion of U.S. minority-owned businesses. In Fiscal Year 2012, the MBDA helped create and retain over 16,000 jobs, the highest level in the 44-year history of the Agency, and helped its clients obtain over \$3.6 billion in contracts and capital awards.

The MBDA Business Center program has had notable success in increasing public and private sector contracts and capital investments obtained by minority-owned firms. The primary objectives of the business centers is to provide strategic consulting services to minority-owned firms that will result in the creation and retention of jobs for Americans through business growth as well as to foster global business expansion by promoting export opportunities. The successful applicant of this competition is also expected to address the unique economic challenges and opportunities in Indian Country and Native Alaska.

Although each MBDA Business Center is strategically located in areas with significant numbers of minority-owned firms in the state and surrounding areas, they are not limited by geographic boundaries and may serve minority businesses in all 50 states and Puerto Rico. This expanded reach is designed to facilitate collaborative efforts among minority-owned firms around the U.S. and with Fortune 500 companies regardless of location.

Eligible Applicants:

For-profit entities (including but not limited to sole-proprietorships, partnerships, limited liability companies and corporations), non-profit organizations, state and local government entities, American Indian Tribes and educational institutions are eligible to apply to operate a business center.

Submission Requirements:

Applicants must review and adhere to the full *Announcement of Federal Funding Opportunity* (FFO). This document outlines program details and instructions for submitting an application. The FFO can be accessed at www.Grants.gov or www.mbda.gov. Only one location among the specific cities listed may be proposed within an application.

Applications must be submitted electronically and time-stamped at www.Grants.gov by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time (EDT) on June 22, 2013. Applications that are time-stamped after the deadline will not be considered.

MBDA will conduct a pre-application teleconference on June 4, 2013. The goal of the teleconference is to provide a background and summary of the MBDA Business Center program, as well as provide potential applicants with the opportunity to ask questions about the program and the application process. The time and registration instructions for the pre-application conference will be posted on MBDA's website. Applicants should visit MBDA at www.mbda.gov for more information. Interested applicants unable to participate in the pre-application teleconference may access a recording of the teleconference and materials on the Agency's website the following day.

Note: The MBDA Business Center program is not a grant program to start or expand an individual business. Applicants must be able to operate a business center and provide business consulting services to eligible minority-owned firms as set forth in the *Announcement of Federal Funding Opportunity*. Applications that do not meet these requirements will not be considered by MBDA for funding.

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About the Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA)

MBDA, www.mbda.gov, an agency within the U.S. Department of Commerce, helps create and maintain U.S. jobs by promoting the growth and global competitiveness of large, medium and small businesses owned and operated by members of the minority and Diaspora communities. Through a national network of more than 30 business centers and a wide range of domestic and international strategic partners, MBDA provides Agency clients with the technical assistance and access to capital, contract opportunities and new markets that they need to create new jobs.