

which the assessment rate is *de minimis*. See 19 CFR 351.106(c)(1). The final results of this review shall be the basis for the assessment of antidumping duties on entries of merchandise covered by the final results of this review and for future deposits of estimated duties, where applicable.

The Department clarified its "automatic assessment" regulation on May 6, 2003. See *Antidumping and Countervailing Duty Proceedings: Assessment of Antidumping Duties*, 68 FR 23954 (May 6, 2003) (*Assessment Policy Notice*). This clarification will apply to entries of subject merchandise during the POR produced by companies included in these final results of review for which the reviewed companies did not know that the merchandise they sold to the intermediary (e.g., a reseller, trading company, or exporter) was destined for the United States. In such instances, we will instruct CBP to liquidate unreviewed entries at the all-others rate if there is no rate for the intermediary involved in the transaction. See *Assessment Policy Notice* for a full discussion of this clarification.

Cash Deposit Requirements

The following cash deposit requirements will be effective for all shipments of the subject merchandise entered, or withdrawn from warehouse, for consumption on or after the publication date of the final results of this administrative review, as provided by section 751(a)(2)(C) of the Act: (1) The cash deposit rate for each specific company listed above will be that established in the final results of this review, except if the rate is less than 0.50 percent and, therefore, *de minimis* within the meaning of 19 CFR 351.106(c)(1), in which case the cash deposit rate will be zero; (2) for previously reviewed or investigated companies not participating in this review, the cash deposit rate will continue to be the company-specific rate published for the most recent period; (3) if the exporter is not a firm covered in this review, or the original investigation, but the manufacturer is, the cash deposit rate will be the rate established for the most recent period for the manufacturer of the merchandise; and (4) the cash deposit rate for all other manufacturers or exporters will continue to be 3.91 percent, the all-others rate made effective by the investigation. See *Lined Paper Order*, 70 FR at 5148. These deposit requirements, when imposed, shall remain in effect until further notice.

Notification to Importers

This notice also serves as a preliminary reminder to importers of their responsibility under 19 CFR 351.402(f) to file a certificate regarding the reimbursement of antidumping duties prior to liquidation of the relevant entries during this review period. Failure to comply with this requirement could result in the Secretary's presumption that reimbursement of antidumping duties occurred and the subsequent assessment of double antidumping duties.

These preliminary results of review are issued and published in accordance with sections 751(a)(1) and 777(i)(1) of the Act.

Dated: September 29, 2008.

David M. Spooner,
Assistant Secretary for Import
Administration.

[FR Doc. E8-23704 Filed 10-6-08; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-DS-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Minority Business Development Agency

[Docket No.: 0809301287-81291-01]

Solicitation of Applications for the Minority Business Enterprise Center (MBEC) Program

AGENCY: Minority Business Development Agency, Commerce.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: In accordance with 15 U.S.C. Section 1512 and Executive Order 11625, the Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) is soliciting competitive applications from organizations to operate a Minority Business Enterprise Center (MBEC) in Houston, TX. The MBEC operates through the use of business consultants and provides a range of business consulting and technical assistance services directly to eligible minority-owned businesses in the Houston-Sugar Land-Baytown, Texas Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). Responsibility for ensuring that applications in response to this competitive solicitation are complete and received by MBDA on time is the sole responsibility of the applicant. Applications submitted must be to operate a MBEC and to provide business consultation services to eligible clients. Applications that do not meet these requirements will be rejected. This is not a grant program to help start or to further an individual business.

DATES: The closing date for receipt of applications is November 7, 2008 at 5 p.m. Eastern Standard Time (EST). Completed applications must be received by MBDA at the address below for paper submissions or at <http://www.Grants.gov> for electronic submissions. The due date and time is the same for electronic submissions as it is for paper submissions. The date that applications will be deemed to have been submitted electronically shall be the date and time received at [Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov). Applicants should save and print the proof of submission they receive from [Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov). Applications received after the closing date and time will not be considered. Anticipated time for processing is forty-five (45) days from the closing date for receipt of applications. MBDA anticipates that one award under this notice will be made with a start date of January 1, 2009.

