Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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WASHINGTON – Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs Tara Mac Lean Sweeney announced today that the Office of Indian Energy and Economic Development (IEED) is soliciting applications for its Native American Business Development Institute (NABDI) grant program, which has a total of $900,000 to fund feasibility studies for tribal economic development projects in Opportunity Zones.

This program seeks to fund some 20 to 25 grants, ranging in value from approximately $25,000 to $75,000, to enable federally recognized American Indian and Alaska Native tribes and entities to undertake feasibility studies of proposed economic development projects, businesses and technologies located in designated Opportunity Zones. These grants are also intended to fund applicants to obtain qualified guidance on how the development projects, businesses or technologies they propose can attract investments from an Opportunity Fund.

"Historically, NABDI studies have placed tribal economic development opportunities at the doorstep of investors, lenders and other government granting agencies," **said Assistant Secretary Sweeney.** "This year, these grants will leverage the possibilities and advantages of investments in Opportunity Zones. We look forward to all the dynamic and creative submissions."

Opportunity Zones were added to the tax code by the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act on December 22, 2017 (26 U.S.C., 1400Z-1 and 1400Z-2). An Opportunity Zone is an economically distressed community where new investments, under certain conditions, may be eligible for preferential tax treatment. Opportunity Funds are set up either as a partnership or corporation for investing in eligible property or businesses located in an Opportunity Zone (26 U.S.C. 1400Z-2(d)). A map and list of Opportunity Zones are at https://www.cdfifund.gov/Pages/Opportunity-Zones.aspx.

IEED's solicitation for NABDI funding and details on how to apply can be found in the Federal Register and at Grants.gov.

NABDI is a competitive, discretionary program. To qualify for funding, applicants must submit a proposal and a supporting tribal resolution to IEED no later than September 28, 2020, using the standard Application for Federal Assistance SF-424 and the Project Narrative Attachment Form, both of which can be found at https://www.grants.gov/.

Proposals will be evaluated on their potential to create jobs and stimulate economic activity within a Native community, the applicant's willingness to consider implementing recommendations resulting from the feasibility study, and the applicant's focus on obtaining qualified guidance on how to attract investment from an Opportunity Fund.

IEED is administering this program through its Division of Economic Development (DED).

Questions about NABDI may be addressed to: Mr. James R. West**,** Native American Business Development Institute (NABDI) Manager, Office of Indian Energy and Economic Development, Room 6049-B, 12220 Sunrise Valley Drive, Reston, Virginia 20191; telephone: (202) 595-4766; e-mail:

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Please visit the Indian Affairs website for more information about IEED's programs and Services at https://www.indianaffairs.gov/as-ia/ieed.

*The **Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs** advises the Secretary of the Interior on Indian Affairs policy issues, communicates policy to and oversees the programs of the BIA and the BIE, provides leadership in consultations with tribes, and serves as the DOI official for intra- and inter-departmental coordination and liaison within the Executive Branch on Indian matters.*

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