

# I-102 Participant eligibility.

(a) To be eligible to participate as a mentor, an entity must—

(1) Be eligible for the award of Federal contracts;

(2) Demonstrate that it—

(i) Is qualified to provide assistance that will contribute to the purpose of the Program;

(ii) Is of good financial health and character;

(iii) Is not on a Federal list of debarred or suspended contractors; and

(iv) Is an other than small business concern, unless approved by the Director of the Office of Small Business Programs (OSBP), Office of the Under Secretary of Defense, Acquisition and Sustainment (OUSD(A&S)), in accordance with 13 CFR 121.103 regarding “affiliation and relationship”; and

(3) Be capable of imparting value to a protégé firm because of experience gained as a DoD contractor or through knowledge of general business operations and Government contracting, as demonstrated by evidence that such entity—

(i) Received DoD contracts and subcontracts equal to or greater than \$25 million during the previous fiscal year;

(ii) Is a prime contractor to DoD with an active subcontracting plan;

(iii) Has graduated from the 8(a) Business Development Program and provides documentation of its ability to serve as a mentor; or

(iv) Is otherwise capable to assist in the development of protégé firms and is approved by the Director OSBP, OUSD(A&S).

(b) To be eligible to participate as a protege, an entity must be—

(1) A small business concern;

(2) Eligible for the award of Federal contracts;

(3) Not more than the Small Business Administration (SBA) size standard for its primary North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) code;

(4) Not owned or managed by individuals or entities that directly or indirectly have stock options or convertible securities in the mentor firm; and

(5) At least one of the following:

(i) A qualified HUBZone small business concern.

(ii) A women-owned small business concern.

(iii) A service-disabled veteran-owned small business concern.

(iv) An entity owned and controlled by an Indian tribe.

(v) An entity owned and controlled by a Native Hawaiian organization.

(vi) An entity owned and controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals.

(vii) A qualified organization employing severely disabled individuals.

(viii) A nontraditional defense contractor.

(ix) An entity that currently provides goods or services in the private sector that are critical to enhancing the capabilities of the defense supplier base and fulfilling key DoD needs.

(c) Mentor firms may rely in good faith on a written representation that the entity meets the requirements of paragraph (b) of this section, except that a mentor firm is required to confirm a protege's status as a HUBZone small business concern (see FAR 19.703(d)).

(d) If at any time the SBA (or DoD in the case of entities employing severely disabled individuals) determines that a protege is ineligible, assistance that the mentor firm furnishes to the protege after the date of the determination may not be considered assistance furnished under the Program.

(e) A mentor firm may not enter into an agreement with a protege firm if SBA has made a determination of affiliation. If SBA has not made such a determination and if the DoD (OSBP) has reason to believe, based on SBA's regulations regarding affiliation, that the mentor firm is affiliated with the protege firm, then DoD OSBP will request a determination regarding affiliation from SBA.

(f) A company may not be approved for participation in the Program as a mentor firm if, at the time of requesting participation in the Program, it is currently debarred or suspended from contracting with the Federal Government pursuant to FAR subpart 9.4.

(g) If the mentor firm is suspended or debarred while performing under an approved mentor-protege agreement, the mentor firm—

(1) May continue to provide assistance to its protege firms in accordance with the approved mentor-protege agreement entered into prior to the imposition of such suspension or debarment;

(2) May not be reimbursed or take credit for any costs of providing developmental assistance to its protege firm, incurred more than 30 days after the imposition of such suspension or debarment; and

(3) Must promptly give notice of its suspension or debarment to its protege firm and the Director, OSBP, of the cognizant military department or defense agency.

(h) Within 30 days of any change in status affecting eligibility, mentors and protégés must give notice and explanation of pertinent facts to each other, the Director of OSBP, OUSD(A&S), and the Director, OSBP, of the military department or defense agency.

**Parent topic:** [APPENDIX I - POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR THE DOD PILOT MENTOR-PROTEGE PROGRAM](#)