Pre-Application Conference: In connection with this solicitation, a pre-application teleconference will be held on October 21, 2008 at 1 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time (EDT). Participants must register at least 24 hours in advance of the teleconference and may participate in person or by telephone. Please visit the MBDA Internet Portal at <http://www.mbda.gov> (MBDA Portal) or contact an MBDA representative listed below for registration instructions.

ADDRESSES: (1a) *Paper Submission—If Mailed:* If the application is sent by postal mail or overnight delivery service by the applicant or its representative, one (1) signed original plus two (2) copies of the application must be submitted. Applicants are encouraged to also submit an electronic copy of the proposal, budget and budget narrative on a CD-ROM to facilitate the processing of applications. Complete application packages must be mailed to: Office of Business Development—MBEC Program, Office of Executive Secretariat, HCHB, Room 5063, Minority Business Development Agency, U.S. Department of Commerce, 1401 Constitution Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20230.

Applicants are advised that MBDA's receipt of mail sent via the United States Postal Service may be substantially delayed or suspended in delivery due to security measures. Applicants may therefore wish to use a guaranteed overnight delivery service. Department of Commerce delivery policies for overnight delivery services require all packages to be sent to the address above.

(1b) *Paper Submission—If Hand-Delivered:* If the application is hand-delivered by the applicant or by its representative, one (1) signed original plus two (2) copies of the application

must be delivered. Applicants are encouraged to also submit an electronic copy of the proposal, budget and budget narrative on a CD-ROM to facilitate the processing of applications. Complete application packages must be delivered to: U.S. Department of Commerce, Minority Business Development Agency, Office of Business Development—MBEC Program (extension 1940), HCHB—Room 1874, Entrance #10, 15th Street, NW. (between Pennsylvania and Constitution Avenues), Washington, DC. MBDA will not accept applications that are submitted by the deadline, but that are rejected due to the applicant's failure to adhere to Department of Commerce protocol for hand-deliveries.

(2) *Electronic Submission:* Applicants are encouraged to submit their proposal electronically at <http://www.Grants.gov>. Electronic submissions should be made in accordance with the instructions available at Grants.gov (see <http://www.grants.gov/forapplicants> for detailed information). MBDA strongly recommends that applicants not wait until the application deadline date to begin the application process through Grants.gov as, in some cases, the process for completing an online application may require 3–5 working days.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For further information or for an application package, please visit MBDA's Minority Business Internet Portal at <http://>

www.mbda.gov. Paper applications may also be obtained by contacting the MBDA Office of Business Development or the MBDA National Enterprise Center (NEC) in the region in which the MBEC will be located (see below Agency Contacts). In addition, Standard Forms (SF) may be obtained by accessing <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants> or <http://www.grants.gov> and Department of Commerce (CD) forms may be accessed at <http://www.doc.gov/forms>.

Agency Contacts:

1. MBDA Office of Business Development, 1401 Constitution Avenue, NW., Room 5075, Washington, DC 20230. Contact: Efrain Gonzalez, Chief, 202–482–1940.

2. Dallas National Enterprise Center (DNEC), 1100 Commerce Street, Room 726, Dallas, Texas, 75242. This region covers the states of Arkansas, Colorado, Louisiana, Montana, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas, Utah and Wyoming. Contact: John F. Iglehart, Regional Director, 214–767–8001.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background: The MBEC Program is a key component of MBDA's overall minority business development assistance program and promotes the growth and competitiveness of eligible minority-owned businesses. MBEC operators leverage project staff and professional consultants to provide a

wide-range of direct business assistance services to eligible minority-owned firms, including but not limited to initial consultations and assessments, business technical assistance, and access to federal and non-federal procurement and financing opportunities. MBDA currently funds a network of 33 MBEC projects located throughout the United States. Pursuant to this notice, competitive applications for new awards are being solicited for the MBEC project identified below.

