

Readiness Training Program for Historically Underutilized Businesses

Funnel One, Third Cohort

Summary of Program Process and Participant Satisfaction

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I. Pre-Session Activities

Recruitment and Admissions

Initial recruitment began in early October 2023 by informing various HUB program offices, multiple chambers of commerce, and small business government entities about the forthcoming training opportunity. Major email announcements were sent on October 9 and 11 and later in October on the 25th and 26th introducing potential applicants to the training and directing them to the training website. The individual session topics and confirmed speakers were shown, and companies could download an application, complete it, and upload it through the website portal to a UT-Austin box folder. Most emails were obtained from the databases shared by Travis County, and from the State of Texas and City of Austin databases. SMBR staff also provided a database of recently certified small businesses that proved quite useful in the recruitment process.

The outreach was quite precise regarding revenue and employee thresholds, and the majority of the 69 subsequent applicants were qualified based on those desired thresholds for revenues (<\$500,000) and less than three years of operational experience. Four companies were asked to defer to a subsequent funnel two class because of their size and revenues, 8 companies did not have a product or service for government purchasing, 10 companies were outside the five-county Austin region, four companies submitted incomplete applications or did not respond to questions about their businesses, one company declined an offer of admittance, and three companies were not admitted for other reasons.

Thirty-nine companies were admitted, although one dropped out before the first class and did not attend any sessions. The 38 companies that started the program are listed below alphabetically, along with their industries. Data are provided below for the 39 companies admitted.

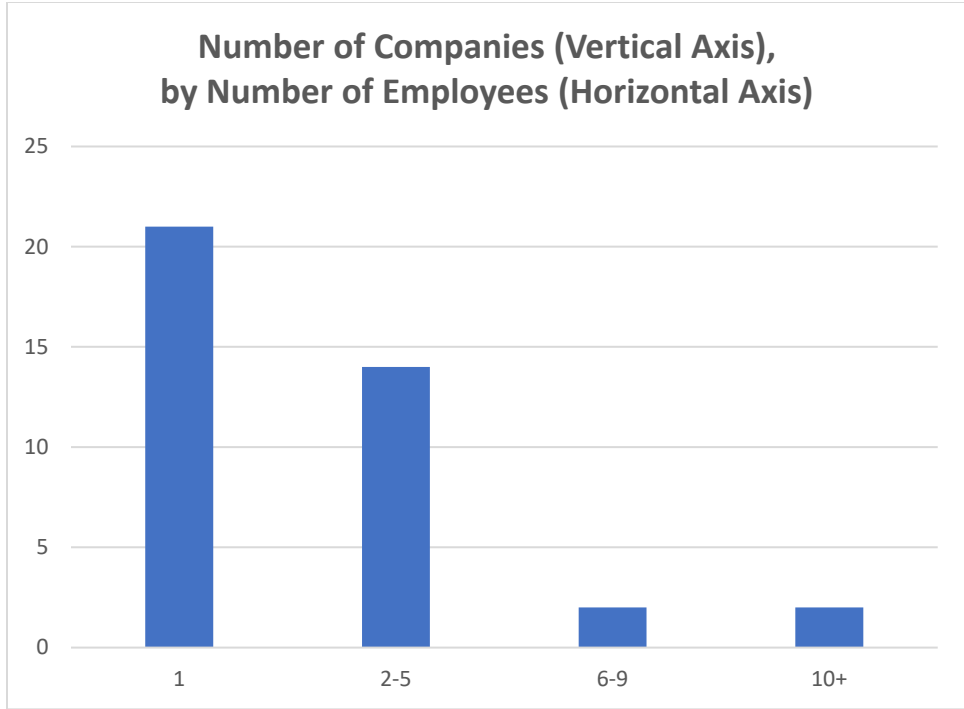
Company Names and Industry—Self-Identified—Fall 2023/Early 2024--Funnel One, Cohort Three	
<i>Company</i>	<i>Business Industry</i>
Acachi LLC	IT
Aura Express LLC	Technology and Office Supplies
BOLD Management, L.L.C.	Real Estate Construction Consulting
Boxer Consulting	Recruiting
Carson Technology Resources LLC	Professional and Technical Training
Chugwar, Inc	Marketing
Collected Abundance	Professional Organizing
DJSO ENTERPRISES, LLC	Property Restoration
Electra Beverages & Nutritionals, LLC	Beverages
G180, LLC	Retail
G4C Enterprises, LLC	Energy Reduction Solutions
Harlem Labs Advisory, Inc.	Management Consulting
Isita LLC	Software development
Levior Energy Austin LLC	LED Electrical Services

