

## Minority Business Assistance Center Program (MBAC)

### Fiscal Year 2016 - 2017 Request for Proposals (RFP)

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July 1, 2015	Minority Business Assistance Centers open for business
June 30, 2017	Project completion



**Minority Business  
Assistance Centers**

**RFP Administered by:**

The Ohio Development Services Agency  
Minority Business Development Division  
77 South High Street, 28<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215



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# **Minority Business Assistance Center Program**

## **Fiscal Year 2016 – 2017**

### **Request for Proposals (RFP)**

## **1 Introduction**

### **1.1 Purpose**

This competitive Request for Proposal (RFP) is being issued to award grants under the Minority Business Assistance Center (hereinafter “MBAC”) Program. The Ohio Development Services Agency (hereinafter “Development”) partners with community-based non-profit organizations to host regional MBACs. MBACs serve the needs of Ohio's small, minority and disadvantaged businesses by providing important services including technical assistance, professional consulting, access to capital and assistance obtaining contracts. A primary objective of MBACs is to identify emerging businesses and cultivate their growth and sustainability. The realization of this objective will strengthen the minority business community, support job creation and further economic growth in Ohio.

### **1.2 Issuing Division**

This RFP is released by Development's Minority Business Development Division (hereinafter “Division”). Entities selected for regional MBACs will enter into grant agreements with Development and such agreements will incorporate the terms of this RFP by reference. The Division fosters the growth and sustainability of Ohio's small, minority and disadvantaged businesses. Supporting these businesses means providing them with technical and professional assistance, access to capital and bonding and connecting them to business opportunities. The Division leverages these resources to support achievement of the state's 15% Minority Business Enterprise goal (hereinafter “MBE”) and Encouraging Diversity, Growth and Equity (hereinafter “EDGE”) 5% set aside goals. The Division, which will administer grant agreements issued under this RFP, and will be responsible for state level supervision of all MBAC activities.

### **1.3 Background**

Goals of the MBAC Program include increasing the number of state certified MBE and EDGE businesses; supporting job creation and retention; providing assistance through loan and bonding programs; and helping minority businesses secure procurement contracts. As Ohio's lead facilitator in the state's efforts to grow minority and disadvantaged businesses, the Division assists in the creation and development of minority and disadvantaged business enterprises throughout the state. The Division's mission is to be a catalyst for high performing minority owned businesses by providing consulting, training, financial assistance, strategic management and technical support. A key priority of the Division is to provide high quality professional services to businesses throughout Ohio.

## 1.4 RFP Rules and Selection Guidelines

Selected applicants will be responsible for the effective management of all MBAC functions and activities supported by the grants awarded under this RFP. The MBAC Program is a critical component of implementing the Division's overall mission.

The Division will give consideration to proposals which best demonstrate the following:

- A history of economic development, accomplishment and leadership;
- An efficient and successful grant management history, exemplifying success in regional business development and sustainability;
- A proven ability to create and implement a strong strategic plan to reach and exceed Key Performance Measures (hereinafter "KPMs");
- A comprehensive and definitive plan to service the defined geographic area, including providing knowledgeable insight of the selected region, its business environment, opportunities and potential challenges for minority and disadvantaged businesses;
- A strong commitment of quality cash match, in-kind services and additional resources above and beyond the minimum requirements;
- A strong plan to collaborate and cultivate relationships with Division staff, and network partners, including Equal Opportunity Division, Small Business Development Centers, Procurement Technical Assistance Centers and Entrepreneurial Signature Programs;
- An integration and collaboration of the MBAC's activities with Division network partners to reduce administrative costs, maximize the use of available resources and promote stronger regional coordination of all business assistance services; and

Documentation of any formal relationship with the Division's network partners such as Memoranda of Understanding, Cooperative Agreements or Letters of Intent to formalize the relationship. The documentation should be identified and included as a part of **Section 8** of the Applicant's proposal, if applicable.

## 2 RFP and Award Process

### 2.1 Request for Proposal Issuance

Any and all information developed by the applicants during the course of this project will be provided to Development upon request and will become the property of Development. The applicant shall not assert any claims arising under copyright or otherwise inconsistent with the transfer of ownership of such documents. All information submitted in response to this RFP shall be public record unless a statutory exception exists that would protect the information from release to the public.