Pursuant to a grant competition held in 2006, MBDA made a three (3) year award for the operation of the Houston MBEC project for the period of January 1, 2007–December 31, 2009. See 71 FR 42352. However, the incumbent operator of the Houston MBEC intends to terminate the current award for the Houston MBEC project as of December 31, 2008. The purpose of this competition is to find an operator for the Houston MBEC project as MBDA intends to maintain delivery of program services in this geographical area. The new award for the Houston MBEC project is expected to be made with a three (3) year award of January 1, 2009–December 31, 2011.

Location and Geographical Service Area: MBDA is soliciting competitive applications from organizations to operate an MBEC in the following location and geographical service area:

Name of MBEC	Location of MBEC	MBEC geographical service area **
Houston MBEC	Houston, TX	Houston-Sugar Land-Baytown, TX MSA **.

** Metropolitan Statistical Area, please see OMB Bulletin No.08–01, Update of Statistical Area Definitions and Guidance on Their Uses (November 20, 2007) at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/bulletins>.

Electronic Access: A link to the full text of the Announcement of Federal Funding Opportunity (FFO) for this solicitation may be accessed at: <http://www.Grants.gov>, <http://www.mbda.gov>, or by contacting the appropriate MBDA representative identified above. The FFO contains a full and complete description of the requirements under the MBEC Program. In order to receive proper consideration, applicants must comply with all information and requirements contained in the FFO. Applicants will be able to access, download and submit electronic grant applications for the MBEC Program through <http://www.Grants.gov>. MBDA strongly recommends that applicants not wait until the application deadline date to begin the application process through Grants.gov as in some cases the process for completing an online application may require additional time

(e.g., 3–5 working days). The date that applications will be deemed to have been submitted electronically shall be the date and time received at Grants.gov. Applicants should save and print the proof of submission they receive from Grants.gov. Applications received after the closing date and time will not be considered.

Funding Priorities: Preference may be given during the selection process to applications which address the following MBDA funding priorities:

(a) Proposals that include performance goals that exceed by 10% or more the minimum performance goal requirements in the FFO;

(b) Applicants who demonstrate an exceptional ability to identify and work towards the elimination of barriers which limit the access of minority businesses to markets and capital;

(c) Applicants who demonstrate an exceptional ability to identify and work

with minority firms seeking to obtain large-scale contracts and/or insertion into supply chains with institutional customers;

(d) Proposals that take a regional approach in providing services to eligible clients; or

(e) Proposals from applicants with pre-existing or established operations in the identified geographic service area.

Funding Availability: MBDA anticipates that approximately \$291,000 will be available in each of Fiscal Years (FYs) 2009–2011 to fund the financial assistance award for the Houston MBEC project. The total award period for the project is anticipated to be three (3) years and to cover the period January 1, 2009–December 31, 2011. The anticipated level of Federal funding and the minimum non-federal matching share for the Houston MBEC project for each funding period is set forth in the below table (the actual award amount

may vary depending on the availability of appropriated funds and on MBDA and Department of Commerce priorities).

Project name	January 1, 2009 through December 31, 2009			January 1, 2010 through December 31, 2010			January 1, 2011 through December 31, 2011		
	Total cost (\$)	Federal share (\$)	Non-Federal share (\$) (20% min.)	Total cost (\$)	Federal share (\$)	Non-Federal share (\$) (20% min.)	Total cost (\$)	Federal share (\$)	Non-Federal share (\$) (10% min.)
Houston MBEC	\$363,750	\$291,000	\$72,500	\$363,750	\$291,000	\$72,500	\$363,750	\$291,000	\$72,500

Applicants must submit project plans and budgets for each of the three (3) funding periods under this award (January 1–December 31, 2009, January 1–December 31, 2010 and January 1–December 31, 2011). Projects will initially be funded for the first funding period and will not have to compete for funding in the second and third funding periods. However, operators that fail to achieve a “Satisfactory” or better performance rating for the current funding period may be denied funding for subsequent funding periods. Recommendations for funding for subsequent funding periods are generally evaluated by MBDA based on a “Satisfactory” or better mid-year program performance rating (i.e., January 1, 20xx–June 30, 20xx) and/or a combination of a mid-year and cumulative third-quarter (i.e., January 1, 20xx–September 30, 20xx) “Satisfactory” or better performance rating for the current funding period. In making such funding recommendations, MBDA and the Department of Commerce will consider the facts and circumstances of each case, such as but not limited to market conditions, most recent performance of the operator and other mitigating circumstances.

