

Avenue, Seward, AK 99664 [Dr. Ian Dutton, Responsible Party] has been issued an amendment to scientific research Permit No. 881-1724.

ADDRESSES: The amendment and related documents are available for review upon written request or by appointment in the following office(s):

Permits, Conservation and Education Division, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Room 13705, Silver Spring, MD 20910; phone (301)713-2289; fax (301)427-2521; and

Alaska Region, NMFS, P.O. Box 21668, Juneau, AK 99802-1668; phone (907)586-7221; fax (907)586-7249.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Amy Sloan or Jennifer Skidmore, (301)713-2289.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The requested amendment has been granted under the authority of the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*), the regulations governing the taking and importing of marine mammals (50 CFR part 216), the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA; 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*), the regulations governing the taking, importing, and exporting of endangered and threatened species (50 CFR parts 222-226), and the Fur Seal Act of 1966, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1151 *et seq.*).

This minor amendment extends the expiration date of the permit from March 30, 2009 to March 30, 2010, and minor changes to personnel are authorized. The permit authorizes the Permit Holder to import, export, and collect parts from marine mammals taken under existing permits in the country of origin; from legal subsistence hunts; from legal incidental bycatch; and from opportunistic collection of stranded carcasses. The purposes of this research are to study marine mammal population ecology, diet and nutrition, reproductive physiology, toxicology, and health. No takes of live animals are authorized by the permit.

Issuance of this permit, as required by the ESA, was based on a finding that such permit: (1) was applied for in good faith; (2) will not operate to the disadvantage of endangered species; and (3) is consistent with the purposes and policies set forth in section 2 of the ESA.

Dated: April 1, 2009

P. Michael Payne,

Chief, Permits, Conservation and Education Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. E9-7858 Filed 4-6-09; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

International Trade Administration

[Docket No. 090401622-9623-01; I.D. GF001]

Market Development Cooperator Program (MDCP) 2009

AGENCY: International Trade Administration (ITA), Department of Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of funding availability.

SUMMARY: ITA announces the availability of funding for the FY 2009 Market Development Cooperator Program (MDCP). Through this program, ITA helps to underwrite the start-up costs of foreign market development ventures that industry organizations are often reluctant to undertake without Federal government support. The intent of this program is to support ITA's mission to create economic opportunity for U.S. workers and firms by promoting international trade and investment, strengthening industry competitiveness, and ensuring fair trade.

DATES: *Public Meeting:* The Department will hold a public meeting to discuss MDCP proposal preparation, procedures, and selection process on Wednesday, April 22, 2009. The ninety-minute meeting will begin at 2 p.m. in Room B841B, at the Herbert Clark Hoover Building, 14th and Constitution Avenue, NW., Washington, DC. The Department will not discuss specific proposals at this meeting. Attendance is not required. Interested parties may participate via telephone conference. Dial-in instructions will be posted on the Internet at trade.gov/mdcp. Interested parties can also obtain dial-in instructions from Mrs. Tonya Milstead at 202-482-5093.

Applications: The Department must receive completed applications by 5 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time, Tuesday, June 2, 2009. Late applications will not be accepted. Applicants whose applications have been accepted will be notified via e-mail or fax within ten days of the submission deadline.

ADDRESSES: Application packages will be available at <http://www.grants.gov>. Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit their applications via <http://www.grants.gov>. A hard-copy application kit can be obtained by contacting Mr. Brad Hess, U.S. Department of Commerce, HCHB 3215, 14th Street and Constitution Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20230. Although grants.gov is the preferred method of submission, hard-copy applications may be submitted to the address noted above.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Brad Hess, Manager, Market Development Cooperator Program, Manufacturing and Services, ITA, U.S. Department of Commerce, 14th Street and Constitution Avenue, NW., Room 3215, Washington, DC 20230.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Trade associations, State departments of trade, and other non-profit industry organizations are eligible to apply for an MDCP award. These organizations are particularly effective in reaching small- and medium-size enterprises (SMEs). Through MDCP cooperative agreements the Department provides technical and financial assistance that these organizations match. Organizations compete for a limited number of MDCP awards. (The program's eligibility requirements effectively preclude applications from individuals and private companies.) MDCP awards help to underwrite the start-up costs of new ventures that organizations are often reluctant to undertake without Federal government support. MDCP strengthens the competitiveness of U.S. industry by fostering projects that result in increased exports and/or market share for non-agricultural goods and services produced in the United States. As an active partner, ITA will, as appropriate, guide and assist organizations in achieving project objectives. ITA encourages organizations to propose projects that (1) best strengthen their industry through market development; and (2) leverage the partnership between the organization and ITA.