Any information submitted with the proposal which the applicant reasonably believes to be a trade secret, **as that term is defined in Section 1333.61 of the Ohio Revised Code**, may be designated as such by marking the information as follows: the phrase "trade secret," marked with two asterisks on each side, must be placed at the beginning and end of the trade secret information (for example: **\*\*TRADE SECRET\*\***). In addition, the trade secret information shall be underlined. Information determined to be a trade secret under the laws of the state of Ohio may be protected as trade secrets by Development in accordance with Ohio law.

Applicants are advised that there will be no opportunity to correct mistakes or deficiencies in their submitted materials after the RFP's due date. Proposals that are incomplete or otherwise missing required information will not be evaluated. No supplementary or revised materials will be accepted after the due date unless specifically requested by Development.

It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure timely submission of a complete proposal. Late proposals will not be scored or given consideration. Development is under no obligation to consider proposals that are received after the due date. Proposals that are not submitted in the format requested will not be scored.

All costs incurred in the preparation of the proposal shall be borne by the Applicant alone and Development shall not contribute, in any way, to the cost of the preparation of the proposal.

In accordance with federal and state statutes and Development policy, no person shall be excluded from participation or subject to discrimination in the RFP process on the basis of race, color, age, sex, national origin, military status, religion or disability.

The Division reserves the right to:

- Adjust the RFP Calendar of Event dates as needed and deemed appropriate;
- Accept or reject any and all proposals and/ or bids if Development determines that it is in the best interests of the state to do so;
- Rebid this RFP, requesting new proposals from qualified organizations;
- Make no award at the end of the evaluation process (this RFP is not to be interpreted or construed to guarantee that one or more applicants submitting responses will be awarded contracts);
- Fund any proposal in full or in part (any assignments of work by Development under the scope of this RFP will be made dependent on need and the availability of adequate, specific funding);
- Fund only those proposals determined to be the best and most responsive;
- Request additional information to assist in the review process;
- Waive or modify minor irregularities in proposals received;
- Contact Applicants to clarify any portion of the Applicants' proposals;
- Require the submission of modifications or additions to proposals as a condition of further participation in the selection process; and
- Request that certain selected Applicants make presentations and participate in interviews with Development's staff and reviewers.

## 2.2 Funding Opportunity Description

Funding under this RFP will be awarded for a period of 24 months beginning July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2017. A single organization or consortium of organizations meeting the operating guidelines established herein may submit a proposal. A single lead Host Organization must be identified in the proposal.

Unsatisfactory performance in reaching identified KPMs and deliverables under prior funding for the MBAC Program or other Development programs may result in a proposal receiving an unsatisfactory rating and/or not being considered. Failure to comply with any or all of the provisions of an agreement executed with Development may have a negative impact on future funding and may be grounds for termination.

## 2.3 Timetable

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Selected applicants that receive grants under this RFP must be prepared to comply with the following mandates **no later than July 1, 2015**:

- The MBAC office will be distinguishable and identifiable from its fiscal agent and include prominent MBAC signage in and/or on the building (at the location) that can be easily visible to the public.
- The MBAC must provide adequate client parking and publicly list the MBAC's telephone number and contact information.
- The MBAC must be managed by a full-time director and full-time business counselor who must be interviewed by Division staff prior to filling the position.
- The MBAC must provide Internet access and have an easily accessible and identifiable website.
- The MBAC's operating hours must commensurate with the Division's operating hours (8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday).
- The MBAC must be fully operational\* and open to the public for service.
- The MBAC office must provide safe, professional and accessible venue for prospective clients.

Fully Operational means that the MBAC's staff, required signage, furniture and equipment (e.g., hardware, software, web-site, phones, fax machine, etc.) are in place and operational by July 1, 2015. Failure to comply with these requirements is grounds for termination of any grant awarded under this RFP.

## 2.4 Question and Answer Period (RFP Clarification Opportunity)

Applicants may submit questions regarding this RFP via e-mail during the Question and Answer period as outlined in Section 2.3 – Timetable. To submit a question, Applicants must use the following process:

- Access Development's website at <http://minority.development.ohio.gov>
- Select MBAC RFP
- To ask a question: Email: [ohiombac@development.ohio.gov](mailto:ohiombac@development.ohio.gov)

Questions regarding this RFP must reference the relevant section of the RFP, the heading for the provision under question, and the page number of the RFP where the provision can be found. Applicants must also include the name of a representative, the organization's name, phone number and email address. Development may, at its option, disregard any questions that do not appropriately reference an RFP provision or section, or which do not include identification for the originator of the question. **Development will not respond to any questions submitted after 5:00 p.m. on the date the Question and Answer period closes.**

Development's responses to all questions will be posted on the web page dedicated to this RFP for reference by all applicants. Applicants submitting questions will not receive personalized or individual email responses. Relevant questions that are submitted and Development's responses will comprise the "Development Question and Answer Document" for this RFP.

