

University of West Florida and The Florida SBDC State Office Intent for Application Announcement

Intent For Application Announcement

The University of West Florida (UWF) and the Florida Small Business Development Center State Office (State Office), collectively referred to as the “Grantor,” are excited to announce that the 2025 Florida SBDC Network Application for Funding is anticipated to open June 10, 2024, and will close on August 30, 2024. Applications are open only to current Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) in the Florida SBDC Network (FSBDCN or “Network”). To be considered for participation in the Application for Funding the applicant must submit an Intent for Application on or before May 17, 2024.

To apply for this funding opportunity, potential grantees must review this Intent for Application announcement and carefully examine the Terms and Conditions; the FSBDCN Conflict of Interest, Ethics, and Acceptable Use of AI Policy; the FSBDCN Standard Operating Procedures (SOP); the FSBDCN Strategic Plan; and the FSBDCN Branding and Marketing Guide (hereinafter, referred to as the “FSBDCN Documents”). A completed Intent for Application must be submitted and accepted by the Grantor for further consideration to move forward with the Application for Funding phase.

Acceptance of Terms

By submitting an Intent for Application for the grant funds provided by the Grantor, you agree to follow and abide by the FSBDCN Documents associated with the FSBDCN program. If you do not agree with these items, you should not proceed with the Intent for Application process.

Grant Description

The Network is hosted at the UWF and is funded in part by the Small Business Administration (SBA), the State of Florida, and UWF.

The program's mission is to provide technical assistance, education, training, and research to small businesses and entrepreneurs in the state of Florida through programming coordinated by the Grantor. The FSBDCN must meet goals and metrics defined by our funding partners. Each region must meet a percentage of these goals based on their allocated funding.

Taxpayer dollars support this program, and it is the Grantor's objective to administer the program efficiently and effectively, minimize duplication of efforts, reduce financial and administrative burdens, and ensure first-class, collaborative coverage for all 67 counties in Florida.

Eligibility

To be eligible to respond to the Intent for Application, your organization must be an institution of higher education with a physical location within the state of Florida or a local government entity currently participating in the FSBDCN Program. The applying organization(s) must provide a one-to-one match in funding to be considered for the program.

It is strongly recommended that the applying organization review its financial and administrative rates, organizational structure, performance and commitment to maximize the return on investment, the number of businesses supported, and the amount of funding that can be utilized to bring cutting-edge programming to the small business communities in the corresponding application region.

The applying entity must have a physical location in the desired region(s) they are applying for below and show evidence through the Intent for Application process that it can cover the region with the desired results and outcomes set forth in the Intent for Application. In order to cover the intended region, a teaming arrangement can be utilized; the formal agreement must accompany the application and clearly define the roles and responsibilities of each organization.

Region 1: Bay, Calhoun, Escambia, Gulf, Holmes, Jackson, Okaloosa, Santa Rosa, Walton, and Washington counties

Region 2: Franklin, Gadsden, Jefferson, Leon, Liberty, Madison, Taylor, and Wakulla counties

Region 3: Alachua, Baker, Bradford, Citrus, Clay, Columbia, Dixie, Duval, Gilchrist, Hamilton, Lafayette, Levy, Marion, Nassau, Putnam, St. Johns, Suwannee, and Union counties

Region 4: Brevard, Flagler, Lake, Orange, Osceola, Seminole, Sumter, and Volusia counties

Region 5: DeSoto, Hardee, Hernando, Highlands, Hillsborough, Manatee, Pasco, Pinellas, Polk, and Sarasota counties

Region 6: Charlotte, Collier, Glades, Hendry, and Lee counties

Region 7: Indian River, Martin, Okeechobee, and St. Lucie counties

Region 8: Palm Beach and Broward counties

Region 9: Miami-Dade and Monroe counties

Anticipate Regional Funding and Associated Goals

The anticipated combined federal and state funding allocated by region is as follows:

Region 1: \$1,000,000.00

Capital Transactions: 156
Underserved Clients: 879
Clients Advised: 1103
New Business Starts: 73
Capital Raised: \$34,048,142
Sales Revenues Generated: \$400,550,196
Government Contracts: \$35,048,142
Jobs Supported: 4772
Total Consulting Hours: 10152

