

# U.S. Small Business Administration

Office of Small Business Development Centers

## SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER PROGRAM

### NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY NO.

OSBDC-2024-02

FOR THE SBDC IN THE U.S. TERRITORY OF AMERICAN SAMOA

Only applications submitted by eligible entities will be considered for funding. **For-profit businesses are not eligible for this award.**

**Opening Date: August 11, 2023**

**Closing Date for Proposals: September 15, 2023**

Proposals responding to this Notice of Funding Opportunity must be posted to [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) by 11:59 PM Eastern Time September 15, 2023. No other methods of submission will be permitted. Proposals submitted after the stipulated deadline will be rejected without being evaluated.

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## 1.0 Section I – Funding Opportunity Description

### 1.1. Program Overview

1.1.1.	<b>Federal Agency Name</b>	U. S. Small Business Administration Office of Small Business Development Centers
1.1.2.	<b>Funding Opportunity Title</b>	Small Business Development Center Program
1.1.3.	<b>Announcement Type</b>	Initial
1.1.4.	<b>Funding Opportunity Number</b>	OSBDC-2024-02
1.1.5.	<b>CDFA Number</b>	59.037
1.1.6.	<b>Closing Date for Submissions</b>	September 15, 2023, 11:59 pm Eastern Time
1.1.7.	<b>Authority</b>	Small Business Act, Section 21 ( <a href="#">15 USC § 648</a> )
1.1.8.	<b>Duration of Authority</b>	Permanent
1.1.9.	<b>Funding Instrument</b>	Cooperative Agreement
1.1.10.	<b>Funding</b>	Funding is for a twenty-four-month period.
1.1.11.	<b>Award Amount/Funding Range</b>	Section 21 of the Small Business Act sets forth a formula by which funds are to be distributed among the States. This formula, for the most part, rests upon a per capita basis, subject to the amount of an appropriation in any given fiscal year. The funding amount for the SBDC Program for fiscal year 2024 will be funded at the level appropriated by Congress. The Recipient Organization receiving the Cooperative Agreement is required to match funding received on a 1:1 ratio unless otherwise authorized.
1.1.12.	<b>Project Duration</b>	Awards will be made for a two-year period of performance. SBA intends to continue to fund the SBDC Program annually, subject to availability of funds.
1.1.13.	<b>Project Starting Date</b>	January 1, 2024, for Funding Opportunity No. OSBDC-2024-02 for PY 2024.
1.1.14.	<b>Proposal Evaluation</b>	Proposals will be reviewed for sufficiency in meeting the requirements of the Program as defined in 13 CFR Part 130.340. SBA may ask Applicants for clarification of the technical and cost aspects of proposals.
1.1.15.	<b>Agency Programmatic Point of Contact</b>	Small Business Administration, Office of Small Business Development Centers, Email: <a href="mailto:SBDCGrantsq@sba.gov">SBDCGrantsq@sba.gov</a> .

### 1.2. Introduction

The Small Business Development Center (SBDC) Program is the U.S. Small Business Administration’s (SBA’s) largest matching grant-funded program providing quality service to the small business community. The SBDC Program has 63 Recipient Organizations - one in each state (with the exception of four regional SBDC networks in Texas and five regional networks in California), the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, American Samoa, Guam, and the Northern Mariana Islands. The Recipient Organization is responsible for establishing a Lead Center and a network of partner Service Centers to cover its designated area of service. The SBDC Program links the resources of Federal, state, and local

governments with the resources of the educational community and the private sector to provide assistance to the small business community. In partnership with SBA's Office of Small Business Development Centers (OSBDC) and District Offices, SBDCs develop business counseling and training programs, informational tools, and other services that enhance the economic development goals and objectives of SBA in their respective service areas, and their local funding partners.

### **1.3. Background**

Since its inception in 1953, SBA has served to aid, counsel, assist, and protect the interests of small businesses. While SBA is best known for its financial support of small businesses through its many lending programs, the Agency also plays a critical role in providing funding to organizations that deliver technical assistance in the form of counseling and training to small business concerns and nascent entrepreneurs in order to promote growth, expansion, innovation, increased productivity, and management improvement.

### **1.4. Purpose**

Eligible organizations, as defined in Section 3.2, may apply to SBA for an award of financial assistance under this Funding Opportunity to fund an SBDC Program. SBDC Programs deliver professional, high quality, individualized business advising and technical assistance to existing small businesses and pre-venture entrepreneurs. SBDCs shall provide problem solving assistance to help small businesses access capital, develop and exchange new technologies, and improve business planning, strategy, operations, financial management, personnel administration, marketing, export assistance, sales and other areas required for small business growth and expansion, management improvement, increased productivity, and innovation.

### **1.5. Leveraging of Resources**

Applicants selected for awards under this Funding Opportunity are required to maximize their efforts to leverage SBA funding by working in conjunction with SBA District Offices and other Federal, state, local, and tribal government small business development programs and activities; SBA resource partners such as SCORE, Women's Business Centers (WBCs), Veterans Business Outreach Centers (VBOCs), SBA Community Navigators, 7(j) Technical Assistance providers, Small Business Investment Companies (SBICs), U.S. Export Assistance Centers (USEACs), Certified Development Companies (CDCs) and SBA lenders; universities, colleges, and other institutions of higher education; and private organizations such as chambers of commerce, and trade and industry groups and associations.

### **1.6. SBA Involvement and Oversight**

The SBDC Program is managed by the Associate Administrator for Small Business Development Centers (AA/SBDC) at SBA Headquarters. The SBA will have substantial involvement in the administration, monitoring, and oversight of the Cooperative Agreement. OSBDC shall assign a Grants Management Specialist (GMS) to review the budget and all fiscal documentation for compliance with applicable Federal and program requirements. The Grants Management Officer (GMO) issues the Notice of Award. A Program Manager within OSBDC serves as the Grants Officer's Technical Representative (GOTR) responsible for overall monitoring and oversight of the Recipient's SBDC Program award, including compliance with the terms of the Cooperative Agreement and program service delivery and performance.

The SBA District Office will review the proposal for Agency priorities and performance goals and will designate a Project Officer (PO) to conduct delegated grant monitoring activities on behalf of OSBDC. SBA will also conduct biennial financial and programmatic examinations of each SBDC Recipient Organization, as required by statute. National performance goal measures have been established by OSBDC in coordination with the America's Small Business Development Centers and the SBA district offices. SBDCs

will include metrics for each of the measures in response to this Notice of Funding Opportunity and in collaboration with their respective District Office.

### **1.7. Changes or Cancellation**

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

## **2.0 Section II – Award Information**

### **2.1. Estimated Funding**

SBA expects to issue awards based on the funds appropriated. The Federal budget for the SBDC Program for program year 2023 was \$140,000,000. Section 21 (a)(4)(C) of the Small Business Act sets forth a formula by which funds are to be distributed.

In the event that SBA is operating under a Continuing Resolution (CR) at the time of award, funding will be available during the period of the CR to the extent that funds are provided to the SBA for this purpose by the Office of Management and Budget. The amount available under the period of the CR may be less than the pro rata total anticipated amount of award.

Subject to the availability of funds and compliance with the terms and conditions of the Cooperative Agreement, SBA has the discretion to adjust the award to an amount consistent with the authorized funding level under the federal appropriations law.

### **2.2. Expected Number of Awards**

SBA anticipates making no more than one award under this Notice of Funding Opportunity.

### **2.3. Period of Performance/Budget Periods**

The period of performance for this award is two years.

### **2.4. Project Start Dates**

The project start dates are January 1, 2024, applicants responding to Funding Opportunity No. OSBDC-2024-02 is for Program Year 2024.

#### **2.4.1. Continuation of Funds**

SBA intends to award continuation funding to the Recipient under subsequent annual SBDC Cooperative Agreements for future calendar years, subject to continued program authorization, availability of funds, satisfactory performance, and the continued interest of the Recipient Organization. However, an SBDC may not receive continued funding if there has been a clear showing of poor performance, as measured by SBA. Poor performance is indicated by unsatisfactory oversight reviews (programmatic and/or financial), accreditation issues, improper or insufficient activity affecting the operation and integrity of the SBDC, and/or a failure to follow the rules and procedures set forth in the statute, regulation, and/or Funding Opportunity.

#### **2.4.2. Intent to Renew**

The Non-Federal Entity that receives this award and wishes to exercise a renewal option must email the Letter of Intent to Renew to their assigned OSBDC Program Manager by the date listed on the SBDC Applicant's Timeline in Section 4.3 of this Funding Opportunity.

## 2.5. Funding Information

Funds provided under the SBDC Program must be used solely for the purposes stipulated in this Funding Opportunity and the Notice of Award and 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 Office of Management and Budget Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart E.

Reimbursement of indirect costs from Federal funds will be capped at a maximum of 20 percent, regardless of the amount stipulated in an Applicant's indirect cost rate (ICR) Agreement.

## 2.6. Funding Instrument

The funding instrument is a cooperative agreement and substantial involvement is expected between the awarding Agency and the Recipient when carrying out the activity contemplated in the Agreement.

## 2.7. Matching Requirement

The organization receiving the Cooperative Agreement is required, unless otherwise authorized by statute, to match Federal funds on a 1:1 ratio. Non-Federal matching funds may take the form of cash or cash equivalent, in-kind donations provided by a third party or unreimbursed indirect costs (i.e., waived indirect).

Cash match in an amount not less than 50 percent of the Federal funding is required. The remainder may be in the form of additional cash or in-kind contributions and/or waived indirect costs.

No portion of the match may be from federal sources, with the exception of applicable Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds. Program income (e.g., fees collected from clients and/or attendees for training) may not be used as a source of matching funds.

### 2.7.1. Insular Area Territory Match Waiver

The SBA has the authority, per U.S. Code Title 48 – Territories and Insular Possessions, Chapter 10 – Territorial Provisions of a General Nature, Section 1469a(d) – Congressional declaration of policy respecting “Insular Areas”, to waive any requirement for matching funds otherwise required by law to be provided by the Insular Area involved. Additionally, § 601 of Pub. L. No. 96-205 and § 6 of Pub. L. No. 98-213 together mandate that “notwithstanding any other provision of law, in the case of the Virgin Islands, American Samoa, Guam, and the Northern Mariana Islands, any department or agency shall waive any requirement for local matching funds under \$200,000...”

The Insular Area Territory SBDCs are required to provide a 1:1 match that must include at least 50 percent in cash with the remainder consisting of a combination of cash, in-kind and non-reimbursed Facilities and Administrative costs (i.e., waived indirect costs) on all core SBDC grant funds of \$200,000 and above.

The SBA may approve an Insular Area Territory Match Waiver for any amount exceeding \$199,999.00. The requested waiver amount cannot exceed the Network's allocation for the program year and must include a business justification. The core grant Insular Area Territory Match Waiver will not apply retroactively to previous, ongoing, or expired grants and is not transferable to other non-SBDC funding opportunities from SBA. The waiver must be requested in writing and included with the application in a letter addressed to the Associate Administrator of the Office of Small Business Development Centers delivered **before** the application submission deadline.

### 3.0 Section III – Eligibility Information

#### 3.1. General

An organization may NOT submit more than one proposal per geographic community in response to this Funding Opportunity.

#### 3.2. Eligible Applicants

To be eligible for this Funding Opportunity an Applicant must be proposing to serve entrepreneurs located in American Samoa and:

- Be an institution of higher education (including, but not limited to, any land-grant college or university, any college or school of business, engineering, commerce, or agriculture, community college or junior college); or
- Be a currently operating Women’s Business Center under §29 of the Small Business Act.

#### 3.3. Ineligible Applicants

The following will automatically be considered ineligible, and their applications will be rejected without being evaluated:

- Any organization currently having an outstanding, unresolved financial obligation to any Federal Agency;
- 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 deficiency reported under the requirements of the Single Audit Act or OMB Circular A-133 within the past three years;
- Any organization having at least one non-compliant condition within SBA program guidelines occurring while administering or implementing any SBA program, including denial of Accreditation;
- Any organization that has had a grant or cooperative agreement involuntarily terminated or non-renewed by SBA for cause;
- Any organization that has filed for bankruptcy within the past five years; and/or
- Any organization that proposes to serve as a pass-through and permit another organization to manage the day-to-day operations of the project.

### 4.0 Section IV – Application and Submission Information

#### 4.1. Application Instructions

General Evaluation Criteria for the SBDC applicant technical proposal for American Samoa are:

##### 4.1.1. Technical Proposal (not to exceed 35 pages)

The technical proposal serves as the blueprint for the Applicant’s planned project. This information must be provided in a paginated attachment not to exceed 35 pages. It must include the following information:

##### 4.1.1.1. Program Narrative:

- **History of Service:** Narrative describing the applicant’s history of managing successful entrepreneurial development programs; experience providing management, technical and



economic development assistance; compliance with staffing and access requirements; organizational structure; alignment with Host's strategic plan/mission. **(10 points)**

Specifically, include:

Applicant experience, qualifications, internal organization structure, and demonstrated ability to manage disciplined results-oriented programs.

The applicant should address the statutory and/or regulatory requirements that fall within this particular evaluation criterion. These would include, but not necessarily be limited to:

- Eligibility Requirements (15 USC § 648(a)(1)).
- Compliance with State/Region SBDC Plan (15 USC §648 (b) (1-2)).
- Ability to provide small business problem-solving assistance (15 USC § 648(c) (1)).
- Compliance with staff and access requirements (15 USC § 648(c) (2) (A-F)).

Include the applicant's experience:

- Providing management and technical assistance programs, and
- Providing economic development support to the small business community.

This section should also address:

- Applicant's internal organizational structure, and
  - Linkage of the SBDC program to the organization's strategic plan and mission.
- **Statement of Work:** Description of the strategic plan and the approach for implementation; ability to provide statutorily required SBDC services and services that meet SBA priorities; ability to modify services to meet the needs of small business concerns in applicant's designated area of service; details of project objectives and milestones with a tactic for attainment; list of core services and activities to be offered on a quarterly basis; and additional special services and/or initiatives. **(15 points)**

Specifically include:

A Strategic Plan defining the services and activities to be offered to existing and proposed entrepreneurs as well as the implementation of the plan.

The applicant should address the statutory and/or regulatory requirements that fall within this particular evaluation criterion. These include, but are not limited to –

- Ability to provide statutory SBDC services (15 USC § 648(c)(3) (A-U) and meet SBA national priorities.
- Ability to upgrade SBDC services to meet evolving small business community needs (15 USC § 648(c)(4)).
- Ability to utilize and compensate qualified small business vendors (15 USC § 648(c)(5)).
- Identification of resources to be used, the services to be provided, and the method(s) for delivering the services (13 CFR §130).

The applicant should provide a description of program objectives, proposed outputs and outcomes, as well as programs any exemplary projects and/or special activities planned.

The proposal must include a list of the types of assistance, including training to be offered during the budget period. To assist SBA, categorize the type of events to be offered on a quarterly basis by topic (e.g., marketing/sales, accounting/budget, cash flow management, procurement, rural business development, international trade) and use the reporting titles listed in Section VI, Part B to the extent possible. (Success stories do not need to be included in the proposal.)

- **Service Delivery Model:** Narrative describing a design for statewide service delivery (NOTE: Proposed service centers must predominantly be institutions of higher education (including but not limited to any land-grant college or university, any college or school of business, engineering, commerce, or agriculture, community college or junior college) or a Women’s Business Center currently funded by SBA and operating under § 29 of the Small Business Act. Narrative should also identify planned partnerships for service delivery; and the ability to reach special target markets. Additionally Narrative should describe the ability to oversee an SBDC Network; experience and qualification of proposed staff; plan to manage and coordinate the network; ensure attainment of program goals. Narrative describing a plan for delivery of consulting, advising, counseling, and training needed by both nascent and existing businesses within American Samoa; how the Host will set up Lead and service center locations and the planned locations of service delivery; and qualifications of key personnel and proposed organizational chart. **(30 points)**

Specifically include:

The ability to establish and operate a network of SBDC service centers and facilities within American Samoa providing services throughout the entire state; the ability to oversee the SBDC Network and to ensure attainment of program goals.