Applicants who attempt to seek information or clarification verbally will be directed to reduce their questions to writing in accordance with the terms of this RFP. No other form of communication is acceptable, and use of any other form of communication or any attempt to communicate with Development's staff regarding this RFP may result in the Applicant being deemed ineligible.

It is the responsibility of the Applicant to check the web site on a regular basis for responses to questions, as well as for any amendments or other pertinent information regarding this RFP.

## 3 Proposal Format, Submission and Organization

### 3.1 Proposal Format and Submission Information:

Development requires proposal submissions in an electronic format. The proposal must be prepared and submitted in accordance with instructions found in this Section.

Applicant's complete proposal submission must be received by **Development no later than 5:00 p.m. on Friday, April 17, 2015.**

All proposals must be received by the due time/date, electronically submitted to:  
[ohiombac@development.ohio.gov](mailto:ohiombac@development.ohio.gov)

The Applicant's original proposal must contain all information and documents specified in Section 3.2 – Proposal Organization.

### **3.2 Proposal Organization**

An Applicant's proposal must contain the following components organized in six sections as described below. Any other information thought to be relevant, but not applicable to a specific RFP section, may be provided as an appendix in **Section 8**. Applicants must organize their proposals in the following order:

#### **3.2.1 Cover Sheet:**

*The cover sheet must include the following information:*

##### **Host Agency Information**

Legal Name of Organization:

Address:

City, State, Zip Code:

Federal Tax I.D. Number:

Primary Contact Name:

Telephone Number:

Email Address:

Secondary Contact Name:

Telephone Number:

Email Address:

Proposed Service Region:

Funds Requested:

#### **3.2.2 Sections (be succinct)**

##### **Section 1**

- Executive Summary

##### **Section 2**

MBAC Proposed Model and Narratives addressing the following:

- Client Needs (Section 5.1)
- Geographic Region (Section 5.1)
- Key Performance Measures (Section 5.1)
- Collaboration with the Division and partners (Section 5.1)
- Proposed Service Region (Section 5.2)
- Scope of Services (Section 5.3)

**Section 3**

- Proposed MBAC Strategic Plan

**Section 4****Required Exhibits**

- Non-Profit Host Organizations: Articles of Incorporation under the laws of Ohio and a copy of the 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(6) Certificate.
- Minority Business Assistance Center: Articles of Incorporation under the laws of Ohio and is a 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(6) organization pursuant to the Internal Revenue Code.
- Cash Match Documentation: Certification from a duly authorized officer of the applicant (CEO or CFO) that the applicant, either directly or through a third party, has secured funds for a minimum of 25 percent of the MBAC's costs. If the Cash Match is to be provided by a third party, the Cash Match Certification must be signed by the provider's duly authorized representative of the Cash Match provider.
- Documentation by the Host Organization and its commitment to minority business development (via a copy of the organization's mission statement and/or strategic plan).
- Roster of Advisory Board Members: Roster of current Advisory Board members with professional business phone numbers, fax numbers, e-mail addresses and organizational affiliations. If proposing a startup operation, documentation of commitment and plan for building an advisory board.

**Section 5**

- Personnel Worksheet (Attachment #3)
- Staff Resumes and Capabilities
- Proposed MBAC and Host Organizational Chart (s)

**Section 6**

- Proposed Key Performance Measures (Attachment #1)

**Section 7**

- Proposed Budget/Cash Match Documentation
- Proposed 24 Month Budget – Administrative Cost Detail (July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2017). (Attachment #2)

**Section 8****Appendix**

- Documentation of Collaboration, i.e., Memoranda of Understanding, Cooperative Agreements, Letters of Intent
- Letters of Support

## 4 Host Organization Qualifications

### 4.1 Mandatory Qualifications

In order to be considered for the grant, Development requires that interested Applicants and Host Organizations meet all of the following mandatory qualification requirements:

#### 4.1.1 Applicant Eligibility:

- The Applicant is incorporated as a 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(6) organization under the laws of Ohio or is a municipality, Chamber of Commerce or public education institution.
- The applicant is legally able to operate as evidenced by a completed W-9 form or other documentation of an Employer Identification Number.
- The applicant has been in operation for at least three years or has comparable, documentable business experience.