Funding for the program listed in this notice is contingent upon the availability of FY 2009 appropriations. MBDA issues this notice subject to the appropriations made available under the current continuing resolution, H.R. 2638, “Consolidated Security, Disaster Assistance, and Continuing Appropriations Act, 2009,” Public Law 110–329. In no event will MBDA or the Department of Commerce be responsible for proposal preparation costs if this program fails to receive funding or is cancelled because of other Department of Commerce or MBDA priorities. All funding periods under the award are subject to the availability of funds to support the continuation of the project. Publication of this FFO does not obligate the Department of Commerce or MBDA to award any specific cooperative agreement or to obligate all or any part of available funds.

Authority: 15 U.S.C. Section 1512 and Executive Order 11625.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA): 11.800, Minority Business Enterprise Centers.

Eligibility: For-profit entities (including but not limited to sole proprietorships, partnerships, and corporations), non-profit organizations, state and local government entities, American Indian Tribes, and educational institutions are eligible to operate an MBEC.

Program Description: MBDA is soliciting competitive applications from organizations to operate a Minority Business Enterprise Center (MBEC) (formerly known as Minority Business Development Centers). The MBEC will operate through the use of trained professional business consultants who will assist eligible minority entrepreneurs through direct client engagements. Entrepreneurs eligible for assistance under the MBEC Program are: African Americans, Puerto Ricans, Spanish-speaking Americans, Aleuts, Asian Pacific Americans, Native Americans (including Alaska Natives, Alaska Native Corporations and tribal entities), Eskimos, Asian Indians and Hasidic Jews. No service may be denied to any member of the eligible groups listed above.

The MBEC Program generally requires project staff to provide standardized business assistance services directly to “eligible minority owned firms,” with an emphasis on those firms with \$500,000 or more in annual revenues and/or those eligible firms with “rapid growth potential” (“Strategic Growth Initiative” or “SGI” firms); to develop and maintain a network of strategic partnerships; to provide collaborative consulting services with MBDA and other MBDA funded programs and strategic partners; and to provide referral services (as necessary) for client transactions. MBEC operators will assist eligible minority-owned firms in accessing federal and non-federal contracting and financing opportunities that result in demonstrable client outcomes.

The MBEC Program incorporates an entrepreneurial approach to building market stability and improving the quality of client services. This entrepreneurial strategy expands the reach of the MBECs by requiring project operators to develop and build upon strategic alliances with public and private sector partners as a means of serving minority-owned firms within each MBEC’s geographical service area. The MBEC Program is also designed to effectively leverage MBDA resources, including but not limited to: MBDA Office of Business Development and MBDA National Enterprise Centers; MBDA’s Business Internet Portal; and MBDA’s nationwide network of MBECs, Native American Business Enterprise Centers (NABECs) and Minority Business Opportunity Centers (MBOCs). MBEC operators are also required to attend a variety of MBDA training programs designed to increase operational efficiencies and the provision of value-added client services.

MBEC operators are generally required to provide the following four client services: (1) Client Assessment—this is a standardized service activity that includes identifying the client’s immediate and long-term needs and establishes a projected growth track; (2) Strategic Business Consulting—this involves providing intensive business consulting services that can be delivered as personalized consulting or group consulting; (3) Access to Capital—this assistance is designed to secure the financial capital necessary for client growth, and (4) Access to Markets—this involves assisting clients to identify and access opportunities for increased sales and revenues.

Please refer to the FFO pertaining to this competitive solicitation for a full and complete description of the application and programmatic requirements under the MBEC Program.

