

**U.S. SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION  
OFFICE OF VETERANS BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT (OVBD)**

**VETERANS BUSINESS OUTREACH CENTER  
PROGRAM  
INITIAL PHASE GRANT – NY/NJ AREA**

**FISCAL YEAR 2016**

**PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENT No. VBOC-2016-05**

**BASE BUDGET PERIOD: AUGUST 1, 2016 – APRIL 30, 2017**

The purpose of this Program Announcement is to provide funding for one (1) eligible organization that will provide the services to **New York and New Jersey**. In accordance with Public Law 110-186, the organizations will provide information on small business ownership to service members and military spouses by facilitating and instructing the U.S. Small Business Administration's "Introduction to Entrepreneurship" known as "Boots to Business" which is a course offered within the Department of Defense Transition Assistance Program (TAP). Additionally, these organizations will provide counseling, training, technical and financial skill development, comprehensive business assessments and mentoring to veteran, service disabled veteran, active duty, Reserve, Guard, and military spouse/survivor entrepreneurs and small business owners interested in starting new or expanding/diversifying established small businesses. This Program Announcement is subject to the availability of funding.

**Opening Date: June 3, 2016**

**Closing Date: July 8, 2016**

Proposals responding to this Program Announcement must be posted to [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) by 11:59 pm on **July 8, 2016**. No other submissions will be permitted. Proposals after the stipulated deadline will be rejected without being evaluated.

**The Office of Veterans Business Development will be hosting a question and answer webinar on June 16, 2016 from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. ET. To participate in this webinar please call:**

**Telephone Number: 1-888-858-2144**

**Access Code: 5817583#**

**Submit all webinar questions to the point-of-contact: [janet.moorman@sba.gov](mailto:janet.moorman@sba.gov)**

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## **1.0 Funding Opportunity Description**

### **1.1 Program Overview**

- 1.1.1 Federal Agency Name: U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA)
- 1.1.2 Funding Opportunity Title: Veterans Business Outreach Center Program (VBOC)
- 1.1.3 Announcement Type: Initial
- 1.1.4 Funding Opportunity Number: Program Announcement No. VBOC-2016-05
- 1.1.5 CDFR Number: 59.044
- 1.1.6 Closing Date for Submissions: July 8, 2016 – 11:59 P.M. Eastern Standard Time
- 1.1.7 Authority: Section 8(b) (17) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 637(b)(17))  
Section
- 1.1.8 Duration for Authority: Permanent
- 1.1.9 Funding Instrument: Cooperative Agreement
- 1.1.10 Funding: Funding is for Fiscal Year (FY) 2016 / Project Year 2015-2016
- 1.1.11 Award Amount: A total of \$180,000 in funding is available for this program in FY 2016. SBA expects to make one (1) Initial Phase award in FY 2016 for a new Veterans Business Outreach Center in New York/New Jersey. Awards will be made in the range of \$150,000 - \$180,000. There are no matching funds requirements. Applicants that submit an application that exceeds \$180,000 will not be funded.
- 1.1.12 Project Duration: Awards will be made for a base project period of 9 months, with up to one (1) renewal option period of 12 months. Option year funding available is up to \$250,000. Exercise of this option is at SBA's discretion and is subject to continuing program authority, availability of funds, and satisfactory performance by the recipient organizations.

- 1.1.13 Project Starting Date: Within 30 calendar days of the date of award.
- 1.1.14 Proposal Evaluation: Proposals will be reviewed for sufficiency as detailed in Section 5.0.
- 1.1.15 Agency Point of Contact: U.S. Small Business Administration  
Office of Veterans Business Development  
Email: [janet.moorman@sba.gov](mailto:janet.moorman@sba.gov)

## 1.2 Introduction

The Small Business Act provides for entrepreneurial training, business development assistance, counseling, and management assistance to small business owned and controlled by eligible veterans, as well as the authority to make grants to, and enter into contracts and cooperative agreements with education institutions, private businesses, veterans' nonprofit community-based organizations, and federal, state, local, and tribal government agencies for the establishment of and implementation of outreach programs for veterans and service-disabled veterans.

## 1.3 Background

The Office of Veterans Business Development's (OVBD) mission is to empower veteran entrepreneurship by formulating, implementing, administering, and promoting policies and programs to equip veteran, service member (active duty, National Guard, Reserve), and military spouse owned small businesses with counseling, training and education, access to capital, and contracting opportunities. OVBD accomplishes this mission by managing programs directly and through collaboration with SBA's Office of Entrepreneurial Development (OED), Office of Capital Access (OCA), Office of Government Contracting and Business Development (OGCBD), and Office of Field Operations (OFO) and by administering grants to a network of Veteran Business Outreach Centers to ensure SBA programs, services and products are available, accessible and effective for veteran owned small businesses (VOSBs). OVBD formulates policy impacting VOSBs through a federal interagency task force and an advisory council and as an agency partner of the Department of Defense's Transition Assistance Program (TAP). To maximize its effectiveness, OVBD maintains additional partnerships with private and non-profit sector entities such as academic institutions and veterans service organizations.

## 1.4 Purpose

Eligible organizations (as defined in Section 3.2) may apply to SBA for an Initial Phase VBOC Award of financial assistance under this Announcement to fund implementation of a Veterans Business Outreach Center to start new Veterans Business Outreach Centers in the following areas.

**New York:** VBOC coverage will include New York & New Jersey. VBOC will be required to participate in Boots to Business Training at Fort Drum, Service Academy West Point, Naval Support

Unit Saratoga Springs and Joint Base McGuire – Dix. In 2015, 22 Boots to Business classes were conducted at these installations. The Boots to Business class projection for 2016 is 24 sessions.