#### 4.1.2 Host Organization Eligibility:

- The Host Organization must have a local advisory board for the proposed MBAC.
- Part of the Host Organization's mission must be related to promoting the growth and development of minority, socially and economically disadvantaged businesses.
- The Host Organization must demonstrate an ability to provide or add significant value to the minority business community.
- The Host Organization's cash match must be equal to or greater than 25 percent of the MBAC's annual budget.
- The Host Organization must commit to providing the required physical facilities, i.e., library, consulting area, adequate parking, prominent signage and a plan room.\*
- The Host Organization must provide reliable internet, telecommunications technology, and standard facility operations including heat, air, and running water.

Documentation supporting the "Applicant Eligibility" and "Host Organization Eligibility" should be included in **Section 4** of the Applicant's proposal.

\*If the Host Organization feels that a plan room is unnecessary and elects not to offer one, an explanation should be provided for why it should be excluded from the proposed MBAC.

## 5 Deliverables

### 5.1 Deliverables

The MBAC Program is designed as a performance-driven system that produces quantifiable outcomes to enhance the growth of small businesses throughout Ohio. The purpose is to assist small, minority and disadvantaged businesses by providing them with professional services that further their development and facilitate greater market success. The sustainability of this initiative is predicated on producing tangible, quantifiable results including increasing the following: the number of high quality client interactions; recruiting and certifying MBE (Minority Business Enterprise) and EDGE (Encouraging Diversity Growth and Equity) companies; the amount of capital and bonding awarded to center clients; the number of contracts awarded to businesses; and the number of Ohio jobs that are created or retained.

An overarching goal of this initiative is to leverage the work performed at the MBACs to support the state's MBE and EDGE goals. While some of the focus may also include broader regional economic development goals, MBACs are expected to support the state's objective to identify, recruit and certify businesses, connect firms with state economic resources such as loans and bonds and connect qualified businesses with state contracts. MBACs are also expected to meet Key Performance Measures (KPMs) that are established and codified in contracts executed between Host Organizations and Development. Proposals should provide responses to the following:

- Client Needs:
  - Identify the services that will be provided through the proposed center, and how those resources will be utilized to identify and meet client needs.
  - Provide a description of the method you will employ to facilitate client intake and/ the consulting process.
  - Describe how you will assist clients at different stages of their growth and development.
  - Explain the value of a business becoming state certified to a business owner in order for him/ her to be able to take advantage of a pending contract opportunity?
- Geographic Region:
  - Provide a Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis of the business environment in the geographic region covered in your proposal.
  - Explain in detail, the strategies and tactics you will employ to exploit the opportunities and overcome the threats in the region.
  - Explain the current economic health within the region.
  - Describe prevalent industries or market sectors located within the region.

- What other community-based resources exist within the region that supports small, minority and women-owned businesses? Discuss opportunities for collaboration.
- Explain in detail, the strategies you will use to inform minority business owners of the services you will provide through the MBAC.
- Key Performance Measurers:
  - Describe specific strategies and tactics you will implement to achieve KPMs.
  - If you have previously hosted an MBAC, describe your own past performance relative to achieving the KPMs.
  - Describe how the Host Organization will provide support and leverage to bolster measureable grant outcomes.
- Collaboration with the Division and partners:
  - Describe how you will interface and collaborate with Division staff to ensure alignment and goal achievement.
  - How will you communicate program challenges and opportunities, in order to improve client interactions or outcomes?
  - Indicate the process you will utilize to respond to time-sensitive requests such as identifying clients for specific contract opportunities?
  - Indicate how you will qualify prospective loan and bonding clients to connect them with state financial and insurance products.
  - How will you determine when to refer clients to non-state sources for loans and insurance products?
  - How (and with whom) will you collaborate in order to support a full range of client development needs?

## 5.2 Proposed Service Areas

The Division is seeking non-profit business assistance providers to serve minority, small and disadvantaged businesses located in seven centers throughout Ohio. Applicants must be located within proposed service areas. Each submitted response should identify the proposed service area and provide a detailed plan for providing services to targeted businesses located within the entire service area. Proposed service areas are shown on Attachment 5.