ManEvSis LLC	IT
Mindful Media	Digital Content Creation
Mission Ready Inc.	IT Service
MMD Architecture	Architecture
Morgan Scott Construction Company	Construction and Business Consulting
Outland Construction Co Inc	Construction
Patriotic Holdings	Contracting
Press8 Telecom	Telecommunications
Prime Concrete Construction	Concrete Construction
Q'ente Communications	Marketing, Public Involvement, and PR
Red Heart CPR	CPR Training
Reflection Executive Advisors LLC	Consulting
Refuerzo Collaborative	Marketing
RM Drone Images	Data Acquisition with Drone Technology
Sparkles Trucking	Landscaping / Trucking
Spector Research	Qualitative Consumer Research
Strange Wisdom Entertainment, LLC	Arts and Entertainment
Swift Security	Security
Neighborhood Plumbing and Drain	Plumbing
Tex-Tanks	Industrial
Tishna Films	Filmmaking/Video Production
TKABO Technical Solutions LLC	INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
Taylor Made Careers	Training/Development
WR Digital Marketing	Digital Marketing

Subsequent tables shown below provide data for the 39 companies admitted including their approximate 2022 gross revenues, full-time employees, participant age, race/ethnicity, gender, and level of education.

Approximate Gross Revenue—2022 Calendar Year

Summer 2023 Cohort	Number	Percentages
<\$50,000	24	61.5%
\$50,000-\$150,000	5	12.8%
\$150,000-\$500,000	8	20.5%
\$500,000-\$1 million	2	5.1%
Total	39	100.0%

