

Frequently Asked Questions on Mentor-Protégé Program

(November 10, 2009)

1. **Question:** Will the program remain as it is now or is it flexible?

Answer: The Engineering Mentor-Protégé Program is a brand new program and will evolve as we implement and learn what works and what doesn't.

2. **Question:** What is the incentive for the mentor firm?

Answer: The program provides at least three advantages for the mentoring firm. 1.) A list of firms mentoring with the goals achieved will be given to the selection committee; 2) a 5% reduction in the DBE goal for the mentored project; 3) a stronger partner is developed to accomplish future projects.

3. **Question:** How long/what should be the duration of the mentor-protégé collaboration?

Answer: The length of the collaboration is dependent on the Development Plan's goals and the activities being mentored. There is no set time duration.

4. **Question:** Are collaborations project specific?

Answer: Yes, each project will dictate what can be mentored, just as every pairing of firms is unique in the opportunities available for mentoring.

5. **Question:** Are the Development Plans to be in place prior to submitting Statements of Interest (SOI) or the selection of a bulletin?

Answer: The Development Plans do not have to be in place. The SOI may include the intention of having a mentor-protégé collaboration on the project. The only requirements are the collaboration must be known at the first negotiation meeting and the Plan submitted to the Bureau of Design and Environment and approved by the Selection Committee prior to the proposal package submittal to the district.

6. **Question:** Can a DBE consultant be a mentor?

Answer: Yes, a DBE certified firm may mentor another certified DBE firm as well as being a protégé themselves when they meet all the specified requirements. Non-DBE firms may only be Mentors.

7. **Question:** Can the same firm mentor more than one DBE firm on different types of projects (i.e. Phase 1, Phase 2, and/or Phase 3)?

Answer: Currently one will only be approved per mentor firm. As the program matures and experience gained, the program will expand to all more than one Plan per mentoring firm.

8. **Question:** Can a DBE participate with more than one mentor?

Answer: Yes

9. Question: Will IDOT designate which projects or the number of projects eligible for mentor-protégé program?

Answer: All project specific projects advertised on PTB 154 and subsequent bulletins are eligible.

10. Question: If a firm is prequalified in Typical Structures and has not done a plate girder bridge, could that be used for mentoring?

Answer: Within each prequalification category there may be areas a protégé firm will benefit from mentoring.

11. Question: If each party is notified within 30 days of submittal of Development Plan, can negotiations begin prior to the approval?

Answer: Yes

12. Question: Is the funding for the Mentor Protégé Program included in the district line item and included in the overall project contract?

Answer: The dollars required for each mentor- protégé collaboration will come from the district's budget. The prime contract total contract amount will include the mentor protégé hours in the approved Development Plan.

13. Question: How will IDOT handle the approval of the Mentor-Protégé Development Plan during the selection process?

Answer: The Development Plan will not be reviewed until after the project has been selected.

14. Question: Does IDOT intend to give the protégé the prequal category in the area the mentor-protégé Plan once the project is complete?

Answer: The minimum requirements for each prequalification category will not be relaxed. Each firm regardless of them being a protégé or not, must meet all the minimum requirements in each category before the firm may receive that prequalification.

The following are examples to help explain the program:

EXAMPLE #1

Task ABC:

Prime prequalified in Task 1

Prime mentoring in Task 1

Subconsultant not prequalified in task 1-will service as entry level staff

Task 1	Totals	Principal	Proj. Engineer	PE 1
Quantity	10	10	10	10
Negotiated hours per task	40	7	13	20
Total Negotiated hours for task	400	70	130	200
Prime (Mentor Negotiated) hours	260	45	85	130
**Subconsultant (Protégé) Negotiated hours	240	35	45	70
Mentoring Hours	10	2	3	5
**Protégé hours	10	3	3	4
Total Hours for task shown in Plan	20	5	6	9
Total Hours on CECS sheet	420	75	136	209

This one project will go towards the experienced needed for prequal category. One project will not allow for gaining prequalification category see example before.

****Hours in red for the protégé will NOT count toward DBE goal on project.**

EXAMPLE #2:

- DBE firm called FIRM 555 is prequalified in Roads and Streets
- Person A works for a protégé FIRM 555 and has experience in Roads and Streets
- Firm 555 has been a protégé on three different projects working towards experience in freeways.
- Person A had increasing responsibilities for the complex geometric designs on all 3 Mentor-Protégé projects. Responsibilities were spelled out in Plan and all the goals and benchmarks were met or surpassed.

FIRM 555, where Person A still is employed full time, can now submit for consideration Prequalification in Freeways.