The applicant should address the statutory and/or regulatory requirements that fall within this particular evaluation criterion. These include but are not necessarily limited to –

- Ability to provide services throughout the state using service center and satellite locations (15 USC § 648(c) (2)).
- Utilization primarily of institutions of higher education and Women's Business Centers to provide services to the small business community. (15 USC § 648 (a) (1)).
- Identification of the Lead Center and other SBDC service providers by name, address and telephone number, the geographic areas to be served (13 C.F.R §130.410).

The applicant must state the approach it will use to oversee the SBDC Network; discuss the management and coordination of the SBDC service delivery points throughout the American Samoa; provide narrative information on the qualifications and experience of the proposed SBDC Network’s key personnel; and describe how the SBDC plans to provide total statewide coverage during the project period. The applicant must show how it intends to deliver counseling, training, and other services needed by nascent and existing small businesses. This plan must indicate where the service delivery locations will be established and how the organization will be set up for delivery of the services.

- **Collaboration:** Narrative describing plans for collaboration with SBA Resource Partners (including Community Navigators, Women’s Business Centers, SCORE, 7j technical assistance providers, Veterans Business Outreach Centers, Federal Agencies, state, and local small business and economic development entities, and other community and small business organizations to deliver core services; and use of academic and other resources to leverage federal funding. Narrative describing plans to establish a territory wide SBDC Advisory Board; and to cooperate with SBA and ASBDC reviews. (15 points)

Specifically include:

Plans for cooperation and coordination with SBA and other community and small business organizations to identify local business; and the use of academic, public, and private resources to deliver statutorily required services.

The applicant should address the statutory and/or regulatory requirements that fall within this particular evaluation criterion. These include, but are not necessarily be limited to:

- Cooperation requirements (15 USC § 648(a)(2)).
- Compliance with the annual Funding Opportunity (15 USC § 648(a)(3)).
- Ability to collaborate with SBA’s local offices, the state small business community as well as state and local agencies (15 USC § 648(c)(7)).
- Ability to participate in the SBDC information sharing system (15 USC § 648(c)(8)).
- Ability to develop and implement a comprehensive plan with the relevant state agency(ies) and the U.S. Department of Commerce for enhancing the export potential of small businesses within the service area (15 USC § 648(d)).
- Ability to cooperate with federal laboratories, the National Science Foundation, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and respective industrial application centers (15 USC §648(e-g)).
- Compliance with guidance issued by the Associate Administrator for the Office of Small Business Development Centers (AA/OSBDC) (15 USC §648(h)).
- Ability to cooperate with the National SBDC Advisory Board (15 § USC 648(i)).
- Ability to establish and operate an American Samoa SBDC Advisory Board (15 USC §648(j)); (under 13 CFR §130, applicant needs to include in its proposal a list of proposed members of board).
- Cooperation with the conduct of biennial programmatic and financial examinations conducted by SBA (15 USC § 648(k)(1)).
- Cooperation with the SBDC Accreditation reviews conducted by the America’s of Small Business Development Centers (ASBDC)(15 USC § 648(k)(2-3)).
- Ability to cooperate with federal agencies, including Department of Defense, Department of Commerce and the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (15 USC § 648).

The method of delivering services should include a description of how and to what extent academic, private, and public resources will be used (13 C.F.R. §130). The applicant should discuss other plans for coordination and collaboration with SBA, Community Navigators, SCORE, WBCs, economic development, and small business organizations in this section.

- **Financial and Administrative Capacity:** Narrative describing the Host’s planned match contribution for the program year and ability to obtain required match; letters of commitment of

match for CY 2024 or in the future; Narrative demonstrating in detail the Host's long-term strategy for securing future match requirements, including letters of support and a plan for future budget periods. Narrative describing the Host's ability to administer the SBDC in accordance with the Notice of Funding Opportunity, OMB circulars and other federal policies and guidance; ability to control program resources; ability to interface with complex reporting systems; and experience in administering other federal grants; details of a sound financial management system. **(30 points)**

[Reference Section 2.7.1, Insular Are Territory Match Waiver for additional guidance.]

Specifically include:

The applicant should address the statutory and/or regulatory requirements that fall within this particular evaluation criterion. These include but are not necessarily limited to the ability to provide the match requirement if possible. 15 U.S.C. § 648(a)(4).

The applicant must be capable of meeting the non-federal match requirements if applicable. The applicant must provide letters of commitment from non-federal sources and eligible federal sources (qualified Community Development Block Grants) specified for the SBDC to certify the ability to match federal funds for the budget period if applicable. The recipient must report receipt of such contributions no later than the end of each project year.

The applicant must provide a detailed development plan demonstrating how the cash and in-kind match will be raised over the term of the project if applicable. In addition, a detailed development plan is also required for continuation of match for no fewer than three future budget periods if applicable. The applicant must include letters of support from potential sources for continuation of matching funds and in-kind contributions specified for the SBDC for future budget periods if applicable.

The applicant must discuss its ability to administer the proposed Network in accordance with the program requirements, conduct administrative oversight of the SBDC Network, and provide control over program resources as outlined in this Notice of Funding Opportunity and other relevant OMB circulars. This discussion must also detail the applicant's experience in administering federal grants, their financial management system, and strategic planning. Applicants subject to the federal Single Audit Act (OMB Circular A-133) should also, upon request, provide a complete copy of their most recent Single Audit Act report.

**If selected**, the applicant will be responsible for performing these activities.

- a. **Planned performance service volume and changes**, if any:
  - i. Counseling: List most recent 12-month program year total counseling hours and counseling clients for the Network for activities funded from core award funds and discuss any anticipated changes for the upcoming project period such as the opening or closing of centers; and
- b. Training: List prior year total training sessions and clients for the Network for activities from core award funds and discuss any anticipated changes for the upcoming project period such as the opening or closing of centers. **Planned milestones and outcomes:**

- i. **List SBDC goals for: Clients Advised, New Business Starts, Capital Infusion Transactions.** See also Attachment 3 in Section 4.1.4. SBDCs should submit their goals with their 2024 Program Year funding proposals. Along with the numerical targets for each goal, SBDCs should include the rationale for setting the goal. For example, an SBDC may look at a five-year average performance as a basis for the goal target. Alternatively, the SBDC may utilize other trend data to determine the target. An SBDC can choose any methodology they believe will provide a realistic level of achievement. OSBDC understands economic conditions change, physical disasters happen, and other local events contribute to changes in the state/regional economy. If the proposed goal target is less than the previous year's achievement, the SBDC should include an explanation or rationale for a lower goal target. If a goal target is too low or too high without a sufficient explanation, OSBDC may request for additional clarification or an adjustment to the target.

OSBDC encourages SBDCs to establish their goals and focus area with their respective District Office. The District Office is not approving the goals; rather, the collaboration should be on the needs of the small business community. If either an SBDC or a District Office has concerns about the goals after the collaborative discussions, either may reach out to OSBDC through their respective Program Manager.

- ii. **List Focus Area:** SBDCs will choose one Focus Area (**from Appendix A - SBDC FY24 Regional Focus Areas Matrix**) in collaboration with their respective District Office that will focus on state or regional needs. This focus area will allow more flexibility to highlight specific small business needs within the community that align with SBA's strategic plan, the strategic plans of the SBDC, and the value of SBDC services that are not necessarily or fully captured by the three overarching goals referenced above. The purpose of the focus area is to enable SBDCs and District Offices to partner on areas specific to the state or region they serve. This will also help demonstrate the diversity within the SBDC Network. See also Attachment 3 in Section 4.1.4.
  - iii. Identify any other key milestones or performance goals for the project period for the core award not captured in part b.i.
- c. **Collaboration, outreach, and/or jointly planned events** the Network is planning to conduct with the District Office and/or other SBA resource partners (e.g., lender roundtables; 8(a) certification training; and events with SBA 7(j) grantees and other SBA Government Contracting and Business Development Resources, Community Navigators, Manufacturing Extension Partnerships (MEPs), APEX Accelerators (formerly Procurement Technical Assistance Centers), U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, and U.S. Department of Agriculture); and
  - d. **Client Satisfaction Rate:** SBDC client satisfaction will be based on overall service, knowledge and expertise of the SBDC advisor, working relationship with the SBDC advisor, and if the client would recommend SBDC services. Describe the Network's plan to collect client feedback on SBDC services and rate achieved in most recent client satisfaction survey. This should be reported in Section 2300 of the Network's Annual Report.
  - e. **Online Client Services:** SBA views the use of web-based technology as a means to increase outreach within existing budgets, to access populations or areas otherwise difficult to reach, and to offer services 24/7 when appropriate.
  - f. **SBDC Operating Hours and Scheduled Closures:** Provide a list of scheduled holidays and planned closures for the Lead Center and each Service Center. SBDC Lead Center and Service Centers must be accessible to the public during normal business hours throughout the year except for the

scheduled closures listed in the Proposal. Emergency closures must be reported in writing or by email to the SBA Project Officer and OSBDC Program Manager as soon as possible.

- g. **Partner Location Information Contact:** Identify the SBDC contact designated to maintain information in SBA's Partner Location Information by name, title, phone number, and email address.
- h. **Advisory Board:**
  - i. Provide a list of the members of the SBDC's statewide/region-wide Advisory Board in accordance with 15 U.S.C §648(j), including their titles. A majority of the Advisory Board members must be representatives from small businesses or organizations representing small businesses located throughout the entire area of service. Veterans, women, minorities, and Native Americans should be represented, as appropriate. The SBA District Director should be a non-voting member.
  - ii. Include a description of the Board's responsibilities and provide the date of the Board's last meeting. There should be regular periodic meetings each year.
  - iii. The reasonable cost of travel of any board member for official board activities may be paid out of the SBDC's budgeted funds and must follow the Recipient Organization's policy for per diem and related travel costs. See Section 4 for additional guidance.
- i. **Conflict of Interest Policy:** Include a copy of the SBDC's current conflict of interest policy for the SBDC Network. Each SBDC Network must have a written conflict of interest policy that is signed annually by all employees, consultants, instructors, and volunteers of the SBDC Network. The policy must include enforceable elements safeguarding the SBDC Program from actual or apparent conflicts.
- j. **Training:** Provide a list of the types of training to be offered during the budget period. The Lead Center is expected to provide the SBA Project Officer with a quarterly calendar of SBDC trainings or with electronic access to comparable information.
- k. **Personnel Resumes:** Attach résumés for any new key personnel directly employed by the SBDC (i.e., Lead and Service Center Directors or managers, managers or directors of specialty centers and programs, such as for technology or international trade and Partner Location Information designee) since the start of the last program year. If not stated on the résumé, please indicate the person's current position in the SBDC Network. Do not include résumés for trainers, counselors, or support staff.
- l. **Activities Supported with Program Income:** Describe planned activities that will be supported with SBDC program income during the performance period and estimated cost. Program income must be used to expand the quantity or quality of services, resources or outreach provided by the SBDC Network. Planned expenditures from program income are subject to OMB Uniform Guidance and SBDC program rules and requirements as set forth in 13 CFR § 130. However, do NOT include program costs supported with program income on the Application, Network budget summary, or budget justifications.
- m. **Funds Managed Outside the Cooperative Agreement:** Fully describe any other federal or state small business assistance programs, contributions or grant funds (excluding foundation accounts) managed by the SBDC Lead Center outside the SBA Cooperative Agreement (e.g., APEX Accelerator, State Small Business Credit Initiative and Manufacturing Extension Programs). Include the source and amount of funds provided by each organization and the purpose for which the funds have been provided.

In accordance with 15 USC §648(a)(5), before bidding on another federal contract, the SBDC must obtain prior written approval from the AA/SBDC as to the subject and general scope of the

project. SBDC Lead Centers may not manage other funds, regardless of funding source, when the scope of activity is inconsistent with this Funding Opportunity.

The SBDC must maintain an updated list of funding sources and amounts for each source of funds received by the SBDC Network including grants, contracts, and contributions. In addition, for each source of funds, documentation regarding the name and phone number of the donor/contractor/grantor, the amount of funding, the intended purpose and any requirements, stipulations or deliverables must be maintained and made available during the biennial financial examination process.

SBDCs managing other small business programs outside the SBA Cooperative Agreement must maintain separate accounting/financial records to ensure a clear audit trail for the funds provided under the SBDC Cooperative Agreement.

n. **Micro-purchase and the Simplified Acquisition Thresholds for Grantees for Financial**

**Assistance:** The SBDC Lead Center must provide a statement acknowledging they are adhering to [OMB Memo 18-18 Implementing Statutory Changes to the Micro-Purchase and the Simplified Acquisition Thresholds for Financial Assistance](#). The SBDC Lead Center will be responsible for ensuring Services Centers are also following the guidelines for the micro-purchase threshold.

The approval to use a higher threshold only applies to the non-federal entity (Lead Center office) and not to each Service Center. For a Network Service Center to use a higher threshold, the Service Center host would also need to follow the same procedure to obtain approval from their cognizant agency for indirect cost and provide that documentation to the SBDC Lead Center Office.

Additionally, if a Network is requesting an increase for their micro-purchase threshold it should be included in the proposal Cost Price Analysis workbook.

#### 4.1.1.2. Planned Milestones Worksheet

Complete all sections of the Planned Milestones Worksheet and include the worksheet as Attachment #3 to the Proposal. The worksheets are available from OSBDC at: SBDC Forms and Worksheets.

#### 4.1.1.3. SBDC Network Listing

Provide a list of all service locations by name, host institution, key contact, physical address, phone number and Partner Location Information code. Identify the Lead Center, and indicate whether each location is a Service Center, specialty center, or other location with a minimum of dedicated part-time personnel.

#### 4.1.2. Cost Proposal

Information on proposed project costs must be provided through the completion or submission of the following:

- a. **Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)**. Included in Grants.gov package;
- b. **Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A)**. Included in Grants.gov package;

- In Section B of SF-424A, line 6 g titled “Construction” shall be used for Consultant costs as described in the SBDC Budget Justification Instructions Section 4.1.2.3.
- c. **SBDC Cost Price Analysis and Budget Justifications** available from OSBDC’s webpage at: SBDC Forms and Worksheets, reference [sba.gov](http://sba.gov);
- Include a separate budget justification form with required cost detail for the Lead Center and each Network Service Center.
  - Personnel lists must include each person’s name, position, salary, and percent time budgeted to the SBDC Program.
  - Applicant may use their own budget justification form, as long as the Applicant’s format includes ALL budget detail required in OSBDC’s template and the guidance herein. If the Applicant chooses to use their own budget justification format (i.e., not the OSBDC form) it must ALSO include a separate SF 424A for the Lead Center and each Network Service Center. It must be uploaded as Attachment #4.
- d. **Budget Narrative** If all required cost detail is not shown on the SBDC budget justification and personnel list, include a separate budget narrative for the Lead Center and each Network Service Center.
- e. **Indirect Cost Rate (ICR) Agreements** negotiated with the cognizant Federal Agency; Provide a complete signed copy of the current ICR Agreement for the Lead Center and each Network Service Center that plans to claim indirect costs.
- f. **Cost Price Analysis and Budget Justifications Worksheet** OSBDC recommends the use of the updated template available on OSBDC’s webpage at: SBDC Forms and Worksheets which includes a template for the SBDC Network’s Cost Price Analysis and Budget Justifications Worksheet.

#### 4.1.2.1. Budget Preparation

OSBDC will provide SBDCs with projected funding levels to be used in budget preparation.

