U.S. SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
OFFICE OF VETERANS BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

VETERANS BUSINESS OUTREACH CENTER PROGRAM

FY 2023

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY NO. SB-OVVB-23-001

The purpose of this Funding Opportunity is to invite proposals for funding from eligible non-profit organizations, local and state government agencies, private sector firm and institutions of higher education to provide quality training and counseling to veteran small business owners and entrepreneurs. A key component of this Funding Opportunity is for applicants to provide training to transitioning military personnel and spouses through the Boots to Business (B2B) Training Program and to veterans and military spouses through the Reboot Training Program.

Additionally, applicants will provide counseling, training, technical and financial skill development, comprehensive business assessments and mentoring services to veteran, active duty, Reserve, National Guard, military spouse and family member entrepreneurs, and small business owners interested in starting, expanding and diversifying small businesses. .

This Funding Opportunity is subject to the availability of funding.

Opening Date: October 6, 2022

Closing Date: November 23, 2022

Proposals responding to this Program Announcement must be posted to www.grants.gov by 11:50pm ET on November 23, 2022. No other submissions will be permitted. Proposals received after the stipulated deadline will not be accepted.

Grant Announcement Q&A Sessions

OVBD will host conference calls on the following dates/times to provide additional information and address questions related to this funding opportunity.

- **October 13, 2022: 3pm ET**
- **October 25, 2022: 1pm ET**
- **November 7, 2022: 4pm ET**
- **November 16, 2022: 1pm ET**

Microsoft Teams
Click here to join the meeting
Meeting ID: 241 597 859 656
Passcode: ggTGqV
Download Teams | Join on the web

Or call in (audio only)
+1 202-765-1264,,265542768# Phone Conference ID: 265 542 768#

To ensure your questions are addressed during these calls, please submit questions in advance to raymond.milano@sba.gov at least 24 hours prior to the call.

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1.0 Funding Opportunity Description

1.1 Program Overview

Federal Agency Name:	U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA)
Funding Opportunity Title:	Veterans Business Outreach Center Program (VBOC)
Announcement Type:	Initial
Funding Opportunity Number:	Program Announcement No. SB-OVVB-23-001
CDFA Number:	59.044
Closing Date for Submissions:	November 23, 2022 – 11:50 P.M. Eastern Standard Time
Authority:	Section 9(b) (17) of the Small Business Act, U.S.C. 637(b)(17)
Duration for Authority:	5 Years
Funding Instrument:	Cooperative Agreement
Funding:	Funding is for Fiscal Year (FY) 2023
Award Amount:	A total of $4,135,000 in funding is available for this program in FY 2023. SBA expects to make up to twelve (12) awards. **Maximum award amounts for specific coverage areas are listed in Appendix A.**
Project Duration:	Awards will be made for a base project period of 12 months, with up to four (4) continuation award periods of 12 months. Exercise of continuation awards is at SBA's discretion and is subject to continuing program authority, availability of funds, and satisfactory performance by the Recipient organizations.
Project Starting Date:	May 1, 2023
Proposal Evaluation:	Proposals will be reviewed for sufficiency as detailed in Section 5.0.
Agency Point of Contact:	U.S. Small Business Administration Office of Veterans Business Development Tel: (202) 905-6685 Email: tangela.liddell@sba.gov

1.2 Introduction

The Small Business Act (Act) provides for entrepreneurial training, business development assistance, counseling, and management assistance to small businesses owned and controlled by eligible veterans. Additionally, SBA is authorized to make grants and enter into contracts and cooperative agreements for the establishment and implementation of outreach programs to serve the veteran community.

1.3 Background

Since its inception in 1953, SBA has served to aid, counsel, assist and promote the interest of small businesses; while SBA is best known for its financial support of small businesses through its many lending programs, the Agency also plays a critical role in providing funding to organizations that deliver technical assistance in the form of counseling and training to small business concerns and nascent entrepreneurs to promote growth, expansion, innovation increased productivity and management improvements. The mission of SBA's Office of Veterans Business Development (OVBD), which bears responsibility acts as a liaison with the veterans' business community, writes and reviews policy analysis and reporting; act as Ombudsmen for Veterans in Small Business Administration programs, provide business training, counseling assistance, and supports the Federal Procurement program for veteran and service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses.

In fulfilling these responsibilities, OVBD has the authority to enter into Cooperative Agreements with educational institutions, nonprofit community-based organizations, private businesses and Federal, State, local and tribal government agencies (as defined in Section 3.2) for the establishment and implementation of outreach and entrepreneurial development programs designed to aid veterans, service-disabled veterans, and Reserve Component members in starting new and expanding or diversifying exiting small businesses.

1.4 Purpose

Eligible organizations (as defined in Section 3.2) may apply for an Initial Phase VBOC Award of financial assistance under this Funding Opportunity to fund implementation of a Veterans Business Outreach Center in the geographic coverage areas defined in Appendix A. Applications are limited to the defined coverage areas.

