



## The University of Texas System Mentor Protégé Program

### Policy

It is the policy of The University of Texas System to promote full and equal opportunity for all businesses to supply the goods and services needed to support the mission, administrative, and logistical operations of UT System Administration and the UT System institutions. UT System Administration and UT System institutions commit to a good faith effort to increase purchases from and contract awards to Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) firms consistent with the state's [Texas'] goals for HUB participation and overall economic development.

### Introduction

The Mentor-Protégé Program was implemented in 2000 by the University of Texas System in accordance with Texas Government Code, Sections 2161.181-182 and Section 111.11 of the Texas Administrative Code (TAC). UT System is committed to facilitate business and economic growth in all areas of the state and to foster diverse relationships that add value to all business communities.

### Purpose

Administered by the UT System, Office of HUB Development and Federal Small Business Program, the purpose of the UT System Mentor Protégé Program is to advance the growth and development of minority and woman-owned businesses in Texas, foster long-term relationships between contractors/vendors and Historically Underutilized Businesses (HUB), increase the ability of the HUB to contract with the state or to receive subcontracts under state contract as well as enable protégé companies to profitably perform in open competition.

### Objectives

The overall objective of the UT System Mentor Protégé Program is to provide professional guidance and support to the protégé company to facilitate their growth and development. In terms of measurable objectives, the UT System Mentor Protégé program seeks to help protégé companies:

- attain long-term stability in the marketplace;
- improve financial strength and bonding capability;
- meet the objectives outlined in the protégé company business plan;
- successfully complete the Mentor Protégé program within one to two years; and
- enable successful transition from protégé to mentor.

### Program Structure

The UT System Mentor Protégé Program is comprised of three key components, the Mentor, the Protégé and the Sponsor. Each component plays a major role in the program and each bears responsibility for the success of the program. Each Mentor Protégé relationship, usually a two-year period, will be unique based on needs, type of business and business climate during the mentor protégé process. Emphasis should be on the Protégé's business development and not on monetary gains by either the Mentor or Protégé.

- **Sponsor** - responsibilities include advertising and promoting the program through the organization of business events such as vendor fairs, workshops and seminars which

focus on the function and structure of the Mentor Protégé program. However, the major function of the sponsor is to facilitate interaction between the mentor and protégé.

- **Mentor** - A mentor firm is a larger, well-established, successful company that is willing to commit time, resources, and expertise to teach, develop, and grow a small business that is ready to take the next step toward success. Mentors are usually executives with the knowledge and experience to help small, emerging business enterprises refine and implement sound business plans.
- **Protégé** - A protégé firm is usually a smaller firm with a vision for growth and long-term stability and sustainability in their industry, but needs guidance to achieve sound business practices that will increase the potential for sustainable growth.
- **Program Structure** - requires monthly meetings between the mentor and protégé and, on a quarterly basis, meeting attendance by the sponsor. The first meeting between mentor and protégé should critically examine the protégé business plan and if one is not in place, a business plan should begin to be developed for implementation. At each monthly meeting, the mentor and protégé, working through a written agenda, will identify and agree on the steps necessary to implement specific actions identified on the business plan before the next meeting. The minutes of each monthly meeting should be written and distributed to the sponsor, mentor and protégé. A review of the mentor protégé team progress will be discussed at each quarterly meeting.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

Mentors must be “On-Call” and attend regular monthly meetings. Mentors have an obligation to give their best business advice to the protégés. A mentor is not expected to address routine business matters but as a mentor, your assigned representatives must be readily available to answer questions as well as help the protégé address any significant business issues or problems they may encounter.

Working through a written agenda, mentors help their protégés establish a business plan, set goals for improvement, and set deadlines to attain those goals. In addition, as the relationship between the mentor and protégé grows and develops, the mentor should review, on a regular basis, the protégés business and action plans, as well as, key business indicators such as cash flow, work in progress and recent bids. Mentors should also help protégés identify any weaknesses in general or financial management and identify professional services that can help address those areas. Mentors can also advise their protégés how to market a company.

Depending on the circumstances, the role of the Protégé in the program is to first, provide complete and up-to-date information on their business. The business information can include business and action plans, cash flow reports, and work in progress reports, etc. The protégé should also take the initiative to request additional assistance needed to address business issues that may arise, as well as, make every reasonable effort to attend regularly scheduled meetings and implement business initiatives that develop from the monthly meeting with the Mentor.

The program sponsor’s key responsibility is to facilitate and structure the interaction between the mentor and protégé and attend quarterly meetings. Other responsibilities include advertising and promoting the program, in addition to, organizing related business events, identifying potential mentors, identifying potential protégés, informing and reminding mentors and protégés of their roles and responsibilities, and maintaining program records which include monthly meeting minutes and quarterly progress reports.

As a result of the cooperative effort between the Mentor, Protégé and Sponsor, a broad base of high quality companies will emerge and lasting partnerships between mentor and protégé will evolve.

## **Benefits of Program Participation**

Mentors:

- Opportunity to develop a partnership with HUB organizations to help satisfy HUB participation requirements established by the State of Texas;
- Enhance protégé job performance through increased business capacity;
- Ability to diversify your business through access to other markets;
- Opportunity to discover, enhance and implement other systems for daily business operation;
- Create viable suppliers for your corporation's future needs.

Protégé:

- Opportunity to improve existing systems of daily business operation.
- Enhance job performance through increased business capacity.
- Increased work volume.
- Improved financial strength.
- Increased bonding limits.
- Retention of reliable and productive employees.

## **Candidate Participation Requirements**

Mentor

- Registration with the State of Texas Centralized Master Bidders List (CMBL).
- Previous mentoring experience.
- Ability to provide developmental guidance in areas identified by the protégé.
- "Good Standing" in doing business with the State of Texas.
- Completion of UT System Mentor Application.

Protégé

- Eligibility and willingness to obtain HUB certification under State of Texas HUB Program. *(Protégé must be certified as a HUB prior to the execution of the Mentor Protégé Agreement)*
- Business in operation for at least one year.
- Desire to participate with a mentoring firm.
- Ability to identify the type of guidance needed for business development.
- "Good Standing" in doing business with the State of Texas.
- Completion of UT System Protégé Application.

## **Next Steps**

To ensure the success of the Mentor Protégé team partnered through UT System, Office of HUB Development, each mentor and protégé candidate must pass a screening process prior to acceptance into the program.

Upon completion and submission of the UT System Mentor or Protégé Application, the Mentor Protégé coordinator will contact the candidate to schedule a meeting to discuss items such as plans and objectives, organizational structure, policies and procedures, systems, personnel, and operation/methods of control. Based on the results of this meeting, the candidate will receive notice of his/her acceptance into the UT System Mentor Protégé Program.

Every Mentor Protégé match is unique. What may work well for one corporate relationship may not work for another. When an identification of a possible Mentor Protégé relationship is made, the UT System Mentor Protégé coordinator will contact each partner to schedule a joint meeting where the Mentor partner and the Protégé partner have an opportunity to meet to determine if the

proposed relationship is a “good fit”. In addition, the Mentor Protégé Agreement will be signed and regular monthly meeting dates will be scheduled.

### **Summary**

Thank you for your interest in the UT System Mentor Protégé Program. It is our hope that you will consider participation in this program not only because it is the “right thing to do” but to “give back” to a community that once supported your new emerging business on its road to success. With that in mind, approach each mentor protégé relationship individually with a focus and emphasis on development.