1. Definitions

Several definitions are provided in section VIII of the Federal Funding Opportunity notice (FFO), which is available at <http://www.trade.gov/mdcp>.

2. Examples of Project Activity

Applicants should propose market development activities tailored to strengthen the competitiveness of the relevant U.S. industry. Examples from prior years are set forth below and, in greater detail, at <http://www.trade.gov/mdcp>. These are provided only for illustration. Applicants are not required to propose any of these activities.

- a. Promotion of standards that ensure market access for U.S. products;
- b. Helping business leaders to leverage free trade agreements to the advantage of U.S. industry;
- c. Demonstration of U.S. products abroad;
- d. Development of a shared Internet-based distribution system in a target market;
- e. Establishment of technical servicing of U.S. products abroad;

- f. Joint promotion of U.S. products with foreign partners;
- g. Establishment of a trade association office in a target market;
- h. Education of foreign users of U.S. technology concerning intellectual property rights;
- i. Training foreign staff for after-sale service of U.S. products in target markets;
- j. Increasing trust in U.S. products in foreign markets by safeguarding non-U.S. elements of the supply chain with an ingredient testing system;
- k. Publication of product brochures and company directories; and
- l. Development of product quality standards and designations along with target-market promotion of same.

Electronic Access: For more information on this program and the application requirements, please read the full text of the full funding opportunity announcement at <http://www.grants.gov>. The announcement will also be available by contacting the program officials identified under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**.

Statutory Authority: MDCP is provided for in 15 U.S.C. 4723. The program strengthens U.S. industry's competitiveness by developing, maintaining, and expanding foreign markets for non-agricultural goods and services produced in the United States.

CFDA: 11.112, Market Development Cooperator Program.

Funding Availability: Approximately \$2,000,000 is expected to be available for fiscal year 2009. The total number of awards made will depend on the amounts requested by top-scoring applicants and the availability of funds. No award will exceed \$400,000. The Department anticipates awarding five to nine cooperative agreements.

Eligibility: Trade associations, State departments of trade and their regional associations, and non-profit industry organizations, including organizations such as World Trade Centers, centers for international trade development, and small business development centers are eligible to apply for an MDCP award. In cases where no entity described above represents the industry, private industry firms or groups of firms may be eligible to apply for an MDCP award. Such private industry firms or groups of firms must provide in their applications, documentation demonstrating that no entity in the first three categories listed below represents their industry.

1. **Trade Association.** A fee-based organization consisting of member firms in the same industry, or in related industries, or which share common commercial concerns. The purpose of the trade association is to further the

commercial interests of its members through the exchange of information, legislative activities, and the like.

2. **Non-Profit Industry Organization.** This definition applies to: a non-profit small business development center operating under agreement with the Small Business Administration; a non-profit World Trade Center chartered or recognized by the non-profit World Trade Centers Association; or an organization granted status as a non-profit organization under 26 U.S.C. 501(c)(3), (4), (5), or (6), which operates as one of the following: Chamber of commerce, board of trade, business, export or trade council/interest group, visitors bureau or tourism promotion group, economic development group, small business development center, or port authority.

3. **State Departments of Trade and Their Regional Associations.** This definition includes: department of a State government tasked with promoting trade, tourism, or other types of economic development; associations of the departments of trade (as defined above) of two or more States; or entities within a State or within a region that are associated with a State department of trade, tourism, or other types of economic development including non-profit, non-private, non-commercial entities which are at least partially funded by, directed by, or tasked by a State government to promote trade, tourism, or other types of economic development.

4. **Educational Institutions:** Educational institutions, such as schools, colleges, and universities, are generally not eligible. However, organizations that are part of or affiliated with an educational institution for administrative, accounting, legal, or logistical reasons may be eligible. Such organizations that are not independent legal entities—for example, an unincorporated organization—that otherwise may be classified above as a trade association, non-profit industry association, or State department of trade or regional association are eligible. In such a case, the eligible entity will include in its application a signed letter from the educational institution stating that MDCP funds will be used only by the eligible entity for the purposes outlined in its application, and that no such funds will be used by or retained by the educational institution, even though the funds may need to go through the educational institution because of the eligible entity's lack of a separate accounting system or lack of status as a separate legal entity.

