



MINORITY SERVING INSTITUTIONS PROGRAM



August 2006

**Administered by
The Office of Small Business and Civil Rights**

MINORITY SERVING INSTITUTIONS PROGRAM

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MINORITY SERVING INSTITUTIONS PROGRAM

I. INTRODUCTION:

- A. **Background:** The Federal Government recognizes Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs) as valuable resources to the Nation. These renowned colleges and universities have either a historic tradition or mandate to serve students in a specific demography and focus on satisfying the needs of minority persons to include social, economic and cultural identities. Three MSIs that fit into this category are: Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs), and Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs). The Federal Government also recognizes these MSIs as important catalysts in the delivery of education to our nation's minorities and has expressed its commitment to strengthening their capacities through White House education initiatives.

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is committed to implementing the White House education initiatives directed at HBCUs, HSIs, and TCUs.

- B. **Legislative Action:** On August 8, 2005, President Bush signed into law the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (EPAAct), which authorized NRC to establish and participate in partnership programs with institutions of higher education, including HBCUs, HSIs, and TCUs, to enhance their capacity to train students, including present or potential NRC employees in fields that the NRC deems critical to its mission.

II. PROGRAM AUTHORITY:

NRC derives its authority to conduct a Minority Serving Institutions Program (MSIP) from the EPAAct, Section 651(c) (4), Partnership Programs with Institutions of Higher Education; Section 622, Nuclear Regulatory Commission Scholarship and Fellowship Program; Executive Order (E.O.) 13256, directed towards HBCUs; E.O. 13270, directed towards TCUs; and E.O. 13230, directed towards HSIs.

III. PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION:

The Office of Small Business and Civil Rights (SBCR) administers NRC's MSIP, and implements White House education initiatives and pertinent EPAAct provisions to ensure MSIs and students and faculty of MSIs have meaningful and equal access to NRC conducted and financially assisted programs and activities.

IV. PROGRAM INITIATIVES:

- A. **Impact of Legislation:** As a result of EPAAct Section 651(c) (4), regarding partnership programs with institutions of higher education, NRC is able to participate in activities to include, but not limited to, research, mentoring, instruction, and training with institutions of higher education, including HBCUs, HSIs, and TCUs. NRC is also able to provide more expansive support services

to strengthen the capacity of MSIs to educate and train students; and to conduct research in the fields of science, engineering, law, information technology, and other fields NRC deems critical to its mission.

- B. **Expansion of Initiatives:** SBCR administers NRC's HBCU initiative, which provides students and faculty internships at Department of Energy (DOE) and other Federal laboratories. As a result of the EAct, NRC is able to provide financial assistance for a broad range of programs and activities for institutions of higher education, including HBCUs, HSIs, TCUs, and other individuals covered by relevant White House education initiatives.

V. GOALS:

NRC is committed to maximizing internal and external relationships to foster collaborative efforts to develop human capital to its fullest and achieve stability within future workforces by:

- A. **Developing Work Relationships:** Building viable relationships and partnerships for the purpose of implementing quality programs and activities that address the needs of MSIs to develop a diverse and skilled workforce in science, engineering, law, information technology and other fields NRC deems critical to its mission.
- B. **Unifying Private/Public Sector Partners to Achieve Common Goals:** Bridging the divide and combining the efforts of private and public sector partners to achieve the greatest potential for developing high quality MSI educational programs, so that they may provide meaningful access to knowledge, training, and work experiences. Also, enhancing individual talent and increasing the potential pool of job candidates in fields NRC deems critical to its mission.
- C. **Implementing Quality Services:** Promoting delivery of quality programs and activities to MSIs, students and faculty of MSIs and individuals including, but not limited to, minorities, women, individuals with disabilities, persons age 40 and over, and persons with limited English proficiency.
- D. **Producing a Pool of Skilled Potential Employees:** Developing the skills and abilities of individuals in areas NRC deems critical to its mission.
- E. **Promoting Diversity/Pool of Work-Ready Candidates:** Providing a diverse pool of work-ready candidates by ensuring that candidates receive instruction and experience in areas NRC deems critical to its mission.

