

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. Candidate businesses include:

- SBA certified 8(a) small disadvantaged businesses
- women-owned small businesses,
- historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs),
- other minority institutions of higher learning, and
- small business concerns owned and operated by service-disabled veterans.

II. 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.

III. 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.
- **Women-owned small business**—A small business concern that meets the requirements of 15 U.S.C. 637 (d)(3)(D).
- **Small business concern owned and operated by service-disabled veterans**—A small business concern as defined in Public Law 106-50, Veterans Entrepreneurship Small Business Development Act of 1999.
- **Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs)**—Institutions determined by the secretary of education to meet the requirements of 34 CFR 608.2.

- **Other minority institutions of higher learning**—An institution determined by the secretary of education to meet the requirements of 20 U.S.C. 1067k.

IV. Selection Requirements

The protégé must submit all of the following:

- a letter of interest,
- a capabilities package containing: a capabilities statement, list of principals with contact information, a statement of the expected benefits to the protégé and the mentor including benefits from technology transfer, a list of subcontracts they currently hold and held within the past one year, a list or summary of the work they would like to pursue and the type of relationship they are seeking to build with ORNL, and any other information the applicant believes is important to the consideration of its application.
- nomination letters by two or more internal ORNL champions.

To meet the program selection criteria, the 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, (official letters must be submitted to the Small Business Office stating their intent to participate as an internal champion to the protégé)
- have at least one existing subcontract with ORNL
- be approved by the director of the Small Business Program 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 in proximity of the lab or has committed to do so, and whether they 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,
- conduct a self-assessment to identify internal strengths and weaknesses,

- submit a quarterly progress report to the Small Business Program Office.

V. Responsibilities

- **Internal champions**—Evaluate the protégé’s technical capability statements, assess technical strengths and areas of opportunities, report semiannually to the ORNL Small Business Program Office, and review potential subcontracting opportunities.
- **Small Business Office**—Coordinate the program, assist in identifying subcontracting opportunities, provide status reports to DOE, schedule monthly meetings with the protégé, oversee communications, prepare the mentor-protégé agreement, identify areas of opportunities, promote the protégé to all ORNL personnel, and be the official point of contact.
- **Protégé**—Identify the areas of opportunity, 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 capability 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 two briefings with the protégé regarding the procurement organization, provide procurement procedure guidance for the protégé, track the procurement dollars going to the protégé, and report progress to the Small Business Program Office.

VI. Expectations / Benefits of Mentor-Protégé Program

- The protégé firm will develop a long-term business relationship with ORNL and other DOE prime contractors.
- The developmental assistance may enable the protégé firm to qualify for, as well as compete for and win, larger, more complex procurements.
- The protégé firm will enhance its opportunities to increase its subcontracts.
- The protégé firm 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.