VBOCs shall be funded to counsel, train, and provide technical and financial/procurement assistance, comprehensive business assessment and mentoring to veteran and service-disabled veteran entrepreneurs and small business owners interested in starting new or expanding/diversifying established small businesses in addition to providing business assistance to Reserve Component members and transitioning military personnel interested in exploring career opportunities in entrepreneurship. A key responsibility of VBOCs is to support transitioning service members as they embark on post military service careers that often include small business ownership and other forms of self-employment. A portion of the funding provided under this program announcement is to be used to fund costs associated with providing classroom based instruction for and coordinating, delivering, and conducting outreach to increase participation in the entrepreneurship track of the DOD's Transition Assistance Program (TAP), known as Boots to Business, on military installations in the continental United States and its territories. VBOCs are directed by the Small Business Act (Title 15 U.S.C. sec. 637 (b)) to participate in the DOD's Transition Assistance Program.

**See Appendix 1** for a map of the proposed coverage areas described below and summary of historical Boots to Business instances and forecast of future Boots to Business instances. The forecast is based on information from the Department of Defense regarding expected number of service members separating or retiring from active duty as well as current resource capacity. The information is provided to assist applicants in understanding the scope of the service requirements and is not intended to be an inflexible target. Performance goals and number of sessions will be negotiated with OVBD as part of the cooperative agreement

## **1.5 Leveraging of Resources**

The Applicant selected for an award under this Announcement is required to maximize efforts to leverage SBA funding by developing partnerships to market and deliver programs and services to eligible, beneficiaries interested in launching new business ventures or expanding or diversifying established businesses by working in conjunction with: 1) government partners, such as SBA's District Offices and other federal, state, local and tribal government small business development programs and activities; 2) SBA resource partners such as SCORE, Small Business Development Centers, Women's Business Centers, Veterans Business Outreach Centers; 3) other market opportunity and capital access providers, such as 7(j) Technical Assistance providers, Small Business Investment Companies, Certified Development Companies, Procurement Technical Assistance Centers, and SBA lenders; 4) business educators, universities, colleges, and other institutions of higher learning; 5) private organizations involved in economic development and business promotion such as chambers-of-commerce and trade and industry groups and associations ; and, 6) regional, and national Veteran and military focused service organizations (VSO/MSO).

Applicants must provide a detailed description of how they plan to work directly with SBA's resource partners in disseminating information to qualified institutions and organizations that provide quality entrepreneurship and small business management education, counseling and training to beneficiaries. Use technology-assisted online counseling and distance learning technology to overcome the impediments to entrepreneurship faced by veterans and members of the Armed Forces. Increase coordination among organizations that assist veteran, including by establishing virtual integration of service providers and offerings.

## **1.6 Oversight**

A designated Grants Officer Technical Representative (GOTR) within the Office of Veterans Business Development at SBA Headquarters will be responsible for overall monitoring and oversight of recipients' awards, including compliance with the terms and conditions of the cooperative agreement. A designated Grants Officer within SBA's Office of Grants Management (OGM) will be responsible for issuing the Notice of Award, making modifications to the award, and processing payments.

## **1.7 Changes or Cancellation**

SBA reserves the right to amend or cancel this Announcement in whole or in part, at the Agency's discretion. Should SBA make material changes to this Announcement, the Agency will extend the Closing Date as necessary to afford Applicants sufficient opportunity to address such changes.

## **2.0 Award Information**

### **2.1 Estimated Funding**

SBA anticipates the amount of funding under this award to be \$150,000.00 to \$180,000.00 for a nine month base budget period, with one 12 month option year period up to \$250,000.00 in funding.

### **2.2 Expected Number of Awards and Award Size**

SBA anticipates making a one award under this Announcement for amounts between \$150,000.00 and \$180,000.00.

### **2.3 Period of Performance**

Awards will be made for a one-year period of performance, consisting of a base period of nine (9) months from the date of award with one (1) option year renewal for 12 months.

### **2.4 Funding Information**

Funds provided under the Veterans Business Outreach Center Program must be used solely for the purposes stipulated in this announcement and the notice of award. Funds may not be commingled with any other monies. All costs proposed in an applicant's budget must meet the tests of allowability, allocability, and reasonableness set forth in the applicable Office of Management and Budget (OMB) cost principles (2 CFR 200). SBA will not reimburse applicants for their proposal preparation costs but Applicants may request pre-award costs. Pre-award costs must directly relate to the conduct of the Project and meet the tests of allowability, allocability and reasonableness.

No federal funds provided through an award under this announcement may be used for the purpose of making a sub-grant. While subcontracting is permitted, successful applicants may not spend more than 20 percent of award funds on subcontracts. Additionally, under no circumstances may successful applicants contract out the administration or day-to-day management of this project to any other party.

### **2.5 Funding Instrument**

The funding instrument used will be a cooperative agreement.

### **2.6 Matching Requirement**

None.

## **2.7 Project / Budget Periods**

The total project period for an award made under this program announcement, including the base period and all options if exercised, would be twenty-one months. The budget periods will include a base period of 9 months and one option period of 12 months, if exercised.

## **2.8 Cancellation or Modification**

SBA reserves the right to amend or cancel this Announcement, in whole or in part, at the Agency's discretion. Should SBA make material changes to this Announcement, the agency will extend the closing date as necessary to afford applicants sufficient opportunity to address such changes.

## **3.0 Eligible Applicants**

### **3.1 Eligible Applicants**

Eligible applicants must be currently located and conducting operations in New York and/or New Jersey and may be small businesses owned and controlled by veterans; education institutions, private businesses, veterans' nonprofit community-based organizations, and Federal, State, local and tribal government agencies. An organization may submit only one proposal in response to this program Announcement. Any additional applications from the same institution will automatically be rejected without being evaluated.

### **3.2 Ineligible Applicants**

The following organizations will automatically be considered ineligible and their applications will be rejected without being evaluated.