Match Requirements: The MBEC Program requires a minimum non-federal cost share of 20%, which must be reflected in the proposed project budget. Non-federal cost share is the portion of the project cost not borne by the Federal Government. Applicants

must satisfy the non-federal cost sharing requirements in one or more of the following four means or any combination thereof: (1) Client fees; (2) applicant cash contributions; (3) applicant in-kind (i.e., non-cash) contributions; or (4) third-party in-kind contributions. The MBEC is required to charge client fees for services rendered and such fees must be used by the operator towards meeting the non-federal cost share requirements under the award. Applicants will be awarded up to five bonus points to the extent that the proposed project budget includes a non-federal cost share contribution, measured as a percentage of the overall project budget, exceeding 20% (see Evaluation Criterion below).

Evaluation Criterion: Proposals will be evaluated and one applicant may be selected based on the below evaluation criterion. The maximum total number of points that an application may receive is 105, including the bonus points for exceeding the minimum required non-federal cost sharing, except when oral presentations are made by applicants. If oral presentations are made (see below: Oral Presentation—Optional), the maximum total of points that can be earned is 115. The number of points assigned to each evaluation criterion will be determined on a competitive basis by the MBDA review panel based on the quality of the application with respect to each evaluation criterion.

1. Applicant Capability (40 Points)

Proposals will be evaluated with respect to the applicant's experience and expertise in providing the work requirements listed. Specifically, proposals will be evaluated as follows:

(a) *Community*—Experience in and knowledge of the minority community, minority business sector, and strategies for enhancing its growth and expansion; particular emphasis shall be on expanding SGI firms. Consideration will be given as to whether the applicant has a physical presence in the geographic service area at the time of its application (4 points);

(b) *Business Consulting*—Experience in and knowledge of business consulting with respect to minority firms, with emphasis on SGI firms in the geographic service area (5 points);

(c) *Financing*—Experience in and knowledge of the preparation and formulation of successful financial transactions, with an emphasis on the geographic service area (5 points);

(d) *Procurements and Contracting*—Experience in and knowledge of the public and private sector contracting opportunities for minority businesses, as well as demonstrated expertise in

assisting clients into supply chains (5 points);

(e) *Financing Networks*—Resources and professional relationships within the corporate, banking and investment community that may be beneficial to minority-owned firms (5 points);

(f) *Establishment of a Self-Sustainable Service Model*—Summary plan to establish a self-sustainable model for continued services to the MBE communities beyond the MBDA award period (3 points);

(g) *MBE Advocacy*—Experience and expertise in advocating on behalf of minority communities and minority businesses, both as to specific transactions in which a minority business seeks to engage and as to broad market advocacy for the benefit of the minority community at large (3 points); and

(h) *Key Staff*—Assessment of the qualifications, experience and proposed role of staff that will operate the MBEC. In particular, an assessment will be made to determine whether proposed key staff possess the expertise in utilizing information systems and the ability to successfully deliver program services. At a minimum the applicant must identify a proposed project director. (10 points).

2. Resources (20 Points)

The applicant's proposal will be evaluated as followed:

(a) *Resources*—Resources (not included as part of the non-federal cost share) that will be used in implementing the program, including but not limited to existing prior and/or current data lists that will serve in fostering immediate success for the MBEC (8 points);

(b) *Location*—Assessment of the applicant's strategic rationale for the proposed physical location of the MBEC. Applicant is encouraged to establish a location for the MBEC that is in a building which is separate and apart from any of the applicant's existing offices in the geographic service area (2 points);

(c) *Partners*—How the applicant plans to establish and maintain the network of strategic partners and the manner in which these partners will support the MBEC in meeting program performance goals (5 points); and

(d) *Equipment*—How the applicant plans to satisfy the MBEC information technology requirements, including computer hardware, software requirements and network map (5 points).