Cost Sharing Requirements: A cooperator must contribute at least two

dollars for each Federal dollar received. The first dollar's worth of contribution must be cash. The remaining cost share amount can be either cash or an in-kind contribution that is equivalent to that amount.

Evaluation and Selection Procedures: The evaluation criteria and selection factors that apply to applications to this funding opportunity are summarized below. The evaluation criteria for applications will have different weights and details. Further information about the evaluation criteria and selection factors can be found in the full funding opportunity announcement.

Evaluation Criteria For Projects: The Department is interested in projects that demonstrate the possibility of both significant progress during the award period, and lasting benefits extending beyond the award period. To that end, the selection panel reviews each application for financial assistance under MDCP based upon the evaluation criteria listed below.

1. **Potential to Strengthen Competitiveness (20 points).** A project's potential to strengthen competitiveness is evaluated primarily on the likelihood that it will result in export initiatives by U.S. firms, particularly small- and medium-sized enterprises. Such initiatives are normally characterized by a significant expenditure of resources by the chief executive officer of a company in the active pursuit of export sales. As noted above in Examples of Project Activity, many different kinds of activity can strengthen the competitiveness of U.S. industry; however, an applicant can earn the maximum number of points under this criterion only by demonstrating how its proposed project is expected to result in increased export initiatives by individual U.S. firms and exports by those firms.

2. **Performance Measurement (20 points).** Applicants must provide quantifiable estimates of projected export and market share increases and explain how they are derived. No application that lacks an estimate of exports can receive a performance measurement score that exceeds ten (10). Applicants must detail the methods they will use to gather and report performance information.

3. **Partnership and Priorities (20 points).** The degree to which the project initiates or enhances partnership with ITA and the degree to which the proposal furthers or is compatible with the following ITA priorities:

- a. Improve the competitiveness of U.S. manufacturing and service industries by addressing impediments

to innovation and reducing the cost of doing business in foreign countries;

b. Increase competitiveness of U.S. industries in large markets like China, India, and Brazil by addressing non-tariff barriers, especially those related to standards and intellectual property rights;

c. Help U.S. industry to capitalize on effective global supply chain management strategies;

d. Advance market-based approaches to energy, clean development, and commercialization of alternative energy technologies;

e. Facilitate ease of travel to the United States and promote U.S. higher education and training opportunities to non-U.S. entities;

f. Capitalize on trade opportunities resulting from trade agreements;

g. Increase overall export awareness and awareness of ITA programs and services among U.S. companies, by making SMEs export-ready or by facilitating deal-making; and

h. Support the Administration's broader foreign policy objectives through competitiveness-related initiatives.

4. *Creativity and Capacity (20 points).* Creativity, innovation, and realism displayed by the work plan as well as the institutional capacity of the applicant to carry out the work plan.

a. *Demonstrating Creativity.* Applicants might propose ideas not previously tried to promote a particular industry in a market. Creativity can be demonstrated by the manner in which techniques are customized to meet the specific needs of certain client groups.

b. *Table Comparing Proposal to Current or Past MDCP Projects.*

Applicants that have received an MDCP award in the past must submit a table comparing their current or past MDCP project(s) and their proposed project. The need for this table and the requested format are described below. MDCP awards are designed to help underwrite the start-up costs of new projects. Accordingly, current or past cooperators can be in a position to earn the maximum number of points under this criterion only if they propose projects that are entirely new. In order to determine whether a project is entirely new, the current or past cooperator must provide, as a separate appendix, a comparison between the elements of the proposed project and the elements of its current or past MDCP-funded projects. Current or past cooperators that propose projects that are not entirely new will receive fewer points under this criterion than they would receive otherwise. In determining the number of points under this

criterion, the selection panel will consider the level to which a particular applicant has incorporated elements of its previously funded MDCP projects. To do this, current or past cooperators should submit a table wherein they approximate the amount of resources devoted to each project element.

c. *Institutional capacity.* The Department measures institutional capacity by what each applicant submits. A current or past cooperator should not assume that success with a prior MDCP project will automatically be taken into account by the Department when reviewing its application. Each applicant must document its institutional capacity in its application.