VI. OBJECTIVES:

NRC provides Federal financial assistance for programs and activities conducted by MSIs, educational institutions, nonprofit and profit organizations, State and local governments, professional organizations, private and public sector organizations and other providers of services for the exchange and transfer of knowledge, ideas, concepts, and skills that will:

- A. **Increase Recruitment and Retention:** Aid MSIs in recruitment, retention, and assisting students to pursue academic and career goals in areas NRC deems critical to its mission.
- B. **Ensure Availability of Instructional and Training Experiences:** Provide students and faculty instruction and learning experiences through exposure to science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) related activities, workshops, skills building sessions, special events, orientations, career exploration trips, and outreach activities to enhance career development.
- C. **Provide Opportunities for Career Exposure and On-the-Job Training (OJT):** Provide instruction, training, work experience, and exposure to new and emerging occupations and professions in science, engineering, law, information technology, and other fields NRC deems critical to its mission.
- D. **Create Research and Development Opportunities:** Establish short-term/long-term research partnerships with NRC, Federal laboratories, MSIs and other universities and colleges in areas NRC deems critical to its mission.
- E. **Develop Leadership Skills:** Provide leadership training that fosters and promotes developmental growth, independence, responsibility, reliance and leadership traits.
- F. **Offer Mentoring Opportunities:** Provide mentoring programs that encourage development of critical thinking skills, support individual commitment and responsibility, throughout the learning and/or work experience cycles, up to and until the individual is determined, through mutual assessment, to no longer require mentoring.
- G. **Make Available Internships:** Provide year-round internships, within NRC affiliated labs, Federal work environments, and various private and public organizations.

VII. **SBCR RESPONSIBILITIES:**

SBCR performs a variety of outreach and coordination functions associated with MSIP to include:

- A. **Oversight:** Administering and managing the MSIP; and reporting the status, progress and outcomes of funded programs and activities to Federal oversight agencies.
- B. **Financial Assistance:** Promoting and encouraging solicited and unsolicited requests for financial assistance for innovative programs and activities that are consistent with NRC's program goals and objectives.

- C. **Outreach:** Serving as liaison to NRC headquarters offices, Regions, and the Office of Human Resources, MSIs, nonprofit and profit organizations, and participating in internal and external efforts to:
- Establish and build new relationships and partnerships;
 - Examine best practices and approaches to delivering effective programs and activities;
 - Identify and address unmet needs of target group members;
 - Identify NRC activities which might be suitable for HBCUs, HSIs, TCUs, and individuals covered by relevant White House education initiatives;
 - Conduct recruitment and retention initiatives;
 - Host and co-host career and learning fairs, booths and activities;
 - Share resources;
 - Dispense information to MSIs, students and faculty of MSIs, and others regarding NRC grants, training, internships and career opportunities;
 - Eliminate barriers which impede participation in programs and activities;
 - Evaluate the effectiveness of services; and progress (pre and post) of participants enrolled in programs and activities.
- D. **Referrals:** Referring students, faculty, organizations and others for assistance and opportunities at NRC, and affiliated laboratories.
- E. **Technical Assistance and Support:** Providing technical guidance and assistance as needed to achieve SBCR's program goals and objectives.
- F. **Monitoring Financially Assisted Programs and Activities:**
- Ensuring compliance with applicable Civil Rights Statutes and regulations to include Title IV of the Energy Reorganization Act of 1974, as amended; Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, including limited English proficiency (LEP); Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; Title II of the Americans with Disability Act; The Age Discrimination Act of 1975; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended; and 10 CFR Part 4, "Nondiscrimination in Federally Assisted Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance From the Commission," and Part 5, "Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex in Education Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance;"

- Ensuring meaningful and equal access to opportunities and benefits including educational preparation, job readiness skills, and work experiences;
- Ensuring instruction and training are at levels sufficient for participants, students and faculty of MSIs to acquire the knowledge, skills and abilities required to achieve educational proficiency, develop appropriate work experience and transition into the NRC workforce;
- Assessing the level and impact of service delivery and/or benefits to MSIs, students and faculty of MSIs and other individuals covered by relevant White House education initiatives;
- Reviewing recipients criteria for participant selection for programs and activities;
- Evaluating and reporting the progress of individuals as a result of participating in educational development and/or job readiness opportunities.

G. **Compliance Coordination:** Ensuring recipients and sub-recipients comply with applicable Civil Rights statutes and regulations by providing assistance with data collection, reporting functions and feedback.