As a major component of the VBOC program Applicants are expected to provide entrepreneurship training through the Boots to Business (B2B) and Reboot Training programs to transitioning military personnel, military spouses and veteran small business owners and entrepreneurs. VBOC awardees will be expected to participate in 100% of the Boots to Business classes within their coverage area. Additionally, funds will be used to offer traditional business counseling, training and technical assistance to veterans, service-members, military spouses, and others interested in starting or growing a small business.

1.5 Leveraging of Resources

It is expected that the recipients will work closely with local SBA District Offices, Resource Partners and all other SBA grantees in leveraging resources when marketing the VBOC program to connect beneficiaries with SBA technical assistance resources. Applicants should demonstrate the capability to establish partnerships with veteran service organizations, workforce development and community-based organizations that service the training needs of veterans by providing copies of partnership agreements and/or letters or emails of support from, the above-listed types of organizations.

1.6 SBA Involvement and Oversight

A designated Grants Officer Technical Representative (GOTR) within the Office of Veterans Business Development at SBA Headquarters will be responsible for overall monitoring and oversight of the Small Business Award Recipients, including compliance with the terms of the Cooperative Agreement. A designated Grants Management Officer

(GMO) within in the Office of Grants Management (OGM) will be responsible for issuing the Notice of Award, Terms and Conditions, amendments to the award and processing/approving payments.

1.7 Change or cancellation

SBA reserves the right to amend or cancel this Funding Opportunity, in whole or in part, at the Agency's discretion. Should SBA make material changes to this Funding Opportunity, the Agency will extend the Closing Date as necessary to afford Applicants sufficient opportunity to address such changes.

2.0 Section II – Award Information

2.1 Estimated Funding

SBA expects to make up to twelve (12) awards (maximum awards up to $400,000). Details for specific coverage areas can be found in Appendix A.

2.2 Period of Performance/ Budget Periods

The Awards will be for a 5-year period of performance, consisting of a base period of 12 months from the date of award and four (4) continuation award periods of twelve (12) months each. Exercise of the continuation award periods will be solely at SBA's discretion and is subject to the continuing program authority, the availability of funds, and Recipients continued satisfactory performance and compliance with all the terms and conditions of the award. Each of the option periods will constitute a separate and distinct twelve (12) month Budget Period.

2.3 Funding Information

Funds provided under the VBOC award must be used solely of the purposes stipulated in this Funding Opportunity. All costs proposed in an Applicant's budget must meet the tests of allowability, allocability, and reasonableness set forth in the applicable Office of Management and Budget (OMB) cost principles. No more than twenty (20) percent of award funds may be expended on contractor or consultant costs. Indirect costs will be based on the Applicants cognizant Agency or the indirect cost rate agreement negotiated with SBA.

2.5 Funding Instrument

The funding instrument used will be a Cooperative Agreement

2.6 Matching Requirement

None

3.0 Section III – Eligibility Information

3.1 General

Eligible organizations and institutions of higher learning may submit one (1) proposal in response to the Funding Opportunity. Any additional applications from the same organizations and institutions will be automatically rejected without being evaluated. Existing VBOC awardees may submit an application to this Funding Opportunity.

3.2 Eligible Applicants

In order to be eligible for this funding opportunity an applicant must:

- Be a nonprofit organization, local or state agency, private sector firm or institute of higher learning.
- Demonstrate a history of providing quality entrepreneurship or business management training to aspiring entrepreneurs or existing small business owners that are members of the following populations: veterans, service-disabled veterans, Reserve Component members, National Guard, transitioning service members, spouses of service members or veteran and other military family members interested in starting or growing

a small business. The quality of a program can be demonstrated by new business starts, business expansions, number of contracts awarded, loans approved, jobs created and/or retained and connection or referrals to other programs such as SBA resource partners.

3.3 Ineligible Applicants

The following applicants will automatically be considered ineligible and their applications will be rejected without being evaluated.

- Any organization that owes an outstanding and unresolved financial obligation to the federal government;
- Any organization that is currently suspended, debarred or otherwise prohibited from receiving awards of contracts or grants from the federal government;
- Any organization that has an outstanding and unresolved material deficiency reported under the requirements of the Single Audit Act or 2 C.F.R. 200 Subpart F "Audit Requirements" within the past three years;
- Any organization that has had a VBOC grant or cooperative agreement involuntarily terminated or non-renewed by SBA for cause within the past year;
- Any organization that has filed for bankruptcy within the past five years;
- Any organization that proposes to serve as a pass-through and permit another organization to manage the day-to-day operations of the project; and/or
- Any organization that was convicted or had an officer or agent acting on its behalf convicted of a felony criminal violation under any Federal law within the preceding two years.
- Any organization that does not have an existing entrepreneurship training program for one of the populations described in Section 1.4 of this Funding Opportunity.
- Existing SBA Resource Partners, to include; Veterans Business Outreach Centers, Small Business Development Centers, SCORE and Women's Business Centers. Host organizations of SBA Resource Partners are eligible to apply.