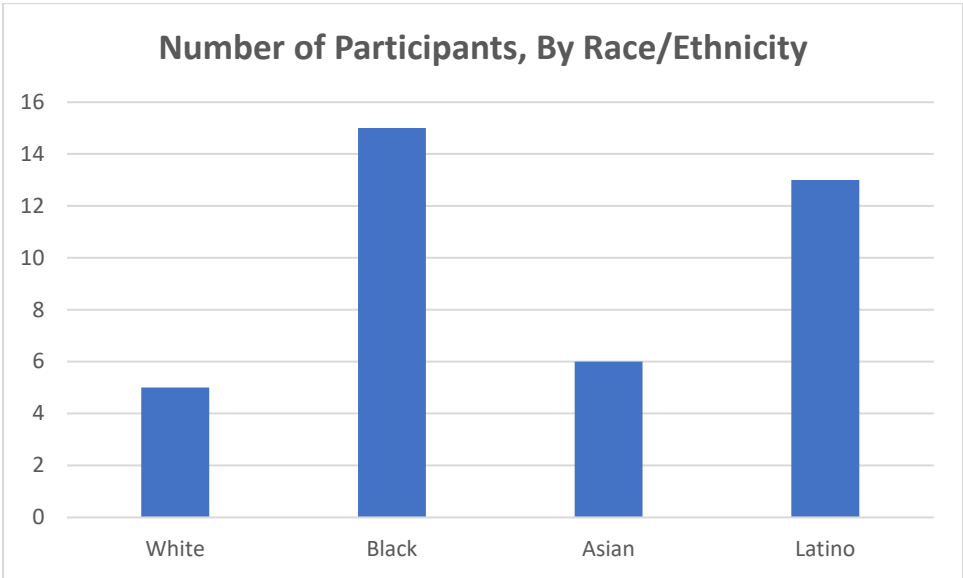
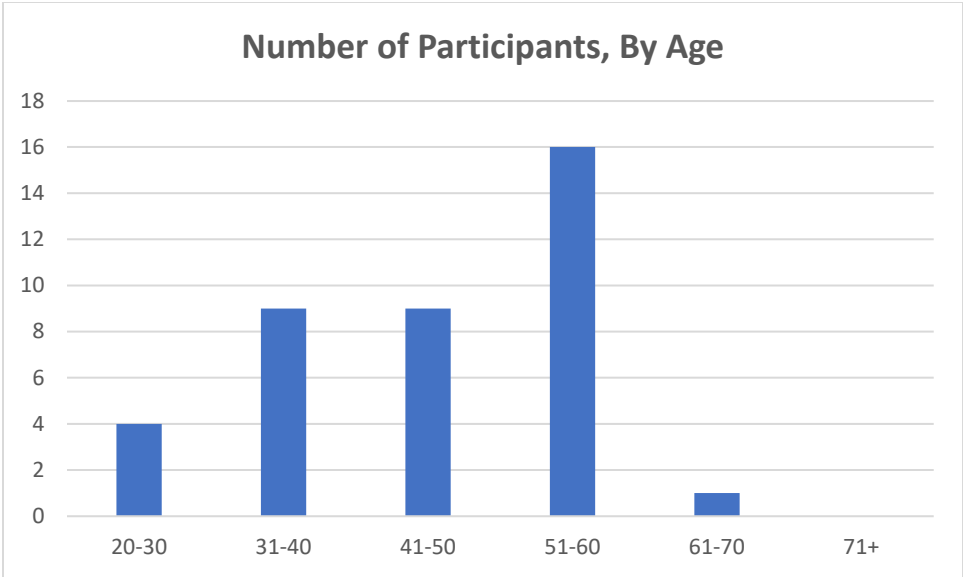


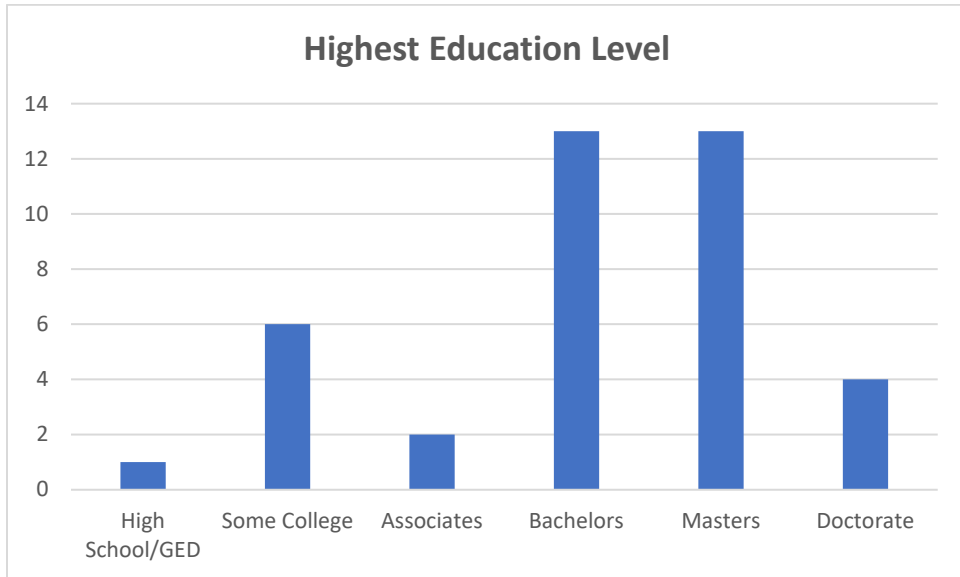
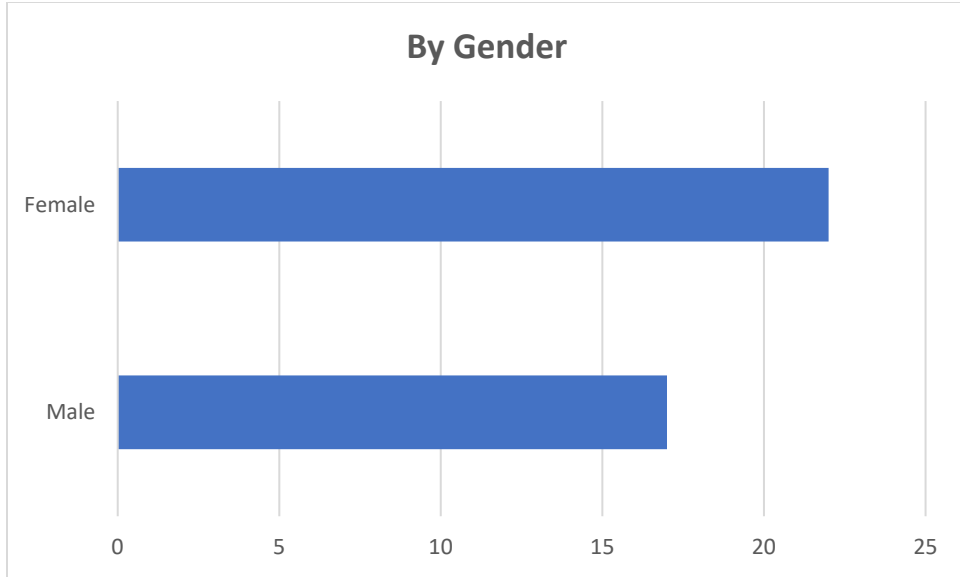
Industry