- Budget information must describe the financial resources contributed by the Applicant. The amount and source of funds provided as match must be clearly indicated, in Box 18 of SF-424, and in the budget summary SF-424A, Lead Center and each Network Service Center budget justification form must clearly indicate which program costs will be paid by Federal dollars, cash, in-kind and waived indirect. Applicants must show how the value of each in-kind match contribution is determined. This applies to costs incurred by Service Centers as well as Recipient costs.
- In addition, matching funds included in the budget information must also be listed by amount and contributor (i.e., state, university, private sector) in Section 5 of the Planned Milestones worksheet required as part of the Technical Proposal.
- Applicants must NOT include SBDC program income, nor unspent program funds from prior budget periods on the Application SF-424, Budget Information SF-424A or SBDC budget justification forms submitted in response to this Funding Opportunity. Planned program income expenditures should be described instead as part of the Technical Proposal. See Section 4 for guidance. Specifically:
  - Leave BLANK and do not include program income on the line f in Box 18, “Total Estimated Funding” of the SF-424;
  - Leave BLANK line 7 for “Program Income” on the SF-424A; and



- o Do NOT include program income costs in the detailed budget justification.

#### 4.1.2.2. Network Service Center Costs

An Applicant may contract with other entities to deliver SBDC services and must include a provision in the Network Service Center agreement to comply with the Uniform Guidance in 2 CFR 200 and all appropriate flow-down provisions.

If an Applicant proposes to use Network Service Centers for delivery of SBDC client services (also referred to herein as subcontracted Service Centers), it shall include the Network Service Center costs in the contractual budget element on the SBDC Network's SF-424A Budget Summary form, and provide separate detailed budget justifications, with a line item breakout for Federal dollars, cash match, in-kind and indirect costs associated with the SBDC services to be provided by the proposed Network Service Center organization. If the Network Service Center proposes its own contractual costs (sub-subcontracts), it must provide supporting budget details such as a statement of work, the number of hours, and rate of pay must be provided for each contractor.

For those SBDCs operating separate International Trade Centers (ITCs), as part of the Cooperative Agreement, the Proposal must identify each Service Center's specialty designation. An Applicant may substitute its own forms or spreadsheets in place of the SBDC Budget Justification Worksheet so long as it includes all of the information requested in Section 4.1.2.3.

#### 4.1.2.3. SBDC Budget Justification Instructions

The budget cost categories and required cost detail for each category are described below. The direct cost and indirect cost total must agree with the SF-424 and SF-424A.

- Personnel:** List name and title of all personnel charged to federal and non-federal funds (direct costs). For vacancies, show position title in budget justification. If additional space is needed to explain the cost, include a budget narrative. Use the personnel list to show annual salary, number of months, level of effort in percentage, and total amount budgeted for each position as the basis used to estimate personnel costs charged to the SBDC Program. Employees of the entity should be budgeted as Federal or cash match.
- Fringe Benefits:** Indicate the fringe rates approved by your cognizant Federal Agency for audits when available. If not available provide the schedule used. Do not include fringe cost in the total amount required for personnel.
- Travel:** For local travel, provide total anticipated mileage, and mileage rate. For out of state/region travel (including foreign travel), provide estimated cost and justification including a.) Purpose, b.) Destination, c.) Mode of transportation and rate (i.e., airfare or mileage and rate), d.) Number of trips, and e.) Number and position of travelers.
- Equipment:** List items costing \$5,000 or greater and having at least one year of useful life. The Recipient Organization must maintain an inventory of equipment purchased with program dollars including cost, location, and detailed description of each item. Equipment inventory must be made available upon request of SBA.
- Supplies:** Show anticipated cost of supply items such as general office, operational, computer supplies and other supply items costing less than \$5,000. The Recipient Organization must maintain an inventory of controlled supplies of higher dollar value and high potential for loss such as computers and it must be made available upon request of the SBA.

- f. **Contractual:** List costs for contractual services that support program operations, such as website support, equipment maintenance or meeting facilitation. Provide budget details including a.) Name of contractor, b.) Statement of work, c.) Number of hours and d.) Rate of pay.

If Applicant proposes to contract with another entity to provide SBDC client services (i.e., a Network Service Center), costs for the Network Service Center contract may be included on the Contractual line for the Network SF-424A Budget Summary, but the Applicant must also include a separate budget justification with cost detail by line item for each Network Service Center.

Please be reminded that if the Applicant uses a budget format other than OSBDC template, the Applicant must also include a separate SF-424A Budget Summary form for each Network Service Center along with its detailed budget justification form.

- g. **Consultants:** Provide detail for consultant costs shown on the line 6 g of SF-424A. (Note that form SF-424A lists category g. as “Construction”, but Applicants are asked to use this line for SBDC Consultant costs only.)

Consultant costs include costs for non-employee SBDC advisors, trainers and other staff who provide client services on an hourly or fee for service basis. Provide consultant(s) name, if known, specify purpose, and indicate the number of hours, and rate of pay.

- h. **Other:** List all expenses included in this cost category separately, with planned cost per item.

Other expense items may include but are not limited to computer software, copying, postage, printing, publications, subscriptions, dues, telephone, conference fees, and office space rental. If rental costs are proposed, provide the square footage required for SBDC activities and rate.

If nominal costs for meals and hospitality expenses associated with client workshops or related events are proposed, include a justification that demonstrates such costs are reasonable and necessary to support the SBDC program mission and goals. Details may be included on the budget justification form, budget narrative or in a clearly marked section of the technical narrative.

Do not list other items with zero amounts.

- i. **Indirect cost:** Show the indirect cost amount on line j of the Budget Justification ONLY. (Do NOT include indirect costs as cash match or as in-kind contributions, or as a contractual cost category).

An Indirect Cost Rate no higher than that approved by your cognizant Agency should be used to estimate indirect costs, except for organizations that have never had an Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (ICRA) with the Federal Government. Those organizations may use either the 10 percent de minimis rate provided in 2 CFR § 200.414 or use a 24 percent modified total direct cost with the SBA. See 2 CFR § 200.1 and Section 4.1.5 Financial Guidelines for additional guidance. Reimbursement of indirect costs charged to federal funds will be capped at a maximum of 20 percent. The amount remaining of the total indirect cost is the waived portion (i.e., indirect match, if any).

You may only use rates which appear on the ICR under “Applicable To” which indicate one of the following:

- Other Sponsored Activity
- All Projects
- Instruction
- SBDC Programs

Other categories may apply. Check with the Grants Management Officer for any necessary clarification.

#### 4.1.3. Certification Forms and Assurances

Consistent with 2 CFR. Part 200.415 Financial Certifications must be signed by an authorized individual at a level no lower than vice president or chief financial officer of the organization. Each Applicant must complete and submit the following forms:

- Cash Match and Program Income Certification Form.
- Cost Sharing Proposal (SBA Form 1224).

\*\* SF-424B and SF-LLL are also incorporated as part of the electronic Application form on Grants.gov. All other required Certification Forms not included in Grants.gov can be obtained from OSBDC at: SBDC Forms and Worksheets and uploaded as Attachments to the Application. See Section 4.1.4 for the list of Attachments.

#### 4.1.4. Attachments

Please upload in Grants.gov the following in the appropriate section and include "Attachment #" in the document name.

- **Attachment #1:** List of Attachments submitted through Grants.gov;
- **Attachment #2:** Technical Proposal, including program narrative, organization chart, Network listing, resumes, and other required information;
- **Attachment #3:** Planned Milestones worksheet;
- **Attachment #4:** Cost Proposal, including SBDC budget narrative, detailed budget justification by line item, personnel listing, and other required cost detail for each Network Service Center and the Cost Price Analysis Worksheet;
- **Attachment #5:** Indirect Cost Rate Agreement for Network Lead and Service Centers (if any);
- **Attachment #6:** Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, and Other Responsibility Matters - SBA Form 1623. Attach your Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, and Other Responsibility Matters;
- **Attachment #7:** Certification Regarding Drug-Free Workplace Requirements; Attach the Certification Regarding Drug-Free Workplace Requirements;
- **Attachment #8:** Cash Match and Program Income Certification Form; There is no Form number for Attachment #8
- **Attachment #9:** Cost Sharing Proposal; Must reflect a minimum of 50 % cash match; Attach the SBA Form 1224; and
- **Attachment #10:** Letter of Support from SBA District Director; and

- **Attachment #11:** Additional information or other documentation the Grantor and the Applicant deems (e.g., Single Audit A-133 Audit specific to the SBDC Program) necessary to support its Proposal.

#### 4.1.5 Financial Guidelines

##### 4.1.5.1 Administrative Requirements and Cost Principles

SBDCs are governed by the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, in accordance with 2 CFR Part 200.

##### 4.1.5.2 Budget Preparation & Funding

Specific items of cost may be included in the Proposal and considered allowable under the additional conditions and requirements set forth below.

#### 1. Travel

All travel performed as part of this Agreement must be in accordance with SBDC program objectives and in compliance with the Recipient's travel policy. To obtain Prior Approval through this Proposal for travel outside of the Service Area, all pertinent details must be provided as indicated under Section 4.

Prior written approval for travel is limited to the following types of trips:

- Any travel by state/local/tribal government officials.
- Out-of-state travel is permitted to areas impacted by federally designated disasters, but prior approval is required from the local District Office and OSBDC when the cost exceeds \$10,000.
- Travel outside the United States and its territories which is either: (1) Charged to the Cooperative Agreement; or (2) Performed while on duty for the Recipient Organization must be submitted to the District Office who shall recommend to the AA/SBDC or his/her designee for his/her approval or denial no less than 30 days before departure on a case-by-case basis. Travel to be completed using vacation time regularly earned is not subject to approval by the AA/SBDC. Failure to obtain 30-day prior approval from the AA/SBDC or his/her designee may result in disallowance of the travel costs but may also include suspension or termination of funding.

#### 2. Payment of Dues

The proposed budget must show amounts estimated for payment of memberships, subscriptions and dues for business, technical and professional associations, including the America's SBDC (ASBDC). Costs proposed for membership in any civic or community organization, however, must be justified in terms of the benefit to the SBDC derived from this expenditure. In addition, all memberships purchased with project funds must be in the name of the SBDC Program rather than in the name of an individual.

#### 3. Lobbying

There is a broad federal restriction on all grantees of the Federal Government, which prohibits the use of federal appropriated funds to lobby Congress or agencies concerning certain specified federal actions 31 U.S.C. §1352 (also known as the Byrd Amendment).

#### 4. Indirect Costs and Overhead

To propose and subsequently claim indirect costs, Applicants must furnish their current indirect cost rate (ICR) Agreement:

- As negotiated with their cognizant Federal Agency;
- Certified by their state governmental unit and approved by their cognizant Federal Agency; or
- A rate approved by SBA.

ICR Agreements for participating Service Centers must also be submitted. Entities currently without an ICR Agreement negotiated with another Federal Agency may request that the SBA Project Officer provide an SBA ICR Agreement (up to 24 percent of Modified Total Direct Costs) to be used exclusively for the SBDC Program. For entities using an SBA provided ICR Agreement, the following terms apply:

- These terms listed herein are to assist in identifying and clarifying those costs considered to be “general administrative and general expenses” noted in 2 CFR § 200. They form the basis for this SBA ICR Agreement and subsequently may not also be included as direct costs against the award when the SBDC ICR Agreement is used;
- Cost pools underlying the ICR Agreement include personnel compensation and benefits for positions or for activities which are not: a.) In direct support of the SBDC Program goals and objectives, and b.) Under the direction or supervision of the key person identified in the Cooperative Agreement as responsible for program performance at the respective host entity;
- Examples include, but are not limited to, those expenditures allocable to human resources and accounting departments, sponsored project staff, corporate marketing staff, controllers, deans, chief executives, and presidents of colleges and universities; and
- Non-personnel costs such as audits, supplies, materials, insurance, and other services and operating costs allocable to administrative departments and to the activities of the host entity are considered part of the “general and administrative cost pool” and thus may not also be directly charged.

Only SBDC Program funds allocated for direct costs may be used to determine the allowable reimbursed or waived indirect cost. Any Indirect Cost Rate Agreements subsequently negotiated with a Federal Agency will supersede the SBA Indirect Cost Rate Agreement.

If the Applicant or participating Network Service Center has never had an approved ICR and its budget includes indirect costs, it may utilize a de minimis rate of 10 percent of Modified Total Direct Costs (to include federal and non-federal) until the non-Federal entity can provide a copy of a current indirect cost rate agreement either through the SBA or from another cognizant Federal Agency. This rule does not apply to organizations that have an expired ICR Agreement.

The negotiated indirect cost rate in effect at the time of the initial proposal will be used for the budget period covered by the Proposal. If a provisional indirect cost rate is in effect at the time the proposal is submitted and it has been more than one year since the date the provisional rate became effective, the SBDC must furnish OSBDC with documentation showing that they have made an effort to negotiate a final rate.

When making new sub-awards, administrative costs incurred for establishing technical needs, determining qualified candidates, issuing requests for bids, evaluating replies and selecting an awardee may be claimed as indirect costs according to 2 CFR Part 200, Appendices III and V. The Circular allows

these incremental Facilities and Administrative (F&A) costs on the first \$25,000 to be claimed one time in the indirect cost base for each subcontract or sub-award. It is not allowable to claim these costs when obtaining annual funding to continue the sub-award. These costs only may be claimed when an open, competitive bidding process was involved in issuing the sub-award that included the aforementioned administrative costs.

Indirect costs cannot be claimed for the Lead Center or for subcontracted Service Centers that do not submit approved ICR Agreements for the proposed funding period. Indirect costs cannot exceed the amount allowable under the approved ICR Agreement submitted with the proposal. Facilities & Administrative costs may not otherwise be charged, directly or indirectly, to the Cooperative Agreement or claimed as non-cash match contributions except as described here. Applicants must indicate the name of the host institution and whether the on or off campus indirect cost rate should be applied for each center where indirect costs are claimed. Please use updated OSBDC Schedule of Indirect Costs worksheet to provide this information. The worksheet is available on OSBDC's webpage: SBDC Forms and Worksheets.

## **5. Justification of Costs**

All costs proposed require justification and narrative explanation for the Lead Center and each Network Service Center. All proposed costs must be included in the specific line items and fully justified. All forms contained in the financial application package must be completed accurately and in full.

## **6. Supplies, Printing, and Costs Related to SBDC**

Generally, promotional items are not an allowable expense using SBDC Program funds (including program income). Promotional items are objects such as gifts, memorabilia, awards, mugs, and any other item which does not have a specific direct benefit to the SBDC. However, costs proposed for printing the SBDC logo on SBDC training supplies such as pens, notepads or flash drives (which contain course material), are allowable. Certain promotional items (e.g., clothing imprinted with the SBDC logo) may be charged to Program funds on a case-by-case basis and should be listed in detail in the Proposal. OSBDC will review such proposed costs on a case-by-case basis to determine reasonableness and allowability. The OSBDC Grants Management Specialist may request further information if required to make this determination. This Section does not include advertising materials specifically allowed in 2 C.F.R. § 200.421 such as:

- (a) The recruitment of personnel required by the non-Federal entity for performance of a Federal award;
- (b) The procurement of goods and services for the performance of a Federal award;
- (c) The disposal of scrap or surplus materials acquired in the performance of a Federal award except when non-Federal entities are reimbursed for disposal costs at a predetermined amount; or
- (d) Program outreach and other specific purposes necessary to meet the requirements of the Federal award.

## 7. Miscellaneous or Contingency Costs

No miscellaneous or contingency costs may be included in the budget. Contributions to a contingency reserve or any similar provision made for unforeseen events are unallowable.

## 8. Subcontracting

All subcontracting awarded as a result of this Agreement will be in accordance with 2 CFR §200.317-332.

## 9. Proposal Costs

This request does not commit the Federal Government to pay any costs incurred in the submission of a proposal.