Region 2: \$535,000.00

Capital Transactions: 98
Underserved Clients: 551
Clients Advised: 691
New Business Starts: 46
Capital Raised: \$26,701,148
Sales Revenues Generated: \$305,155,983
Government Contracts: \$26,701,148
Jobs Supported: 2991
Total Consulting Hours: 6363

Region 3: \$1,430,000.00

Capital Transactions: 244
Underserved Clients: 1374
Clients Advised: 1725
New Business Starts: 115
Capital Raised: \$51,908,379
Sales Revenues Generated: \$593,238,611
Government Contracts: \$51,908,379
Jobs Supported: 7463
Total Consulting Hours: 15879

Region 4: \$1,630,000.00

Capital Transactions: 272
Underserved Clients: 1529

Clients Advised: 1920
New Business Starts: 127
Capital Raised: \$56,816,617
Sales Revenues Generated: \$649,332,761
Government Contracts: \$56,816,617
Jobs Supported: 8307
Total Consulting Hours: 17674

Region 5: \$1,800,000.00

Capital Transactions: 298
Underserved Clients: 1675
Clients Advised: 2103
New Business Starts: 140
Capital Raised: \$64,697,079
Sales Revenues Generated: \$739,395,183
Government Contracts: \$64,697,079
Jobs Supported: 9097
Total Consulting Hours: 19356

Region 6: \$1,000,000.00

Capital Transactions: 169
Underserved Clients: 953
Clients Advised: 1196
New Business Starts: 79
Capital Raised: \$32,942,974
Sales Revenues Generated: \$376,491,126
Government Contracts: \$32,942,974
Jobs Supported: 5174
Total Consulting Hours: 11007

Region 7: \$600,000.00

Capital Transactions: 100
Underserved Clients: 564
Clients Advised: 708
New Business Starts: 47
Capital Raised: \$23,795,794
Sales Revenues Generated: \$271,951,931
Government Contracts: \$23,795,794
Jobs Supported: 3061
Total Consulting Hours: 6512

Region 8: \$1,300,000.00

Capital Transactions: 215
Underserved Clients: 1207
Clients Advised: 1516
New Business Starts: 101
Capital Raised: \$47,991,526
Sales Revenues Generated: \$548,474,577
Government Contracts: \$47,991,526
Jobs Supported: 6558
Total Consulting Hours: 13952

Region 9: \$1,270,000.00

Capital Transactions: 215
Underserved Clients: 1207
Clients Advised: 1516
New Business Starts: 101
Capital Raised: \$47,991,528
Sales Revenues Generated: \$548,474,577
Government Contracts: \$47,991,526
Jobs Supported: 6558
Total Consulting Hours: 13952

The above funding levels are not guaranteed. The grant is funded federally through a congressional appropriation and by state funds through a state appropriation. Therefore, until a finalized appropriation has been determined, the Grantor reserves the right to adjust the funding levels and key performance indicators (KPIs) as necessary based on the appropriations and other performance factors. All funding estimates have been determined based on the past history of the Grantor's funding and the regional landscape as defined above.

Additional Strategic initiative funding for each region is available based on contributions and performance to the strategic initiatives outlined by the State Office. These initiatives include but are not limited to task force participation, underserved market events, Florida SBDC Small Business Success Summit/PD Conference participation, Q12 survey participation, and when warranted and needed disaster response funding. For planning purposes an additional \$107,500 could be invoiced per region if all requirements are met.

The strategic plan is and will be a collaborative effort between the regions defined per the Intent for Application. The strategic plan will define further goals that are leading and lagging to monitor and ensure that the Network is a high quality and high performing network and is on the right path to meeting the core KPIs per our funding partner requirements.

Application Process

Phase I: Letter Acknowledging The Intent to Apply

A formal letter acknowledging that the applicant intends to respond to the Intent for Application is required by April 12, 2024. As a part of that response the applicant organization must review and acknowledge the FSBDCN Documents.

Phase II: Program Application

The provided Program Application is required and must be completed and submitted on or before May 17, 2024. Any application submitted after this date will be considered non-responsive and will not be considered for the Application for Funding process (Phase III).

The Program Application must address at a minimum the FSBDCN Documents. The applicant must demonstrate its understanding and commitment to incorporate all of these requirements and concepts to successfully administer the program in their applicable region.