- Any organization that is not currently located and conducting operations in New York and/or New Jersey;
- Any organization that owes an outstanding and unresolved financial obligation to the federal government;
- Any organization that is currently suspended, debarred or otherwise prohibited from receiving awards of contracts or grants from the federal government;
- Any organization with an outstanding and unresolved material deficiency report under the requirements of the Single Audit Act or OMB Circular A-133 within the past three years;
- Any organization that has a grant or cooperative agreement involuntarily terminated or non-renewed by SBA for cause;
- Current Veterans Business Outreach Center Program grantee;
- Any organization that has filed for bankruptcy within the past five years; and
- Any organization that proposes to serve as a pass-through and permit another organization to manage the day-to-day operations of the project.
- Current SBA Resource Partner (Small Business Development Center, Women's Business Center or SCORE). Host organizations of current SBA Resource Partners are eligible to apply.

## **4.0 Application and Submission**

### **4.1 Application Information**

Applications must consist of the following elements: (i) a cover letter and table of contents; (ii) a technical proposal; (iii) budget information and cost proposal; (iv) certifications, forms and assurances; and (v) attachments and exhibits.

### **4.2 Cover Letter and Table of Contents**

The first page of each application must be a cover letter which contains the following information:

- Statement that the application is in response to the Program Announcement No. VBOC-2016-02
- Applicant's name and address;
- Applicant's website address;
- Name, telephone number, fax number, and email address for the applicant's designated point of contact; and
- Dollar amount of assistance being requested for FY 2016.

Applicant must also include a table of contents that lists the major paragraphs of the proposal and associated page numbers.

### **4.3 Technical Proposal**

a. A narrative that demonstrates the ability of the Institution/organization to implement the VBOC program, to include identification/selection of accomplished entrepreneurship educators with relevant business expertise, external communication and outreach strategies for marketing/promotions, recruitment strategies for beneficiaries and implementation of entrepreneurship counseling and training programs. The narrative should explain standard operating procedures for the proposed center's day-to-day business activities such as training and counseling, outreach, participation in events, stakeholder engagement, etc.

b. For Boots to Business (B2B) & Boots to Business|Reboot (B2BR): the proposal should include the applicant's plan for providing delivery of the two-day Foundations of Entrepreneurship classroom-based course and any follow-up counseling and training activities related to this program. The plan must include a description of the target markets to be served for B2B and B2BR. For B2B the plan should include a forecast of the installations to be service and the number of courses the applicant intends to instruct on a quarterly and annual basis and the associated proposed budget. Cost associated with Boots to Business must be clearly itemized in the budget. The technical proposal should also outline the outreach activities to be conducted in support of B2B. These could include: 1) the production and distribution of informational materials such as flyers, brochures or other "collateral"; 2) public relations materials such as press releases and news

articles for installation newspapers or other outlets; 3) social media content, and; 4) participation in events related to veteran entrepreneurship or employment.

For B2BR the plan should include at a minimum: 1) the number of courses the applicant intends to conduct on a quarterly and annual basis; 2), a market service segmentation plan that identifies the segments or sub-segments of the veteran population to be served, such as post 9/11 veterans, military spouses, disabled veterans, etc. and is based on available data on the coverage region, such as total veteran population by state and age, and other demographics.; 3) a description of how the applicant will partner with other organizations in various local communities across the coverage area to deliver quality events; and, 4) a quality assurance plan that describes how the applicant will collect feedback on the program to ensure quality and enable continuous improvement.

c. Identification of a full time program director, i.e., 100 percent of the directors' time, and key management personnel and staff (i.e. staff members who dedicate 50% or more of their time to the VBOC project and who are vital to its success) including resumes (position descriptions for unfilled positions). Resumes must include experience relevant to this project and may not be more than two pages in length. Copies of resumes must be included as attachments in accordance with Section 4.5 below and do not count toward the 20-page limit in accordance with Section 4.5.

d. Identification of contractors and consultants and the manner in which they were selected (i.e., competitively or non-competitively). **NOTE:** No more than 20% of award funds may be expended on contractor and/or consultant costs. Provide copies of contracts and consulting agreements (either signed or samples as applicable) must be included as attachments in accordance with Section 4.5 below and do not count toward the 20-page limit;

e. An organizational chart for the VBOC project which includes all proposed full-time and part-time program staff, titles, and the amount of time each will devote to the VBOC project.

f. A training and professional development plan illustrating competency in counseling and training of Veteran Businesses and Service Disabled Veteran Businesses concerns.

h. The hours of operation for the VBOC (which provides services to clients 40 hours per week). The VBOC work week includes weekend and weeknight hours, and a plan for online counseling to serve clients during non-traditional hours. If a VBOC operates at more than one location under the same cooperative agreement, the 40 hour workweek is divided between two facilities. However, no more than two locations share the 40 hours.

i. Budget information must be provided through the completion or submission of the following:

- Standard Form (SF) 424, Application for Federal Assistance;
- SF-424A Budget Information (Non-Construction Programs);
- Tax identification Documentation issued by the Internal Revenue Service

- SF-3881 ACH Vendor/Miscellaneous Payment Enrollment Form
- Budget Detail Worksheet (Attachments A-9 through A-12 and the SF-424A).
- Budget narrative providing a brief, detailed explanation of the components of **each cost element** listed in the SF-424A;
- Copy of Applicant's Cost Policy Statement; and
- If the Applicant does not have a current IDCR agreement, it may claim indirect costs in accordance with procedures set forth in 2 C.F.R. Part 200, Appendix III.

#### **4.4 Certifications and Assurances**

Each Applicant must complete and submit the following forms:

- SBA Form 1623, Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, and Other Responsibility Matters;
- SF-424B Assurances (this form requires a signature)
- Drug-free Workplace Agreement Certification
- SF-LLL, Disclosure for Lobbying Activities;
- Letter from the Applicant's Auditor, CPA, Treasurer, Comptroller, CFO or similarly qualified individual certifying that the non-Federal entity's financial management system currently meets the requirements of 2 CFR Part 200.302.[NOTE: This requirement does not apply to awards made directly to state, local, or tribal governments].
- A letter or other formal type of certification from the Board of Directors or ruling body naming the person or persons who is/are authorized to legally bind the organization. This delegation of authority shall remain in place until a new certification is received by SBA changing this designation.