## 10. State/Regional Advisory Board Compensation

With the exception of travel costs, compensation for the State/Regional SBDC Advisory Board members is not allowed. This includes compensation reimbursed from Federal funds or donated by the Advisory Board member and used as non-cash match (in-kind).

## 11. Improvements to SBDC Facilities

If minor construction/physical improvement to SBDC facilities is proposed, Applicant must provide justification for use of program funds, estimated costs and facilities or lease agreement or other documentation from property owner.

## 4.2. Application Submission Instructions

Proposals responding to this program Funding Opportunity notice must be posted to [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) by 11:59 PM Eastern Time (ET) on September 15, 2023. No other methods of submission will be permitted. Proposals submitted after the stipulated deadline will be rejected without being evaluated. GrantSolutions.gov is the official grant system used for this award.

All SBA programs and services are extended to the public on a nondiscriminatory basis. If you have questions regarding the development and submission of your grant application, please contact [help@Grants.gov](mailto:help@Grants.gov) for assistance.

Applicant must submit an electronic copy of the Proposal to the SBA District Office for review approximately one week before the submission to [Grantsolutions.gov](http://Grantsolutions.gov). All proposals (narratives and forms) must be submitted electronically via the Federal Government-wide portal [www.Grantsolutions.gov](http://www.Grantsolutions.gov). Applicants should save and print written proof of an electronic submission made at [Grants.gov](http://Grants.gov). If problems occur while using [Grants.gov](http://Grants.gov), the Applicant is advised to a.) Print any error message received; and b.) Contact [Grants.gov](http://Grants.gov) for immediate assistance. Applicants may obtain advice and assistance with the [Grants.gov](http://Grants.gov) submission process by visiting [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) or by calling 1-866-577-0771 or 202-401-5282 Monday through Friday 7 AM – 8 PM EDT (closed Federal holidays) or email: [help@Grants.gov](mailto:help@Grants.gov).

## 4.3. SBDC Applicant's Timeline

SBDCs funded on the CALENDAR year:

**August 11, 2023**

This 2024 Notice of Funding Opportunity posts to [Grants.gov](http://Grants.gov)

**September 15, 2023** Proposal due via electronic submission to <http://www.Grants.gov/at>  
11:59 pm EDT

**June 3, 2024** SBDC Recipient Organization must submit a Letter of Intent to  
apply for renewed funding to your OSBDC Program Manager.

#### **4.4. Additional Proposal Information**

##### **4.4.1 Treatment of Proposal Information**

If the SBDC's Proposal contains confidential data, such information will be treated in accordance with Part 102 of SBA's regulations. See [13 CFR Part 102](#).

##### **4.4.2 Treatment of Client Information (Privacy Requirements)**

Unless otherwise specified, all financial, statistical, personnel and/or technical information and data furnished, produced or otherwise made available to the SBDC by its small business customers during the performance of this Agreement shall not be used for purposes other than performance of work under this Agreement. The above information received by the SBDC may be privileged and must not be released or disclosed by the SBDC without the prior written consent of the client unless otherwise required by law. If such information is requested in a legal proceeding, the SBDC must take the necessary precautions and legal recourse to protect privileged information.

For clients who have responded "yes" to Question 11 in Part I of SBA Counseling Information Form 641, the SBDC shall provide the information and data contained in Part I along with the small business name every 90 days. SBA will safeguard client and customer Personal Identifiable Information (PII).

No files or records will be removed from the premises of any government agency with which the Recipient may work without the approval of the agency in possession of such documents.

Except where a client consents in writing or as directed by SBA, SBDCs are not permitted to disclose any client information to a third party (or share such information with other units of your organization not directly involved in the conduct of this project).

#### **5.0 Section V – Application Review Information**

##### **5.1. General**

Applications will first be screened to determine if the Applicant meets stated mandatory eligibility requirements. SBA will not evaluate Applicants that do not document in their application that they meet the requirements for participation in the SBDC Program. Submissions will only be accepted via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov).

Proposals 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 all required forms and/or provide the required level of detail.

In addition, an Applicant must disclose in its application if it currently holds any other financial assistance awards from SBA or has any other applications for SBA financial assistance awards still pending. If it does, the Applicant must identify how it will avoid duplication of efforts, commingling of funds, and overlapping or double claiming of costs among those projects. Applicants must treat each SBA project as separate and



discrete with individual outcomes and deliverables and provide distinct reporting, accounting, and audit trails for each application and award.

Failure to sufficiently distinguish between multiple applications from the same organization or between an application and one or more current SBA awards may result in rejection of an application on the ground that it is duplicative of proposed or existing efforts.

Applications for the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) Program for American Samoa follow a four-tier competitive review and selection process.

Tier One:

Applications will first be screened to determine if the applicant meets stated mandatory eligibility requirements. SBA will not evaluate applicants that do not document in their application that they meet the requirements for participation in the SBDC Program. Only eligible applicants proposing to serve entrepreneurs located in American Samoa, which meet the requirements for participation in the SBDC program and submit a complete application in response to the specifics contained in this Funding Opportunity will be considered. **Submissions will only be accepted via [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov).** Proposals 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 all required forms and/or provide the required level of detail.

Tier Two:

An Objective Review Committee (ORC) is formed, composed of at least three individual independent SBA evaluators. The ORC will score each eligible proposal narrative against the evaluation criteria stated in the Funding Opportunity on an individual level. As required by 2 C.F.R. § 200.205(b), Applicants will be evaluated to assess the possible risks they may pose to accomplishing the objectives of the award and to maintaining compliance with the terms and conditions of the award. In assessing the possible risks posed by individual applicants, OSBDC will include in its consideration the following:

- a. Financial stability;
- b. Financial Management systems quality and its ability to meet the management standards prescribed in 2 C.F.R. § 200.302;
- c. History of performance in managing other Federal awards, including timeliness of providing required reports; compliance with the terms and conditions of the award; ability to meet matching funds requirements; and the extent to which the applicant has failed to fully expend funds provided under prior awards; Results, reports, and findings from any of its available audits or programmatic reviews and its responses to them; and
- d. Ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements.

SBA may decline to issue an award under this announcement based on this risk assessment.

After each individual ORC member has reviewed his/her proposals independently, then the ORC will meet together as a group to come to consensus on a final score for each applicant, and will rank the applicants in order, based on the scores. The ORC will then provide a recommendation to the Associate Administrator of the Office of Small Business Development Centers (AA/OSBDC) to accept or reject the proposals based on the ORC's cumulative score (Must be 80 or above). The ORC's review of grant applications is intended to be **advisory** and does not replace the delegated authority of the AA/OSBDC.

Tier Three:

As a result of the ORC recommendation, the AA/OSBDC or his/her designee may review the full proposal for financial as well as programmatic sufficiency.

Tier Four:

For those entities which successfully pass the first three tiers of the proposal review, a Sufficiency Site Review (SSR) will be conducted by senior SBA management at the applicant's physical locations (*in this case, the review will be virtual*) to analyze and determine the applicant's ability to provide the programmatic and financial administrative services contained within their proposals. In addition, SBA's Financial Examination Unit will establish a recommendation to the AA/OSBDC as to each prospective new host's financial capability to successfully operate an SBDC. This is also a final opportunity for the applicant to clarify any outstanding concerns or issues. The findings of the SSR are intended to validate the recommendation of the ORC.

The AA/OSBDC will make a final selection following the SSR(s).

After identifying the highest scoring application, SBA reserves the right to engage in negotiations with that Applicant and issue an Award that is conditional upon the Applicant's agreement to make changes to its technical proposal and/or budget to address any potential noncompliance due to its organizational structure, service delivery model, or similar technical matters. In the event that the highest scoring Applicant is unable or unwilling to make the required changes, SBA will issue an Award to the next highest scoring Applicant subject to the same conditions.

#### **5.1.1. SBA Duties and Responsibilities**

SBA Agency Officials and Offices will coordinate and communicate through the SBDC Lead Center for the following:

- Carry out the duties and responsibilities imposed on it by the statutes and regulations governing this program.
- Respond to requests for guidance or information related to the SBDC Program.
- Respond to requests for Agency participation and collaboration in project activities, as appropriate.
- Promote the project by referring interested parties to you for assistance and displaying your printed materials.
- Facilitate cooperation and coordination between SBDC Lead Center, other SBA resource partners, and other Federal agencies.
- Review and act upon requests for modifications to your technical proposal, budget, key personnel, project/budget period, and other project parameters.
- Review and act upon SBDC Lead Center reports and payment requests.
- Where authorized by law, share SBA resources and/or donated materials.
- Monitor performance under this award and ongoing operations to determine if SBDC Lead Center is making effective and efficient use of project funds. This includes reviewing records, files, and procedures relating to performance under this award, as well as interviewing clients to gauge program effectiveness.

### 5.1.2. Intergovernmental Review

The SBDC Program does not involve the mandatory payment of any matching funds from the state or local government and does not affect directly any state or local government. As appropriate, SBDC programs should comply with [Executive Order 12372](#), “Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs.”

### 5.1.3. SBDC Program Objectives and Required Services

The SBDC Program is sponsored and partially funded by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA). The SBDC Program is governed by Section 21 of the Small Business Act, 15 U.S.C. § 648, and Federal regulations, 13 CFR Part 130. Although SBA is responsible for the general management and oversight of the SBDC Program, a legal partnership exists between SBA and the Recipient Organization for the delivery of assistance to the small business community.

SBDCs, under Section 21 of the Small Business Act, are required to provide counseling and training to small businesses, including working with the SBA to develop and provide informational tools to support business start-ups and existing business expansion.

The SBDC Program is governed by a binding legal instrument between the Recipient Organization and the SBA known as a notice of award or cooperative agreement. The purpose of the Cooperative Agreement is to ensure the delivery of high-quality business and economic development assistance (as defined by 13 C.F.R. Part 130 and the Small Business Act) to small businesses and prospective small businesses.

The SBDCs must ensure that their economic development and technical assistance services are available to all small business populations, including Special Emphasis Groups [13 C.F.R. Part 130].

The services provided must include those required by statute and shall include the activities of the Lead Center (Applicant) and all participating Network members. Each Applicant will be accountable to SBA for performing all services included in its Proposal.

### 5.1.4. Statutorily Required Services

SBDCs are required to provide the following services:

#### 5.1.4.1. On a non-fee basis, one-on-one confidential counseling/consultation/advising/guidance:

- Working with individuals or businesses to increase awareness of basic credit practices and credit requirements;
- Working with individuals or businesses to develop business plans, financial packages, credit applications and contract proposals;
- Working with the SBA to develop and provide informational tools to assist individuals with pre-business startup planning, existing business expansion and export planning;
- Working with individuals or businesses referred by the SBA District Offices, other SBA resource partners, and SBA participating lenders (Providing any preferential treatment to clients of any specific lender is prohibited, as is the SBDC’s acceptance of payment for the provision of counseling services); and,
- SBDCs must have counselor resources or referrals available to meet the needs of entrepreneurs throughout the SBDC’s designated Service Area.

#### 5.1.4.2. Technology transfer, research and development:

- Assisting in technology transfer, research and development, including applied research and coupling from existing sources to small businesses, such as:
  - Working to increase the access of small businesses to the capabilities of automated flexible manufacturing systems;
  - Working through existing networks and developing new networks for technology transfer;
  - Encouraging partnerships between the small business and academic communities to help commercialize university-based research and development;
  - Introducing university-based engineers and scientists to their counterparts in small technology-based firms; and
  - Exploring the viability of developing shared production facilities under appropriate circumstances.

#### 5.1.4.3. Rural Assistance:

- Assisting small businesses in rural areas in an effort to increase their participation in exporting, government procurement, tourism, access to credit, incubators, innovation and technology and other small business programs, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Commerce, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and other relevant Federal Agencies; and
- The SBDCs may develop marketing and production strategies that will enable the rural businesses to better compete in the domestic market, provide technical assistance needed by rural small businesses, make available managerial assistance to rural small business concerns and provide information and assistance in obtaining financing for business startups and expansion.

#### 5.1.4.4. Export Assistance:

- Maintaining a minimum number of certified export assistance counselors available to assist clients in developing export and international trade opportunities by meeting the requirement in Section 22(i) of the Small Business Act. SBA has interpreted the legislation to mean that the certification standard is based on the total number of full time equivalent (FTE) counselors in each SBDC Network. The minimum number of certified counselors for an SBDC Network is the lesser of:
  - a. Five counselors; or
  - b. Ten percent of the total number of FTE counselors in the Network.

*Example:* If an SBDC has a total of thirty FTE counselors in its Network, the minimum number of counselors who must attain SBA's export and trade certification is three since ten percent is the lesser number. The minimum number of certified counselors required for SBDC Networks with 50 or more FTE counselors is five.

- Compliance with the requirement shall be reported in the Semi-Annual and Annual Reports by providing the counselor's name and email, certification type and date of certification, as well as the number of full-time (FTE) counselors employed and the number certified. SBDCs not meeting this requirement shall include a plan for attaining compliance with the law in their proposal narrative, including an implementation timeframe.
- Report client data for export assistance as required.
- Make qualified referrals to SBA's Office of International Trade of small businesses that need (1) help obtaining financing for export development activities, to expand export operations, or to facilitate

export transactions; (2) assistance overcoming trade barriers; or (3) access to grant funding through the State Trade Expansion Program (STEP) grant to begin or expand exporting.

- Cooperate with SBA's Office of International Trade, the Department of Commerce and other relevant Federal Agencies to assist small business to:
  - Identify and develop potential export markets;
  - Develop trade linkages between U.S. and foreign small business firms;
  - Participate in international trade shows, trade missions, and other export development activities;
  - Access export assistance in rural areas;
  - Develop export marketing strategy;
  - Globalize websites and strengthen e-commerce capabilities to support global sales;
  - Overcome barriers to export expansion and obtain referrals to appropriate resources for trade adjustment and trade remedy assistance; and
  - Identify translation services.

Where appropriate, the SBDC and the SBA may work collaboratively with state governments to establish a state international trade center for these purposes.

#### **5.1.4.5. Base Closure Assistance:**

Develop and implement strategic business plans to effectively respond to the planned closure or reduction of a Department of Defense (DoD) facility within the community or actual or projected reductions in such firms' business base due to the actual or projected termination or reduction of a DoD facility or a contract in support of such facility.

#### **5.1.4.6. Cybersecurity**

- The Small Business Cyber Training Act of 2022 amended §21 of the Small Business Act to establish a cyber training program, including a certification program for Small Business Development Center (SBDC) employees (15 U.S.C. §648 (o)). The cyber certification program is intended to prepare SBDC employees in cyber strategy, including cyber planning assistance and expand the number of qualified counselors available to assist small businesses in planning for cyber awareness and defending against cyber risks and attacks. The Small Business Act requires SBA to ensure SBDCs have employees certified in cyber strategy counseling for small businesses and maintain a minimum number of certified cyber counselors on staff. The minimum number of certified counselors for an SBDC Network is the lesser of:
  - a. 5; or
  - b. Ten percent of the total number of employees in the Lead SBDC.
- There are two options for SBDC employees to attain certification:
  1. Basic Certification – Cyber Strategy Counseling  
  
Attendance at a cyber strategy conference workshop, including but not limited to the ASBDC Annual Conference.
    - a. Proof of utilization and proficiency in use of SBA, ASBDC, and/or Clearinghouse resources and tools related to cyber strategy for small businesses. This includes, but is not limited

to, participation in the ASBDC North Star Small Business Data/Cyber Protection Awareness Program.

- b. Evidence of inclusion of cyber security strategy, resiliency, and planning for small businesses in the SBDC Disaster Operations Plan.
2. Industry Certification – SBDCs may elect to obtain a cyber certification from a program that meets the following standards:
    - a. Available nationwide;
    - b. 4-hour minimum training hours;
    - c. Awarded a national credited certification; and
    - d. Emphasis on small business cyber application.
- Compliance with the requirement shall be reported in the Annual Reports by providing the counselor’s name and email, certification type and date of certification, as well as the number of certified full-time (FTE) employees. SBDCs not meeting this requirement shall include a plan for attaining compliance with the law in their proposal narrative, including an implementation timeframe.
  - Costs related to cyber training may, however, be considered an eligible program expense of core SBDC grant funding. Requests for reimbursement from the core award Federal funds may not exceed \$5,500 per Lead Center annually.