4.0 Section IV - Application and Submission Information

4.1 Application Information

Applications must consist of the following elements: (i) a cover letter & table of contents (ii) a technical proposal: (iii) budget information and cost proposal; (iv) certifications, forms and assurances; and (v) attachments and exhibits.

4.1.1 Cover Letter

The first page of each application must be a cover letter which contains the following information:

- Statement of the application in response to the Funding Opportunity No. SB-OVVB-23-001
- Applicant's name and address
- Applicant's website address
- Name, telephone number, fax number, and email address for the applicant's designated point of contact, and
- Dollar amount of assistance being requested

4.1.2 Technical Proposal *(Not to exceed 15 pages)*

The technical proposal serves as the narrative blueprint for the applicant's planned project and must include the following information:

- Detailed description of the applicant's past experience and present ability to provide entrepreneurship/business management training and counseling assistance to identified beneficiaries with an interest in starting, managing, or growing a successful small enterprise;
- A copy of the curriculum for the recipients' existing program
- Project plan detailing the ability of VBOC staff to participate in and provide operational and instructional support to 100% of the Boots to Business classes within the defined coverage area.
- Outcome data of the program since inception, to include number of business starts, jobs created/retained contracts won, capital acquired, etc.
- General demographic data of past program participants
- The number of clients served in each 12-month period since program inception and projected number of beneficiaries that will be trained/counseled in future-12 month periods;
- Identification of director that will spend 100% of their time on the VBOC Program and key management personnel and staff, including resumes (position descriptions for unfilled positions). Resumes must include experience relevant to the project and may not be more than two pages in length. Copies of resumes must be included as attachments in accordance with *Section 4.1.5* below and do not count toward the 15-page limit.
- Identification of contractors and consultants and the manner in which they will be selected (i.e., competitively or non-competitively). **NOTE:** No more than 20% of award funds may be expended on contractor and/or consultant costs. Copies of contracts and consulting agreements (either signed or samples as applicable) must be included as attachments in accordance with *Section 4.1.5* below and do not count towards the 15-page limit;
- Organizational chart;
- A timetable of milestones for the 12-month Budget Period; and identification of any additional funds or in-kind resources that will be expended in furtherance of the program.

4.1.3 Budget Information and Cost Proposal

Budget Information must be provided through the completion and submission of the following:

- Standard Form (SF) 424, Application for Federal Assistance;
- SF- 424A Budget Information (Non-Construction Programs);
- Budget Detailed Worksheet (Attachment A-9 through A-12 to the SF 424A);
- Copy of the Applicant's Cost Policy Statement; and
- Copy of the Applicant's government-wide Indirect Cost Rate agreement. If the Applicant does not have an IDCR agreement, the Applicant may claim indirect costs in accordance with the procedures set forth in 2 C.F.R. Part 200, Appendix III;
- Indirect cost is allowable under this program, as described in 2 CFR Part 200.414, with the exception of recipients who have never negotiated and IDCR. Recipients must have an approved agreement with their cognizant Federal agency to charge indirect cost on the award. In the event that the recipient does not have an indirect cost rate, the recipient may use the 10% de minims rate based on MTDS (as defined by 2 CFR Part 200.68).

4.1.4 Certifications, Forms and Assurances

Each application must complete and submit the following forms:

- SBA Form 1623, Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, and Other Responsibility Matters;
- SF-LLR, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities;
- Letter from the applicant's Auditor or CPA, Treasurer, Comptroller, CFO or similarly qualified individual certifying that the organization's financial management system currently meets requirements of 2 C.F.R. Part 200.302 Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements with institutions

of higher learning, Hospitals, and Other Non-Profit Organizations. [**NOTE:** This requirement does not apply to awards made directly to state, local or tribal governments].

4.1.5 Attachments and Exhibits

Each applicant must attach copies of the following as part of the proposals:

- Resumes, position descriptions, contracts/consultant agreements, letters or support, along with annotations of pledges for additional funding or in-kind resources (that are not required as a match) leases, Conflict of Interest policy, and cost policy statement;
- Most recent A-133 audit report or website link to it. If the Applicant is not subject to the requirements of the Single Audit Act, it must submit a copy of its most recent audited financial statement by an Independent CPA, and
- Any other documentation the Applicant believes supports its proposal.

4.2 Submission Instructions

All proposals (narrative and forms) must be submitted electronically via the government-wide financial assistance portal www.grants.gov. **NO OTHER FORMS OF SUBMISSION WILL BE ACCEPTED**. All required forms are provided in the grant.gov application package for this via grants.gov, including animated tutorials may be found at http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/support.html.

