Energy and mineral development, energy management capacity building, and feasibility studies of economic development opportunities are all addressed

Media Contact: Nedra Darling, OPA-IA Phone: 202-219-4152
For Immediate Release: April 27, 2016
Print PDF

WASHINGTON – Acting Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs Lawrence S. Roberts announced today the availability of approximately $9.1 million for three funding opportunities for federally recognized Indian tribes, Alaska Native villages, Alaska Native regional or village corporations, authorized tribal organizations, and Tribal Energy Resource Development Organizations.

Eligible applicants may submit proposals this year for separate funding awards from the following programs: the Tribal Energy Development Capability Program (TEDC), the Energy and Mineral Development Program (EMDP), and the Economic Development Feasibility Study Program.

“Our office has never before offered simultaneously such a variety of technical assistance tools to help tribes identify and monetize the value of their energy and mineral resources, expand their ability to manage their energy resources, and test the viability of economic development proposals,” said Roberts.

The Tribal Energy Development Capability Program and Energy and Mineral Development Program awards will be made based on tribal proposals either as a direct service to tribes or pursuant to the Indian Self Determination and Education Assistance Act through Public Law 93- 638 contracts or self-governance compacts. The Economic Development Feasibility Study Program awards will also be made based on tribal proposals, but funding will be disbursed in the form of discretionary grants.

The Assistant Secretary- Indian Affairs’ Office of Indian Energy and Economic Development (IEED) is administering funding for the Energy and Mineral Development Program (EMDP), the Tribal Energy Development Capacity program (TEDC), and the Native American Business Development Institute (NABDI) feasibility study program.

Tribes, Alaska Native villages, Alaska Native regional or village corporations, authorized tribal organizations, and Tribal Energy Resource Development Organizations are eligible for funding under the TEDC and NABDI programs. However, only tribes, tribal organizations, and Tribal Energy Resource Development Organizations are eligible to submit proposals for the EMDP because the program focuses on Indian trust land.

Tribal Energy Development Capability (TEDC) Program: $1.5

million

These awards are intended to complement the Helping Expedite and Advance Responsible Tribal Homeownership (HEARTH) Act (25 U.S.C. § 415), which restores the authority of tribes to develop and implement tribal laws governing the leasing of tribal surface trust lands for business and other purposes.

The funds under this program are intended to enable eligible recipients to take advantage of the opportunity for self-determination afforded by the HEARTH Act by building capacity through the establishment of organizational structure(s) and/or business entity structure(s) capable of engaging in commercial energy development or management activities.

The awards will also support tribal development or enhancement of key regulatory activities, assisting tribes which seek to enter into Tribal Energy Resource Agreements (TERAs) pursuant to Title V, Section 503 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (Public Law 109-58). TERAs are agreements between tribes and the Secretary of the Interior that allow a tribe to enter into leases, business agreements, and rights-of-way for energy resource development on tribal lands without further review and approval by the Secretary.

Energy and Mineral Development Program (EMDP): $7.0 million

These awards are for projects that assess, evaluate, or otherwise promote the processing, use, or development of energy and mineral resources on Indian lands, particularly feasibility studies of community-scale energy development projects that promote local economic benefits and stronger tribal economies.

Economic Development Feasibility Study Program: $650,000

These awards are for feasibility studies that concern the viability of an economic development project, opportunity, enterprise, or business or the practicality of a technology a tribe may choose to pursue. Feasibility studies may be used to determine the likelihood of success for businesses in specific American Indian and Alaska Native communities. They can also be used to examine the credibility of a project promoter and claims made regarding a specific project.

“The TEDC program will complement the Helping Expedite and Advance Responsible Tribal Homeownership (HEARTH) Act, which restores the authority of tribes to develop and implement tribal laws governing the leasing of tribal surface trust lands for business and other purposes,” Roberts noted.

The EMDP program will, he said, “enable tribes to obtain the best information available about the quality, quantity, and value of their energy and mineral assets,” while the NABDI program will “equip tribes to distinguish promising economic development proposals from those destined to fail.”

Roberts also noted that feasibility studies conducted by credentialed, disinterested third parties often satisfy the due diligence requirements of lenders and can frequently be leveraged to obtain grants from other federal agencies.

More information about the importance of economic development feasibility studies can be found at IEED's online "Economic Development Principles-at-a-Glance" series.

Detailed instructions for submitting proposals for all three programs can be found at Grants.gov or:

- http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/search-grants.html?keywords=TEDC
- http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/search-grants.html?keywords=EMDP
- http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/search-grants.html?keywords=NABDI

Proposals for all three programs must be submitted by 9:00 p.m. EDT on July 8, 2016.

Questions regarding these funding opportunities can be addressed to Jack Stevens, Acting Director, Office of Indian Energy and Economic Development, at jack.stevens@bia.gov or at (202) 208-6764.