#### **4.5 Attachments and Exhibits**

Each Applicant must attach copies of the following to its proposal:

- Resumes, position descriptions, contracts, consulting agreements, letters of support, pledges of additional funding or in-kind resources, leases, conflict of interest policy, and cost policy statement;
- Most recent A-133 audit report (No older than 1 year from current date). If the Applicant is not subject to the requirements of the Single Audit Act, it must instead submit a copy of its most recent audited financial statement done by an independent third party; and

#### **4.6 Submission Instructions**

All proposals (narratives and forms) must be submitted electronically via the government-wide financial assistance portal [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov). NO OTHER FORMS OF SUBMISSIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED. All required forms are provided in the grants.gov application package for this funding opportunity. Specific instructions for obtaining, completing, and submitting an application via grants.gov, including animated tutorials, may be found at

<http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-tools-and-tips.html>. In order to submit an application via grants.gov, an organization is first required to have a DUNS number, be registered with the System for Award Management (SAM), and have a grants.gov username and password. Additionally, Applicants should not wait until the closing date to begin the submission process in order to avoid unexpected delays that could result in the rejection of an application, because the process of acquiring a DUNS, registering in SAM, etc., can take over two weeks to complete.

Information about the grants.gov registration process can be found at <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html>. Applicants must register as organizations, not as individuals. Please note that organizations already registered with grants.gov do not need to register. However, all registered organizations must maintain a current DUNS number and keep their SAM registrations up-to-date. As part of the grants.gov registration process, an Applicant must designate one or more Authorized Organizational Representatives (AORs). AORs are the only individuals who may submit applications to grants.gov on behalf of an organization. If an application is submitted by anyone other than a designated AOR, it will be rejected by grants.gov and cannot be considered for funding.

Once an application is submitted, it undergoes a validation process through which it will be accepted or rejected by the grants.gov system. The validation process may take 24 to 48 hours to complete. Applicants should save and print written proof of an electronic submission made at grants.gov. Applicants can expect to receive multiple emails regarding the status of their submission. The first email will confirm receipt of the application. The second email will indicate that the application has either been successfully validated by the system or assigned an SBA tracking number, or it has been rejected due to errors. An Applicant will receive a third email once SBA has downloaded its applications from grants.gov for review in accordance with Section 5.2 below.

If grants.gov notifies an Applicant via email that its application contains an error, the Applicant must correct the noted error(s) before the system will accept and validate the application. Applicants that choose to submit on or close to the closing date are advised they may not receive email notification of an error with their application until after the submission deadline, and thus will not have an opportunity to correct and submit their applications. **APPLICATIONS THAT ARE REJECTED BY GRANTS.GOV WILL NOT BE FORWARDED TO SBA AND CANNOT BE CONSIDERED FOR FUNDING.** It is the Applicant's responsibility to verify that its submission was received and validated successfully at grants.gov. To check the status of your application and see the date and time it was received, log on to grants.gov and click on the "Track My Application" link from the left-hand menu.

Although rare, if you experience a technical difficulty with grants.gov (i.e., system problems or glitches with the operation of grants.gov website itself) that you believe threatens your ability to submit your application, please (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 a case number regarding your communications with grants.gov. **NOTE:** Problems with an Applicant's own

computer system or equipment is not considered technical difficulties with grants.gov. Similarly, an Applicant's failure to (i) obtain a DUNS number or complete the SAM or grants.gov registration process; (ii) ensure that an AOR submits the application; or (iii) take note of and act upon an email from grants.gov rejecting its application due to errors, are not considered technical difficulties. A grants.gov technical difficulty is an issue occurring in conjunction with the operation of grants.gov itself, such as the temporary loss of service by grants.gov due to an unexpected volume of traffic or failure of information technology systems, both of which are rare occurrences.

Applicants should use the following link to obtain assistance in navigating grants.gov and access a list of useful resources: <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-tools-and-tips.html>. If you have a question that is not addressed under the "Applicant FAQs" try consulting the "Applicant User Guide" or contacting the grants.gov Contact Center, which is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

#### **4.7 Submission Dates**

Each Applicant is required to submit its proposal electronically via [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) no later than **11:59 pm on July 8, 2016**. Because of the re-conditions for submitting applications via grants.gov and the potential for encountering technical difficulties in using that site, Applicants are strongly encouraged to log on to grants.gov and review the submission instructions early. **DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE CLOSING DATE TO BEGIN THE SUBMISSION PROCESS. Applicants bear sole responsibility for ensuring their proposals are submitted and received before the closing date.**

SBA will consider the date and time stamp on the validation generated by grants.gov as the official submission time. A proposal that is not received by grants.gov before the closing date of this Announcement will be rejected without being evaluated, unless the Applicant can clearly demonstrate through documentation obtained from grants.gov that it attempted to submit its proposal in a timely manner but was unable to do so solely because of grants.gov system issues. Additionally, SBA will not accept any changes, additions, revisions, or deletions to applications made after the closing date.

Applicants should save and print written proof of an electronic submission made at grants.gov. If problems occur while using grants.gov, the applicant is advised to (i) print any error message received; and (ii) contact grants.gov for immediate assistance. Applicants may obtain advice and assistance with grants.gov submission process by visiting [http://www.grants.gov/help/html/help/index.htm?callingApp=custom#t=Get\\_Started%2FGet\\_Started.htm](http://www.grants.gov/help/html/help/index.htm?callingApp=custom#t=Get_Started%2FGet_Started.htm) or by calling 1-800-518-4726.

