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Business Outreach Center Challenge Grant Program

Sec. 32-9qq-1. Definitions

(a) “Applicant” means any non-profit or governmental entity which intends to establish a business outreach center in a particular region of the state or for certain industry sectors to assist in providing services to small businesses and minority business enterprises.

(b) “Business Outreach Center” means any non-profit or governmental entity providing or able to provide assistance to small businesses and minority business enterprises in the areas of business plan development, financial projection, loan package planning, including loan packaging for small businesses and minority business enterprises which are seeking financial assistance from the Connecticut development authority, business counseling and related monitoring and follow-up services.

(c) “Commissioner” means the commissioner of economic development.

(d) “Connecticut Development Authority” means the quasi-public agency established pursuant to Section 32-11a of the Connecticut General Statutes.

(e) “Department” means the department of economic development.

(f) “Governmental Entity” means any department or agency of the State, or of any municipality of the State, including but not limited to, quasi-public agencies and public institutions of higher education.

(g) “Minority Business Enterprise” means a small contractor as defined in Section 32-9e (a) (3) of the Connecticut General Statutes.

(h) “Non-Profit Entity” means all non-profit corporations as the term is defined in Section 33-421 (l) of the Connecticut General Statutes, including but not limited to corporations organized exclusively for charitable or educational purposes.

(i) “Small Business” means any person or entity including affiliates engaged in or which intend to establish or acquire a for-profit activity or activities in this state, and whose gross revenues, including revenues of affiliates, did not exceed ten million dollars in its most recently completed fiscal year or if such person or entity has not been in business for one year, the commissioner determines in his discretion that such gross revenues, including revenues of affiliates, are not likely to exceed ten million dollars in its first fiscal year.

(Effective August 31, 1989)

Sec. 32-9qq-2. Eligibility

To be eligible for a grant pursuant to these Regulations an applicant must:

(a) be a non-profit or governmental entity;

(b) be applying for a grant hereunder to cover, in whole or in part, the cost of maintaining or operating a business outreach center as defined in Section 32-9qq-1 of these Regulations;

(c) be providing or able to provide assistance to small businesses and minority business enterprises in the areas of business plan development, financial projection, loan package planning, including loan packaging for small and minority businesses seeking financial assistance from the Connecticut development authority, business counseling and related monitoring and follow-up services; and

(d) establish and maintain business outreach centers solely in the State of Connecticut.

(Effective August 31, 1989)

Sec. 32-9qq-3. Application requirements

Each application for a grant shall be submitted on forms prescribed by the department. Such forms shall require applicants to submit sufficient information to

make a determination of eligibility for receipt of a grant, including, but not limited to the following:

(a) evidence satisfactory to the commissioner and the department that the applicant is a non-profit or governmental entity;

(b) the applicant's plan for the use of the grant funds requested hereunder including:

(1) submission of a work plan which sets forth:

(A) the specific region or industry sector to be served by the business outreach center;

(B) an identification and assessment of the general needs of businesses in such region or industry sector;

(C) an identification and assessment of the general and specific needs of the small businesses and minority business enterprises to be served by the business outreach center;

(D) a statement of the mission, goals and objectives of the business outreach center;

(E) an overall work plan for the entire budget period;

(F) a detailed work plan for the first year of the budget period;

(G) an outreach and marketing plan;

(H) an explanation of how the activities of the business outreach center will coordinate with or supplement existing services within the region or industry sector;

(I) a detailed explanation of the manner in which the business outreach center intends to assist small businesses and minority business enterprises in the areas of business plan development, financial projection, loan package planning, including loan packaging for small businesses and minority business enterprises which are seeking financial assistance from the Connecticut development authority, business counseling and related monitoring and follow-up services; and

(J) any further information requested by the commissioner;

(2) submission of a financial plan which sets forth:

(A) actual or proposed sources of financial resources other than grant monies received pursuant to these Regulations, including specification of such resources as public or private and projected revenues from service fees; and

(B) an estimation of costs for the entire grant period and detailed identification of costs for the first year as follows:

(i) personnel;

(ii) travel;