Construction & Supplies	8
IT Equipment, Services & Staffing	8
Management Consulting	5
Marketing and Public Relations	5
Training	3
Entertainment	3
Other unique services	7

Certifications

HUB	27
MBE	22
WBE	11
DBE	11
SBE/SB	6
None	4
NMSDC	3
SDVOSB	1
ESBE	1
DIBE	1
ACDBE	1
VBE	1
VOSB	1





II. Funnel One, Cohort Three Sessions

The topics, session dates, and speakers are shown on the project website at:
<https://www.smallbizxl8.com/new-ut-austin-training-program-for-hubs/>

Attendance varied by session. Based on their attendance at the main sessions, the three workshops, a request for reviews of their draft capability statements, and short-term technical assistance on bid submissions by two companies, submitting, 31 of the 38 HUBs were deemed to have finished the course. (This standard required a company to have attended at least half of the sessions and be active at the end of the training. We did not allow those who watched the videotaped sessions at a later time to count that toward their sessions.) The cohort completion rate was 81%, exceeding our expected rate of 70%.

A number of proven procedures were created to facilitate interaction and networking and preserve the session information. This included links to recordings of the sessions for those unable to attend the live training, and links to materials presented by the speakers.

Three workshops were held. The first was held on December 7 and was devoted to elevator pitch practice and feedback by a group of the project's business advisers. Twenty-two companies participated and received advice from 13 advisers, including three project staff members. One week later the second workshop was conducted on the benefits of certification. Twenty-two firms heard the presentation by a SMBR staff member and asked questions. The third workshop on January 11 was devoted to responding to purchasing solicitations and when and how to prepare proposals. Twenty-one companies attended.

In addition to the workshops, individualized assistance was given to participants who submitted draft capability statements in mid-December. These statements were bundled and sent to four business advisers for review and comments. Twenty-two companies took advantage of this opportunity, and feedback about the reviews was uniformly quite positive when companies received comments and suggestions in early January.