#### **5.1.4.7. Intellectual Property Protection**

In accordance with P.L. 115-259, the Small Business Innovation Protection Act of 2017, SBDCs shall provide services to individuals to include training in person or through a website relating to:

- Domestic and international intellectual property protections, and
- How those protections should be considered in the business plans and growth strategies of small businesses.

#### **5.1.4.8. Small Business Employee Ownership and Cooperatives Promotion**

In accordance with the Main Street Employee Ownership Act, SBDCs shall provide access to information and resources on employee ownership through cooperatives or qualified employee trusts as a business succession strategy. SBDCs must provide services encouraging and assisting the provision of succession planning to small business concerns with a focus on transitioning to cooperatives, as defined in section 7(a)(35) of the Small Business Act, and qualified employee trusts (collectively referred to in this subparagraph as ‘employee-owned business concerns’), including by—

- Providing training to individuals to promote the successful management, governance, or operation of a business purchased by those individuals in the formation of an employee-owned business concern;
- Assisting employee-owned business concerns that meet applicable size standards established under section 3(a) with education and technical assistance with respect to financing and contracting programs administered by the SBA;
- Coordinating with lenders on conducting outreach on financing through programs administered by the SBA that may be used to support the transition of ownership to employees;

- Supporting small business concerns in exploring or assessing the possibility of transitioning to an employee-owned business concern; and
- Coordinating with the cooperative development centers of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the land grant extension network, the Manufacturing Extension Partnership, community development financial institutions, employee ownership associations and service providers, and local, regional and national cooperative associations.

#### **5.1.4.9. Regulatory Compliance:**

- Maintain current information concerning environmental, energy, health, safety, and other Federal, state and local regulations that affect small businesses and counseling small businesses on methods of compliance with such regulations; and
- Develop information publications, establish resource centers of reference materials, make appropriate referrals to the SBA's Office of the National Ombudsman, and distribute compliance guides published under section 212(a) of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996, Public Law 102-121.

#### **5.1.5. SBA Required Services**

It is acknowledged that SBDCs receive funding from and must meet the mandates of its other funding sources. Despite these mandates, SBA District Directors, and SBDC Lead Center Directors should identify services that meet local needs based on periodic needs assessments. SBDC Lead Center Directors should integrate the SBA strategic plan into the Proposal, including, but are not limited to:

- Assisting manufacturing workers interested in starting their own business and working closely with the U.S. Department of Commerce, National Institute of Standards and Technology's (NIST) Manufacturing Extension Partnership Program to assist small manufacturers;
- Providing programs focused on existing businesses to assist them with growth and expansion.
- Developing, facilitating and/or leveraging appropriate virtual programs and/or initiatives that can be utilized by small business clients and, where appropriate, other SBA resource partners;
- Using market research tools such as the SBDC Clearinghouse to serve the needs of the small business community;
- Provide access to tools and initiatives offered by SBA's Office of Veterans Business Development;
- Developing programs in conjunction with the SBA Regional Administrator and SBA District Office; coordinating with their state, local, and tribal economic development officials, chambers of commerce, lenders and other public and private entities to maximize business development in underserved areas;
- Developing economic recovery programs and plans that include counseling small business owners on ways and means to strengthen business recovery and continuity; and
- Participating in and actively supporting community economic development in the SBDC's stated area of geographic coverage, including coordination with all levels of government – Federal, state, and local in support of initiatives that strengthen the infrastructure of the community and ensure stability and equality in community-based economic growth and development. The private sector, including business and professional organizations, should be invited to become stakeholders with the SBDCs acting as catalysts to initiate development projects beneficial to the community as a whole.
- Each SBDC Lead Center network is responsible for offering a formal cybersecurity training program. The training must provide a broad mix of small businesses with a variety of training programs that range from introductory familiarization to intermediate and advanced cybersecurity training.

- Each SBDC Lead Network is responsible for offering a formal Intellectual Property (IP) training program for its state and regional network. SBDCs may collaborate and leverage existing resources to prevent duplication of services. The training will be designed to provide a broad mix of small businesses with a variety of training programs that range from introductory familiarization to intermediate and advanced Intellectual Property training. The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) will also provide a mix of online, webinars, and in-person IP training to the SBDCs through their regional and national offices. Requests for SBA and USPTO training-assistance can be made directly to these offices or through the SBDC Network's IP training outlines, programs, classes, and metrics should be included in EDMIS-NG (or SBA's successor system). In FY2024, the Semi-annual and Annual reports in Section 6.3 in 0200 will include a formal section on a Network's IP training program and the results and impact of its IP program.

#### **5.1.5.1. Government Contracting Assistance**

- Provide information and assistance to small business owners interested in pursuing Federal, state and local prime contract and subcontract opportunities;
- Advise and assist small business owners to develop and execute effective marketing and sales plans for targeting Federal prime contracts;
- Work cooperatively with the APEX (Accelerator Program formerly Procurement Technical Assistance Center Program);
- Help 8(a) firms either directly or through the Applicant's affiliate in the area of contract education and assistance;
- Provide information and assistance to small business owners interested in participating in the 8(a), HUBZone, Veteran-owned Small Business, or Women Owned Small Business Certification Programs; and
- Work with SBA District Offices to assess the needs of 8(a) firms to provide the 8(a) firm with business management and other education, training and information.

#### **5.1.5.2. Access to Capital and Other SBA Programs**

- Provide assistance and guidance with the necessary documentation required for applications for capital assistance; including assistance for SBA loan products and services, including small dollar loans.
- Inform small business contractors about SBA's Surety Bond Guarantee Program, as appropriate.

#### **5.1.5.3. Emerging Markets**

Provide outreach and service delivery to entrepreneurs of all demographics, backgrounds and locations, inclusive of urban and rural populations, new immigrant populations and members of Reserve Components of the U.S. Military and National Guard and their spouses.

#### **5.1.5.4. Minority Serving Institutions**

Given the importance of Minority Serving Institutions in higher education and the increasing growth and interest in entrepreneurship and small business throughout historically underserved communities, it is an ideal fit for SBDCs and the SBA to also increase its services, partnerships and outreach to HBCUs and other MSIs. These other MSIs include the following: Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs), Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), Asian American and Pacific Islander Serving Institutions (AAPISIs), Alaska Native



and Native Hawaiian Serving Institutions (ANNHSIs), Predominantly Black Institutions (PBIs), and Native American-Serving Nontribal Institutions (NASNTI).

SBDCs with MSIs in their states or regions should partner with their respective SBA Regional and District Offices and respective MSI leadership (such as the university president, dean, or chancellor) to enhance collaboration. This also includes onboarding new SBDC Service Centers that best support historically underserved communities where practicable for HBCUs and other MSIs.

By prioritizing these collaborative actions, SBA and SBDCs will develop a more comprehensive and inclusive outreach strategy to underserved communities. SBA and its resource partners will be able to communicate more efficiently and effectively with entrepreneurs of underserved communities and provide the support that may help their businesses start and grow.

#### **5.1.5.5. Additional SBA Service Groups**

While the core purpose of the SBDC program remains the provision of direct assistance to small businesses, SBDCs may also, under certain circumstances, provide technical assistance to non-profit organizations. Specifically, where a significant portion of a non-profit organization's activities involve providing aid to small business concerns, it is permissible for an SBDC to provide counseling or training to such non-profits on the ground that such action still results in the provision of technical assistance to small business concerns.

#### **5.1.6. Program Operations Overview**

SBDCs operate under a plan to provide assistance within a state or designated geographical area. As a condition of any SBA grant award made, SBDC Applicants are required to provide at least an equal amount of matching funds from sources other than the Federal Government. SBDCs operate under the provisions of the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, 2 CFR Part 200, a Notice of Award (the Cooperative Agreement) issued by SBA, and the provisions of this Funding Opportunity.

The SBDC Network must provide services as geographically close as possible to small businesses by using a variety of service delivery mechanisms, including satellite locations, traveling counselors, and virtual counseling and training, as appropriate. The facilities and staff of each SBDC shall be located in places that will provide maximum accessibility and benefits to the small businesses which the SBDC is intended to serve. The SBDC will develop a plan as part of the proposal specifying the extent to which SBDC statutory and program duties will be delivered to address the needs of the small business community in the area to be served. In doing so, SBDCs must ensure that statutory and regulatory requirements are met.

The Recipient Organization must establish and maintain a program control center or Lead Center to provide administrative services to the SBDC Network within the state or territory. These administrative services shall include, but not be limited to, a.) program development; b.) program management; c.) promotion and public relations; d.) financial accounting; e.) reports management; and f.) internal quality control. Records shall be maintained in the Lead Center indicating the Federal, state, local government, academic and private sector resources available to the SBDC Network, and the types of services provided to clients.

The Lead Center must have its own full-time staff, must have a separate budget and identity and, if part of a larger unit, must be a clearly distinguishable sub-unit. Staffing must include a fulltime equivalent Lead Center Director who will operate and administer the operations of the SBDC Network and must have full

authority to make expenditures under the Center's budget as well as to manage the program activities. At least 75 percent of the SBDC Lead Center Director's time must be allocated to the functions of the SBA SBDC Cooperative Agreement. Other statutory requirements for the SBDC are outlined in 15 U.S.C. § 648(c)(2).

#### **5.1.7. Required Reporting Lines for SBDC Lead Center Director**

The SBDC Director, if an employee of an SBDC Lead Center hosted by an educational institution, must report to the school or college dean or an equivalent or higher-level administrator. In a non-educational organization, the SBDC Director must report to an individual who is no lower than the third level of management or administration within a state agency.

#### **5.1.8. Program Organization and SBDC Name**

The specific identification "Small Business Development Center" or "Small Business and Technology Development Center" shall be a part of the name of every SBDC organization within the SBDC Network. No other name designations or variations will be accepted. The entity established by the Recipient Organization to manage statewide Small Business Development Center operations and activities is referred to as the SBDC "Lead" Center. The Lead Center manages and administers a comprehensive small business assistance network, consisting of the Lead Center and its Service Centers, under the terms of a Cooperative Agreement between the U. S. Small Business Administration and the Recipient Organization. This Network is part of the Small Business Development Center Program.

#### **5.1.9. Prior Approval**

Actions requiring prior approval by SBA not listed in this Funding Opportunity are listed in the SBA and SBDC Program Notice of Award Terms and Conditions and 2 CFR 200.

##### **5.1.9.1 Travel Outside the State**

Prior approval for out of state travel not included in the original Network's proposal and exceeding \$10,000 to areas impacted by federally designated disasters is required from the local District Office and OSBDC.

##### **5.1.9.2 Travel Outside the U.S.**

Travel outside the United States and its territories which is either: (1) Charged to the Cooperative Agreement; or (2) Performed while on duty for the Recipient Organization must be submitted to the District Office who shall recommend to the AA/SBDC or his/her designee for his/her approval or denial no less than 30 days before departure on a case-by-case basis. Travel to be completed using vacation time regularly earned is not subject to approval by the AA/SBDC. Failure to obtain 30-day prior approval from the AA/SBDC or his/her designee may result in disallowance of the travel costs but may also include suspension or termination of funding.

##### **5.1.9.3 Improvements to SBDC Facilities**

If minor construction/physical improvement to SBDC facilities is proposed, Applicant must provide justification along with budget revision for use of program funds, including estimated costs and facilities or lease agreement or other documentation from property owner prior to implementation.

##### **5.1.9.4 Changes in Service Delivery Plan**

If a Recipient proposes to add or close a Service Center, including adding a new contracted service provider (subcontracted Service Centers), the Lead Center must request prior approval in writing or by email to the OSBDC Program Manager. The Recipient may also be required to submit modifications to the technical proposal and/or cost proposal and supporting documents to effect this change.

## **5.2. Evaluation Criteria**

All timely, materially complete applications received from eligible organizations will be reviewed in accordance with the criteria listed below.

### **5.2.1. Organizational Experience and Capacity**

Applications will first be screened to determine if the Applicant meets stated mandatory eligibility requirements.

### **5.2.2. Collaboration and Leveraging of Resources**

Applicants will be reviewed on the breadth of their plans for coordinating their proposed activities and working to expand the scope and reach of their project in collaboration with entities such as SBA's District Offices, other Federal, state, local and tribal government agencies, other SBA grant Recipients/resource partners (e.g., SCORE, WBCs, SBA Community Navigators), trade associations, business/industry groups, institutions of higher education and/or private organizations. Additionally, Applicants should note the availability of any non-award funds and/or in-kind resources that will be pledged to the performance of their projects.

### **5.2.3. Risk Assessment**

As required by 2 CFR § 200.205(b), Applicants will be further evaluated by OSBDC to assess the possible risks they may pose to accomplishing the objectives of the award and to maintaining compliance with the terms and conditions of the award. In assessing the possible risks posed by individual Applicants, OSBDC will include in its consideration the following:

- e. Financial stability;
- f. Financial Management systems quality and its ability to meet the management standards prescribed in 2 CFR § 200.302;
- g. History of performance in managing other Federal awards, including timeliness of providing required reports; compliance with the terms and conditions of the award; ability to meet matching funds requirements; and the extent to which the Applicant has failed to fully expend funds provided under prior awards; results, reports, and findings from any of its available audits or programmatic reviews and its responses to them; evidence of Federal delinquent debt; and
- h. Ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements.

SBA may decline to issue an award under this Funding Opportunity based on this risk assessment.

## **5.3. Review and Selection Process**

All SBDC funding proposals must be reviewed by and receive a letter of support from the SBA District Office(s) (District Director and/or designee) in their geographic territory prior to submission of the final proposal to [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov); a letter of support from the SBA District Director should be included but is not required in the proposal submission. If multiple SBA District Offices are in the geographic service area

of the SBDC, one SBA District Office Project Officer serves as the designated primary point of contact for the SBDC.

After the Proposal has been received by OSBDC, all submissions and/or revisions (if any) will be reviewed for sufficiency by the appropriate SBA personnel. SBDCs will be contacted by OSBDC if the Proposal has issues that require resolution. Once the selected Technical Evaluation Panel has reviewed and recommended the application for funding, the Grants Management Specialist reviews the budget and all fiscal documentation to ensure costs are in compliance with applicable OMB cost principles and generates the Notice of Award.

## 6.0 Section VI – Award Administration

### 6.1. Award Notification

All non-Federal entities selected for an award and non-Federal entities not selected for an award will receive written notification. There will be no debriefing process for unsuccessful non-Federal entities. **If you are selected for an award, you will be given instructions on how to register with GrantSolutions.gov to access and sign the notice award.**

### 6.2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

All successful Applicants will be required to comply with the requirements set forth in Section 21 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. § 648 and 13 CFR Part 130 et seq.; 2 CFR Part 200; the Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424B); and the terms and conditions set forth in their Notices of Award. In addition, SBA may, from time to time, advise Recipients of awards made under this Funding Opportunity of new legal requirements and/or statutorily authorized policy initiatives with which they must agree to comply.

### 6.3. Reporting

#### 6.3.1. Required Data Collection System

All SBDCs are required to report program data through SBA's data collection system (EDMIS -Next Generation or SBA successor system). EDMIS-NG serves as a centralized data collection system. While SBDCs may use EDMIS-NG as their primary MIS, they may also choose to maintain existing or complementary systems should they individually require more extensive data collection needs than that of the SBA.

All SBDCs must be fully capable of either manually entering data or uploading batch files to SBA's data collection system (EDMIS-NG or SBA successor system). SBDCs are required to upload all data they have collected via the SBA approved data collection tools (Form 641 and Form 888) except as precluded by statute.