5. *Budget and Sustainability (20 points).* This criterion encompasses the reasonableness of the itemized budget for project activities, the amount of the cash match that is readily available at the beginning of the project, and the probability that the project can be continued on a self-sustained basis after the completion of the award. Current or past cooperators must show how the proposed project will achieve self-sustainability independent of any current or past MDCP projects. ITA does not assume that prior MDCP projects are self-sustaining. As noted in Creativity and Capacity above, ITA assesses each application based on what each applicant chooses to include in its application. If an applicant wants ITA to consider the self-sustainability of a prior project when evaluating a new project proposal, it should include relevant information in its application. Each of the above criteria is worth a maximum of 20 points. The five criteria together constitute the application score. At 20 points per criterion, the total possible score is 100.

Review and Selection Process: The applicant is responsible for submitting a complete application in a timely manner. Each complete application will be subject to the process set forth below.

1. *Eligibility Determination.* The MDCP staff of the Office of Planning, Coordination and Management (OPCM) in ITA's Manufacturing and Services (MAS), in consultation with the Department's Office of General Counsel, reviews all applications to determine the eligibility of each applicant.

2. *Program Area Review.* Relevant program areas, including ITA's MAS, Market Access and Compliance (MAC), and Commercial Service, have the opportunity to review the submitted applications. This allows experts in the industry sector or geographical region to assess applicant claims. These reviewers provide insights into both the potential

benefits and the potential difficulties associated with the applications.

3. *OPCM Review.* Representatives of OPCM review and comment on applications using the evaluation criteria identified above. OPCM prepares for the selection panel a review packet including the applications and reviewer comments. The OPCM staff and program area comments afford the selection panel the insights and breadth of experience of Department professionals. However, the selection panel is free to consider or disregard them as it sees fit.

4. *Selection Panel Composition.* The MDCP Manager forwards all of the eligible applications, along with all related materials, to the selection panel of at least three senior ITA managers. This panel is chaired by the OPCM Director and typically includes three other members, one each from MAS, MAC, and the Commercial Service. Panel members are office directors or higher.

5. *Selection Panel Scoring.* Each selection panel member reviews each eligible application and assigns a score for each of the five criteria stated above. The scores of each selection panel member for each application reviewed are maintained in the files for seven years. The individual criteria scores are averaged to determine the total score for each application. The evaluation criteria scores assigned by the panel determine which applications are recommended for funding.

6. *Ranked Recommendation.* Based on the scores assigned by selection panel members and deliberations by the selection panel, the selection panel forwards the applications with the ten highest total scores ("top-ranked applications") to the Assistant Secretary for Manufacturing and Services and recommends which of the top applications should receive funding. If the amount of funds requested by the top ten applicants is less than the funding available, the selection panel recommends additional applications for funding in rank order. The selection panel's recommendation will not deviate from the rank order. This means, for example, that the selection panel cannot recommend funding for the application ranked seventh without recommending funding for applicants ranked first through sixth. The selection panel recommendation includes the panel's written assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the top-ranked applications.

Selection Factors for Projects: From the top-ranked applications forwarded by the selection panel, the Assistant Secretary for Manufacturing and

Services selects those applications that will receive funding. In addition to the Evaluation Criteria for Projects above, the Assistant Secretary for Manufacturing and Services may consider the selection factors listed below: 1. The selection panel's written assessments, 2. The degree to which applications satisfy the ITA priorities established under Project Funding Priorities above, 3. Geographic distribution of the proposed awards, 4. Diversity of industry sectors and overseas markets covered by the proposed awards, 5. Diversity of project activities represented by the proposed awards, 6. Avoidance of redundancy and conflicts with the initiatives of other Federal agencies, and 7. Availability of funds.

Intergovernmental Review: There are no intergovernmental review requirements beyond those already noted.

Limitation of Liability: In no event will the Department of Commerce be responsible for proposal preparation costs if these programs fail to receive funding or are cancelled because of other agency priorities. Publication of this announcement does not oblige the Department of Commerce to award any specific project or to obligate any available funds.

Paperwork Reduction Act: This document contains collection-of-information requirements subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA). The use of Standard Forms 424, 424A, 424B, and SF-LLL and CD-346 has been approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) under the respective control numbers 0348-0043, 0348-0044, 0348-0040, 0348-0046, and 0605-0001.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person is required to, nor shall a person be subject to a penalty for failure to comply with, a collection of information subject to the requirements of the PRA unless that collection of information displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Executive Order 12866: This notice has been determined to be not significant for purposes of Executive Order 12866.

Executive Order 13132 (Federalism): It has been determined that this notice does not contain policies with Federalism implications as that term is defined in Executive Order 13132.