Advisers who served at one of the workshops or gave feedback on the capability statements included:

Jonathan Alba, Jonathan Alba Management
Cheryl Brown, MiraCosta College
Sallie Burchett, CEO, Diva Imaging
Dr. John Sibley Butler, Emeritus Professor, McCombs School of Business
Terry Chase, Texas A&M Engineering Experiment Station
Dr. April Lovelady, School of Engineering Medicine, Texas A&M University
Robert Meyer, Private Investor
Ahmed Moledina, CEO, Soal Technologies
Christina Mortel, Center for Women Entrepreneurs, Texas Woman's University
Patricia Rubio, CEO, Cognit Systems
Andy Smetana, Managing Director, PMCS Services

III. Findings from Post-Session Surveys **(Active and Inactive Participants)**

Summary

Over 60 percent of the respondents said the program had exceeded their expectations, and approximately 90 percent believe they will be able to use the information in their businesses and would recommend to colleagues or non-competitive businesses. Multiple suggestions for improvements were offered by the companies.

Note: All comments from the owners to the open-ended questions are provided without editing in this report. Because the survey was conducted, has been compiled, and is being presented by staff who had a major role in Funnel One, Cohort Three sessions, there is an element of “self-grading.” For that reason, the only descriptive comments appearing below from project staff relate to procedure and process or are statements that clearly are apparent from the data.

Introduction

Two surveys were conducted to obtain satisfaction levels of participants with the set of main sessions and the business advisory workshops.¹ Each of the 25 participants received an email invitation on January 26 with a link to an online survey. Non-respondents were sent multiple reminders. The survey was closed on February 10 with a total of 31 responses. A copy of the survey instrument is attached as a separate document.

General Evaluation of Funnel One Sessions and Workshops (Active Participants)

Five questions elicited general reactions from participants and then more specific questions captured detailed views. Please see Table I, Chart I, Table II, Table III, and Table IV for the general reactions.

¹ As noted earlier, 31 of the companies were considered as participants completing Funnel One. They received the main survey and will be the primary focus in the remainder of this report. Seven companies did not participate actively after their admission and received a shorter survey to probe why. Results from the five responses to the short survey are presented afterwards.

TABLE I.

Now that you have completed this course, how would you rate the entire series of RTP Funnel One sessions? Please choose one answer AND explain your choice.

<u>Answer Options</u>	<u>All Sessions (# of responses)</u>	<u>Percentage of Respondents</u>
Far exceeded my expectations	10	32%
Exceeded my expectations	9	29%
Met my expectations	10	32%
Did not meet my expectations	1	3%
No value add	1	3%

Note: Comments from respondents to this question are shown later starting on page 16.

GRAPH I.