**Partner Location Information Maintenance:** SBA requires Lead Center SBDCs to maintain their Lead Center and Network Service Center information in SBA's Partner Location Information, which interfaces with EDMIS-NG or SBA successor system. The Lead Center SBDC will designate one employee to update

Partner Location Information and will provide their name, email address, and phone number within the Proposal.

### 6.3.2. Required SBA Reports

All SBDC Recipients must provide the required reports to SBA by the established deadlines. Failure to submit accurate, complete and timely reports may result in withholding of reimbursements. Required reporting documents and submission are detailed in the Notice of Award Terms and Conditions.

### 6.3.3. Reporting Categories

SBDC performance reports must summarize Network-level accomplishments in each of the following categories. Performance reports should be a summary of SBDC Program accomplishments - not an itemized SBDC Service Center listing of accomplishments - in each of the categories. Each category should include, where applicable, number of clients, number of counseling hours, and outcomes.

#### 0100 CAPITAL FORMATION

- Assist small businesses in identifying and accessing sources of capital including leveraging Lender Match;
- Provide technical assistance on SBA and other capital access products, including small dollar programs, to assist small business; and
- Develop close linkages with SBICs, venture capital firms, Certified Development Companies (CDCs) and state and local finance programs.

#### 0200 INNOVATION, TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER, AND TECHNOLOGY ASSISTANCE

- Identifying innovation and technology developed by the Federal Government and/or academic organizations having commercial or practical potential and alerting industry and state and local governments to its availability;
- Include a formal section on the SBDC Network's Intellectual Property training program and the results and impact of its IP program;
- Transferring expertise and equipment available from the Federal Government to the private sector;
- Transferring innovation and technology from business to business, SBIR, and other related activities. Note any collaboration with the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST);
- Providing information and education on the use of technology in everyday business activities or processes;
- Report cyber training that provides a broad mix of small businesses with a variety of training programs that range from introductory familiarization to intermediate and advanced cybersecurity training; and,
- Current number of SBDC Lead Center staff that have attained certification for cyber strategy training. Include employee name, level and date of certification.

#### 0300 INTERNATIONAL TRADE

- Current number of SBDC staff FTE counselors that have attained certification for export assistance at intermediate or advanced level Certified Global Business Professional (CGBP). Include employee

name, level and date of certification. Please distinctly identify the staff with certification in both intermediate or CGBP or any other export certifications obtained.

- Explain how you ensure certified staff remain current with best practices and resources supporting international trade counseling.
- Promoting increased exports by small businesses such as: supporting US Export Assistance Centers (USEACs); evaluating small business firms' export capabilities; assisting with a client's export related financing needs, providing counseling, training and outreach assistance including co-partnership events; providing rural export assistance; partnering with public and private sector organizations involved in export development; data base development; match services and market research; rural exporting and participating in World Trade Week;
- Data reported for the following categories (from SBA Form 641/EDMIS-NG (or SBA successor platform)):
  - # of small businesses receiving export assistance from the SBDC;
  - # of small businesses that started to export (new to export) after receiving SBDC assistance and to what markets;
  - # of small business exporters that entered new foreign markets (new to market) as a result of SBDC assistance;
  - Increase in export revenues attributed to SBDC assistance;
  - Jobs created or retained as a result of exporting assistance; and
  - # of small businesses referred to Departments of Commerce (DoC), Agriculture, State, Ex-Im Bank, OPIC, The U.S. Trade and Development Agency (USTDA), and SBA Office of International Trade for trade assistance.
- Indicate if SBDC has Service Centers that are co-located with USEAC, and/or state or local trade agencies, or program offices.

#### **0400 PROCUREMENT**

- Fostering opportunities for increasing small businesses' share of procurement dollars spent by the government and private sector through conferences, computer matching services such as SBA's "Business Matchmaking," assistance to Certificate of Competency businesses and prime contractor outreach; and
- Indicate if the SBDC manages a Federal APEX Accelerator Program formerly Procurement Technical Assistance Center Program; or has Service Centers co-located with an Accelerator and/or similar state, or local program.

#### **0500 MANUFACTURING**

- Assistance to manufacturing companies or their employees, including displaced manufacturing workers. Can include efforts and support to troubled companies, companies challenged by foreign competition, the United States, Mexico, Canada Agreement (USMCA) and foreign labor alternatives. This may also include cooperation efforts with other local organizations or government units concerned with manufacturing issues such as the National Institute of Standards and Technology's (NIST) Manufacturing Extension Program (MEP); and
- Indicate if the SBDC Lead Center manages an MEP, is co-located with, or has Service Centers that host an MEP or are co-located with MEP centers.

## **0600 SPECIAL EMPHASIS GROUPS**

- Assistance to people with disabilities; rural communities; Native Americans; young entrepreneurs; older adults, targeted associations; industry groups and other groups identified by SBA and/or the SBDC. (Note: Report minority, veteran and service connected-disabled veteran and women's efforts separately under Minority Small Business Development, Veteran and Service Connected-Disabled Veteran Owned Businesses and Women-Owned Businesses.)
- Include information about programs to assist childcare providers and the number of childcare businesses the SBDC Network provided services.
- Please also include partnerships with MSIs including new SBDC Service Centers that support historically underserved communities including but not limited to: Persons who are Asian American, Black and African American, Hispanic and Latino, Middle Eastern, North African, Other Persons of Color, Alaska Native, Native American, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, Tribal Communities, Have Disabilities, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ+), Of Religious Minorities, Live in Rural or underserved Urban areas, Veterans, Military Servicemembers, and Spouses, Women, or are otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty or systemic inequality.

## **0700 MINORITY SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT**

- Helping minorities participate in an entrepreneurial ecosystem such as: working on Asian American initiatives; Black or African American initiatives; Hispanic American initiatives; Native American initiatives; Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islanders initiatives; assisting 8(a) clients in the developmental stage, and other stages; and linking minority clients with other opportunities such as financial assistance and procurement and conferences.

## **0800 WOMEN-OWNED BUSINESSES**

Describe briefly collaboration with the Women's Business Centers (WBCs) and any seminars or specialized counseling approaches or other activities aimed at women entrepreneurs (e.g., SBA's Ascent Program).

## **0900 VETERANS, RESERVISTS, SERVICE-DISABLED VETERAN-OWNED BUSINESSES AND ALL OTHER MEMBERS OF THE U.S. MILITARY**

- Assistance targeted toward veteran and service connected-disabled veteran owned businesses, as well as Reservists and National Guard members called to active duty, such as: Veteran Entrepreneurial Training Programs; coordination with Veteran Business Outreach Centers (VBOCs); providing Veteran Entrepreneurial Training Programs, include marketing the availability of the V-WISE and Operation Endure and Grow programs managed by the SBA Office of Veterans Business Development (OVBD); summits for veteran business owners; activities in conjunction with the Department of Veterans Affairs Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Services; Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) and National Guard State Adjutants; DELTA Program; marketing and assistance for the Military Reservist Economic Injury Disaster Loan program; Patriot Express program; base closings and RIF counseling; and, DoD or DoL Transition Assistance Program (TAP) seminars and DoD Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program events; and
- Identify any SBDC Service Centers co-located with VBOCs or other armed services/veteran assistance programs.

## **1000 RURAL ASSISTANCE**

- Marketing, technical assistance, and service delivery strategies to rural businesses to better compete in the marketplace, including information and assistance in obtaining financing for business startups and expansion in rural areas;
- Assistance to increase participation of rural businesses in exporting, government procurement, tourism, access to credit, incubators, innovation and technology and other small business programs, in cooperation with the U.S. Departments of Commerce (DoC) and Agriculture (USDA), and other relevant Federal agencies; and
- Identify any SBDC Service Centers co-located with USDA assistance centers or other state/local rural assistance program centers.

## **1100 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, FAITH BASED, AND COMMUNITY INITIATIVES**

- Activities not specific to an individual client, do not fit in other categories, and are aimed at supporting/strengthening the economic environment in the SBDC's territory;
- Areas reported on may include Agribusiness, Rural Development, Community Development, corporate downsizing or plant closing assistance, convention/tourism, and incubators; and
- Activities aimed toward assisting small business and community economic development organizations such as providing counseling, training and outreach to community organizations, or other such entities with a significant focus on supporting the needs of small businesses.

## **1200 RESEARCH**

Research efforts aimed toward assisting small business and economic development such as database development and needs analysis.

## **1300 ONLINE ACTIVITY**

Activities and accomplishments which demonstrate use of web-based technology to enhance direct client service delivery such as: the use of online counseling (email and real-time) and training; online expert systems or diagnostic tools to identify needed services; audio or video streaming; electronic registrations and scheduling; webinars; and other targeted uses of the internet to virtually facilitate delivering information to clients more cost effectively.

## **1400 OTHER ACTIVITY**

Provide information regarding any efforts that do not fit in the categories above. Describe and provide information about any SBDC “best practices” to be used by SBA and archived in the SBDC National Information Clearinghouse. This also may include dissemination of basic business information as well as any specific information requested by the SBA Project Officer and mutually agreed upon with the SBDC State/Regional Program Director.

## **1500 SUCCESS STORIES [DO NOT INCLUDE IN PROPOSAL]**

Report at least three examples of assistance provided in which tangible results occurred. Include a description of the business, the problems encountered, the assistance provided, the resources used and the actual or expected results including economic impact. A signed statement from the success story



client(s) of his/her consent for use of the success story by SBA must be kept on file. (SBA can provide a sample form if one is not available locally.)

#### **1600 ADVOCACY**

- Support for small business interests within the SBDC's jurisdiction to improve the climate for small business and contribute to the vitality of the small business sector; and
- Include, as appropriate: public speeches, testimonies before state and/or Federal legislatures, and small business week activities.

#### **1700 RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT**

- Collaborating with funding or other partners to assist the SBDC in its mission through recruiting, developing and overseeing private and public resource organizations/individuals for the purpose of providing business development counseling, training and outreach efforts; and
- Any increase in match funding or other new program resources achieved during the reporting period.

#### **1800 COLLABORATION AND LEVERAGING**

Address key partnerships and collaborations throughout the Network and the type of interaction or relationship enjoyed. Include participation in Federal interagency collaboration efforts such as broadband efforts.

- Indicate collaboration with SBA's special initiatives such as T.H.R.I.V.E. and other Office of Entrepreneurial Development (OED) programs and identify any SBDC centers that are co-located with other SBA resource partners such as WBC and SCORE.

#### **1900 UNPLANNED TRAVEL [DO NOT INCLUDE IN THE PROPOSAL]**

Provide a description of any unanticipated or unbudgeted out-of-country travel for Lead and Service Centers not disclosed in the Cooperative Agreement.

#### **2000 KEY PERSONNEL CHANGES [DO NOT INCLUDE IN THE PROPOSAL]**

Provide description of new key personnel not included in the proposal, including name, position, date of hire and resume. Also indicate any key personnel vacancies and anticipated fill date. If Partner Location Identification point of contact has changed since the proposal was submitted, report that change here and provide name, contact information including email address, and effective date of change.

#### **2100 PROBLEMS [DO NOT INCLUDE IN THE PROPOSAL]**

Provide a description of any and all problems that have significant impact on the Program or program objectives.

#### **2200 BUDGET TO ACTUAL COMPARISON [DO NOT INCLUDE IN THE PROPOSAL]**

- Provide a comparison of actual program expenditures to date to the approved budget, by budget category and an explanation for any significant variances.

- SBDCs must also furnish copies of SF-425, SBA Form 2113, the Cost Price Analysis worksheet and other requested financial reports and attachments as required.

### **2300 ECONOMIC IMPACT [DO NOT INCLUDE IN THE PROPOSAL]**

For each progress report, provide a table showing comparison of performance goals to actual accomplishments achieved during the reporting period and include a management analysis of results.

For the Average Satisfaction Rate, include:

- Count of the counseling clients surveyed;
- Count of counseling clients responding; and,
- The average rating from all respondents.

## **6.4. Recordkeeping Requirements**

All SBDC Applicants and their Network Service Centers are required to maintain complete and accurate records and supporting documentation to facilitate a thorough program examination. All significant client counseling, training, and other activities shall be fully documented. SBDC Applicants will support SBA's required data collection and reporting system.

In addition to the performance, financial and program reports already mentioned in this Funding Opportunity, SBDCs must maintain the following records:

### **6.4.1. Counseling Activity**

All SBDCs are responsible for reporting all counseling activities on SBA Form 641, "Counseling Information Form" or an equivalent form that supports SBA's management information database. A client will be counted once in a Federal fiscal year with reporting to include both the number of sessions and the number of hours spent with the client. Copies of these forms or an electronic signed copy must be available for review by the SBA when requested.

Online counseling must meet the standards identified in the client definitions and there must be a signed SBA Form 641 or its equivalent that supports SBA's management information database.

#### **6.4.1.1 Agreement**

Each client is required to sign a request for assistance, SBA Form 641 or equivalent, and must be shown the following statement:

I request business counseling service from the Small Business Administration (SBA) or an SBA Resource Partner. I agree to cooperate should I be selected to participate in surveys designed to evaluate SBA services. I permit SBA or its agent the use of my name and address for SBA surveys and information mailings regarding SBA products and services (Yes/No). I understand that any information disclosed will be held in strict confidence. (SBA will not provide your personal information to commercial entities.) I authorize SBA to furnish relevant information to the assigned management counselor(s). I further understand that the counselor(s) agrees not to: 1.) Recommend goods or services from sources in which he/she has an interest, and 2.) Accept fees or commissions developing from this counseling relationship. In consideration of the counselor(s) furnishing management or technical assistance, I waive all claims against SBA personnel, and that of its Resource Partners and Host Organizations, arising from this assistance.

These forms shall be retained in accordance with current OMB and SBA requirements. SBDCs may use an electronic version of this form. For clients who have responded “yes” to Question 11 in Part I of SBA Counseling Information Form 641, the SBDC shall provide the information contained in Part I along with the small business name every 90 days. SBA will safeguard client and customer Personal Identifiable Information (PII).

#### **6.4.2. Transactions with Suspended or Debarred Entities**

SBDCs are responsible for verifying that entities (such as employees, consultants, contractors or other service providers) paid with program funds and clients receiving counseling assistance supported by program funds are not currently under suspension or debarment by or have an unresolved debt with a Federal Agency. SBDCs may require clients to certify that they are not currently suspended or debarred prior to receiving counseling assistance and should retain certification records with client files.

#### **6.4.3. Training Activity**

The SBDC must use SBA Form 888 or its equivalent to document and report SBDC training activities. The agenda and/or program content, attendee list and evaluations are required for each training event. SBDCs will submit all training information from the SBA Form 888 or equivalent form quarterly to SBA’s data collection system (EDMIS-NG or SBA successor system). The training information will be considered certified by the State/Regional Program Director when uploaded into EDMIS-NG or SBA successor system. The SBA Form 888 or similar program developed form must be maintained at the SBDC for review by the SBA when requested.

##### **6.4.3.1. Multi-Session Training:**

For courses with multiple sessions, each session may count as one course. Sessions must correspond with the minimum training duration identified in the definitions listed in Section 8.1. SBA’s management information system collects both the number of sessions and hours for the course.

##### **6.4.3.2. Online Training:**

An SBA Form 888 is required for all online training events. At a minimum, the following fields should be completed on a registration form for online training: a.) Client Name or approved client-coded name/number; b.) Email Address; and c.) Zip Code.

In addition, every effort should be made to collect these data:

- Race;
- Ethnicity;
- Gender;
- Disability;
- Veteran Status; and
- Military Status.

##### **6.4.3.3. Co-hosted (Collaborative) training:**

When reporting training numbers for a co-hosted training, the hosts (SBA and Entrepreneurial Development resource partners) can receive credit for the clients.