## 5.0 Application Review

### 5.1 Evaluation Criteria

All timely, materially complete applications received from the eligible organizations will be evaluated in accordance with the criteria listed below. The assigned weights provides the level of importance of each section of the completed application and how the final evaluation and funding decision will be impacted by the quality completion of each of the respective sections:

### 5.2 Mission Experience (Weight: 20%)

- a. Describe relevant past experience. The Applicant must demonstrate experience in long-term and short-term training and counseling and, more specifically, experience in providing targeted business development services to veterans.
- b. Describe any specialized experience with a certain demographic(s) within the veteran community (i.e. active duty, veteran, service disabled veteran, Guard, Reserve, military spouse, military caregiver, etc.).

Describe past experience delivering or supporting SBA's Boots to Business or Reboot Program for service members and military spouses transitioning from active duty to civilian life.

### 5.3 Organizational Experience and Capacity (Weight: 25%)

1. Applicants must demonstrate an adequate staffing plan to accomplish the goals and objectives as set forth in its proposal. Include an organizational chart for the VBOC Project which includes all full-time and part-time program staff, titles, and the amount of time each will devote to the VBOC Project.
2. Include resumes for the program director and all key personnel (i.e. staff members who dedicate 50% or more of their time to the VBOC Project and who are vital to its success) and position descriptions for ALL personnel (key and non-key). Provide copies of all contracts and consulting agreements and identify the employees or officials of the applicant's organizations who will be responsible for overseeing and administering those agreements.
3. The cooperative agreement **requires** a full-time (40 hours per week) program director whose time is dedicated 100% to managing the day-to-day operation & budget of the VBOC (this position cannot be shared between two or more persons). The proposed Program Director's resume will be evaluated for a high level of business experience, defined as having owned a business or held a C-level or higher executive position within a business, demonstrated knowledge of military culture, supplemental experience in the areas of leadership and management experience in leading other government program initiatives, etc. Program Director should also have experience as a business advisor/counselor to entrepreneurs and small business owners. Staff members will have competency in business assistance defined as holding a B.A. in business, having owned a business, or having prior work experience in business counseling or training.

4. State by whom and during what hours the facility or facilities will be staffed. In addition, provide a list of proposed closures (e.g., holidays, etc.).

5. Provide a narrative description of the target market to be served—geographic size and area type (state/regional/national and/or urban, rural, or suburban), population numbers and demographics. Include the names/locations of all military installations within the target market area. Use data to support your assertion.

a. At the time of application, the VBOC is required to have a readily accessible location within the proposed coverage area and the facilities and administrative infrastructure sufficient to operate the VBOC. Applicants must include supporting documentation in regard to the location, such as a lease or deed.

b. The VBOC must be open to clients 40 hours per week. The VBOC's work week must include weekend and weeknight hours, and a plan for online counseling to serve clients during non-traditional hours. If the VBOC operates at more than one location under the same Cooperative Agreement, the 40 hour requirement may be divided between the two facilities. However, no more than two locations may share the 40 hours. VBOCs should respond to individuals interested in receiving VBOC services within one business day from the time in which such individuals made contact (via e-mail, phone or in-person).

c. Describe capacity to deliver the Boots to Business & Boots to Business Reboot programs, including conducting and coordinating the two-day Introduction to Entrepreneurship course, selecting, evaluating, and training instructors, collaborating with district offices and other resource partner's, and planning and executing outreach activities to create and maintain awareness for the program on installations served and other community stakeholders.

d. Demonstrate your ability to provide quality entrepreneurship training, counseling, technical assistance and financial training and varied means of delivery (i.e. multi-session training on procurement at the VBOC during evening hours, webinar on business plan development, etc.).

e. The proposal shall include a narrative, one (1) year plan with clear goals, measurable objectives, and time-phased activities that are results-oriented to increase business expansions and new business start-ups among prospective clients. The goals shall include the number of clients to be counseled and trained. Performance goals will be negotiated with the assistance of OVBD annually based on funding levels, market needs and capacity of the VBOC.

f. The applicant shall provide a completed projected milestone chart and timeline for **each** of the project years, showing goals, objectives and planned activities, including types of training and counseling to be offered during the budget period. The goals projected appear appropriate for the resources, budget and service area proposed.

## **5.4 SBA & Resource Partner Collaboration (Weight: 20%)**

Applicants will identify how the team will work with the SBA District Office, SBA Resource Partners (SCORE, SBDC, WBC), and with base transition assistance personnel. Strong proposals will also show previous support for veterans and the Boots to Business program, as well as the ability to provide any follow-up counseling and training activities related to this program.

a. Should include a plan that will align with the larger Veteran community including Veteran Service Organizations, Public/Private Partnerships, and Engage on a frequent basis with Stakeholders potentially with monthly or weekly meeting engagements.

b. Copies of agreements with, or letters or emails from, the above-listed types of organizations pledging to work with the Applicant in order to advance specific VBOC Project objectives.

c. Propose the methods and framework for coordinating and tracking client referrals to outside providers as well as within-collaborative network.

## **5.6 Market Assessment (Weight: 5%)**

Provide a narrative description of the target markets to be served.

a. Provide a marketing and communications plan to include budget, methods, target audiences, media (internet, social media, print, radio, magazine, newsletters, partner publications/efforts), events, and expected results.

b. The estimated costs for these activities are accurately reflected in the budget documents.