SKILL IMPROVEMENT

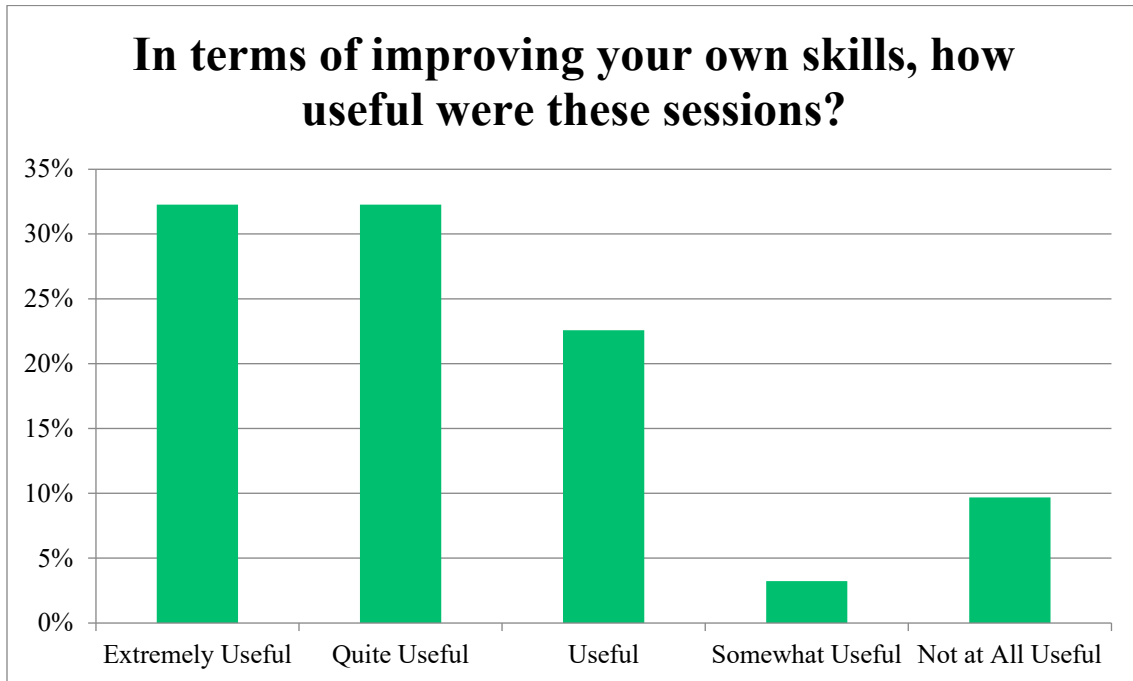


TABLE II.*Would you recommend these sessions to friends, colleagues, or business acquaintances who are not your competitors?*

Answer Options	All Sessions (# of responses)	Percentage of Respondents
Yes definitely	22	71%
Yes likely	5	16%
Don't know	2	6%
No unlikely	2	6%
No definitely not	0	0%

TABLE III.*Characteristics of Sessions*

<i>Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with each of the statements about the sessions.</i>	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The sessions provided information and content new to me.	52%	35%	0%	6%	6%
The information and content were appropriate for my needs.	42%	42%	10%	0%	6%
I will be able to use this information in my business.	52%	42%	0%	0%	6%
The structure of presentations, exercises, and discussions was appropriate for my needs.	45%	39%	10%	3%	3%

TABLE IV.*Should the Readiness Training Program series (Funnel One) be offered again?*

Answer Options	All Sessions (# of responses)	Percentage of Respondents
Yes, without revision	12	40%
Yes, with some revisions/modifications	15	50%
Yes, with substantial revisions/modifications	3	10%
Probably not	0	0%
Definitely not	0	0%

Note: Comments from respondents to this question are shown later starting on page 18.

Specific Training Elements

A series of questions probed for more detailed reactions to the training and the training elements. As shown in Table V, reactions to each of the sessions showed some variation. The second session on November 28 received the most plaudits while the small business finance session on January 9 was rated slightly lower than the others.

TABLE V.						
<i>Usefulness of Each Session</i>						
<i>Please rate each of the sessions.</i>	<u>Extremely Useful</u>	<u>Quite Useful</u>	<u>Useful</u>	<u>Somewhat Useful</u>	<u>Not At All Useful</u>	<u>Unable to Attend/ Not Applicable</u>
Company Introductions, Local Government HUB Program Overviews—November 14	39%	16%	16%	16%	6%	6%
Communicating Your Capabilities (Value Propositions, Capability Statements, Elevator Pitches)—Brown—November 28	58%	26%	3%	3%	3%	6%
State Government and University Program Overviews & Bid Databases—December 5	32%	32%	12%	13%	3%	6%
Small Business Finance and Securing A Loan—Gonzalez, Bennett—January 9	23%	13%	26%	13%	13%	12%
Regional Technical Assistance Resources—SCORE, SBDC, CWE, Apex Accelerator—January 16	32%	19%	23%	13%	3%	10%
Successful Contractors—Mora, Johnson, Caudle, Callier—January 23	29%	29%	19%	3%	3%	16%

Table VI shows the owners’ reactions to several program components. The Participant Folder proved more useful than the website or social media networking group.