VIII. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE:

SBCR may enter into arrangements to provide financial assistance to accomplish the purpose of MSIP.

A. **Methods of Providing Financial Assistance:** Financial assistance is provided in two ways:

- **Grant** - which is a legal instrument for transferring money, property, or services to a recipient to accomplish a public purpose of support or stimulation in which there will be no substantial involvement between SBCR and the recipient during performance.
- **Cooperative Agreement** - which is a legal instrument for transferring money, property, or services to a recipient to accomplish a public purpose of support or stimulation in which substantial involvement between SBCR and the recipient is anticipated during performance.

Grants as well as cooperative agreements can result from unsolicited applications. Unsolicited applications undergo the same processing, technical and budget review and award as other applications.

B. **Areas in Which Applications for Financial Assistance are Accepted:** Financial assistance may be provided in areas to include mentoring programs; leadership programs; research and development; direct institutional subsidies; program evaluation; training and technical assistance; facilities and equipment;

fellowships, internships, recruitment and retention; arrangements under the Intergovernmental Personnel Act (IPA); student tuition assistance; scholarships and housing.

C. **Solicited Applications for Financial Assistance:** Applications for financial assistance are solicited from potential recipients by a multipurpose notice. This notice is a formal written notification for interested service providers to submit applications for the exchange and transfer of knowledge, ideas, concepts and skills. The Federal Register is used to notify the public regarding:

- Forms and procedures for applying for financial assistance
- Criteria by which applicants will be evaluated and selected
- Application due date (Applicants will be given a minimum of 30 days to prepare their application).

SBCR also solicits applications for financial assistance through other mediums to include:

- Newspapers of Record
- Minority Serving Institutions
- Private and Public Organizations
- Nonprofit Organizations
- Community and Professional Interest Groups
- NRC Website
- Other Source

D. **Unsolicited Applications for Financial Assistance:** The public may submit unsolicited applications for financial assistance to conduct programs, activities, training, projects and symposiums. Unsolicited applications may include requests for financial assistance of a new initiative and requests for additional support of a previously funded program, activity or project.

IX. PERIOD OF SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE:

Applications for financial assistance are received at various periods throughout the year; however, awards are subject to the availability of program funds. The public may submit applications for financial assistance to: U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Division of Contracts, Office of Administration, MS: T7-I2, Washington, DC 20555.

X. ELIGIBILITY FOR MSIP FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE:

To receive consideration applicants for solicited and unsolicited financial assistance must:

A. Submit a Written Narrative:

- Identifying name, address and location of the organization, corporate structure, principal place of business and all external locations
- Organizational chart, organization make-up including the names, titles and telephone numbers, fax numbers and email addresses of principals and all staff responsible for carrying out programs and/or activities in which funding is being requested
- Summary statement and proof of experience administering programs and/or activities in the areas funding is being requested
- Statement of financial capability
- Description of program services to be rendered and the target group(s) to be served (e.g., HBCUs, HSIs, TCUs, or other groups)
- Statement of goals and objectives and time tables for implementation, duration and completion of activities; and
- Summary discussing techniques, methodology and resources that will be utilized to achieve goals and objectives, and measure individual progress

B. Submit a Budget: Submit a budget reflecting cost breakdowns associated with conducting programs and activities, and administrative and overhead costs.

C. Submit Required Data: Submit to SBCR, prior to award of funding, the following documents (Title VI, Guidelines, Data Collection Requirements, Sec. 42.406(d)):

- Notice of all lawsuits (and for recipients, complaints) filed against it
- A description of assistance applications that the recipient has pending in other agencies
- Other Federal assistance being provided
- A description of any civil rights compliance reviews of the potential

awardee or recipient during the preceding two years

- A statement as to whether the potential awardee or recipient has been found in noncompliance with any relevant civil rights requirements

XI. REVIEW OF APPLICATIONS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE:

Review Process: A Contracting Officer is designated within the Division of Contracts, Office of Administration, to ensure the processing, award, and administration of all financial assistance actions. Applications solicited and unsolicited are submitted to the Division of Contracts, Office of Administration. The Division of Contracts checks applications for completeness and accuracy, and forwards applications to the Grants Coordinator for SBCR.