## **5.5 Project Objectives and Performance Metrics (Weight: 10%)**

Provide a narrative description of the services provided the approach to implementing the project, the objective of the project and the milestones, with specific timelines/deadlines, to be measured. Describe the evaluation process and method used for measuring the outcomes of its objectives and its compliance with all required financial, performance, customer-satisfaction, and follow-up reporting.

a. Identify all key management staff and contractors/consultants, describe their roles in conducting and overseeing the project, stipulate the amount of time they will devote to the project, and provide copies of resumes/position descriptions and an organizational chart;

b. Demonstrate a training plan for all staff as it relates to mission and function of the VBOC, specifically capturing reporting actions, ensuring consistency and quality of counseling and training delivery, and standard operating procedures.

c. Identify all facilities and other physical resources that will be utilized in furtherance of counseling, training and technical assistance to beneficiaries, quality, relevant training materials;

and development/maintenance of an approved VBOC website. Applicant must provide copies of relevant deeds, leases, free space agreements, rental contracts, memoranda of understanding, etc.;

d. Provide copies or samples of contracts and consulting agreements and identify the employees or officials of the Applicants' organizations who will be responsible for overseeing and administering those agreements;

e. Describe its financial management structure and internal controls and identify all staff members who will be responsible for financial recordkeeping, reporting, the receipt and expenditure of award funds, and addressing audit findings;

f. Provide a copy of its conflict of interest policy addressing, at a minimum, procedures for ensuring its employees, consultants and contractors do not assist client firms in which they, their principals, or their immediate family members have a financial interest or fiduciary duty and for ensuring its employees, consultants and contractors do not use their role in the project as a means of marketing their outside services to project clients.

### **5.7 Innovation (Weight: 10%)**

Describe unique or innovative approaches to delivering the project.

### **5.8 Financial Management Capability (Weight: 10%)**

a. In addition to submitting all items required in 4.1.3, the applicant will describe the organization's financial management structure and internal controls and identify all staff members who will be financial record keeping, reporting, the receipt and expenditure of award funds, and addressing audit findings;

b. Provide a copy of its conflict of interest policy addressing, at the minimum, procedures for ensuring its employees, consultants and contractors do not assist client firms in which they, their principles, or their immediate family members have a financial interest or fiduciary duty and for ensuring its employees, consultants and contractors do not use their role in the project as a means of marketing their outside services to VBOC Project clients.

### **5.9 Review and Selection Process**

Applications will be rejected without being evaluated if they are submitted by ineligible organizations, or they are illegible or materially incomplete due to an Applicant's failure to include required forms and/or provide the required level of detail.

Applications that are not rejected by grants.gov or SBA's initial screening process will be evaluated by a team of merit reviewers and evaluated on the basis of how well the applications meet the criteria outlined within this Program Announcement. These reviewers may be SBA employees or employers of other federal agencies. Applicants are therefore encouraged to design proposals that address the criteria listed above in a clear and concise manner.

The SBA merit reviewers will utilize an adjectival rating structure to evaluate eligible applications. The merit reviewers shall be measure each application against the Program Announcement (PA), and shall be evaluated against the criteria of the PA. These criteria and their respective weighting of each criterion are detailed in Section V. – Application Review: 5.1 – 5.7. The reviewers will determine whether the application, in consideration of each category, and its respective weighting and then taken in its entirety, should be rated as: 1) Highly Responsive; 2) Responsive; 3) Somewhat Responsive; or 4) Not Responsive.

- a. **Highly Responsive:** Applicant fully addresses all criteria aspects, convincingly demonstrates that it will meet the SBA's performance requirements, and demonstrates no discernable weaknesses;
- b. **Responsive:** Applicant fully addresses all criteria aspects, demonstrates a likelihood of meeting the SBA's requirements, but may include minor weaknesses;
- c. **Somewhat Responsive:** Applicant addresses most criteria aspects and demonstrates the ability to meet the SBA's performance requirements. However, the Application contains significant weaknesses and/or a number of minor weaknesses. These weaknesses may be addressed by recommending the award and including a specific programmatic or administrative post-award special term(s) and condition(s); or,
- d. **Not Responsive:** Applicant does not sufficiently address the criteria and the information presented indicates a strong likelihood of failure to meet SBA's requirements.

The SBA reviewers shall submit to the Program Office their determination, after evaluating the respective applications with the aforementioned criteria and weighting, of whether the respective applications reviewed were: 1) Highly Responsive; 2) Responsive; 3) Somewhat Responsive; or 4) Not Responsive. These determinations shall be given to the Program Office (PO), who will take these assessments, along with other information in the possession, and after careful consideration all information shall draft individual funding recommendations which will include: 1) not to fund the application; 2) fund the application but not at the level requested; or 3) fund the application at the level requested. Any funding recommendations may include one or more special conditions that the applicant would need to meet in order to receive recommended funding. The draft funding recommendations would be forwarded to the SBA Administrator or her designee, to make final funding recommendations.

## 5.10 Risk Management

Applicants will be evaluated using a risk-based approach pursuant to 2 C.F.R. 200.205(b) based on the following criteria:

6. Financially stability – C.F.O. Certification referencing adequacy of internal controls as applicable with standard accounting practices and in compliance with 2 C.F.R. 200.302;
7. History of Performance – the applicant’s record in managing Federal awards, if it is a prior recipient of Federal awards, including timeliness of compliance with applicable report requirements, accuracy of reimbursement requests, conformance to terms and conditions of pervious Federal awards;
8. Reports and finding from annual audits and independent CPA financial reviews performed;
9. The applicant’s ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory and other requirements imposed on non-Federal entities.

SBA may decline to fund an application, no matter how highly it is rated, based on the results of this risk assessment.

## **6.0 Award Administration Information**

### **6.1 Award Notification**

After the SBA Administrator or her designee makes final funding decisions, all the Applicants will receive written notification as to the funding status of their application.

### **6.2 Legal Requirements**

The successful Application will be required to comply with the requirement set forth in 2 C.F.R. Part 200 (Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements For Federal Awards); the Assurances of Non-Construction Programs (SF-424B); and the terms and conditions set forth in their Notice of Award. In addition SBA may, from time-to-time, advise the Recipient of the award made under this Announcement of new legal requirements and/or policy initiatives with which they must agree to comply.