To submit an application via grants.gov an organization is first required to have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) (formally called DUNS). A UEI must be obtained by the applicant prior to the application submission. To obtain an UEI visit https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html

Applicants are required to obtain and Employer Identification Number (EIN). Both the EIN and UEI are required prior to the issuance of a financial assistance award and for grant award payment. Both the EIN and a UEI number are required to register with SAM. The EIN base for an organization is the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Tax ID number; for individuals, it is their Social Security number. The Social Security and IRS Tax ID numbers are both 9-digit numbers. Organizations and individuals submitting their applications must correctly identify the EIN from the DUNS, since both are 9-digit numbers. If these numbers are not correctly identified in the application, a delay in the issuance of the funding award and/or incorrect payment to a recipient organization may result. Organizations applying for an EIN should plan on a minimum of two full weeks to obtain an EIN. For assistance registering an EIN, please contact the IRS helpline. SBA cannot assist applicants with questions related to obtaining a current EIN.

Information about the grants.gov registration process can be found at http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html Applicants must register as organizations, not as individuals. Please note that organizations already registered with grants.gov do not need to register. However, all registered organizations must keep their resignations up-to-date. As part of the registration process, an Applicant must designate one or more Authorized Organizational Representatives (AORs). AORs are the only individuals who may submit applications to grants.gov on behalf of an organization. If an application is submitted by anyone other than a designated AOR, it will be rejected by grants.gov and cannot be considered for funding.

Once an application is submitted, it undergoes a validation process through which it will be accepted or rejected by the grants.gov system. The validation process may take 24 to 48 hours or longer to complete. Applicants should save and print written proof of an electronic submission made at grants.gov. Applicants can expect to receive multiple emails regarding the status of their submission. The first email will confirm receipt of the application. The second email will indicate that the application has either been successfully validated by the system, and assigned

an SBA tracking number, or it has been rejected due to errors. An Applicant will receive a third email once SBA has downloaded its applications from grants.gov for review in accordance with Section 5.3 below. If grants.gov notifies an Applicant via email that its application contains an error, the Applicant must correct the noted error(s) before the system will accept and validate the application. Applicants that choose to submit on or close to the closing date are advised they may not receive email notification of an error with their application until after the submission deadline, and thus will not have an opportunity to correct and submit their applications. **APPLICATIONS THAT ARE REJECTED BY GRANTS.GOV WILL NOT BE FORWARDED TO SBA AND CANNOT BE CONSIDERED FOR FUNDING**. It is the Applicant's responsibility to verify that its submission was received and validated successfully at grants.gov. To check the status of your application and see the date and time it was received, log on to grants.gov and click on the "Track My Application" link from the left-hand menu.

If you experience a technical difficulty with grants.gov (i.e., system problems or glitches with the operation of grants.gov website itself) that you believe threatens your ability to submit your application, please (i) print any error message received; and (ii) call the grants.gov Contact Center at **1-800-518-4726** for immediate assistance. Ensure that you obtain a case number regarding your communications with grants.gov. NOTE: Problems with an Applicant's own computer system or equipment is **not** considered technical difficulties with grants.gov. Similarly, an Applicant's failure to (i) obtain a DUNS number or complete the Sam.gov registration process; (ii) ensure that an AOR submits the application; or (iii) take note of and act upon an email from grants.gov rejecting its application due to errors, are **not** considered technical difficulties. A grants.gov technical difficulty is an issue occurring in conjunction with the operation of grants.gov itself, such as the temporary loss of service by grants.gov due to an unexpected volume of traffic or failure of information technology systems, both of which are rare occurrences.

Applicants should use the following link to obtain assistance in navigating grants.gov and access a list of useful resources: http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html If you have a question that is not addressed under the "Applicant FAQs" try consulting the "Applicant User Guide" or contacting the grants.gov Contact Center, which is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

4.3 Required Proposal Submission Dates

Each Applicant is required to submit its proposal electronically via www.grants.gov no later than 11:50 P.M. Eastern Time on November 23, 2022. Because of the conditions for submitting applications via grants.gov and the potential for encountering technical difficulties in using that site, Applicants are strongly encouraged to log on to the grants.gov and review the submission instructions early. **DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE CLOSING DATE TO BEGIN THE SUBMISSION PROCESS**. Applicants bear sole responsibility for ensuring their proposals are submitted and received before the closing date.

SBA will consider the date and time stamp on the validation generated by grants.gov as the official submission time. A proposal that is not received by grants.gov before the closing date of this Announcement will be rejected without being evaluated, unless the Applicant can clearly demonstrate through documentation obtained from grants.gov that it attempted to submit its proposal in a timely manner but was unable to do so solely because of grants.gov systems issues. Additionally, SBA will not accept any changes, additions, revisions, or deletions to applications made after the closing date.

Applicants should save and print written proof of an electronic submission made at grants.gov. If problems occur while using grants.gov, the applicant is advised to (i) print any error message received; and (ii) contact grants.gov for immediate assistance. Applicants may obtain advice and assistance with grants.gov submission process by visiting http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/support.html or calling **1-800-518-4726**.

5.0 SECTION V – APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS

5.1 General

Applications will be rejected without being evaluated if they are submitted by ineligible organizations, they are illegible or materially incomplete due to an Applicant's failure to include required forms and/or provide the required level of detail.