XII. EVALUATION OF APPLICATIONS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE:

- A. **Screening Process:** Prior to the technical review process applications will be screened to remove from consideration any proposal that the budget is seriously flawed with regard to cost necessity and reasonability. Copies of applications are subsequently submitted to a panel of evaluators for review, evaluation and ranking based on technical merit.
- B. **Technical Review:** The technical evaluation review may include such considerations as judgment on the merit of project objectives, accomplishments, work plan, and staff/facilities; delivery of services; techniques, methodology and resources utilized; past performance; and project budget evaluation.
- C. **Pre-award Review by SBCR to Ensure Compliance with Civil Rights Statutes and Regulations:** SBCR conducts a pre-award review to ensure that potential awardees have met the requirements under the applicable Civil Rights statutes and regulations. SBCR provides a copy of the review results to the Contracting Officer for appropriate action.
- D. **Notification of Award:** The Contracting Officer notifies prospective recipients of their selection by issuance of an award document or letter.

XIII. RECIPIENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

An applicant becomes a recipient following the award of financial assistance. Recipients are regarded as providers of programs and activities and who stand between the funds provided by NRC and the individuals who participate in, or benefit from the services provided. Recipients provide a variety of functions to include:

- A. **Signing an Assurance of Compliance:** Prospective recipients are required to sign an Assurance Statement of intent to abide by applicable Civil Rights statutes and regulations pertaining to Federally assisted programs and activities as a condition of award.
- B. **Providing Oversight:** Administration and management of the day-to-day operations of recipient and sub-recipient programs and activities. These

responsibilities include ensuring individuals served or eligible to be served by a program or activity are not denied an opportunity to participate in, benefit from, or have access to such services based on their class status.

- C. **Implementing Quality Programs:** Ensuring delivery of quality programs and activities conducted by the recipient and sub-recipients.
- D. **Submitting Required Data:** Ensuring data is collected, records maintained, and reports required by SBCR are submitted timely. (Title VI, 28 CFR Sec. 42.406(d) of the Coordination Regulations).

XIV. **APPLICABLE CIVIL RIGHTS STATUTES/ EXECUTIVE ORDERS:**

Executive Order 12250, Leadership and Coordination of Nondiscrimination Laws:
<http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/cor/byagency/eo12250.htm>

Executive Order 13078, Increasing Employment of Adults with Disabilities:
<http://www.archives.gov/federal-register/executive-orders/1998.html>

Executive Order 13160, Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Race, Sex, Color, National Origin, Disability, Religion, Age, Sexual Orientation, and Status as a Parent in Federally Conducted Education and Training Programs:
<http://www.archives.gov/federal-register/executive-orders/2000.html>

Executive Order 13163, Increasing Opportunities for Individuals with Disabilities to be Employed in the Federal Government: <http://www.archives.gov/federal-register/executive-orders/2000.html>

Executive Order 13166, Improving Access to Services for Persons with limited English proficiency: <http://www.archives.gov/federal-register/executive-orders/2000.html>

Executive Order 13256, Historically Black Colleges and Universities:
<http://www.archives.gov/federal-register/executive-orders/2002.html>

Executive Order 13230, Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans:
<http://www.archives.gov/federal-register/executive-orders/2001-wbush.html>

Executive Order 13270, Tribal Colleges and Universities:
<http://www.archives.gov/federal-register/executive-orders/2002.html>

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964:
<http://www.dol.gov/oasam/regs/statutes/titlevi.htm>

Title IX of the Educational Amendments Act of 1972, Increasing Female Participation in Federally Conducted, Funded or Assisted Educational Programs, Activities and Services: <http://www.dol.gov/oasam/regs/statutes/titleix.htm>

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973: <http://www.ericec.org/sect504.html>

The Age Discrimination Act of 1975:

http://www.dol.gov/oasam/regs/statutes/age_act.htm

Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990:

<http://www.dol.gov/esa/regs/statutes/ofccp/ada.htm>;

<http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/reg2.html>

10 CFR Part 4, Nondiscrimination in Federally Assisted Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance From the Commission:

http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/waisidx_05/10cfr4_05.html

10 CFR Part 5, Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex in Education Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance:

http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/waisidx_05/10cfr5_05.html

XV. SBCR PROGRAM CONTACT INFORMATION:

Contact SBCR for information regarding funding for MSIP and other funding opportunities at:

In-Person Address:

U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Office of Small Business and Civil Rights
11555 Rockville Pike
Rockville, MD 20852

Phone Number: 301-415-7380

TDD: 301-415-5244

Fax: 301-415-5953

Mailing Address:

U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Office of Small Business and Civil Rights
MS: O-3H8
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MINORITY SERVING INSTITUTIONS PROGRAM



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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

- Q1. What is the Minority Serving Institutions Program (MSIP)?
- A. MSIP is a program administered by the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), Office of Small Business and Civil Rights (SBCR), which is designed to implement White House education initiatives and provision of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (EPAct) to ensure MSIs and students and faculty of MSIs have meaningful and equal access to NRC-conducted and financially assisted programs and activities.
- Q2. What provision is covered by the EPAct?
- A. The EPAct authorized the NRC to establish and participate in partnership programs with institutions of higher education, including Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs) and Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), to enhance their capacity to train students, including present or potential NRC employees, in fields that the NRC deems critical to its mission.
- Q3. What type of programs and activities may be funded?
- A. As a result of the EPAct, the NRC is able to participate in programs and activities to include, but not limited to, mentoring, leadership, research and development opportunities, program evaluation, training and technical assistance, recruitment and retention initiatives, student tuition assistance, scholarships, and housing. The NRC is also able to provide more expansive support services to strengthen the capacity of MSIs to educate and train students and to conduct research in the field of science, engineering, law, information technology, and other fields that the NRC deems critical to its mission.
- Q4. How does NRC benefit from the MSIP?
- A. NRC's commitment to maximizing partnerships and promoting delivery of quality programs and activities that address the needs of MSIs, students, and faculty of MSIs helps to create a diverse pool of skilled potential employees in science, engineering, law, information technology, and other fields that the NRC deems critical to its mission. It also provides opportunities for the NRC to gain knowledge regarding the skills and talents of potential recruits, and for them to gain knowledge about the NRC as an agency and employer.
- Q5. How does the MSIP benefit MSIs and students and faculty of MSIs?
- A. Students and faculty benefit from an exchange and transfer of knowledge, ideas, concepts, and skills from individuals in engineering, science, technology, information technology, law, and other fields that the NRC deems critical to its mission and from the opportunity to pursue their academic and career goals. MSIs benefit from increases in recruitment and retention; the ability to provide the highest level of educational excellence; the availability of instructional and training experience; the creation of

research and development opportunities; the ability to provide mentoring and leadership development; and opportunities for career exposure, on-the-job training, and internships for their students.

Q6. How do providers of programs and activities apply for financial assistance?

A. Providers of programs and activities can submit unsolicited and solicited applications for financial assistance to: U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Division of Contracts, Office of Administration, MS: TWB 1B10M, Washington, DC 20555.

Q7. What types of financial assistance are available?

A. The NRC may enter into arrangements to provide financial assistance to accomplish the purpose of MSIP in two ways: a grant, which is a legal instrument for transferring money, property, or services to a recipient to accomplish a public purpose of support or stimulation in which there will be no substantial involvement between the agency and the recipient during performance; and, a Cooperative Agreement, which is a legal instrument for transferring money, property, or services to a recipient to accomplish a public purpose of support or stimulation in which substantial involvement between SBCR and the recipient is anticipated during performance.

Q8. What are the criteria for evaluating applications for financial assistance?

A. The types of programs and activities funded vary. The public is notified of solicited applications for financial assistance by a multipurpose notice in the Federal Register, which will provide information regarding the forms and procedures for applying and criteria for evaluation. Notification is also provided on NRC's website.

Q9. How are MSIs, students, and faculty of MSIs made aware of MSIP programs and activities?

A. Information is posted on NRC's external website; literature and program information is also sent to MSIs and community and professional organizations; or institutions and individuals may contact Tuwanda M. Smith, Esq., MSI Program Coordinator at 301-415-7394, TDD: 301-415-5244, Fax: 301-415-5953, or email: EEOPrograms@nrc.gov.

Q10. What role will SBCR have in the administration of the MSIP programs and activities funded?

A. SBCR is responsible for a variety of administrative functions of the MSIP, which include oversight, financial assistance, outreach and coordination, referrals, technical assistance and support, monitoring, and compliance coordination.