The applicant understands that the SBDC program is funded in part by the SBA, the state of Florida, and UWF. As such the program has the potential to shift priorities and metrics from year to year or, in the case of a strong need for service in a given area or region, as deemed necessary by Grantor to meet the demands of our small business community in Florida.

Once the University of West Florida and the Florida SBDC State Office have reviewed and approved the Program Application the applicant will be invited to submit an Application for Funding (Phase III)

Phase III: Application for Funding

The Application for funding process will require that the participating organization prepare a budget based on Grantor's Program Application and anticipated funding for the designated region. The funding allocation presented in the Intent for Application and Application for Funding is based on historical funding by the SBA and state and anticipated funding. Funding is not a guarantee and nothing within any of the documentation or processes shall be taken as a guarantee of current or future funding levels.

In building out the budget, a strong emphasis on direct services to the small business community in your region shall be considered. The Grantor has marketing, videography, and research support that should be utilized state-wide to eliminate duplication. Therefore, staffing decisions should be made so as to not duplicate the statewide efforts for efficient use of taxpayer dollars. Historically, Grantor has not put thresholds on this support, but in future opportunities for funding the efficiency of the region will be considered.

The Application of Funding shall support the execution of the Program Application submitted during the Intent for Application Phase. The potential grantee shall submit a compelling budget and budget narrative to support the Program Application.

Program Information and Expectations of Grantees

Governing Documents

- FY_2025_SBDC_CORE_NOTICE_OF_FUNDING_OPPORTUNITY (NOFO)
- FSBDCN Standard Operating Procedures
- FSBDCN Strategic Plan
- FSBDCN Branding and Marketing Guide
- SBDC Program Terms and Conditions
- FSBDCN Conflict of Interest, Ethics, and Acceptable Use of AI Policy

Governing Authority

The authority governing the SBDC program in Florida includes the following:

- 15 U.S.C. §§648, et seq.
- 13 CFR Part 130
- 2 CFR Part 200
- 2 CFR Part 215
- Section 288.001, Florida Statutes

Where there are any conflicts, the precedence is as follows: federal law, state law, FSBDCN documents.

Required Meetings

Initial Kick-off Meeting

The grantee shall attend a formal in person kickoff meeting for the grant program year. The initial kickoff meeting will be scheduled and held within 15 calendar days after the federal notice of award to the Grantor. The grantee shall have the critical host partner leadership (Host finance, Host management, and the identified regional director) as a part of that call. The grantee may have others participate as well at its discretion. The management and finance person can be a delegate for those listed in the Intent for Application, although the delegate cannot be the regional SBDC leadership team.

Host Council Calls

The grantee shall attend at least one virtual host council meeting a year. These bi-annual meetings will be scheduled in advance within 15 calendar days after the federal notice of award. The calls are important to the Grantor and the success of the program for our state. These meetings provide regularly scheduled opportunities for the host partner management, government relations, and communications to ask questions, collaborate on mutual concerns, and receive in-depth knowledge of the program and its direction directly from the Grantor.

Quality Improvement Plan Meeting

Critical management must attend any quality improvement plan meeting such that all parties understand what is needed to ensure the success of the Network and that of the awarded partner.

Close-out Meeting

In the event that the Grantor has determined that the grantee is no longer fit for the program due to a lack of performance, violations of grant terms and conditions, or other just cause, Grantor will give a 90-day written notice of termination of the grant. A close-out meeting will be scheduled, and the defined critical leadership from the grant application is required to attend this final meeting. The host partner may select a delegate, although the delegate cannot be the regional SBDC leadership team.

Performance

As per the Intent for Application process, the Network has KPIs the Network must achieve to comply with the federal grant and state grants. The grantee's Technical Proposal addresses how the grantee will perform and meet these KPIs. Beyond the KPIs, the Network addresses performance through a Continuous Improvement Process (CIP), Q12 Surveys, Client Surveys, and other tools to ensure the Network is performing at the highest level.

The CIPs are used as an interactive, collaborative way to drill down into a regional organization's processes, culture, strategies, commitment to regional businesses, engagement, and the incorporation of the Grantor's requirements for performance. In the event that the Grantor finds there is sufficient evidence that the region is not performing to the FSBDCN standards, a quality improvement plan (QIP) will be issued. It should be noted that the QIP is not a prerequisite for termination. The Grantor can terminate the subaward at any time given 90 days written notice.