3. Techniques and Methodologies (20 Points)

The applicant's proposal will be evaluated as follows:

(a) *Performance Measures*—For each funding period, the manner in which the applicant relates each performance measure to the financial information and market resources available in the geographic service area (including existing client list); how the applicant will create MBEC brand recognition (marketing plan); and how the applicant will satisfy program performance goals. In particular, emphasis may be placed on the manner in which the applicant matches MBEC performance goals with client service hours and how it accounts for existing market conditions in its strategy to achieve such goals (10 points);

(b) *Start-up Phase*—How the applicant will commence MBEC operations within the initial 30-day period. The MBEC shall have thirty (30) days to become fully operational after an award is made (3 points); and

(c) *Work Requirement Execution Plan*—The applicant will be evaluated on how effectively and efficiently staff time will be used to achieve the work requirements, particularly with respect to periods beyond the start-up phase (7 points).

4. Proposed Budget and Budget Narrative (20 Points)

The applicant's proposal will be evaluated as follows:

(a) *Reasonableness, Allowability and Allocability of Proposed Program Costs*. All of the proposed program costs expenditures should be discussed and the budget line-item narrative must match the proposed budget. Fringe benefits and other percentage item calculations should match the proposed budget line-item and narrative (5 points);

(b) *Non-Federal Cost Share*. The required 20% non-Federal share must be adequately addressed and properly documented, including but not limited to how client fees (if proposed) will be used by the applicant in meeting the non-federal cost-share (5 points); and

(c) *Performance-Based Budgeting*. The extent to which the line-item budget and budget narrative relate to the accomplishment of the MBEC work requirements and performance measures (i.e., performance-based budgeting) (10 points).

Bonus for Non-Federal Cost Sharing (maximum of 5 points): Proposals with non-federal cost sharing exceeding 20% of the total project costs will be awarded bonus points on the following scale:

more than 20%—less than 25% = 1 point; 25% or more—less than 30% = 2 points; 30% or more—less than 35% = 3 points; 35% or more—less than 40% = 4 points; and 40% or more = 5 points. Non-federal cost sharing of at least 20% is required under the MBEC Program. Non-federal cost sharing is the portion of the total project cost not borne by the Federal Government and may be met by the applicant in any one or more of the following four means (or a combination thereof): (1) client fees; (2) cash contributions; (3) non-cash applicant contributions; or, (4) third party in-kind contributions.

5. Oral Presentation—Optional (10 Points)

Oral presentations are optional and held *only* when requested by MBDA. This action may be initiated for the top two (2) ranked applications. Oral presentations will be used to establish a final evaluation and ranking.

The applicant's presentation will be evaluated as to the extent to which the presentation demonstrates:

(a) How the applicant will effectively and efficiently assist MBDA in the accomplishment of its mission (2 points);

(b) Business operating priorities designed to manage a successful MBEC (2 points);

(c) A management philosophy that achieves an effective balance between micromanagement and complete autonomy for its Project Director (2 points);

(d) Robust search criteria for the identification of a Project Director (1 point);

(e) Effective employee recruitment and retention policies and procedures (1 point); and

(f) A competitive and innovative approach to exceeding performance requirements (2 points).

Review and Selection Process

1. Initial Screening

Prior to the formal paneling process, each application will receive an initial screening to ensure that all required forms, signatures and documentation are present. An application will be considered non-responsive and will not be evaluated by the review panel if it is received after the closing date for receipt of applications, the applicant fails to submit an original, signed Form SF-424 by the application closing date (paper applications only), or the application does not provide for the operation of an MBEC. Other application deficiencies may be accounted for through point deductions during panel review.

2. Panel Review

Each application will receive an independent, objective review by a panel qualified to evaluate the applications submitted. The review panel will consist of at least 3 persons, all of whom will be full-time federal employees and at least one of whom will be an MBDA employee, who will review the applications for a specified project based on the above evaluation criterion. Each reviewer shall evaluate and provide a score for each proposal. Each project review panel (through the panel Chairperson) shall provide the MBDA National Director (Recommending Official) with a ranking of the applications based on the average of the reviewers' scores and shall also provide a recommendation regarding funding of the highest scoring application.