5.2 Evaluation Criteria

All timely, materially complete applications received from the eligible organizations/ institutions of higher learning will be evaluated in accordance with the criteria listed below.

5.2.1 Organizational Experience and Capacity *(Weight 25%)*

Applicants will be evaluated on their demonstrated ability to deliver their established training and counseling assistance to beneficiaries.

Applicants must provide the following:

- Detailed description of the applicant's past experience and present capacity to provide entrepreneurship/business management technical assistance to veteran-owned and service-disabled-owned small businesses which intend to start new or expand existing small businesses
- Specific examples of how the applicant has marketed training and counseling assistance in the past to clients and description of future communications strategy and marketing
- Projected milestones or timelines for recruitment and selection of training candidates
- Scope of the geographic area and demographics intended to penetrate when recruiting potential candidates
- The number of beneficiaries served in each 12-month period since the inception of your current program(s) and projected number of beneficiaries that will be served in a future 12-month period if this funding opportunity is granted
- Description of established relationships with strategic partners and alliances with veteran organizations within local and regional communities

5.2.2 Project Design *(Weight 20%)*

Applicants must outline the program objectives and outcomes to be measured as well as the methodology for evaluating and assessing the effectiveness of the program. Applicant narratives should describe any evaluation criteria and delivery methods as part of its Technical Proposal.

- Requirements for marketing and promotions of VBOC program within local and regional veteran business communities, to include methods of assessing the market and targeting potential veteran small business owners and entrepreneurs as clients;
- Project plan detailing the ability to participate and provide operational and instructional support to 100% of the Boots to Business classes within the coverage area;
- Marketing and communications plan/strategy that identifies media (print, internet, television, radio, magazines, newsletters) used to promote VBOC to targeted communities
- Budget outline of marketing/promotions costs

- General demographic data of past program participants
- Description of location of training and delivery channel(s) (e.g. on-site, webinar, in-residence)
- Accessibility of training
- Outcome data of the program since inception such as number of business starts, jobs created or retained, contracts won, capital acquired, etc.
- Description of the evaluation methodology.

5.2.3 Project Management *(Weight 20%)*

Applicants will be evaluated on the strength of their staffing and management plans for accomplishing the goals and objectives of the program requirements.

- Applicants must demonstrate they will devote adequate numbers of personnel having sufficient experience to the project, establish clear and direct lines of responsibility and authority for managing and overseeing the project, and show that they will have sufficient facilities and other physical resources at their disposals to accomplish the proposed project. In particular, an Applicant must:
- Identify a director, key management staff and contractors/consultants, describe their roles in conducting and overseeing the project, stipulate the amount of time they will devote to the project, and provide copies of resumes/position descriptions and an organizational chart;
- Identify all facilities and other physical resources that will be utilized in furtherance of capacity building and provide copies of relevant deeds, leases, free space agreements, rental contracts, memoranda of understanding, etc.;
- Provide copies of all contracts and consulting agreements and identify the employees or officials of the Applicants' organizations who will be responsible for overseeing and administering those agreements;
- Describe its financial management structure and internal controls and identify all staff members who will be responsible for financial recordkeeping, reporting, the receipt and expenditure of award funds, and addressing audit findings;
- Provide a copy of its conflict of interest policy addressing, at a minimum, procedures for ensuring its employees, consultants and contractors do not assist veterans in which they, their principals, or its employees, consultants and contractors do not use their fiduciary duties and/or ensure its employees, consultants and contractors do not use their role in the project as a means for marketing their outside services to project clients.

5.2.4 Budget Information and Cost Proposal *(Weight 15%)*

Budget Information must be provided through the completion and submission of the following:

- Standard Form (SF) 424, Application for Federal Assistance;
- SF- 424A Budget Information (Non-Construction Programs);
- Budget Detailed Worksheet (Attachment A-9 through A-12 to the SF 424A);
- Copy of the Applicant's Cost Policy Statement; and
- Copy of the Applicant's government-wide Indirect Cost Rate agreement. If the Applicant does not have an IDCR agreement, the Applicant may claim indirect costs in accordance with the procedures set forth in 2 C.F.R. Part 200, Appendix III;
- Indirect cost is allowable under this program, as described in 2 CFR Part 200.414, with the exception of recipients who have never negotiated and IDCR. Recipients must have an approved agreement with their cognizant Federal agency to charge indirect cost on the award. In the event that the recipient does not have an indirect cost rate, the recipient may use the 10% de minims rate based on MTDS (as defined by 2 CFR Part 200.68).