#### 6.4.4. SBDC Client Evaluation Forms

Evaluations should be solicited from SBDC clients who receive counseling or attend an SBDC training event. All SBDCs should develop internal procedures to ensure that these evaluations are performed on a regular basis and retain these documents on file. Client satisfaction rate data should be reported in the Annual Report in Section 2300 of the Economic Impact Report.

#### 6.4.5. Financial Recordkeeping

An SBDC must maintain the documentation for year-end Standard Form 425 (SF-425) Financial Report as required by OMB Circulars and SBA Regulations. SBDC Lead Centers and Service Centers that manage other non-SBDC funds (i.e., not included in the Proposal or SBA Cooperative Agreement) must maintain separate ledgers and transaction journals for the SBDC financial activity to ensure a clear audit trail of the financial resources used under the SBDC Cooperative Agreement as required by 2 CFR §200.302. SBDC expenditures of Federal, matching, and program income must be accounted for separately from other Lead Center resources. In addition, funds must be identifiable to the program year for which they were provided. SBDCs must maintain support documents for SBA Form 2113s and SF-425s. This support should consist of at a minimum:

- A spreadsheet that reconciles the SF-425 and the disbursement journals at the Lead Center and Network Service Center organizations (i.e., Network Service Center(s)). This applies to the Lead Center only;
- Support for all charges to the Cooperative Agreement, but not limited to, the disbursement ledger, vendor invoices, canceled checks, and journal entries;
- The expense reimbursement invoices submitted from the subcontracted Service Centers and any related supporting documentation (i.e., disbursement ledgers, comparison of actual to budgeted expenditures). This applies to Lead Center only;
- Any agreement(s) related to matching costs;
- Support for program income receipts and expenditures including receipt and disbursement journals;
- Salary and wage records for SBDC employees charged to the Cooperative Agreement (Both Recipients and Network Service Centers must maintain the appropriate standard to document costs for full-time and part-time personnel allocated to the Program.) This may include, but is not limited to, time and effort certification, appointment letters or contracts, performance reviews, payroll journals and/or activity reports. The records should be incorporated into the official records of the institution; and,
- **Support for in-kind costs:** Contributions, when used as match, must be documented showing the name of donor, phone number, signature of donor, date of donation, justification of the value of goods or services (hours with labor rate of services), and narrative description of service provided, or item donated. OSBDC implemented the following policy regarding in-kind contributions:
  - Contributions may include, but are not limited to, cost items such as time and materials, office space, and equipment;
  - A bona fide contribution exists and may be claimed when the source of the donation has no reasonable expectation of compensation such as a requirement the contribution be made as a provision in a contract or purchase order for the products or service;
  - Paid SBDC staff (i.e., host employees) are not eligible sources of in-kind contributions over and above the remuneration of salaries and benefits provided by the Host Organization; however, in-kind cost for time committed by consultants to the SBDC Program may be counted as in-kind match with the appropriate documentation. The documentation must

- include a letter signed by the consultant indicating the hours they are donating and the rate to be charged for those hours. It also must be signed and dated.
- SBDC support documentation must include the following: dated and signed statement from the donor identifying the specific nature of the donation, contact information and indicating that no additional remuneration is expected. Donor documentation may resemble an invoice with those provisions;
  - The SBDC must document the annual basis for valuing the donation in a clear manner such as the following: three bids or quotes in response to a competitive procurement process for similar cost items; sales literature, price catalogs; published schedules; or documented pricing for similar cost items previously paid for by the host institution; and
  - The total value of paid and donated services from each donor must represent a reasonable value to the government and be consistent with the procurement policies and standards of the host institution.

## 7.0 Section VII - Agency Contacts

### 7.1. Small Business Development Center Program Point of Contact

Questions concerning general information and technical aspects within this Funding Opportunity should be directed to the SBA Office of Small Business Development Centers (OSBDC) at [SBDCGrantsq@sba.gov](mailto:SBDCGrantsq@sba.gov).

### 7.2. Financial/Grants Management Point of Contact

Questions regarding budgetary matters related to this Funding Opportunity should be directed to [SBDCGrantsq@sba.gov](mailto:SBDCGrantsq@sba.gov). Questions regarding payments to the SBDC networks should be sent to [SBDCpayments@sba.gov](mailto:SBDCpayments@sba.gov).

### 7.3. Grants.gov Technical Support

For technical support with filing an electronic application in response to this Funding Opportunity, contact the Grants.gov help desk Monday through Friday 7 AM – 8 PM ET (closed Federal holidays) or call 1-866-577-0771 or 202-401-5282 or [help@Grants.gov](mailto:help@Grants.gov).

## 8.0 Section VIII - Other Information

### 8.1. Definitions

The following definitions apply to awards made under this Funding Opportunity (See 13 CFR Part 130 et seq. for additional definitions relating to Small Business Development Centers.):

#### 8.1.1. Budget Period

The 12-month period in which expenditure obligations are incurred by an SBDC Network, coinciding with either the calendar year or the Federal fiscal year.

#### 8.1.2. Capital Infusion

For capital infusion, SBA is going on transactions but still capturing dollars. Each time a client obtains capital it is a capital infusion transaction. If a client has multiple transactions, each count towards the goal. SBDCs should report:

- Loan Count and Dollar Amount of SBA Loans;
- Loan Count and Dollar Amounts of non-SBA Loans;

- Investment Count and Dollar Amounts of Equity Capital (to include private investment); and,
- Grant Count and Dollar Amount of Awards from state, local, and private organizations, including SBIR and STTR.

Capital infusion includes all forms of debt and investments from all sources (i.e., lines of credit, consumer debt products used specifically for the business, angel investors, grants, owner's capital contributions). Credit lines and other revolving debt facilities/instruments are to be recognized for the full amount of the line of credit when established and not to be based on individual drawdowns. Capital infusion measures and reporting should not contain sales increases or events such as private or government contracts awarded since these are distinguished separately on the SBA Form 641 and subsequently in EDMIS-NG or the SBA successor platform.

### **8.1.3. Client**

The client is the business, if it exists. In the case of a prospective business, the client is the individual (i.e., nascent entrepreneur or pre-venture) receiving SBDC services. Each client will be counted only once in a fiscal year, and the reporting will include both the number of sessions and the number of hours spent with the client.

### **8.1.4. Clients Advised**

This will be the number of unique clients advised in a given project year. It does not include clients trained. While training is still valuable, tracking clients advised allows greater focus on the clients and client outcomes. (This was previously goaled as unique clients served that also included unique training clients.)

### **8.1.5. Counseling**

Services provided one-on-one to an individual and/or business that are delivered in person (face-to-face), on the telephone, or electronically and which: a. Are substantive in nature and concern the formation, management, financing, and/or operation of a small business enterprise; AND b. Are specific to the needs of the business or individual; AND c. Require a signed SBA Form 641 or equivalent form that supports SBA's management information data.

### **8.1.6. Equity Capital**

Equity contributions to the business as reported on Form 641. Includes all funding transactions (except loans) obtained by clients attributed to SBDC assistance including grants, SBIR awards, equity investments (private and owner), etc.

### **8.1.7. In-Kind**

A non-cash match contribution based on the value of goods and services that are provided to the project, which may include office equipment and office space. In-kind donations may be provided by the Recipient, Network Service Center, contractor, or other party to the Cooperative Agreement, and must be appropriately valued and documented.

#### **8.1.8. New Business Starts**

The number of new businesses started in a given federal fiscal year.

##### **8.1.9.1 Reporting New Business Starts**

There will be a new field added to NEXUS to indicate that the business is a New Business Start. This is based on milestones as reported by the SBDC Network and, for which client attribution has been obtained.

#### **8.1.9. Project Period**

The total period of performance for an award made under this Funding Opportunity.

#### **8.1.10. Religious Organization**

An entity that is organized for religious purposes and engages in activity consistent with, and in furtherance of, such purposes.

#### **8.1.11. SBDC Lead Center**

The entity established by the SBDC Recipient Organization that has a current Cooperative Agreement with SBA to administer and operate the SBDC Network. The Lead Center is responsible for establishing an SBDC Network for a defined area and for overall program development, service coordination, financial management, reporting, promotion and public relations, evaluation, assessment and internal quality control over Network services.

#### **8.1.12. SBDC Network/SBDC Program.**

The "Network" is the combination of the Lead Center, SBDC Service Centers, and satellite locations.

#### **8.1.13. SBDC Satellite Locations**

A geographic point of service delivery that operates on a full- or part-time basis under direct management of an SBDC Lead Center Director or SBDC Service Center Director.

#### **8.1.14. SBDC Service Center**

An SBDC service location that operates on a full-time basis to provide counseling and training services within a service area designated by the Lead Center. Reference 13 CFR 130 for additional guidance.

#### **8.1.15. Small Business**

A business entity:

- i) That is independently owned and operated, is not dominant in its field of operation, is organized for profit with a place of business located in the United States, and operates primarily within the United States; and
- ii) That does not exceed the applicable size standard for its industry as established under 13 CFR § 121. In general, the most common size standards are:
  - 500 employees for most manufacturing and mining industries;
  - \$45 million in average annual receipts for most general & heavy construction industries;
  - \$19 million in average annual receipts for all specialty trade contractors;
  - \$9.0 million in average annual receipts for most retail and service industries; and
  - \$2.0 million to \$5.0 million in average annual receipts for most agricultural industries.

#### **8.1.16. Special Emphasis Groups**

Groups whose members are underrepresented in the population of business owners compared to their representation in the overall population. Special Emphasis Groups may include: disabled individuals, Native Americans or Alaska Natives, Black or African Americans, Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians or other Pacific Islanders, Hispanics, women, veterans, service connected-disabled veterans, self-employed Reserve and Guard members, transitioning military personnel and spouses, individuals in rural areas, individuals in HUBZones and individuals in low to moderate income urban and rural areas as determined by Census Bureau information, among others.

#### **8.1.17. Technical Assistance**

Counseling or training services provided to an individual and/or business in accordance with the terms of this Funding Opportunity and a Recipient's Notice of Award.

#### **8.1.18. Training**

An SBDC training workshop or seminar is defined as an activity or event in which a counselor from the SBDC, another resource partner, District Office, and/or a third party actively delivers a structured program of knowledge, information or experience on a business-related subject.

##### **8.1.18.1. Online training (or webinars):**

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 include a registration process as well as an evaluation process (e.g., one to five-star ranking). Online training can be synchronous or asynchronous. (Note: Must meet other criteria listed above.)

*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.



#### **8.1.18.2. Co-hosted Training (Collaborative)**

Meets the definition of “training” and is further defined as an activity where each Host Organization actively participates and contributes substantially to the training.

#### **8.1.19. Training Hours (Total Number of Training Hours)**

Total hours of training are the number of hours that the trainer spends teaching the training session.

#### **8.1.20. Travel Time**

The amount of time spent traveling to/from a location (separate from assigned post-of-duty) to meet with business or individual clients. If meeting with more than one client, travel time is only counted once. Travel time will not count toward counseling time but will be tracked separately.

### **8.2. Guidelines**

#### **8.2.1. Faith-Based & Neighborhood Partnerships**

SBDCs are encouraged to coordinate activities through either a contractual or partnership relationship with faith-based and other neighborhood organizations. SBDCs are also encouraged to coordinate their efforts with SBA’s Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnership initiatives designed to open government programs to these organizations to improve their communities. There are no grant funding set-asides for faith-based organizations. Instead, the Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnership creates a level playing field for faith-based as well as other neighborhood organizations to work with the Federal Government to meet the needs of America’s communities.

Lead Centers should be aware that many sectarian colleges and universities are eligible to participate in the SBDC Program. In assembling and maintaining their statewide/region-wide SBDC Networks, Lead Centers should be mindful of not imposing any unnecessary conditions which could prohibit or discourage otherwise eligible faith-based or other neighborhood organizations from seeking to act as Service Centers. If a Lead Center has any question regarding particular entity's eligibility to function as a Service Center, it should contact SBA for further assistance. See also Notice of Award, SBDC Program Terms and Conditions.

#### **8.2.2. Environmental Assistance**

Environmental assistance includes any activity that encourages, supports and enables small businesses to develop, market, and/or adopt environmental technologies (including pollution prevention) to achieve economic growth and environmental compliance. SBDCs are encouraged to consult with appropriate state and/or local providers of environmental technical assistance programs.

#### **8.2.3. Financial Packaging Assistance/Access to Capital**

SBDCs should work with their SBA District Offices to provide services that increase small businesses' access to capital. SBDCs are encouraged to develop linkages with lenders, Small Business Investment

Companies (SBICs), venture capital firms, Certified Development Companies (CDCs), SBA micro-lending intermediaries, and state and local finance programs.

SBDCs will assist small businesses with business plan development, financial statement preparation and analysis, cash flow preparation and analysis, source and application of funds. In addition, SBDCs, in cooperation with SBA District Offices, are expected to offer service to new SBA clients and to assist delinquent SBA borrowers who are referred to them by SBA and/or lenders to assist in problem solving, business restructuring, cost analysis, market penetration, and other similar subjects.

#### **8.2.4. Financial Assistance Restrictions**

SBDCs cannot make loans, service loans, or make credit decisions regarding the award of loans.

SBDCs must not advocate, recommend approval or otherwise attempt in any manner to influence SBA to provide financial assistance to any of its clients. SBDCs may not charge fees for providing assistance for financial packaging. Providing any preferential treatment to clients of any specific lender is prohibited, as is the SBDC's acceptance of payment for the provision of counseling services.

#### **8.2.5. Financial Packaging Assistance Guidelines**

SBDCs are encouraged to provide counseling services that increase a small business concern's access to capital, such as business plan development, financial statement preparation and analysis and cash flow preparation and analysis.

SBDCs should help prepare their clients to represent themselves to lending institutions.

While SBDCs may attend meetings with lenders to assist clients in preparing financial packages, they may not take a direct role in representing clients in loan negotiations.

SBDCs should inform their clients that counseling assistance or financial packaging assistance does not guarantee receipt of a loan.

#### **8.2.6. International Trade Services**

SBDCs will provide international trade finance and market development assistance to small businesses throughout the SBDC Network. Where appropriate, and to the extent possible, SBDCs will offer special international trade programs. SBDCs shall maintain a minimum number of certified export assistance advisors in their Network. Such international trade services will be conducted in conjunction with the SBA representative at the local U.S. Export Assistance Center and other relevant federal, state, and local agencies providing small business export and trade assistance.

#### **8.2.7. International Trade Center (ITC)**

Where appropriate, SBDCs will establish International Trade Centers (ITCs) to focus on export assistance to small businesses. ITCs are specialty centers within the SBDC Network dedicated specifically to providing international trade services. A list of these centers/locations shall be included with the proposal. ITCs must have a separately designated and full-time director and qualified professional staff. They must have a separate budget within the SBDC and there must be separate international trade related counseling and training milestones established in the SBDC Cooperative Agreement. Separate brochures marketing the SBDC's international services must be developed and distributed.

The ITC will coordinate and use public and private resources to provide assistance to small businesses, and particularly to those small businesses new to exporting or with export finance packaging needs.

ITCs will provide a broad range of services as appropriate and needed by the small business community, including the following:

- Assist SBA by supporting Export Assistance Centers sponsored by SBA, the U.S. Department of Commerce, the Export-Import Bank and other Federal Agencies;
- Assess client's export related financing needs and assist clients in structuring and compiling necessary documentation, (i.e., business plan development, financial statement and analysis, cash flow preparation and analysis, source and application of funds, letters of credit, and other related documents) for export financing and particularly for SBA's Export Working Capital Program;
- Develop linkages with local lenders, SBA District Export Finance Officers, Ex-Im Bank personnel and U.S. Export Assistance Center personnel;
- In cooperation with SBA, develop an Export Trade Assistance Partnership (E-TAP) program on an annual basis for new exporters. Create an E-TAP Task Force for its development and cooperation with other appropriate private and public sector partners to provide counseling and training for this program.
- Develop and conduct seminars on opportunities and procedures involved in exporting, export finance, joint ventures, licensing, ISO 9000, and other International Standards Registration, metric conversion and so forth;
- Identify and analyze client's international trade needs, capabilities and problems and provide in-depth counseling in international trade techniques, procedures and opportunities;
- Use services available through the Federal Bar Association/SBA Agreement to assist in the resolution of client's international trade/legal problems, the Export Legal Assistance Network (E-LAN);
- Assist SBA in promoting and recruiting participants for SBA cosponsored events including those with the Department of Commerce, the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, the Agency for International Development and the Export-Import Bank; and
- Assist SBA in disseminating information on trade promotion, trade finance, trade adjustment and trade remedy assistance.