3. Oral Presentation—Upon MBDA Request

MBDA may invite the two (2) top-ranked applicants to develop and provide an oral presentation. If an oral presentation is requested, the affected applicants will receive a formal communication (via standard mail, e-mail or fax) from MBDA indicating the time and date for the presentation. In-person presentations are not mandatory but are encouraged; telephonic presentations are acceptable. Applicants will be asked to submit a PowerPoint presentation (or equivalent) to MBDA that addresses the oral presentation criteria set forth above. The presentation must be submitted at least 24 hours before the scheduled date and time of the presentation. The presentation will be made to the MBDA National Director (or his/her designee) and up to three senior MBDA staff who did not serve on the original review panel. The oral panel members may ask follow-up questions after the presentation. MBDA will provide the teleconference dial-in number and pass code. Each applicant will present to MBDA staff only; competitors are not permitted to listen (and/or watch) other presentations.

All costs pertaining to this presentation shall be borne by the applicant. MBEC award funds may *not* be used as a reimbursement for this presentation. MBDA will not accept any requests or petitions for reimbursement.

The oral panel members shall score each presentation in accordance with the oral presentation criterion provided above. An average score shall be compiled and added to the score of the original panel review.

4. Final Recommendation

The MBDA National Director makes the final recommendation to the Grants Officer regarding the funding of one application under this competitive solicitation. MBDA expects to recommend for funding the highest ranking application, as evaluated and recommended by the review panel and taking into account oral presentations (as applicable). However, the MBDA National Director may not make any selection, or he/she may select an application out of rank order for the following reasons:

(a) A determination that an application better addresses one or more of the funding priorities for this competition. The National Director (or his/her designee) reserves the right to conduct one or more site visits (subject to the availability of funding), in order to make a better assessment of an applicant's capability to achieve the funding priorities; or

(b) The availability of MBDA funding. Prior to making a final recommendation to the Grants Officer, MBDA may request that the apparent winner of the competition provide written clarifications (as necessary) regarding its application.

Intergovernmental Review: Applications under this program are not subject to Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs."

Limitation of Liability: Funding for the program listed in this notice is contingent upon the availability of FY 2009 appropriations. MBDA issues this notice subject to the appropriations made available under the current continuing resolution, H.R. 2638, "Consolidated Security, Disaster Assistance, and Continuing Appropriations Act, 2009," Public Law 110-329. In no event will MBDA or the Department of Commerce be responsible for proposal preparation costs if the MBEC Program fails to receive funding or is cancelled because of Department of Commerce or MBDA priorities. All funding periods under the award are subject to the availability of funds to support the continuation of the project. Publication of this notice does not obligate MBDA or the Department of Commerce to award any specific project or to obligate any available funds.

Universal Identifier: Applicants should be aware that they will be required to provide a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering system (DUNS) number during the application process. See the June 27, 2003 **Federal Register** notice (68 FR 38402) for additional information.

Organizations can receive a DUNS number at no cost by calling the dedicated toll-free DUNS Number request line at 1-866-705-5711 or by accessing the Grants.gov Web site at <http://www.Grants.gov>.

Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements: The Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements contained in the **Federal Register** notice of February 11, 2008 (73 FR 7696) are applicable to this solicitation.

Paperwork Reduction Act: This document contains collection-of-information requirements subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA). The use of Standard Forms 424, 424A, 424B, SF-LLL, and CD-346 have been approved by OMB under the respective control numbers 0348-0043, 0348-0044, 0348-0040, 0348-0046, and 0605-0001. Notwithstanding any other provisions of law, no person is required to respond to, nor shall any person be subject to a penalty for failure to comply with a collection of information subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act unless that collection displays a currently valid OMB Control Number.

Executive Order 12866: This notice has been determined to be not significant for purposes of E.O. 12866.

Administrative Procedure Act/Regulatory Flexibility Act: Prior notice and an opportunity for public comment are not required by the Administrative Procedure Act for rules concerning public property, loans, grants, benefits, or contracts (5 U.S.C. 533(a)(2)). Because notice and opportunity for comment are not required pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 533 or any other law, the analytical requirements of the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C 601 *et seq.*) are inapplicable. Therefore, a regulatory flexibility analysis is not required and has not been prepared.