5.2.5 Collaboration and Leveraging of Resources *(Weight 10%)*

Applicants will be evaluated on the breadth of their plans for coordinating their proposed activities and working to expand the scope and reach of their project in collaboration with entities such as SBA District Offices, other federal, state, local and tribal government agencies, SBA resource partners, trade associations, business/industry groups, and institutions of higher learning. Specifically, an applicant must provide:

- Copies of agreements with, or letters or emails of support from, the above-listed types of organizations pledges;
- Copies of agreements with, or letters or emails from, the above-listed types of organizations pledging to work with the Applicant in order to advance specific VBOC Project objectives.
- Brief details of how applicant plans to work specifically with SBA's District Office and resource partners (VBOCs, SCORE, SBDCs and WBCs) and other SBA grantees to coordinate marketing of the Boots to Business and Reboot training programs to beneficiaries and post-program business technical assistance referral; and
- Demonstrates the capability to establish partnerships with veteran service organizations, employment services, and community-based organizations that service the training needs of veterans; provide a list of strategic alliances established to date, as an addendum.
- Propose the methods and framework for coordinating and tracking client referrals to outside providers as well as within-collaborative network.
- Propose methods of how Applicant will coordinate efforts with SBA Resource Partners (SBDCs, WBCs and Score Chapters in delivery of both Boot to Business and Reboot trainings to beneficiaries

5.2.6 Risk Management *(Weight 5%)*

Applicants will be evaluated using a risk-based approach pursuant to 2 C.F.R. 200.205(b) based on the following criteria:

1. Financially stability – C.F.O. Certification referencing adequacy of internal controls as applicable with standard accounting practices and in compliance with 2 C.F.R. 200.302;
2. History of Performance – the applicant's record in managing Federal awards, if it is a prior receipt of Federal awards, including timeliness for compliance with applicable report requirements, accuracy of reimbursement requests, conformance to terms and conditions of pervious Federal awards;
3. Reports and findings from annual audits and independent CPA financial reviews performed;
4. The applicant's ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory and other requirements imposed on non-Federal entities.

5.2.7 Innovation *(Weight 5%)*

Describe unique or innovative approaches for the execution of the program.

5.3 Review and Selection Process

Applications will be rejected without being evaluated if they are submitted by ineligible organizations, or they are illegible or materially incomplete due to an Applicant's failure to include required forms and/or provide the required level of detail.

Applications that are not rejected by grants.gov or SBA's initial screening process will be evaluated by a team of merit reviewers on the basis of how well the applications meet the Technical Proposal criteria outlined within this

Funding Opportunity. The reviewers may be SBA employees or employees of other federal agencies. Applicants are therefore encouraged to design proposals that address the criteria listed above in a clear and concise manner.

The SBA merit reviewers will utilize an adjectival rating structure to evaluate eligible applications. The merit reviewers shall measure each application against the requirements of the Funding Opportunity. These criteria and their respective weighting of each criterion are detailed in Section 5. The reviewers will determine whether the application, in consideration of each category, respective weighting and then taken in its entirety, should be rated as: 1) Highly Responsive; 2) Responsive; 3) Somewhat Responsive; or 4) Not Responsive.

a**. Highly Responsive:** Applicant fully addresses all criteria aspects, convincingly demonstrates that it will meet the SBA's performance requirements, and demonstrates no discernable weaknesses;

b**. Responsive:** Applicant fully addresses all criteria aspects, demonstrates a likelihood of meeting the SBA's requirements, but may include minor weaknesses;

c. Somewhat Responsive: Applicant addresses most criteria aspects and demonstrates the ability to meet the SBA's performance requirements. However, the Application contains significant weaknesses and/or a number of minor weaknesses. These weaknesses may be addressed by recommending the award and including a specific programmatic or administrative post-award special term(s) and condition(s); or,

d. **Not Responsive:** Applicant does not sufficiently address the criteria and the information presented indicates a strong likelihood of failure to meet SBA's requirements.

The SBA reviewers shall submit their final evaluations to the SBA's Office of Veterans Business Development who will take the assessments, along with other information in the possession, and after careful consideration all information, shall draft individual funding recommendations which will include: 1) not to fund the application; 2) fund the application but not at the level requested; or 3) fund the application at the level requested.

6.0 Section VI – Award Administration Information

6.1 Award Notification

The Applicant selected for the award will receive written notification. Applicants not selected for awards will be notified via email or letter. Debriefs of unsuccessful Applications will be available upon request.

6.2 Administrative and National Policy Requirements

The successful Application will be required to comply with the requirements set forth in 2 C.F.R. Part 200, the Assurances of Non-Construction Programs (SF-424B) and the terms and conditions set forth in their Notice of Award. In addition SBA may, from time-to-time, advise the Recipient of the award made under this Announcement of new legal requirements and /or policy initiatives with which they must agree to comply.

6.3 Reporting

The Recipient is required to submit the reports identified below: SBA may withhold payment if reports are not received or are deemed inadequate. Failure to report in a timely manner will also be weighed against future applications for grant funding from the same organization and the exercise of any option periods. The reports provided by Recipient may be made public. In addition, SBA reserves the right to require the Recipient to post these reports on their web sites. Recipients are required to utilize the Neoserra CRM system as their client

management and reporting system and Salesforce to support the Boots to Business Program. Both Neoserra and Salesforce will be provided by the SBA.