For each of the seven service areas, there are counties designated as primary and secondary service areas. Primary service areas include counties with the largest concentrations of self-identified, minority-owned businesses. MBAC staff are expected to focus the majority of their efforts and resources on businesses within primary service areas.

While the number of minority-owned firms located in secondary service areas is smaller, MBACs are expected to provide services to any qualified business that requests support and is located in secondary service areas. By designating primary and secondary service areas, every minority-owned business in the state can seek and receive support from an MBAC.

### 5.3 Scope of Services

MBACs are required to perform work in three (3) basic areas – market development, client services and operational quality. These elements are designed to increase the exposure and visibility of minority and small business enterprises. The MBAC’s efforts in these areas should produce *quantifiable* results. The proposal should contain a detailed plan to accomplish all three of the service areas:

#### 5.3.1 Market Development

This basic MBAC function facilitates identifying prospective and potential existing minority business owners, soliciting potential clients, and identifying, and leveraging public and private sector resources and business opportunities for clients. A core function of the MBAC is to promote minority businesses to the public and private sectors and build market awareness of their capability, talent and capacity. Under the market development function, the MBAC staff matches qualified minority businesses with identified opportunities and resources.

#### 5.3.2 Client Services

Provide direct client assistance through individualized intake and assessment. Under the client services function, the MBAC director and consulting staff provide detailed business consulting services to minority businesses and individuals who have agreed in writing to become MBAC clients. Clients shall be assisted primarily through one-on-one business consulting, strategic team counseling, and training workshops led by the MBAC. Business consulting services shall include, but are not limited to:

- Marketing: market research, promotion, advertising, sales, sales forecasting, market feasibility studies, pricing and customer service;
- Financial Management: capital budgeting, general accounting, break-even analysis, cost accounting, financial planning and analysis, budgeting, tax planning, and business consulting (excludes bookkeeping, tax preparation and audits);
- Financial Assistance: identification, preparation and packaging of state loan and bond program applications, standard commercial and alternative debt (loans, lines of credit, etc.), other public and private bonding, leases (property and equipment), equity (venture capital, angel capital, etc.) and trade credit opportunity;
- Procurement Assistance: preparation and planning to identify private and public sector contracting opportunities, developing capability statements, teaming and joint venturing relationships;
- Construction Industry Assistance: estimating, bid preparation, bonding, take-offs and business consulting; and
- Certification Assistance: provide a review of the application, supporting documentation for MBE and EDGE certification applicants, completing, submitting and as appropriate, expediting applications.

MBAC counselors shall conduct client assessments that provide each client with a fundamental business evaluation. This process is designed to standardize services across the MBAC network, maintain the quality of center operations and facilitate the client referral process through the network. This process requires that an interview be conducted between the client and counselor. This assessment function is designed to provide:

- Client background and contact information;
- Client business analysis with respect to core competency, organizational structure, market and industry placement, production of products/delivery of services, marketing plan, resources and financial viability;
- Analysis and benchmarking of the client;
- Identification of immediate and long-term client needs and expectations;
- Development of action plans;
- Strategic referrals;
- Identification of resources;
- Implementation of targeted action plans for increasing size, scale and capacity;
- Increased exposure and visibility of the MBAC Program and MBE and EDGE companies; and
- Promotion and achievement of client outcomes.

### 5.3.3 Operational Quality

This function addresses operational efficiency and effectiveness and the quality of client services. The proposal should address:

- An action plan that will be implemented, for all operations and client services.
- The methodology that you will use to achieve your Action Plan's objectives for each client based on individualized client assessments.
- A process for ensuring that all client files contain accurate supporting documentation including assessment, action plan, work assignments, baseline economic data, and jobs created or retained, financial awards, and certifications and/or contracts obtained.
- A process for ensuring that all client intake data and related work efforts are entered into the MBDAssist reporting system. The MBAC is *required* to enter client information, consulting data, staff work effort, awarded transactions, job creation and retention, also any other pertinent data within 72 hours from the time of service.
- A process to promote and utilize the services and resources of other Development programs, particularly the financial assistance programs within the Division.
- Professional development plan to train the MBAC's staff, including but not limited to, the following training sessions offered by the Division:
  - Department of Administrative Services Certification Training

- Certified Business Advisor Training within first year of employment or provide proof of equivalent professional experience
- FastTrac Entrepreneurial Training within first year of employment or provide proof of equivalent professional experience

## 6 Staff Competencies

### 6.1 Staff Experience

The applicant must assign professional staff with significant expertise to key leadership roles. The applicant's proposal must include resumes for each person. Each MBAC must be staffed by at least one full-time Director and Business Counselor. Full-time MBAC staff is greatly preferred over multiple part-time staff. When selecting staff, every effort should be made to choose individuals with previous finance, business management or banking experience. Staff should have an understanding of the fiscal requirements of minority businesses to connect them with appropriate financial resources.