Administrative Procedure Act/Regulatory Flexibility Act:

Prior notice and an opportunity for public comment are not required by the Administrative Procedure Act or any other law for rules concerning public property, loans, grants, benefits, and contracts (5 U.S.C. 553(a)(2)). Because

notice and opportunity for comment are not required pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 553 or any other law, the analytical requirements for the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. 601 *et seq.*) are inapplicable. Therefore, a regulatory flexibility analysis has not been prepared.

Dated: April 2, 2009.

Robert W. Pearson,

Director, Office of Planning, Coordination and Management Manufacturing and Services, International Trade Administration, Department of Commerce.

[FR Doc. E9-7823 Filed 4-6-09; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Institute of Standards and Technology

Technology Innovation Program (TIP) Notice of Additional Public Meetings (Proposers' Conferences)

AGENCY: National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), United States Department of Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of public meetings.

SUMMARY: The National Institute of Standards and Technology's (NIST) Technology Innovation Program (TIP) announces that it has scheduled three public meetings (Proposers' Conferences) on April 13, 2009, in Boston, Massachusetts; on April 15, 2009, in Detroit, Michigan; and on April 17, 2009, in San Jose, California. These meetings are in addition to the Proposers' Conference scheduled for April 8, 2009, in Gaithersburg, Maryland, that was announced previously in the **Federal Register** on March 31.

DATES: TIP announces that it is holding public meetings (Proposers' Conferences) on

1. April 8, 2009, 9 a.m.–1 p.m. Eastern Time in Gaithersburg, Maryland.
2. April 13, 2009, 1 p.m.–5 p.m. Eastern Time in Boston, Massachusetts.
3. April 15, 2009, 1 p.m.–5 p.m. Eastern Time in Detroit, Michigan.
4. April 17, 2009, 9 a.m.–1 p.m. Pacific Time in San Jose, California.

ADDRESSES: The Proposers' Conferences will be held at the following locations:

1. NIST Red Auditorium, 100 Bureau Drive, Gaithersburg, Maryland 20899. Electronic registration at: <https://rproxy.nist.gov/CRS/>.
2. Marriott Boston Cambridge, Two Cambridge Center, 50 Broadway, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02142.

3. Detroit Marriott at the Renaissance Center, 400 Renaissance Center, Detroit, Michigan 48243.
4. San Jose Marriott, 301 S. Market St., San Jose, California 95113.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Barbara Cuthill at 301-975-3273 or by e-mail at barbara.cuthill@nist.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On March 31, 2009, the National Institute of Standards and Technology's (NIST) Technology Innovation Program (TIP) announced that it was soliciting high-risk, high-reward research and development (R&D) proposals for financial assistance. TIP is soliciting proposals under this fiscal year 2009 competition in two areas of critical national need entitled "Civil Infrastructure" and "Manufacturing" (74 FR 14524). TIP also announced the date and location of its Proposers' Conference on April 8, 2009, in Gaithersburg, Maryland, and indicated that any additional Proposers' Conferences would be announced in the **Federal Register**, on the <http://grants.gov> Web site and on the TIP Web site at <http://www.nist.gov/tip>. The legal authority for TIP is 15 USC 278n.

TIP is holding Proposers' Conferences to provide general information regarding TIP, to offer guidance on preparing proposals, and to answer questions. Proprietary technical discussions about specific project ideas with NIST staff are not permitted at this Conference or at any time before submitting the proposal to TIP. Therefore, proposers should not expect to have proprietary issues addressed at the Proposers' Conference. Also, NIST/TIP staff will not critique or provide feedback on project ideas while they are being developed by a proposer. However, NIST/TIP staff will answer questions about the TIP eligibility and cost-sharing requirements, evaluation and award criteria, selection process, and the general characteristics of a competitive TIP proposal at the Proposers' Conference and by phone and e-mail. Attendance at the TIP Proposers' Conference is not required.

No registration fee will be charged at the Proposers' Conference. Presentation materials from the Proposers' Conference will be made available on the TIP Web site.

The Proposers' Conferences will be held as follows:

April 8, 2009, 9 a.m.–1 p.m. Eastern Time: NIST Red Auditorium, 100 Bureau Drive, Gaithersburg, Maryland 20899, (301-975-8910). Pre-registration is required by 5 p.m. Eastern Time on April 6, 2009 for the Proposers' Conference being held at NIST Gaithersburg, MD. Due to increased