(iii) outside consultants;

(iv) outreach and marketing efforts;

(v) rent, utilities and related expenses; and

(vi) any other expenses related to the work plan referred to in Section 32-9qq-3 (b) (1) of these Regulations;

(3) submission of a plan detailing the proposed administrative structure of the business outreach center, which plan shall set forth:

(A) the type of policy-making board and administrative structure of the applicant;

(B) major participants in the applicant's program other than the policy-making board;

(C) the existing or proposed levels of expertise and previous experience of the staff employed or to be employed by the business outreach center;

(D) criteria applied or to be applied to develop or enhance the operations of the applicant; and,

(E) evidence of the level of commitment or other appropriate administrative support to the business outreach center.

(c) any further information requested by the commissioner.

(Effective August 31, 1989)

Sec. 32-9qq-4. Eligible use of grant funds

Grant funds may be utilized to:

(a) pay the salary, benefits and travel expenses of employees of the business outreach center;

(b) purchase the services of outside consultants or organizations;

(c) develop outreach materials and conduct outreach efforts;

(d) pay rent and related office expenses;

(e) pay for such other expenses as are deemed appropriate by the commissioner.

Provided, however, the foregoing are eligible uses for grant funds only to the extent that the applicant conducts the services or activities of a business outreach center as identified in Section 32-9qq of the Connecticut General Statutes.

(Effective August 31, 1989)

Sec. 32-9qq-5. Grant award criteria

Grant awards will be reviewed on the basis of the following, among other criteria:

(a) the degree of need of the applicant and the businesses to be served by the applicant;

(b) the commitment and capability of the business outreach center to satisfy significant needs of small businesses and minority business enterprises;

(c) the degree to which the business outreach center will not duplicate or fund existing services;

(d) the capability of the business outreach center to coordinate with or improve and supplement existing services;

(e) evidence of financial and non-financial commitment to the business outreach center from sources other than the State or United States governments.

(f) the level of financial support relative to the identified needs of small businesses and minority business enterprises from sources other than the State or United States governments.

(g) the administrative capacity of the applicant to implement the work plan efficiently and effectively;

(h) the capability of the business outreach center to become self-sufficient during or by the end of the grant period;

(i) the need for assistance to small and minority businesses in the region or industry sector to be served by the business outreach center;

(j) the applicant's plan for outreach efforts designed to inform small businesses and minority business enterprises of available sources of financial and technical assistance; and

(k) such other factors the commissioner may deem appropriate to satisfying the needs of small businesses or minority business enterprises to be served by the outreach center.

(Effective August 31, 1989)

Sec. 32-9qq-6. Grant award and agreement

(a) Eligible and properly submitted applications shall be reviewed and approved by the commissioner or his designee. Such review shall include consideration of the criteria established pursuant to Section 32-9qq-5 of these Regulations.

(b) Upon approval of an application by the commissioner or his designee, an offer of grant funds will be made by the department, subject to the authorization of funds by the State Bond Commission and the execution of a Grant Assistance Agreement between the applicant and the department. Such Grant Assistance Agreement shall set forth the amount of the grant approved, the period of years over which grant funds will be paid, the terms and conditions required by these Regulations and such other terms and conditions considered by the commissioner necessary to carry out the purposes of these Regulations and Section 32-9qq of the Connecticut General Statutes.

(c) As a condition of approval of an application, the commissioner may require the applicant to obtain a matching grant, which matching grant may include cash and in-kind contributions.

Matching grants shall be in such amounts as the commissioner determines in his discretion and shall be based upon, but not limited to, such factors as the need of the applicant and the level of commitment of such applicant to provide assistance to small businesses and minority business enterprises.

(d) No grant assistance agreement shall exceed five (5) years in duration or five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000) in amount. Grant awards shall be determined on an annual basis in accordance with such assistance agreement, subject to a satisfactory review of past performance as determined by the commissioner.

(Effective August 31, 1989)

Sec. 32-9qq-7. Disbursement

Disbursement of the approved grant shall be made in accordance with the grant assistance agreement.

(Effective August 31, 1989)