The following are the minimum required qualifications for key personnel.

### 6.2 Director – Qualifications

A Bachelor's or Master's degree in business administration, public administration, economics or other related field from an accredited college or university is preferred. In place of a degree, a minimum of seven years' experience in business ownership and operations and/or equivalent combination of education and experience which demonstrates the required knowledge, skills and abilities may be acceptable. Extensive knowledge of business management, fiscal planning and accountability, employee training and development, office management and other support functions is required.

Additional requirements for the MBAC Director include:

- Demonstrated ability to organize and manage multiple projects;
- Experience supervising professional staff;
- Ability to develop and manage resources to support the MBAC;
- Strong analytical abilities;
- Strong written and oral communication skills;
- Ability to relate well to people from diverse backgrounds;
- Capacity to work effectively with the business community and private and public organizations;
- Receive CBA Certification within one year of hire date or provide proof of equivalent professional experience; and
- Possess a valid Ohio Driver's License and the ability to travel.

### 6.2.1 Director - Responsibilities

The MBAC Director is responsible for coordinating activities that accomplish the Scope of Work and KPMs outlined in the grant agreement awarded under this RFP. This includes defining, developing and implementing required projects; providing one-on-one consulting to minority and small businesses; originating and conducting meetings with community leaders, state and local officials; and providing and directing professional services for minority, small and disadvantaged businesses. Duties include:

- Devoting a minimum of 40 hours a week of his/her time engaged in MBAC work, with 60 percent of his/her time focused on consulting and a maximum of 40 percent focused on managing the MBAC and performing outreach responsibilities;
- Planning and coordinating programs and activities consistent with the goals outlined by the Division, including the MBAC's objectives and overseeing all client and business development, reporting and delivery;
- Developing and submitting quarterly expense and narrative reports to the Division;
- Attending regional and state conferences;
- Providing and facilitating in-depth individual business analysis and client referrals to the Division's partners;
- Maintaining relations between the MBAC, Division, local chambers of commerce, banks, trade groups, network partners, and/or the Host Organization; and
- Encouraging businesses to provide volunteer consulting services and training.

### 6.3 Business Counselor – Qualifications

Business Counselor(s) should be a graduate of a regionally accredited four year college or university with a bachelor's degree in business administration, economics or other related fields and/or possess a minimum of five years of experience in business management or business ownership. An equivalent combination of education and experience, which demonstrates the required knowledge, skills and abilities may be acceptable.

Additional requirements for the proposed Business Counselor include:

- Thorough knowledge of business principles;
- High level of interpersonal analytical and communication skills;
- Ability to handle multiple assignments, organize and establish work priorities with minimal direction and supervision;
- Receive CBA Certification within one year of hire date or provide proof of equivalent professional experience; and
- Possess a valid Ohio Driver's License and the ability to travel.

### 6.3.1 Business Counselor - Responsibilities

A Business Counselor is responsible for providing direct, in-depth client consulting, business research and assistance in preparing business and strategic plans, identifying suggestions for alternative courses of action and maintaining the confidentiality of client information. Duties include:

- Interviewing and assessing clients' needs and developing action plans;
- Devoting a minimum of 40 hours a week of his/her time engaged in MBAC work, with 75 percent of his/her time to in-depth consulting with clients to determine their needs and capabilities and a maximum of 25 percent of his/her time providing essential MBAC services to the public and administrative support.
- Working closely with the Director and/or other agencies to facilitate the operation of the MBAC;
- Attending training sessions for business counselors to facilitate ongoing knowledge and ability to provide in-depth consulting;
- Assisting in planning and marketing seminars, training sessions and conferences;
- Community involvement including public speaking as needed or directed;
- Participating in training events as an instructor or moderator;
- Assisting in efforts to evaluate the effectiveness and impact of training events; and
- Other duties as assigned by the Director.