### **6.3 Reporting Requirements**

The Recipient is required to submit the reports identified below. SBA may withhold payment if reports are not received or are deemed inadequate. Failure to report in a timely manner will also be weighed against future applications for grant funding from the same organization and the exercise of any option periods. The reports provided by Recipient may be made public. In addition, SBA reserves the right to require the Recipient to post these reports on their web sites.

### **6.4 Performance Reports**

Recipient will be required to submit quarterly performance reports to SBA's GOTR using the SF-PPR Performance Progress Report, within 30 days of the completion of each of the first three quarters and within 90 days of the completion of the fourth quarter of each Budget Period. Each quarterly performance report shall include a narrative which includes discussion on the following:

- Progress toward excepted outcomes and success measures;
- A discussion of any problems encountered and steps taken or proposed to correct those problems. This comparison must incorporate the evaluation measurement template(s) (this may be in the form of a template to easily track progress. If cumulative in nature, a brief analysis during each reporting period is required);
- A comparison of project tasks to actual accomplishments and identification of the reasons for slippage and a plan of action to address them, where applicable; and
- Copies of résumés and subcontracts relating to the current budget period, if not previously submitted.

As part of its fourth quarter performance report, Recipients must include a more extensive narrative with a well-organized description of the work performed to date, annual accomplishments, and any difficulties encountered. In addition, it must summarize the entire

budget period, cumulatively detailing the project's objectives, results, impact and recommendations for duplication and best practices. It must also include:

- A summary of the activities funded by the grant;
- The number of Service members and their family members assisted under the project;
- Any additional information deemed necessary by the OVBD; and
- Expected outcomes achieved.

## **6.5 Financial Reports**

Recipient will be required to submit quarterly financial reports to SBA using SF-425, Federal Performance Progress Reports, within 30 days of the completion of each of the first three quarters and within 90 days of the completion of the fourth quarter for each Budget Period.

## **6.6 Payments**

Grantee may request advance payment. No advance payments will be authorized for the fourth quarter of the project period. Payment requests must be sent to the GOTR electronically. The Recipient must submit the following with each request:

- Standard Form 270 - Request for Advance or Reimbursement;
- Standard Form 425 – Financial Report;
- Detailed Expenditure Worksheet A9-A12 (Direct Cost Budget, Personnel List and Indirect Cost Worksheet) must be filled out completely as instructed on the worksheet and must be aligned with the original budget, and the budget and performance report narrative. Explanations in the budget narrative must encompass expenditures and justifications for expenditures. The SF 270 must show the period that the advance will cover. The budget and performance narrative must support the actual expenditures covered by the request.
- Standard Form 425 – Federal Financial Report;
- Quarterly Reports either in narrative form or the SF-PPR.

## **7.0 Agency Contacts**

### **7.1 Program Management**

Questions concerning general information contained in this Announcement should be directed to the GOTR, Janet Moorman, at [janet.moorman@sba.gov](mailto:janet.moorman@sba.gov).

### **7.2 Grant Management**

Questions concerning budgetary matters related to this Announcement should be directed to [electronic.grants@sba.gov](mailto:electronic.grants@sba.gov)

### **7.3 Technical Support**

For technical support with filing an electronic application in response to this Announcement, contact the Grants.gov help desk at 1-800-518-4726 or [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov).

## **8.0 Other Information**

### **8.1 Statement of Understanding**

If any portion of this Program Announcement conflicts the Small Business Act, SBA's regulations (13 C.F.R.), the relevant OMB circulars (2 C.F.R.) or SBA's policy notices, all of the above will control and take precedence.

### **8.2 Personal Information and Data Collection Practices**

The SBA will have an unlimited license and all rights to use data (excluding private client data), including those prepared or stored electronically, which are generated either partially or fully under this Grant, including materials that are copyrighted.

### **8.3 Dispute Resolution**

Dispute resolution occurs when there is a programmatic or financial disagreement between the recipient organization and the SBA and the recipient organization requests that the dispute be handled by SBA in a formal manner. Any dispute arising after award of the Grant will be resolved in the manner prescribed and within the time frames stated in SBA regulations and the Notice of Award. Every effort will be made to resolve disputes.

### **8.4 Announcement Definitions**

The following definitions apply to awards made under this Announcement.

#### **Applicant**

Private, non-profit organizations with 501(c) tax exempt status from the U.S. Treasury/Internal Revenue Service.

#### **Budget Period**

The 12-month period during which expenditure obligations will be incurred by the recipient for an award under this Announcement. For the purposes of this Announcement, the initial budget period will be for one year from the date of the Notice of Award. Each option year, if exercised, will constitute a separate budget period and funding decision. In addition, SBA reserves the right to fund an option year at a different level from that provided in the initial budget period.

#### **Cooperative Agreement**

A legal instrument reflecting a relationship between the United States government and a Recipient when the principal purpose of the relationship is to transfer a thing of value to the Recipient to carry out a public purpose of support or stimulation and substantial involvement is expected between the awarding agency and the Recipient when carrying out the activity contemplated in the agreement.

## **Cost Policy Statement**

A document describing all accounting policies of an Applicant organization and narrating in detail its proposed cost allocation plan. This plan must stipulate the procedures used to identify, measure, and allocate all costs to each benefitting activity.

## **Counseling**

Services provided one-on-one to an individual and/or business that are delivered in person (fact-to-face), on the telephone, or electronically and which are:

- Substantive in nature and concern the formation, management, financing, and/or operation of a small business enterprise; and
- Specific to the needs of the business or individual; and
- Require a signed SBA Form 641 or equivalent form that supports SBA's management information database.

*Face-to-face counseling* – Meets the definition of “counseling” and should be no less than one hour initially (preparation time may be included in this initial calculation) and includes any counseling session thereafter regardless of time. Long-term counseling – Meets the definition of “counseling” and includes 5 or more hours of contact time per individual or business during the federal fiscal year.

