Mentor-Protégé Program

1. PURPOSE

The Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) is committed to the growth and development of the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Community and its ability to compete in the general marketplace. In this interest, the CTA's Diversity Programs department has developed a Mentor-Protégé program ("Program") within the guidelines provided in the federal DBE Regulations, as set forth in Appendix D to 49 CFR Part 26, to enhance the capacity and capability of DBE firms and thereby increase opportunities for DBE participation on CTA contracts.

Through hands-on and classroom training experience, the Program strives to develop working relationships between DBE firms and prime contracting firms that have successfully participated in and/or completed CTA contracts.

2. PROGRAM OUTLINE

Participation in the Program is voluntary. Eligible prime contractor firms that wish to mentor a DBE firm under the Program must work together to achieve the agreed upon outcomes outlined in a Relationship Plan submitted by the prime contractor with its bid or proposal for a contract. The requirements and format for the Relationship Plan are attached as Exhibit A and will be used by Mentor and Protégé to identify specific areas of training for the Protégé.

In order to remain compliant with the Commercially Useful Function ("CUF") requirements of the federal DBE Regulations, each firm must have distinct, specific roles and responsibilities, but will work together to successfully deliver a completed contract. This may require a relationship that will last through the completion of the contract or a predetermined timeframe if, for example, the relationship is specific to trade that will not be required for the entire contract. In the event that a mentor proposes to include a protégé firm as part of their DBE Utilization Plan, the mentor may only claim credit for scopes that the protégé firm is certified in and is completing without any assistance from the mentor firm, or any other firm, in accordance with CUF requirements of the federal DBE Regulations. *Example: Mentor firm is mentoring protégé firm in Scope 1. Protégé firm is certified and proposed to perform Scope 2. The mentor firm can only claim DBE credit for Scope 2, contingent on a Compliance and CUF review.*

The Relationship Plan must be submitted for review with the prime contractor's bid or proposal in which it plans to use the Mentor/Protégé relationship.

3. PROGRAM BENEFITS

- Create and strengthen working relationships between established and emerging companies
- Increase opportunities for DBE firms to participate in CTA contracts
- Enhance DBE firm's capabilities
- Increase pool of qualified DBEs for various types of work on CTA projects
- Encourage DBEs to bid as prime contractors on future CTA contracts

4. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Mentor requirement:

- Firm must have at least five (5) years of public contracting experience, preferably as a prime contractor
- Must agree to a minimum of **8** hours per month of coaching including but not limited to classroom training, one-on-one meetings, small group seminars, and/or on-the-job training with the protégé
- Must assign qualified key personnel to administer training and supervision of the program

Protégé requirement:

- Firm must be DBE certified in the Illinois Unified Certification Program (ILUCP) Directory at the time of opening of bids or proposals
- Firm must remain DBE certified and in good standing throughout the duration of the Relationship Plan
- Must agree to a minimum of **8** hours per month of coaching including but not limited to classroom training, one-on-one meetings, small group seminars, and/or on-the-job training with the mentor

5. RELATIONSHIP PLAN

Prime contractors wishing to participate in the Program must submit a Relationship Plan with their bid or proposal to be approved by the CTA. Only participants with an approved Relationship Plan can participate in the Program. The Relationship Plan must include specific training curriculum for the Protégé in areas such as business, financial, technical, and bidding/estimating. The Relationship Plan must also include measurable benchmarks to be met by both parties, a training schedule, and a reporting schedule.

The Relationship Plan delineates the specific responsibilities and obligations of each party in the Mentor-Protégé relationship and must include the timeline by which stated obligations will be completed; a sample Relationship Plan can be found in Exhibit A. The Relationship Plan must be signed by both parties.

The relationship between Mentor and Protégé is a cooperative business partnership. The Mentor cannot exercise management control over the Protégé, outside of contractual requirements, nor have any direct or indirect ownership interest in the Protégé, and the Protégé cannot be dependent on the Mentor. Both are independent entities who will be responsible for their own tasks and management of their own staff. The Protégé must perform a CUF and not be required to work exclusively with the Mentor.

6. TERMINATION OF MENTOR-PROTÉGÉ RELATIONSHIP

Once a Relationship Plan has been approved, written notice of any change in its status must be sent to the Director of Diversity Programs in a timely manner. In order to terminate a Relationship Plan, one of the parties must submit a request, in writing, to the Director of Diversity Programs explaining why they feel the Relationship Plan should be terminated. The request should include any documentation and correspondence between the two parties to show a failure to meet the obligations of the Relationship Plan. The CTA will concur in the termination of the Relationship Plan for cause for any of the following reasons, documented to the satisfaction of the CTA: failure of the other party to submit reports and/or attend quarterly meetings; its failure to meet task deadlines; lack of cooperation; or any material breach of the Program requirements.