### 6.4 Conflict of Interest

All MBAC staff, including but not limited to the Director, Business Counselor(s) and administrative support staff, must certify to the Division by June 30<sup>TH</sup> of each calendar year that he/she has not had a conflict of interest with any client seeking or receiving services with the MBAC within the Fiscal Year. Additionally, MBAC staff are required to notify the Division, in writing of potential or actual conflict of interests that arise during the course of his/her job duties at the MBAC. Both economic interests and fiduciary relationships should be considered.

#### 6.4.1 Conflict of Interest - Definitions

Conflict of Interest - a situation in which a private interest or gain leads to, or has the potential to lead to a disregard for the needs of the MBAC, or the rights of the client.

Client - a business, individual or legal entity with which the MBAC has entered into a contract, written or verbal to provide any or all of MBAC available services.

MBAC Services - Include but are not limited to consulting, training, business plan development, access to capital, procurement opportunities, referrals to

other agencies, provision of printed materials copies or media information or any other service that the center may commonly or routinely perform for its clients.

Compensation - includes anything of value, such as wages, gifts and travel expenses, provided to an employee or volunteer in exchange for a service.

#### **6.4.2 Standards of Conduct**

All MBAC staff and volunteers shall not:

- Solicit, accept, or use his or her position to secure a gift, meal, entertainment or anything of value that could have a substantial and improper influence upon his or her duties.
- Solicit or accept anything of value, from any source other than the MBAC, as compensation for the performance of his or her job duties.
- Use his or her position to obtain financial gain or benefit for his/herself, a family member or anyone whom he or she has a business or employment relationship.
- Solicit the private engagement of his or her services by clients at any time during the term of the clients' relationship with the MBAC.
- Use or disclose confidential information protected by law, unless appropriately authorized.
- Invest money, personal services or property in the business of current clients.

All MBAC staff shall:

- Avoid any action that might give rise to the appearance of impropriety.
- Ensure that the priorities established under the grant agreement take precedence over the Host Organization programs and initiatives.
- Assure that the outside activity does not interfere with the full performance of the MBAC's activities and responsibilities.
- Abide by Ohio ethics laws.

## 7 Key Performance Measures and Budget Considerations

### 7.1 Key Performance Measures

The proposal should include the Applicant's projected KPMs (Attachment 1 - Key Performance Measures Worksheet) and how the applicant will achieve measurable performance outcomes. Failure to fully complete these projections may result in the proposal being rejected as unresponsive.

The KPMs provide the core measurement by which the Division evaluates the overall effectiveness of the MBACs. The KPMs help align the vision and mission of the MBAC with clients.

MBAC Requirements:

- Maintain day-to-day operations;
- Manage and evaluate business strategy;
- Monitor operational efficiency;
- Communicate progress to stakeholders.

While all KPMs and requirements are important to the development of the minority businesses, the following are significant goals that are part of the strategic mission of Development and are closely monitored. Applicants should take great care to analyze their capability to successfully meet all KPMs. Grant funding may be denied if poor performance and lack of accountability is evident upon review of quarterly reports:

- Client transactions
- MBEs and EDGEs recruited
- MBE and EDGE certifications
- Capital and bonding awarded
- Contracts awarded
- Number of jobs created and retained
- Fiscal management

Occurrences of poor progress in reaching Key Performance Measures, fiscal responsibility, or meeting any contractual agreed upon terms will initiate the process for probation. Probation terms and tenure will be discussed on a situational basis, and can lead to withholding of grant funds or closure of the center.

### 7.2 Budget and Cash Match Requirements

The Division provides grant funding, oversight and administration of the MBAC Program. Funding levels for the MBACs may change based on FY2016 / FY2017 budget and the Division's overall budget. The MBAC must have strong fiscal management, tracking and documentation of cash match and grant monies.

### 7.2.1 Total Costs for the Proposed Center

Each MBAC must project the total cost of the program. Costs include personnel, fringe benefits, travel, marketing, equipment, supplies, contractual and other costs as well as the source of funds for each line item. Allowable indirect costs are to be listed in total on the Budget Summary Page.