Critical management must attend any QIP meeting such that all parties understand what is needed to ensure the success of the Network and that of the awarded partner.

Use of Network Tools

The Network invests a significant amount of resources into tools to support the activities of our consultants for our small businesses. These tools must be utilized as designated by the tool provider, and the consultants must take all necessary precautions and actions to ensure conformity to these policies. Any member of the Network that is not in conformity may have their access to these tools revoked.

The State Office procures various software tools for the Network to leverage economies of scale and to provide consistency across the Network for both staff and clients. Therefore, tools such as the Organizational Intranet, Customer Relationship Management, Events Management and Ticketing, and any other designated tool must be utilized per the direction of the FSBDCN SOP and other documentation supplied by the State Office.

Network Brand

The Network brand is very important to the public perception of the Network. The importance of our brand is codified in our state-wide strategic plan, which has an entire pillar dedicated to perception. The grantee shall follow the FSBDCN Marketing and Branding Guide. The Director of Strategic Communications or designee at the State Office is the only person within our Network that has the authority to deviate from the brand standards.

Partnerships

The Network will never receive enough federal and state funding to engage every small business in our state that needs our help. It is important to the Network that we leverage strategic partners to support our outreach and services. Therefore, the Florida Entrepreneurial Nexus shall be supported and utilized by all grantees to enhance our reach and our services.

Collaborative Funding Opportunities

As stated, the Network will never receive enough funding from our core funding partners to support the needs of our entire small business community in Florida. Therefore, the Network shall leverage, seek out, and explore meaningful opportunities for larger Network-wide funding partnerships. The end result would be an endowment of funds to draw interest from annually to support the Network regions through a foundation to foundation transfer.

Partner Structures

Taxpayer dollars support this program, and it is the Grantor's objective to administer the program efficiently and effectively, minimize duplication of efforts, reduce financial and administrative burdens, and ensure first-class, collaborative coverage for all 67 counties in Florida. Therefore, the structure of each region shall not duplicate the efforts of the State Office

and, during the review of the Application for Funding, the State Office may question a position and ask for further clarification and/or need prior to final award of the program.

Network Innovation

The Network has always been a cutting-edge network and in many instances has set the vision for the nation when it comes to the SBDC program. The FSBDCN is the largest continuous SBDC network in the nation and was one of the founders of the program in 1976. It is important to our state and our Network that we continue to drive forward with innovative solutions and ideas to support our small businesses.

The State Office is dedicated and committed to hearing the voices of those working tirelessly in their communities to support small businesses. It is important to the Network leadership that these voices play a role in the vision and strategies to move the Network forward. Therefore, the State Office has established task force groups of special interests to help bring strategies to the forefront and build upon the state-wide strategic plan.

Each grantee will ensure that a member of their organization is on each of these task force groups and attend meetings as scheduled.

Annually as scheduled the Regional Directors and the State Office leadership shall come together to workshop and discuss strategies and innovation to move the Network forward. In the event that a Regional Director cannot attend, the Regional Director shall designate another individual to attend. The final strategies, objectives, tactics, and goals will be formalized in the FSBDCN Strategic Plan and the FSBDCN SOPs with core state and federal KPIs defined in the sub-contract award.

Contract Terms and Conditions

For the latest Terms and Conditions please go to floridasbdc.org/apply.

Data Usage

The data provided herein shall be utilized for the sole purpose of evaluating the applicant's proposal for further consideration for the Application for Funding phase. All proposals are subject to Florida's Public Records law, Chapter 119, Florida Statutes.

Termination

The Grantor may terminate the sub-award grant at any time based on funding allocations, direction from the federal government, or direction from the state of Florida. The Grantor reserves the right to terminate the contract at any time based on poor performance by the

grantee and, based on the severity of the performance, a QIP may not be exercised. In such a case the Grantor will provide a 90-day written notice of termination, which will further spell out the actions the grantee must take to close out the program.

Review of The Program Application

The Grantor will review the submitted Intent for Application and will formally notify the applying partner organization within 30 days of whether the application is accepted. If accepted, the organization's application will undergo the Application for Funding process.

The authorization to submit an Application for Funding as a partner to support the Network does not exclude or qualify your participation in any future program under the Grantor's program umbrella.

Contact Information

For further information please send your questions to FSBDCStateDirector@uwf.edu. All questions will be posted and answered publicly on floridasbdc.org/apply.