#### **8.2.8. Manufacturing Assistance**

Many SBDCs partner with the Department of Commerce, National Institute of Standards and Technology's (NIST) Manufacturing Extension Partnerships (MEPs) to provide specialized services to small manufacturers. Through this partnership, a small manufacturer can receive business advising services including capital, contracting, and exporting support from the SBDC and engineering assistance from the MEPs.

All SBDCs that are partnering with the NIST MEPs are encouraged to continue this valuable assistance to small business manufacturers. SBDCs without a working partnership with the NIST MEPs may wish to pursue one. The nature of any participation with MEPs must be reported in the SBDC Semi-Annual Annual Report in Section 0500.

#### **8.2.9. Military Base Closings and Reductions-in-Force**

In those states where base closing or realignments have occurred or will occur, the SBDC must provide a full range of business development and technical assistance services in the affected areas. These services should be specifically designed to meet the particular small business needs that arise as these closings

and realignments occur, including services specifically targeted toward existing and former military personnel.

#### **8.2.10. Minority Business Development**

SBDCs should work with their SBA District Offices to provide training and counseling to firms in all stages of participation in the 8(a) Business Development Program. Each SBDC must make all of its economic development and technical assistance services available to 8(a) firms in all stages, other minority business owners and prospective minority business owners. SBDCs are encouraged to make special efforts to assist SBA's 8(a) Business Development Program. These efforts include community-based seminars and workshops concerning the SBA's 8(a) Program application process.

SBDCs should inform their 8(a) clients that counseling assistance does not guarantee receipt of a contract.

#### **8.2.11. Native American Assistance**

Each SBDC must make its economic development and technical assistance services available to Native Americans. Local initiatives for Native Americans shall be supported when appropriate, and to the extent possible, by the appropriate SBDC where it is determined that this assistance is needed. Where appropriate, SBDCs shall provide support to initiatives of SBA's Office of Native American Affairs (ONAA).

#### **8.2.12. Procurement Assistance**

SBDCs are encouraged to provide services that provide basic information needed by small business concerns interested in procurement opportunities in the Government arena. These services should include, but not be limited to:

- Providing information on government buying methods;
- Identifying Federal resources to educate, inform, and assist small businesses in the Federal, state and local procurement marketplace;
- Making connections and providing client referrals to appropriate procurement officials at the Federal, state and local levels including the SBA Area Directors, Procurement Center Representatives, Commercial Market Representatives and Business Opportunity Specialists);
- Educating small businesses about the Federal Government's acquisition policies and procedures;
- Assisting small businesses with understanding the required documentation for applications responding to procurement bids and proposals;
- Assisting clients in identifying and maximizing subcontracting opportunities;
- Providing business advising and referral information concerning bidders' rights and obligations, appeal procedures, termination and default actions, and size criteria (to exclude legal advice);
- Providing technical assistance on contractual, financial and contract administration issues including assistance to small and disadvantaged businesses women-owned small businesses, veteran-owned small businesses and service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses and HUBZone small businesses;
- Identifying and facilitating access to computerized systems that identify Federal, state and local procurement opportunities;
- Assisting eligible small business firms to complete and submit certification and application for small business programs including small and disadvantaged, women-owned, 8(a) Business Development, HUBZone Program, veteran-owned and other set-aside program electronic applications; and

- Working cooperatively *with* SBA resources including SBA 7(j) grantees and other SBA Government Contracting and Business Development Resources as well as the APEX (Accelerator Program formerly Procurement Technical Assistance Center Program);

#### **8.2.13. Rural Development**

SBDC Applicants must make a full range of business development and technical assistance services available to small businesses located in rural areas. These services will be designed to increase rural small business participation in exporting, government procurement, tourism, access to credit, incubators, innovation and technology, and other small business programs.

#### **8.2.14. Surety Bond Guarantee Assistance**

SBDCs are encouraged to educate their counselors and small business contractors about the Surety Bond Guarantee (SBG) Program. This includes making available program information at counseling and training sessions and at business, professional and trade association meetings. SBDCs should develop an outreach program and actively promote the SBG program to special emphasis contractors. SBDCs should refer small business contractors to the SBG specialist in one of the two SBG Area Offices (Denver and Seattle) for detailed information about the Program. The Office of Surety Guarantees in SBA Headquarters will provide a power point presentation for this purpose. An SBDC should contact The Office of Surety Guarantees in SBA (202) 205-6540 for answers to questions and for more information. The SBA OSG website is located at: [SBA Surety Bond Webpage](#).

Many contractors are able to leave the Program and obtain bonding on their own while others remain in the program for several years. One reason small contractors continue in the Program is that they lack management expertise and have ongoing cash flow problems. SBDCs are encouraged to work with the specialist in the appropriate Area Office to identify such contractors and give them the needed business management assistance. Among other areas, this may include business plan development, cash flow preparation and analysis, bid preparation, marketing and financial statement preparation and analysis.

#### **8.2.15. Technical Assistance for Research and Innovation**

The Lead Center must make technical assistance for research and innovation available, directly or through other relationships, to small businesses including, but not limited to: new product development; assisting inventors and high technology firms to research, develop and market their ideas and inventions; assisting non-technological firms to gain access to existing technologies; SBIR related assistance; and facilitating the transfer of technology and technical data from federal and university laboratories.

#### **8.2.16. Training**

Applicants must provide quality training designed to improve the skills and knowledge of existing and prospective small business owners/managers throughout the SBDC Network.

Training planned by SBDCs must be shared with the SBA Project Officer to avoid duplication with training efforts offered by other local organizations and SBA. In addition, all training materials developed in an electronic format shall be made available to the SBA Project Officer and the SBDC Clearinghouse.

SBDCs may charge reasonable fees to cover program costs associated with this training. These fees are considered program income and shall be used to expand services and further SBDC program objectives.

### **8.2.16.1. SBDC Co-hosted Training**

SBDCs are encouraged to enter into co-hosted training arrangements with the private sector and other organizations to extend outreach and productivity. (Cooperation between members of the SBDC Network ((i.e., Lead Center with Service Centers or other organizations funded through the Cooperative Agreement with SBA) is not considered a co-hosting).

In order for an SBDC to receive credit for a co-hosted training event, it must actively participate (i.e., provide speakers, materials, publicity) with the organization assuming primary responsibility for financing the training session. Final responsibility for the quality of the training rests with the SBDC. For all co-hosted training among Office of Entrepreneurial Development (OED) resource partners where there will be a distribution of receipts in whole or in part to the co-host, the training file for the activity must clearly document the role and responsibility of the SBDC and each participant receiving a share of the receipts. The training file must also document how the receipts were distributed.

Each OED resource partner participating in a co-hosted training event is allowed to claim the total number of participants that attends a training event. Each OED resource partner must contribute substantive value to the co-hosted event in order to claim each participant attending the training event. The substantive value provided by the OED resource partner must be documented in the training file.

SBDCs are reminded that income received by the SBDC Network for all co-hosted programs is considered program income and cannot be used for match funding; it must be used to further support the SBDC program. Note that SBDC programs involving the SBA District Office and one or more third party organizations as co-hosts (such as lenders or chambers of commerce) are subject to the Agency's co-sponsorship requirements and may require a different treatment of program income receipts.

### **8.2.17. Veteran and Service-Connected Disabled Veteran Business Ownership**

SBDCs must support the entrepreneurship track of the Department of Defense's Transition Assistance Program (TAP) known as Boots to Business (B2B). The B2B program is offered to service members and their spouses at military installations worldwide as a two-day Introduction to Entrepreneurship. The SBDCs are integral to the B2B program, which uses a multi-phase approach to introduce transitioning service members to the fundamentals of small business ownership and highlights follow-on training and counseling opportunities with a focus on the eight-week online Foundations of Entrepreneurship course offered by Institute for Veterans and Military Families (IVMF) at Syracuse University. SBDCs may provide B2B instructors, preferably veterans or those with knowledge of military culture, and assist with program marketing and outreach activities. Selection of instructors and the delivery of B2B will be coordinated by SBA District Offices and their designated Veterans Business Development Officer. As an extension of B2B, SBA also offers Boots to Business: Reboot. This Program offers the same tailored curriculum to veterans of all eras and their families and is also delivered collaboratively by all SBA partners.

Each SBDC must make available all of its economic development and technical assistance services to veterans, including service-connected disabled Veterans and their immediate families as well as Reservists and National Guard members called to active duty as appropriate. Both national and local initiatives for Veterans shall be supported by the appropriate SBDC as needed. If not actively involved with the B2B initiative, each SBDC Network will establish a minimum of one Veteran Entrepreneurial Training (VET) Program for veterans, service-connected disabled veterans, Reservists and National Guard members as well as active-duty military personnel who are pending discharge. The Program may include feasibility and marketing studies, preparation of business plans and loan packages including Patriot Express and formation of support groups to provide follow-up and encouragement to participants.

SBDCs should contact their state National Guard Adjutant General and all units of the Military Reserves to identify Reservists and National Guard members who are operators of small businesses; are otherwise self-employed or are essential employees in small businesses and who have been or may be mobilized pursuant to Title 10 USC for active duty. SBDCs should provide business counseling and training as needed to minimize business interruption and/or adverse financial and operational problems. Such counseling could include, but is not limited to, the offering advice on the best feasible means of winding up business operations and the utilization of Federal and state laws (including the Soldiers and Sailors Civil Relief Act) enacted to protect small businesspersons who are subject to mobilization to active duty. Additionally, business assistance for self-employed Reserve and National Guard members following their release from active duty will be critical to mitigate expenses, secure legal assistance, engage in significant marketing efforts and otherwise minimize the negative effects of the member's mobilization on their small business or practice.

Each SBDC should also encourage development of a Veterans' business network and work with strategic partners to develop a local summit for Veteran business owners and service-connected disabled veterans business owners as well as Reservists and National Guard members who are subject to be called to active duty. Each SBDC will contact its local Veterans Administration (VA) regional office and engage VA Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors with clients.

SBDCs should highlight Veteran's needs at small business seminars, conferences and outreach Funding Opportunities. SBDCs should develop close working relationships with their respective State Department of Veterans Affairs to explore collaborative outreach and referrals.

Pursuant to the Military Reservist and Veteran Small Business Reauthorization and Opportunity Act of 2010, SBDCs shall, as part of the SBA's Outreach and Technical Assistance Program, market and provide technical assistance for SBA's Military Reservist Economic Injury Disaster Loan program including website linkages to assistance programs offered by SBA, the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Defense.

#### **8.2.18. Women's Business Services**

Each SBDC will make available all of its economic development and technical assistance services to women business owners and prospective women business owners. SBDCs will also provide referrals to the Women's Business Centers (WBCs) for women business owners when appropriate.

#### **8.2.19. Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program**

Pursuant to [Public Law 110-181](#), passed January 28, 2008 – The Secretary of Defense initiated the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program which provides information, services, referral and proactive outreach programs to National Guard and Reserve members and their families with sufficient information, services, referral and proactive outreach opportunities through the four phases of the deployment cycle:

1. Pre-Deployment;
2. Deployment;
3. Demobilization; and
4. Post-Deployment-Reconstitution.

The goal of the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program is to prepare soldiers and families for mobilization, sustain Families during mobilization, and reintegrate soldiers with their families, communities and employers upon redeployment or REFRAD.

Relevant portions of the “Act” are:

(h) Outreach Services- As part of the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program, the Office for Reintegration Programs may develop programs of outreach to members of the Armed Forces and their family members to educate such members and their family members about the assistance and services available to them under the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program. More information is available at [http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/yellow\\_ribbon.asp](http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/yellow_ribbon.asp).

### **8.3. Advance Understandings**

#### **8.3.1. Hours of Operation**

The Lead Center and Service Centers services shall be accessible to the public during normal business hours throughout the year except as granted by prior approval. In addition, provision should be made to provide evening and weekend assistance, both online and in Service Centers, as appropriate to meet local community demands and needs. Anticipated closings shall be included in any annual renewal application. Emergency closures shall be reported to the SBA Project Officer and SBA Program Manager as soon as possible.

#### **8.3.2. Travel**

The travel charged to the Cooperative Agreement must be in accordance with provisions of the grant and utilized in conformance with Program regulation and must be used under the same formula for travel reimbursement as provided by the host institution. Award funds are not available for the payment of per diem, lodging, meals or other subsistence expenses associated with local travel (50-mile radius). However, award funds may be used to pay transportation expenses for local travel.

SBDCs are authorized to include a certain amount of funds in the proposal for “unanticipated” travel. Unanticipated travel is defined as “travel, which is necessary to further SBDC objectives, but for which a complete description and/or justification could not be provided in the proposal.” SBDCs are required to report on the out-of-state or international travel completed after the fact in the Semi-annual or Annual Report.

Travel funds are authorized for the SBDC State/Regional Director and/or his/her designee to attend two America’s SBDC (ASBDC) meetings per year. Travel funds may also be authorized for additional SBDC staff to attend meetings designed for professional development purposes. Further, one trip per year, as approved by the AA/SBDC, is authorized to allow the SBDC State/Regional Director and/or his/her designee to meet with national SBA officials to discuss local program initiatives.

#### **8.3.3. Small Business Week**

SBDCs are encouraged to promote, support, plan, implement and participate in Small Business Week activities in cooperation and coordination with local and national SBA officials. SBDC State/Regional Directors and other SBDC personnel, with their strong links to prominent entrepreneurs and small business advocates in their communities, should nominate individuals for Small Business Week awards. SBDCs are encouraged to submit nominees for the SBDC National Awards.



#### **8.3.4. Legal Services Restrictions**

No costs associated (either directly or indirectly) with civil, criminal, or administrative litigation are allowable under an award made pursuant to this Funding Opportunity. Project funds may be used to pay the cost of non-litigation legal counseling services either to the recipient of this Award or project beneficiaries. However, all parties receiving such services must agree in writing or by email to waive any claims of privilege over such services with regard to SBA to the extent necessary for the Agency to perform its monitoring and oversight function.

SBDCs may offer training courses on business law issues, provided that legal topics are presented by individuals qualified by training and experience to address such topics. In furtherance of their educational mission, SBDCs may negotiate arrangements with law schools to offer clients access to supervised student legal clinics that are approved by the state attorney licensing entity. The SBDC must make appropriate disclosures and disclaimers to that effect.

#### **8.3.5. Conflict of Interest Policy**

Each SBDC Network must have a written conflict of interest policy which is signed annually by all employees, consultants, instructors, and volunteers of the SBDC Network. The policy must include enforceable elements safeguarding the SBDC Program from actual or apparent conflicts in accordance with 2 CFR § 2701.112.

#### **8.3.6. Disaster Operations Plan**

Each Lead Center and its Service Centers must have in place disaster plans which are coordinated with the Host Institution to ensure delivery of services to small businesses in its area of operations. Such plans must be kept on file and available for review by SBA officials. Plans should be reviewed annually by the Lead and/or Service Center Directors and updated as needed. SBDCs individually, and in cooperation with SBA and other Federal Agencies as well as state and local entities, are encouraged to provide disaster recovery assistance to support impacted small businesses in local economies.