

Historically Black Colleges and Universities Consortium for Acquisition Development (HCAD)

Harnessing Future Potential

The coming decade offers a historic opportunity for Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) to delve into groundbreaking space science research and engineering projects with NASA. As we embark on missions back to the moon and lay the groundwork for Mars Sample Return, Congressional support and increased funding are opening new doors for HBCU engagement. This not only paves the way for black-owned businesses incubated from HBCU research but also fosters long-term economic growth and workforce development. These initiatives are geared towards building long-term capacity and addressing historical adversities faced by the African American community in space science.

Overcoming Barriers

Despite significant opportunities, several barriers and hindrances make it challenging for HBCU researchers to access these funds and opportunities. These barriers include lesser competitiveness compared to traditional Carnegie R1 and R2 High and Very High Research Activity universities (R1/R2). This disparity leaves both the HBCU community and federal agencies deprived of the full benefits of their innovative contributions.

Proposed Initiatives

Through years of experience working with the HBCU community, we have identified several targeted initiatives to decrease barriers and enhance HBCU participation in federally funded research and engineering projects:

- **Research on Barriers:** Conduct comprehensive studies to identify obstacles preventing HBCU proposal submissions and their engagement with government agencies.
- **HBCU Conferences and Workshops:** Develop workshops covering contract management, proposal development, budgeting, review processes, and compliance requirements. Including talks from experts to improve HBCUs' competitiveness and promote networking and dialogue for better proposal success rates.
- **Business Intelligence:** Develop centralized repository tool to help HBCUs identify prime opportunities available to HBCU researchers, ensuring alignment with university strengths and maximizing competitiveness.
- **Collaborative Ecosystems:** Foster partnerships among research faculty, administrators, and business school staff to enhance research competitiveness into viable, fundable, and commercializable proposals through multidisciplinary collaborations.
- **Research Administration Support:** Provide administrative support for proposal submissions and compliance activities, ensuring high-quality, competitive grant applications.
- **HBCU STEM Workforce Development:** Promote a pipeline of trained professionals, technicians, entrepreneurs, academicians in STEM, and acquisition fields to meet future demands.
- **Creating Communities of Practice:** Establish forums for HBCU researchers to share knowledge, collaborate, and address common institutional issues.

AUI's Consortium Management (CM) Model

Combined Impact Through A Unified Approach

AUI proposes implementing these initiatives via a Consortium Management (CM) model, overseen by select HBCU institutional members and operated by AUI. This model will focus on capacity building, research and development conduct, and workforce development, with AUI managing grant pursuits, project development, and consortium administration. This governance structure is scalable to other minority-serving institutions, including Hispanic Serving Institutions and Tribal Colleges and Universities.

Governance Structure

A robust Consortium Management structure includes:

- Associate CM Directors handling major areas such as technology, policy, and workforce development.
 - Providing the necessary structures, processes, and project management to support grant pursuit, project plan development, and member cooperation.
- A Governance Board overseeing CM, guiding project pursuits, and fostering collaborations.
 - Led by HBCU members, ensuring that the voices and needs of HBCU researchers guide the consortium's activities.
- Independent Science & Technology and Industry Advisory Committees providing assessments and recommendations from leaders in academia, industry, and government.

Roadmap to Success

By participating in these proposed activities, HBCUs can increase engagement and influence in space science research and development. The Consortium Management model will ensure their sustainable involvement and capacity building, paving the way for diverse and innovative contributions to NASA's missions.

About AUI

Associated Universities Inc. (AUI) has a longstanding history of supporting research at HBCUs and promoting STEM education among historically underrepresented populations. With proven initiatives such as Project RADIAL, National and International Non-traditional Exchange (NINE), National Astronomy Consortium (NAC), and Physicists Inspiring the Next Generation (PING), AUI continues to push the boundaries in ensuring diverse, innovative contributions in STEM fields.

Join Us in Building the Future of Space Science with HBCUs!

Take this unprecedented opportunity to contribute to the future of space science and engineering. Join AUI and NASA in fostering HBCU involvement in groundbreaking research and projects.

Learn More and Get Involved

Erika White

Business Development Operations Manager

202-908-5936

ewhite@au.edu