6.3.1 Financial Reports

Recipient will be required to submit quarterly financial reports to SBA using SF-425, Federal Performance Progress Reports, within 30 days of the completion of each of the first three quarters and within 120 days of the completion of the fourth quarter for each Budget Period.

6.3.3 Performance Report Submission

Recipient will be required to submit quarterly performance reports to SBA using the SF-PPR Performance Progress Report, within 30 days of the completion of each of the first three quarters and within 120 days of the completion of the fourth quarter of each Budget Period.

Reports must be submitted electronically via e-mail to the GOTR and uploaded in GrantSolutions.

7.0 Section VII – Agency Contacts

7.1 Veterans Business Outreach Centers point of contact:

Questions concerning general information contained in this Funding Opportunity should be directed to GOTR Tangela Liddell, tangela.liddell@sba.gov

7.2 Financial/Grants Management Point of Contact

Questions concerning budgetary matters related to this Opportunity should be directed to electronic.grants@sba.gov

7.3 Grants.gov Technical Support

For technical support with filing an electronic application in response to this Announcement, contact the Grants.gov help desk at **1-800-518-4726** or support@grants.gov.

8.0 Section VIII – Other Information

8.1 Definitions

The following definitions apply to awards made under this Announcement.

8.1.1 *Applicant* – an eligible organization or institution of higher learning that applies for funding under this Program announcement.

8.1.2 *Budget Period* – the 12-month period during which expenditure obligations will be incurred by the recipient for an award under this Announcement. For the purposes of this Announcement, the initial budget period will be from May 1, 2023 to April 30, 2024. Each continuation award period, if exercised, will constitute a separate budget period.

8.1.3 *Cooperative Agreement* – A legal instrument reflecting a relationship between the United States government and a Recipient when the principal purpose of the relationship is to transfer a thing of value to the Recipient to carry out a public purpose of support or stimulation and substantial involvement is expected between the awarding agency and the Recipient when carrying out the activity contemplated in the agreement.

8.1.4 *Cost Policy Statement* – A document describing all accounting policies of an Applicant organization and narrating in detail its proposed cost allocation plan. This plan must stipulate the procedures used to identify, measure, and allocate all costs to each benefitting activity.

8.1.5 *Counseling* – Services provided one-on-one to an individual and/or business that are delivered in person (fact-to-face), on the telephone, or electronically and which are:

a) Substantive in nature and concern the formation, management, financing, and/or operation of a small business enterprise; and

b) Specific to the needs of the business or individual; and

c) Require a signed SBA Form 641 or equivalent form that supports SBA's management information database.

- Face-to-face counseling – Meets the definition of "counseling" and should be no less than one hour initially (preparation time may be included in this initial calculation) and includes any counseling session thereafter regardless of time. Long-term counseling – Meets the definition of "counseling" and includes 5 or more hours of contact time per individual or business during the federal fiscal year.

- Online or telephone counseling – Meets the definition of "counseling" and the recipient of the counseling must acknowledge, through an SBA Form 641 or an SBA-approved "electronic substitute," the requirements imposed by accepting counseling assistance from the SBA or its resource partner(s). (In states that accept electronic signatures, it may contain an electronic signature. In states that do not accept electronic signatures, the form must have an original signature.) Online or telephone counseling should be no less than 30 minutes initially (preparation time may be included in the initial consultation and the total time may include several electronic questions and responses that cumulatively add up to 30 minutes).

- Telephone Counseling: Meets the definition of "counseling" and is conducted via telephone. The initial telephone counseling session must be no less than 30 minutes (can include prep time in this initial consultation). The recipient of the counseling must acknowledge, through an SBA Form 641 or an SBA approved "electronic substitute," the requirements imposed by accepting counseling assistance from the SBA or its resource partner(s).
    - Reporting Telephone Counseling: At a minimum, the following fields should be completed on SBA Form 641 or an SBA approved electronic substitute:
    - Client Name or approved client-coded name/number;
    - Telephone Number; and

- Zip Code.

- Long-Term Counseling (contact and prep time): Meets the definition of "counseling "and requires the Center to provide five or more counseling hours of contact and prep time per individual or business during the fiscal year being report

8.1.6 *Notice of Award* – The legal document, signed by both SBA and a Recipient, that memorializes the award of funding under a Cooperative Agreement and contains the specific terms and conditions that apply to the award.

8.1.7 *Project Period* – The total period of performance for an award made under this Program Announcement, including the base and all option-year Budget Periods.

8.1.8 *Recipient* – A qualified organization or Institution of higher learning that has been awarded funding under the Program Announcement.

8.1.9 *Service-disabled veteran* – a U.S. military veteran with a service-connected disability.

8.1.10 *Training*

A workshop, seminar or similar activity or event, which delivers a structured program of knowledge, information or experience on a business-related topic. The training must last for a minimum of thirty (30) minutes and include two or more individuals in attendance.

