



# Mentor-Protege Program

Office of Small and Disadvantaged  
Business Utilization (A-149C)

Quick Reference Fact Sheet

The Mentor-Protege Program is being introduced and developed within the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to stimulate the participation of small disadvantaged businesses (SDBs) in EPA's contract base. The program will be initiated within the Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response (OSWER) and the Office of Air and Radiation (OAR). Other program areas will be included as the concept becomes institutionalized within EPA. By sharing their managerial and technical expertise, the prime contractors will help SDBs develop the necessary expertise to compete successfully for EPA prime and subcontract opportunities in the environmental marketplace at all levels in the public and private sectors.

## PURPOSE OF THE PROGRAM

The EPA's Appropriations Act of 1990 establishes a goal for participation by SDBs in EPA prime contracts and subcontracts. The Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 also require that a percentage goal for the use of SDBs be established within the air research program. The Mentor-Protege Program is designed to help the Agency achieve these goals.

The Program's purposes include:

- Increasing the participation of SDBs as subcontractors, suppliers, and ultimately as prime contractors.
- Establishing a mutually beneficial relationship with SDBs and EPA's large business prime contractors.
- Developing technical and corporate administrative expertise of the SDB which will ultimately lead to greater success in competition for contract opportunities.
- Promoting the economic stability of SDBs.
- Aiding in the achievement of goals for the use of SDBs in the Agency's contracting activities.

As partner firms learn from one another and develop an effective working relationship, their combined efforts in seeking and performing profitable ventures will benefit both firms.

The prime contractor's active participation in the program demonstrates both a commitment to achieve the goal of its contractual and subcontracting plan and a commitment to help the EPA achieve its goal to encourage greater participation of SDBs in environmental matters.

## PARTICIPATION IN THE PROGRAM

Mentor firms will be responsible for selecting Protege firms. EPA will attempt to assist Mentor firms in identifying eligible Protege firms. The proposed Protege firms must have proven to be viable and capable contractors who need additional support via this Program to launch the firm to a competitive status in the environmental contracting marketplace.

To participate as a Protege, a firm should be a small disadvantaged business, which for purposes of this initiative is defined as a small business concern that is at least 51 percent owned by one or more socially and

economically disadvantaged individuals or, in the case of a publicly traded company, at least 51 percent of the stock is owned by one or more socially and economically disadvantaged individuals. Individuals shall be presumed to be socially disadvantaged if they are members of the following groups:

- Black Americans
- Hispanic Americans
- Native Americans (including American Indians)
- Asian Americans
- Eskimos
- Aleuts
- Native Hawaiians.

Economically disadvantaged individuals are considered socially disadvantaged individuals

whose ability to compete in the free enterprise system has been impaired due to diminished capital and credit opportunities as compared to others in the same or similar line of business who are not socially disadvantaged.

The EPA Mentor-Protege Program is administered by the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization. For more information contact:

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