Dated: October 2, 2008.

Edith J. McCloud,

Associate Director for Management, Minority Business Development Agency.

[FR Doc. E8-23739 Filed 10-6-08; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-21-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[Docket No. 0809261277-81278-01 I.D. GF001]

Cooperative Institute for Satellite Climate Studies

AGENCY: National Environmental Satellite Data and Information Service Program Office (NESDISPO), National Environmental Satellite Data and Information Service (NESDIS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of funding availability.

SUMMARY: NOAA National Environmental Satellite Data and Information Services (NESDIS) invites applications for a Cooperative Institute (CI) that will focus on (1) Climate and satellite research and applications, (2) climate and satellite observations and monitoring, and (3) climate research and modeling. Through this competition, NOAA intends to establish competitively a new CI according to the policy and procedures described in NOAA Administrative Order 216?107 and the Cooperative Institute Interim Handbook both available at <http://www.nrc.noaa.gov/ci>. The proposed CI should be composed of two or more member institutions (e.g., multiple universities). At least one research institution should be in Maryland, Washington DC or the adjacent states (Delaware, Pennsylvania, West Virginia and Virginia). At least two research institutions should be in North Carolina or the adjacent states (Virginia, Tennessee, South Carolina and Georgia), with a presence in Asheville, North Carolina. NOAA has identified three research themes that will address specific needs within the NOAA Mission Support Satellite Service program and the NOAA Climate Goal that would benefit from collaborations with the CI. The CI should possess outstanding capabilities to work in the three research themes summarized below, as well as possess the capability to conduct outreach and education activities in support of these research themes. *I. Climate and Satellite Research and Applications:* Research conducted under this theme is associated with the development of new and innovative uses of non-NOAA satellite assets that can ultimately be transitioned into NOAA operations to support climate information needs. This theme also includes performing research and development aimed at improving the utilization of long time series of

satellite measurements that will offer NOAA scientists a homogeneous record of satellite radiances. *II. Climate and Satellite Observations and Monitoring:* Research conducted under this theme involves (1) Designing indices and applications that incorporate satellite observations to detect, monitor and investigate climatic changes and their impacts on coastal and open ocean ecosystems, (2) identifying and meeting the satellite climate needs of a wide variety of users, including research, business and industry, and government and private sector users, and (3) contributing significantly to climate reanalysis projects when satellite data is a key input. *III. Climate Research and Modeling:* Research conducted under this theme is focused on improving climate forecasts on mesoscale, regional and global scales when satellite data is a key input, and developing regional ecosystem models that can incorporate satellite observations to predict the impact of climate change on these ecosystems, particularly those located in the Mid-Atlantic region. The CI is also expected to play a significant role in National Centers for Environmental Prediction (NCEP) Climate Test Bed projects when satellite data is a key input. This announcement provides requirements for the proposed CI and includes details for the technical program, evaluation criteria, and competitive selection procedures. Applicants should review the NOAA CI Policy and CI Interim Handbook (both available at <http://www.nrc.noaa.gov/ci>) prior to preparing a proposal for this announcement.

DATES: Proposals must be received by NESDIS no later than January 5, 2009 5 p.m., E.T. Proposals submitted after that date will not be considered.

ADDRESSES: The standard application package is available at <http://www.grants.gov>. For applicants without Internet access, an application package may be received by contacting Ingrid Guch, NOAA/NESDIS, 5200 Auth Road, Room 701, Camp Springs, Maryland 20746. Applicants are strongly encouraged to apply online through the Grants.gov website. Paper submissions are only acceptable only if internet access is not available. Grants.gov requires applicants to register with the system prior to submitting an application. This registration process can take several weeks, involving multiple steps. In order to allow sufficient time for this process, you should register as soon as you decide that you intend to apply, even if you are not yet ready to submit your proposal. If an applicant has problems