A. Co-hosted training (collaborative) – Meets the definition of "training" and further defined as an activity where each host organization actively participates and contributes substantially to the training.

B. Online Training – Online training is a structured program of knowledge, information or experience on an entrepreneurial or business-related subject. It must be of a quality and substantive nature and must include a registration process as well as an evaluation process (e.g. 1-5 star ranking). The training must be for a minimum of thirty (30) minutes and a course evaluation must be made available. Online training may be synchronous or asynchronous:
    - Synchronous – A group of clients proceed through the training module(s) or program as a group.
    - Asynchronous – A client individually proceeds through the training module(s) or program individually and is self-paced. Total hours of training – the total number of hours the trainer spends teaching the training session.

8.2 Additional Instructions

Instructions for Completing the SF-424 (Application for Federal Assistance)

Item 1	Enter: "Application"
Item 2	Enter: "New"
Item 3	Completed by Grants.gov upon submission.
Item 4	Leave Blank

Item 5a	Leave Blank
Item 5b	Leave Blank
Item 6-7	Refer to instructions at end of form.
Item 8-9	Refer to instructions at end of form.
Item 10	Enter: “U.S. Small Business Administration”
Item 11	Enter: [59.044] and [VBOCs]
Item 12	Enter:
Item 13	Leave Blank
Item 14	Applicants must specifically identify each city, county, and state that will be affected by its project.
Item 15	Self Explanatory
Item 16	Refer to instruction at end of form.
Item 17	Leave Blank
Item 18	Self Explanatory
Item 19	Check Box C. T
Item 20	Refer to instructions at end of form.
Item 21	Self Explanatory

Appendix A

South Carolina – Maximum Award: $375,000
VBOC coverage area includes the state of South Carolina. The VBOC will be required to participate in all virtual and in-person Boots to Business training at Shaw AFB, Fort Jackson, Joint Base Charleston, Naval Weapons Station Charleston, and Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort.

Alaska – Maximum Award: $400,000
VBOC coverage area includes the state of Alaska. The VBOC will be required to participate in all virtual and in-person Boots to Business training at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Eielson AFB, Fort Wainwright, U.S. Coast Guard Station Juneau, U.S. Coast Guard Base Kodiak, U.S. Coast Guard Base Ketchikan, and U.S. Coast Guard Base Sitka.

Central California – Maximum Award: $375,000 VBOC coverage area includes Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, Orange, Ventura, Riverside and San Bernardino Counties. The VBOC will be required to participate in all virtual and in-person Boots to Business training at Edwards AFB, Fort Irwin, Los Angeles AFB, Marine Corps Air Station Twentynine Palms, Naval Base Ventura County, Vandenberg AFB,

Oklahoma & Arkansas – Maximum Award: $375,000
VBOC coverage area includes the states of Oklahoma and Arkansas. The VBOC will be required to participate in all virtual and in-person Boots to Business training at Dyess AFB, Fort Sill, Tinker AFB, Vance AFB, Altus AFB and Little Rock AFB.

Puerto Rico – Maximum Award: $300,000
VBOC coverage area includes Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The VBOC will be required to participate in all virtual and in-person Boots to Business training at Fort Buchanan and U.S. Coast Guard Base San Juan.

Nevada – Maximum Award: $325,000 VBOC coverage area includes the state of Nevada. The VBOC will be required to participate in all virtual and in-person Boots to Business training at Nellis AFB and Naval Air Station Fallon.

Nebraska & Iowa – Maximum Award: $350,000
VBOC coverage area includes the states of Iowa and Nebraska. The VBOC will be required to participate in all virtual and in-person Boots to Business training at Offutt AFB.

Kentucky: - Maximum Award: $300,000
VBOC coverage area includes the state of Kentucky. The VBOC will be required to participate in all virtual and in-person Boots to Business training at Fort Knox.

Pennsylvania – Maximum Award: $300,000
VBOC coverage area includes the state of Pennsylvania. The VBOC will be required to participate in all virtual and in-person Boots to Business training at Carlisle Barracks.

South Florida – Maximum Award: $335,000
VBOC coverage area includes all areas south of Hernando, Sumpter, Lake and Orange Counties. The VBOC will be required to participate in all virtual and in-person Boots to Business training at MacDill AFB, Patrick AFB, Naval Air Station Key West, U.S. Coast Guard Station Key West, U.S. Coast Guard Air Station Miami and U.S. Coast Guard Southern Command Doral.

Colorado – Maximum Award: $400,000
VBOC coverage area includes the state of Colorado. The VBOC will be required to participate in all virtual and in-person Boots to Business training at Buckley AFB, Schriever AFB, Peterson AFB, Fort Carson and the Air Force Service Academy.

Ohio: - Maximum Award: $300,000
VBOC coverage area includes the state of Ohio. The VBOC will be required to participate in all virtual and in-person Boots to Business training at Wright-Patterson AFB.