

The Oak Ridge National Laboratory Mentor-Protégé Program

Oak Ridge National Laboratory is managed by UT-Battelle, LLC,
for the U.S. Department of Energy
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I. Purpose

The Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL) Mentor-Protégé Program is a U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) initiative designed to encourage and assist small businesses in an effort to enhance their capabilities to perform contracts and subcontracts for ORNL.

NOTE: *This program is developmental in nature and is intended for small businesses to develop/improve their capabilities. This program is not intended to be a quick path for obtaining subcontracts. While participating in the program, companies should take the advice of the mentor(s) to improve their processes, policies, procedures, etc., in order to better position themselves to be a successful subcontractor after graduating from the program. Small businesses with the primary purpose of obtaining non-competitive subcontracts while in the program are discouraged from participation.*

II. Eligibility

- SBA certified 8(a) and other Small Disadvantaged Businesses
- Certified Woman-Owned Small Businesses
- HUBZone Small Businesses
- Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Businesses
- Minority Educational Institutions (herein included in the term Small Businesses)

III. Objectives

- To enhance the capabilities of small businesses to perform contracts and subcontracts for ORNL, other DOE Laboratories and facilities, and other federal agencies.
- To foster long-term business relationships between small business entities and to provide increased opportunities and resources for small business growth.
- To provide guidance and use of research facilities and staff, and to assist small business to be competent in their respective industries.

IV. Definitions

- **Small Disadvantaged Business** — A small business concern that is owned and operated by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals and that meets the requirements of 13 CFR part 124 subpart B.
- **8(a) contractors** — Concerns that are certified by the Small Business Administration (SBA) and that are eligible under section 8(a) of the Small Business Act to receive subcontracts from the SBA under this provision.
- **Woman-Owned Small Business** — A small business concern that meets the requirements of 15 U.S.C. 637 (d)(3)(D).
- **HUBZone Small Business** — A small business concern that is determined by the Small Business Administration (SBA) in accordance with 13 CFR part 126.
- **Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business** — A small business concern as defined in Public Law 106-50, Veterans Entrepreneurship Small Business Development Act of 1999.
- **Minority Educational Institutions** — An institution determined by the Secretary of Education to meet the requirements of 20 U.S.C. 1067k.

V. Selection Requirements

The interested small business must submit all of the following:

- A letter of interest
- A capabilities package containing:
 - A capabilities statement
 - A list of principals with contact information
 - A statement of the expected benefits to the protégé and the mentor
 - A list of subcontracts currently held and those held within the past year
 - A list or summary of the work the company would like to pursue and the type of relationship the firm is seeking to build with ORNL
 - References from 3 previous customers, and any other information the applicant believes is important to the consideration of the application.
 - Nomination letters from two or more internal ORNL champions.

To meet the program selection criteria, the interested small business protégé must:

- Certify as a small business for the NAICS code for services provided to ORNL
- Have been in business at least two years
- Have two internal ORNL champions willing to work with the selected protégé for the duration of the mentor-protégé agreement. (Official letters must be submitted to the Small Business Programs Office stating the intent to participate as an internal champion to the protégé)
- Have at least one existing subcontract with ORNL
- Be approved by the Socioeconomic Program Officer, the Director of the Small Business Program Office, and
- Be approved by the Chief Financial Officer.

To meet the program selection criteria, the interested Minority Educational Institution must:

- Be an accredited Historically Black College or University or other minority institution of higher learning
- Be eligible/capable of the participation in and receipt of government contracts
- Must have demonstrated scientific research areas and/or capabilities which are compatible with those of the UT-Battelle
- Must have at least one staff person, and when necessary, additional staff persons who is (are) devoted to tasks during the period of the Mentor-Protégé agreement, which may include, but are not limited to: subcontracting, research collaborations, laboratory visits, and laboratory-related activities on the school campus
- Be approved by the Socioeconomic Program Officer, the Director of the Small Business Programs Office, and
- Be approved by the Chief Financial Officer.