*Online or telephone counseling* – Meets the definition of “counseling” and the recipient of the counseling must acknowledge, through an SBA Form 641 or an SBA-approved “electronic substitute,” the requirements imposed by accepting counseling assistance from the SBA or its resource partner(s). (In states that accept electronic signatures, it may contain an electronic signature. In states that do not accept electronic signatures, the form must have an original signature.) Online or telephone counseling should be no less than 30 minutes initially (preparation time may be included in the initial consultation and the total time may include several electronic questions and responses that cumulatively add up to 30 minutes).

## **Notice of Award**

The legal document, signed by both SBA and a Recipient, that memorializes the award of funding under a Cooperative Agreement and contains the specific terms and conditions that apply to the award.

## **Project Period**

The total period of performance for an award made under this Program Announcement, including the base and all option-year Budget Periods.

## **Recipient**

A non-federal organization that has been awarded direct funding under the Program Announcement from a federal agency.

## **Technical Assistance**

Counseling or training services provided to an individual and/or business in knowledge, information or experience on a business-related subject. The training must last for a minimum of one hour and include two or more individuals and/or businesses in attendance. Must be in accordance with the terms of this program announcement and the Notice of Award.

## **Training**

A workshop, seminar or similar activity or event which delivers a structured program of knowledge, information or experience on a business-related topic. The training must last for a minimum of one hour and include two or more individuals and/or businesses in attendance.

- A. Co-hosted training (collaborative) – Meets the definition of “training” and further defined as an activity where each host organization actively participates and contributes substantially to the training.
- B. Online Training – Online training is a structured program of knowledge, information or experience on an entrepreneurial or business-related subject. It must be of a quality and substantive nature, and must include a registration process as well as an evaluation process (e.g. 1-5 star ranking). The training must be for a minimum of 30 minutes and a course evaluation must be made available. Online training may be synchronous or asynchronous:
  - Synchronous – A group of clients proceed through the training module(s) or program as a group.
  - Asynchronous – A client individually proceeds through the training module(s) or program individually and is self-paced.
- C. Total hours of training – The total number of hours the trainer spends teaching the training session.

## **8.5 Additional Instructions**

Instructions for Completing the SF-424 (Application for Federal Assistance)

- |          |   |
|----------|---|
| Item 1   | Enter: "Application"                        |
| Item 2   | Enter: "New"                                |
| Item 3   | Completed by Grants.gov upon submission.    |
| Item 4   | Leave Blank                                 |
| Item 5a  | Leave Blank                                 |
| Item 5b  | Leave Blank                                 |
| Item 6-7 | Refer to instructions at end of form.       |
| Item 8-9 | Refer to instructions at end of form.       |
| Item 10  | Enter: "U.S. Small Business Administration" |
| Item 11  | Enter: [59.044] and [Boots to Business]     |
| Item 12  | Enter: Program Announcement No. VBOC 2016   |

- Item 13 Leave Blank
- Item 14 Applicants must specifically identify each city, county, and state that will be affected by its project.
- Item 15 Self Explanatory
- Item 16 Refer to instruction at end of form.
- Item 17 Leave Blank
- Item 18 Self Explanatory
- Item 19 Check Box C. The Boots to Business Program is not covered by E.O. 12372.
- Item 20 Refer to instructions at end of form.
- Item 21 Self Explanatory

## 8.6 Instructions for Completing the SF-424A

(Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs)

The budget is the Applicant’s estimate of the total cost of performing the project for which funding is being requested under this Announcement during the applicable Budget Period. The budget is to be based upon the total amount of funds that will be devoted to the project, including Federal funds, contributions from non-Federal sources, and program income (as applicable). All proposed costs reflected in the budget must be relevant to the conduct of the project and must be reasonable, allowable, and allocable under the applicable OMB Cost Principles and Agency policies. All costs **must** be justified and itemized by unit cost in the Budget Narrative/Budget Detail Worksheet. All forms contained in the financial application package must be completed accurately and in full. Enter the following information in the appropriate sections:

Section A - Budget Summary

Column A: Enter “[Boots to Business] Program”

Column B: Enter “[59.044]”

Section B – Budget Categories

Complete lines 6a – 6k, entering amounts by budget category, labeling columns 1- 5 as follows:

- 1 – Federal
- 2 – Non-Federal Cash
- 3 – Non-Federal In-Kind
- 4 – Program Income
- 5 – Totals

All amounts entered in this section must be expressed in terms of whole dollars. The itemization must reflect the total requirements for project funding from both Federal and non-Federal sources.

Section C – Non-Federal Resources

Refer to instructions on form.

Section D – Forecasted Cash Needs

Refer to instructions on form.

#### Section E – Budget Estimates

Refer to instructions on form.

#### Section F – Other Budget Information

Direct Charges: Transfer the total direct charges from Section B, line 6i.

Indirect Charges: Transfer the total direct charges from Section B, line 6j.

#### Section G - Personnel

List the name, title, salary for each employee who will be paid with project funds and the estimated amount of time each will devote to this project. NOTE: Fees, expenses, and the estimated amount of time to be devoted to the project for outside consultants/contractors belongs in the contractual line item, not here.

#### Section H - Fringe Benefits

Leave blank if fringe benefits applicable to direct salaries and wages are treated as part of indirect costs in the Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (ICRA). If your organization's fringe benefit package is not included in your ICRA, list each component included as a fringe benefit.

#### Section I - Indirect Charges

Enter the indirect cost rate, date, and Federal agency that issued your ICRA. If your organization does not have an approved ICRA, you must negotiate an ICRA with your cognizant agency in accordance with the applicable OMB Cost Principles.

#### Section J - Justification of Costs

All proposed costs require justification and narrative explanation.

#### Section K - Miscellaneous or Contingency Costs

Leave blank. No miscellaneous or contingency costs are allowed.

#### Section L - Proposal Costs

Leave blank. SBA will not pay any costs incurred in the preparation and submission of a proposal.