



MBAC Request for Proposals – Questions & Answers

March 16, 2015

What is the RFP Timeline?

RFP Timeline	Action
February 20, 2015	Development releases RFP to potential applicants
March 6, 2015	Pre-Bid Conference at the Riffe Tower located at 77 S. High Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215. Conference will begin at 11:00 am on the 31 st Floor East B conference room
March 9, 2015	Development closes applicant question and answer period at 5 p.m.
March 16, 2015	Development posts answers to applicant questions
April 17, 2015	Deadline for proposal submission at 5 p.m.
April 27 - 30	Scheduled interviews for proposed MBAC Host and staff
May 4, 2015	Development issues Minority Business Assistance Center awards and denial notification letters
July 1, 2015	Minority Business Assistance Centers open for business
June 30, 2017	Project completion

How long is the grant period?

The grant begins on July 1st, 2015 and ends June 30th, 2017. The grant can be up to 24 months, with 8 quarters.

Can you explain the difference between “primary and secondary” counties on the MBAC Regional Map?

When determining service areas for the current Minority Business Assistance Center Request for Proposal we reviewed census data to determine how many self-identified minority-owned businesses as well as minority populations reside in each county. The primary service areas were determined by designating those counties which contained the highest representation of minority-owned businesses and minority residents. Data for those areas designated as secondary service areas did not show a sufficient representation of minority-owned businesses or residents to be designated as primary service areas. However, our goal was to ensure that businesses in any county in Ohio would have access to a Minority Business Assistance Center.

How many service areas can I propose to cover?

If you represent an organization which has locations in more than one area in Ohio, it is acceptable if you wish to submit more than one proposal. If you elect to submit more than one proposal make sure that each proposal contains responses to questions that specifically address each service area. Regions that are

established in the Minority Business Assistance Center service area map cannot be broken up or changed. Proposals must address service areas as they are shown in the Request for Proposal.

What is the minimum/maximum proposal amount that organizations can request?

The minimum/maximum grant amounts are based upon multiple factors including but not limited to; size of service area covered, proposed activities, budget request, and proposed service model. Funding for current centers ranges from \$100,000 to \$300,000 per year.

What is the difference between cash match and in-kind contributions?

There is a 25% percent Cash Match requirement, and the referenced definitions explain the limitations of each contribution type.

- **Host or Local Cash Match** - Funds contributed by the host of the Minority Business Assistance Center or by any local partner that may be providing financial support to the program.
- **Cash Match** -Cash Match funds must be generated from a source with a mission and focus on economic development, business development and business/entrepreneurial training.
- **In-kind** - Contributions made to the Minority Business Assistance Center in a form other than dollars. This may include office space, time, support, etc. In-kind contributions require specific documentation to meet the test.

In-kind Rules

- The Ohio Minority Business Assistance Center program has set the following rules for the inclusion and documentation of in-kind contributions:
- Contributions may include, but are not limited to, cost items such as staff time and materials, office space and equipment.
- A bona fide contribution must exist and may be claimed when the source of the donation has no reasonable expectation of compensation such as a requirement that the contribution be made as a provision in a contract or purchase order for the products or service.
- Paid Minority Business Assistance Center 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.
- Minority Business Assistance Center support documentation must include the following: date and signed statement from the donor identifying the specific nature of the donation, contact information and indication that no additional remuneration is expected. Donor documentation may resemble an invoice with those provisions.

- The Minority Business Assistance Center must document on an annual basis the valuing of 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.
- The total value of paid and donated services from each donor must represent a reasonable value to the state and be consistent with the standards of the host institution.

Is there a date or specific time frame that the cash match must be used by?

Yes, there are 8 quarters in this 24 month grant period. The financial reports for the first five quarterly reports (covering 7/1/15 – 9/30/16) must adequately prove that a 20% minimum of the total cash match has been spent/used in the corresponding quarter being reported. Therefore, the total 25% cash match requirement will be satisfied by the due date of the fifth quarter in the grant (10/15/16).

What staff is mandatory?

Mandatory staff includes one Minority Business Assistance Center Director and one Counselor. A program/administrative person would be ideal, but not mandatory.

Can MBAC centers share staff?

No, the expectation is to have dedicated staff serve a single center and service area.

Are the CBA/ Fas Trac certifications mandatory for all MBAC Directors?

There is an expectation for all directors to achieve Certified Business Advisor/ FasTrac certification within a year of becoming a Minority Business Assistance Center director or, alternatively, providing proof of equivalent professional experience. One advantage of obtaining FasTrac certification is that the certified individual has the ability to generate program revenue which can be utilized to support work of the Minority Business Assistance Center.

How will the proposal be scored?

Eligible proposals will be reviewed by an evaluation committee of three persons that consists of state employees and/or stakeholders for the program, and scored against the stated criteria. If the applicant has prior experience hosting an MBAC, scoring will take into account the past performance, fiscal responsibility and accountability. In addition to the proposals submission, the review process will include interviews of selected applicants. Proposals will be evaluated for completeness and responsiveness to the RFP. Points will be assigned in each of the following five scoring factors:

- Completeness and responsiveness to the RFP’s requirements
- Past and current grant performance
- Proposed budget cost effectiveness
- Comprehensive plan to address proposed service area
- Strategic plan to reach and exceed proposed KPMs

How should we deliver the proposal?

We will only accept proposals that are submitted electronically. Proposals can be emailed to ohiombac@development.ohio.gov.

Proposals must be addressed to:
MBAC Request for Proposals
Minority Business Development Division
Ohio Development Services Agency
77 South High Street, 28th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215

In order to be considered, proposals must be received no later than 5:00 P.M. on Friday, April 17th, 2015. Any proposal received after that date will not be reviewed.

Will a receipt be issued with the online submission of the proposal?

Yes, you should receive an email verifying receipt of your proposal.

One of the requirements of the RFP is that all proposed staff must come in for an interview with DSA staff. What if the proposed staff person(s) have not been hired yet?

The proposal will be reviewed in accordance to RFP requirements, and (proposed) staffing will be taken into consideration. It is recommended that you submit as much information as possible regarding the proposed staffing structure.

Since the grant requires a quarterly Cash Match, will consideration be given to Centers whose cash match is provided by their sponsor annually?

Yes, consideration will be given for those Centers.

Are the self-identified minority businesses that make of the primary regions from the U.S. census data?

Yes, the regions were established from the 2007 Statistics of U.S. Business U.S. Census data report.

Does the primary regions and minority business concentration impact the services the Center provides?

The concentration of minority businesses in a region will definitely impact the services the center provides and should also be taken in consideration when defining the key performance measures.

Will there be changes made to the Customer Relation Manager Database system that is currently in place?

Not at this time, but we are evaluating the effectiveness of the system and will be looking at new reporting formats.

Would it be possible to have multiple sites to house the center?

Yes, it could be a possibility. All grantees should use creativity on how to cover the region.

In the Pre-Bid meeting, it was stated that Development is moving from advances to funds reimbursement. Under the reimbursement model, can the MBAC send in monthly expense reports to receive reimbursements instead of quarterly reports?

No, all quarterly programmatic and financial reports will still be required.