Selection criteria include:

- Whether the applicant's capabilities match the mission and goals of UT-Battelle – ORNL
- Whether the applicant has a strong possibility of building a successful relationship with ORNL, i.e., if there is a strong potential for subcontracting opportunities at ORNL in the present or future that fall in line with the areas of concentration or focus of the applicant
- Whether the applicant is located within proximity of the lab or has committed to do so, and whether the company would be able to effectively communicate electronically and physically with mentor
- The types of subcontracts awarded through UT-Battelle in the past and their performance ratings for that particular task, and

- Whether other factors presented by the applicant or otherwise known to ORNL indicate likelihood of a successful mentor protégé relationship, including personal contacts and local knowledge, applicant financial condition, applicant willingness to change, and reference checks.

Upon acceptance, the protégé is required to:

- Commit to a minimum of two years to the program; Three years for Minority Educational Institutions
- Commit to participation in the protégé Development Program
- Conduct a self-assessment to identify internal strengths and weaknesses
- Submit a semi-annual progress report to the Small Business Programs Office

NOTE: *Small Businesses that have completed another DOE installation's mentor-protégé program are ineligible to participate in the ORNL Mentor-Protégé Program.*

VI. Responsibilities

- **Internal champions**—Act as the mentor, periodically meet with protégé on challenges, opportunities, and developmental advice, evaluate the protégé's technical capability statements, assess technical strengths and areas of opportunities, report semi-annually to the ORNL Small Business Programs Office, arrange meetings with other organizations to introduce protégé's capabilities, fund internal training participation, and review potential subcontracting opportunities.
- **Small Business Programs Office**—Coordinate the program, assist in identifying subcontracting opportunities, provide status reports to DOE, schedule periodic meetings with the protégé, oversee communications, prepare the mentor-protégé agreement, identify potential opportunities, promote the protégé to all ORNL personnel, and be the official point of contact.
- **Protégé**—Identify the areas of opportunity, participate in the protégé Development Program, establish a point of contact, develop a two-year strategy for achieving success as a protégé, identify areas where the protégé company's expertise could be beneficial to ORNL, become familiar with ORNL's core mission, be financially capable of participating in the Mentor-Protégé Program, have a strong technical staff in place, select areas of growth that match the ORNL core mission, and develop a strong capabilities statement.
- **Procurement Organization**—Proactively promote the protégé to all ORNL personnel, communicate the capabilities of the protégé to all buyers and encourage buyers to include protégé in all bid lists where the protégé has the capabilities to perform, hold at least one briefing with the protégé regarding the procurement organization, provide an evaluation of participants' business accounting systems, provide procurement procedure guidance for the protégé, track the procurement dollars going to the protégé, and report progress to the Small Business Programs Office.

VII. Expectations / Benefits of the Mentor-Protégé Program

- The protégé will develop a long-term business relationship with ORNL and other DOE prime contractors.
- The developmental assistance may enable the protégé to qualify for, as well as compete for and win, larger, more complex procurements.
- The protégé will enhance its opportunities to increase its subcontracts.
- The protégé may also increase its employee base, revenues, and long-term profitability.
- ORNL will benefit by having a competent, highly-skilled small business that can provide technical services in critical areas.

NOTE: *The protégé is not allowed to utilize government-owned or leased property provided under a subcontract with the Mentor for any purpose other than performance of that subcontract.*

VIII. Development Program

- All protégés must participate in a Development Program designed to help them mature as a business. Failure to complete the Development Program after one year is cause for termination of participation. (Exceptions must be documented and approved.)

Protégé Development Plan

- Within two months of signing the Mentor-Protégé Agreement, the protégé, the internal champions and the Small Business Programs Office will document a Protégé Development Plan. This plan will identify actions to be taken, i.e. development plan commitment, status reporting, meetings, responsibilities for the actions, scheduled completion dates, etc.

Onsite Training

- Protégés and their mentors must identify onsite training that will benefit the protégé. The training must be scheduled and so noted on Development Plan. Also, the rationale for attempting the course should also be noted. At least 2 classes attended or 1 attended and 1 scheduled.
- The protégé must attend Technical Project Officer (TPO) training.

Procurement Training

- The protégé must attend training on solicitations and proposals offered by the Contracts Division.

Marketing Plan

- A marketing plan is to be developed and documented by the protégé. The plan should identify planned marketing efforts within ORNL, within DOE and within the public sector. The structure of the plan must be completed using the template provided by the SBPO. The marketing plan must receive 3rd party concurrence. Protégé must participate in “Protégé Day” in Contract Division.

Business Plan

- A business plan is to be developed and documented by the protégé. This plan must have concurrence of the Small Business Administration, PTAC or the State of Tennessee.