Termination may affect the ability to receive DBE participation credit on the contract.

7. REPORTING

Reports of activities such as completed tasks, trainings, and progress toward planned goals must be submitted to the CTA's Diversity Programs department on a quarterly basis for the duration of the Relationship Plan. The report must be signed and approved by both parties before submittal.

8. MONITORING

Oversight of the Program will be performed by the compliance unit of the CTA's Diversity Programs department. The Diversity Programs compliance unit will review all monthly reports and schedule quarterly meetings with both parties to discuss progress and/or any goal shortfalls. Mentor and Protégé must attend all quarterly meetings.

The Compliance unit will evaluate reports to ensure both parties are adhering to the Relationship plan. The evaluation will focus on stated objectives in the plan and the overall relationship between Mentor and Protégé.

The following will be a guide to evaluate the overall vitality of the Mentor-Protégé relationship:

- Satisfactory progress toward the stated goals in the Relationship Plan
- Quality of training provided by the Mentor
- Working relationship between Mentor and Protégé
- Protégé's improved competency in specific target areas
- Decreased reliance on the Mentor by the Protégé

9. SITE VISIT

The CTA may conduct site visits (scheduled or unscheduled) at project sites or field locations where classes and hands-on training are conducted. The purpose of site visits is for a first-hand observation of the progress made by both parties and to verify concurrence with monthly reports.

EXHIBIT A

Mentor-Protégé
Relationship Plan

The Relationship Plan should be designed to comply with the Program while providing the flexibility to meet specific requirements for all parties involved. The content requirements and format for the Relationship Plan are as follows:

The Plan must identify three (3) or more areas of specific training provided by the Mentor to the Protégé from the list below. Each training objective must be tailored to the specific needs of the Protégé.

- **Bidding/Estimating**
- **Business Administration**
- **Business Development**
- **Financial/Invoicing**
- **Insurance & Bonding**
- **Marketing**
- **Public-Sector Contracting Strategy**
- **Safety/Quality**
- **Technical**
- **Technology/Software**

The Relationship Plan must include the following elements:

1. Overall description of purpose for Mentor-Protégé relationship
    - Explain why this relationship should be considered for the Program
2. Key Personnel
    - Identify personnel from both parties who will be responsible for the deliverables of this Relationship Plan
3. An objective for each area of training
    - Provide a rationale for the selected areas of training for the Protégé
4. Provide specific responsibilities of each party for all areas of training
    - Describe the specific obligations each party will adhere to during training
5. Training goals
    - Describe specific goals to be achieved by each training
6. Training schedule for hands-on and classroom training
    - Submit a predetermined schedule that includes dates, times, and locations
7. Milestone timelines
    - Provide a predetermined timeline by which measurable progress toward stated goals must be achieved by Protégé
8. Reporting
    - Mentor must provide a description of how the Protégé will be evaluated in each training
9. Duration of Mentor-Protégé relationship
    - Provide the length of time this relationship will be in effect

EXHIBIT A

Mentor-Protégé
Relationship Plan

Project Name: _____

Contract No.: _____

Bid/Proposal Due Date: _____

Start Date of Relationship: _____ Estimated End Date of Relationship: _____

Mentor Firm:	_____	Protégé Firm:	_____
Contact:	_____	Contact:	_____
Address 1:	_____	Address 1:	_____
Address 2:	_____	Address 2:	_____
Phone:	_____	Phone:	_____
Email:	_____	Email:	_____

2. Overall description of purpose for the Mentor-Protégé relationship (Attach additional pages as necessary)

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

3. Key Personnel (Include resumes for Mentor staff responsible for training and program deliverables)

Mentor:		Protégé:	
Name:	_____	Name:	_____
Title:	_____	Title:	_____
Name:	_____	Name:	_____
Title:	_____	Title:	_____
Name:	_____	Name:	_____
Title:	_____	Title:	_____

EXHIBIT A

Mentor-Protégé
Relationship Plan

4. Training Categories (Attach additional pages as necessary)
   For each Training Category identify the following:
   a. Identify objectives
   b. Specific responsibilities of each party
   c. Training goals

Training category: _____

Objective: _____
_____
_____

Specific responsibilities: _____
_____
_____

Training goals: _____
_____
_____

Training category: _____

Objective: _____
_____
_____

Specific responsibilities: _____
_____
_____

Training goals: _____
_____
_____

Training category: _____

Objective: _____
_____
_____

Specific responsibilities: _____
_____
_____

Training goals: _____
_____
_____

EXHIBIT A

Mentor-Protégé
Relationship Plan

Attach the following items:

5. Training schedule for hands-on and classroom training

6. Milestone timelines

7. Reporting template: Describe the evaluation criteria the Mentor will use to evaluate Protégé's progress in each training category

Mentor Signature Date

Protégé Signature Date

Approved by:

CTA Diversity Programs Director Date