### 7.2.2 Cash Match Requirement

In order to qualify for funding, each applicant must provide an additional amount called “Cash Match” based on the total dollars requested. The minimum match requirement is 25 percent of the total dollars requested per center however prospective host organizations can propose matches that exceed 25 percent. Other Development programs or general revenue funds cannot be used as a Cash Match. The Cash Match funds must be generated from a source with a mission and focus on economic and business development, and business / entrepreneurial training. Under no circumstances will a center’s proposal be funded without the Cash Match documentation and commitment being included in the proposal.

### 7.2.3 Eligible Costs

- Personnel: Salaries of MBAC employees should not include any employee assigned less than 50 percent of their time to the MBAC. Full-time MBAC staff are preferred over multiple part-time staff. The Key Personnel Chart is part of the Budget document.
- Fringe Benefits: Employer-contributed benefits related to personnel services costs are eligible costs, provided such benefits are granted in accordance with established Host Organization policies.
- Travel: Receipts and documentation are required for mileage, workshops, training expenses, meals, lodging, etc. When providing documentation and copies of receipts, please highlight, circle or otherwise note the charges that are being requested for reimbursement. ***Travel Expense Projections Should be Based on State Travel Guidelines.***
- Equipment: Charges reported in this category include costs that exceed \$5,000 for each unit purchased. Purchase or lease of all items having a useful life of more than two years and an acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more per unit are eligible costs.
- Supplies: Cost of goods used in the operation of the program such as office consumables, office and computer supplies, equipment maintenance and equipment under \$5,000 per unit cost should be included in this category.
- Contractual: Itemize all costs if not allocated directly throughout the budgeted line items. Include all contractual costs *other* than equipment, consultants, and space; examples include computing, accounting, audit and other professional services.
- Consultants: The following information must be listed for each proposed consultant: name, number of annual hour’s planned and hourly rate and consultant's specialty. Explain how the center will review and approve the

consulting activity. Consultants can only be reimbursed for new hours of counseling that are documented in MBDAssist.

- **Professional Development:** Indicate the projected costs for activities related to this category, such as staff training, membership in professional organizations, subscriptions, publications, etc.
- **Marketing:** Indicate the projected cost associated with communicating and positioning the services that are provided through the center to clients, prospective clients and critical stakeholders.
- **Rent:** Office space to house the program.
- **Other:** All necessary, justifiable and allowable costs not included elsewhere. Examples include printing, copying, utilities and library resource materials. Miscellaneous and contingency costs are not allowable, and all costs in this line item must be described in detail and cannot exceed \$10,000.

## 8 RFP Evaluation Criteria

### 8.1 Evaluation Factors

Listed below are the factors that will be used to select those applicants that best meet the purpose and objectives of the MBAC Program.

- Completeness and responsiveness to the RFPs' 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

### 8.2 Proposal scoring

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 applicant has prior experience hosting an MBAC, scoring will take into account the past performance, fiscal responsibility and accountability. An applicant may not contact any member of an evaluation committee except at the State's direction.

In addition to the proposals submission, the review process will include interviews of selected applicants. The proposed Host Organization and MBAC program staff will interview with the Division staff according to the outlined dates. Failure to provide the information requested, or failure to provide the information requested in an easily readable manner may adversely impact the assessment of the application's merits.

## REQUIRED EXHIBITS CHECKLIST

**The following are required exhibits and documents that must be included and identified in the proposal:**

- Non-Profit Host Organizations: Articles of Incorporation under the laws of the state of Ohio and a copy of the 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(6) Certificate.
- Minority Business Assistance Center: Articles of Incorporation under the laws of the state of Ohio and is a 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(6) organization pursuant to the Internal Revenue Code.
- Cash Match Documentation: Certification from a duly authorized officer of the applicant (CEO or CFO) that the applicant, either directly or through a third party, has secured funds for at least 25 percent of the Minority Business Assistance Center office's costs. If the Cash Match is to be provided by a third party, the Cash Match Certification must be signed by a duly authorized representative of the Cash Match provider.
- Documentation of the Host agency and its commitment to minority business development (via a copy of the organization's mission statement and/or strategic plan).
- Roster of Advisory Board Members: Roster of current Advisory Board members with professional business phone numbers, fax numbers, e-mail addresses and organizational affiliations. If a startup operation, documentation of commitment and plan for building an advisory board.
- Proposed MBAC and Host - Organizational Chart(s)
- Memoranda of Understanding, Cooperative Agreements, Letters of agreement (if referenced in the proposal).
- Letters of in-kind support (if referenced in the proposal).