TABLE VI.						
<i>Usefulness of Program Activities and Components</i>						
<i>Please rate each of these activities and components.</i>	<u>Extremely Useful</u>	<u>Quite Useful</u>	<u>Useful</u>	<u>Somewhat Useful</u>	<u>Not At All Useful</u>	<u>Did Not Use/Not Applicable</u>
Website	32%	16%	29%	3%	3%	16%
Social Media Networking Group	23%	19%	10%	26%	6%	16%
Participant Folder (download slides, watch a session I missed)	58%	29%	3%	3%	0%	6%
Communication & Interactions with Project Staff	45%	26%	10%	6%	6%	6%
Communication and Interactions with Session Presenters	45%	32%	10%	3%	6%	3%

One question sought information from the HUBs about the most important benefit from the training for them.

Question: What was the single most important benefit you obtained from these sessions? In other words, what single thing did you learn that is likely to help your business now and in the future? If there was nothing, please enter “none.”

Verbatim responses are shown below in italics.

<i>The concept of proactive outreach and relationship building with buyers when a proposal does not exist.</i>
<i>Networking and confirming individuals I can engage when/if we have specific questions related to the sessions and content we covered throughout the program.</i>
<i>Slides</i>
<i>Hearing from the procurement professionals and getting appropriate links for vendor signup.</i>
<i>Networking matters</i>
<i>Learning to network and pursue other avenues.</i>

<i>Information on applying and preparing materials for various submission areas (loans, grants, HUBs, etc)</i>
<i>Like I said Cheryl Brown was super helpful. I like stories from others who have done what I am trying to do and what they went through and how they got contracts. But, I also loved the introductions to the agency contacts. That was huge. I LOVE that you make the slides and the saved video available to watch later!! Thank you so much!! Feedback on my Capability Statement was so helpful as well!!</i>
<i>I learned a lot about how to position our company and expertise with government / public agencies through preparing the capabilities statement.</i>
<i>Learning to locate buyers for services my firm offers.</i>
<i>Resources for funding and how to navigate the PO procurement process.</i>
<i>Cheryl Brown's information on available opportunities that can be found outside of the traditional bid channels was informative and her presentation was inspirational for those of us who were looking to deepen our relationships with state and local government bodies.</i>
<i>"Don't boil the ocean" – providing one clear service and not offering "everything" is a key take away for my business.</i>
<i>I used this time as a refresher course as I learned about a lot of these resources in PTAC, or some of the other programs I've participated in.</i>
<i>Value Proposition/Capabilities Statement! Even though I haven't developed my value proposition, knowing about this marketing tool will help me be ready to bid and network!</i>
<i>Information about being registered to do business with different entities, such as AISD, TxDOT and others.</i>
<i>Networking, connecting with decision makers and not being shy to introduce myself and my business.</i>
<i>Since I have had the opportunity to sub for a company from the beginning, I didn't realize how important is to attend events and network. I wasn't aware of all of the organizations mentioned that are so helpful.</i>
<i>The information and the ability to access the slides</i>
<i>All above</i>
<i>How to sign up to receive bid opportunities information through the States</i>
<i>Sending procurement emails, learning on where and when to respond to a proposal and networking with different state and city of austin agencies.</i>
<i>I appreciate the willingness of presenters to be contacted if we had further questions. At times, I may not know what questions I need to ask until later in time.</i>
<i>I learned I can rise as a HUB and can get in the govt. contracting game. I learned how to read and write RFPs & scopes/statements of work. This class gave me confidence <3</i>
<i>All the sessions with Cheryl Brown were SO exceptionally useful. I feel more confident I can do business with the government because of her advice.</i>
<i>I learned that help is available this was the most single benefit for me. I called SCORE immediately and received a mentor in 48 hours.</i>
<i>Understanding the whole process</i>
<i>The networking as we build our businesses.</i>

Question: Please comment on how these RTP training sessions may have changed your thinking about your product, service, market, or business strategy. If the sessions have not affected your business in any way, please enter "none."

Nine owners said “none.” Other comments are shown below.

<i>I will be less reactive and more proactive in encouraging the creation of requests that I can bid on.</i>
<i>Yes</i>
<i>Yea very informative.</i>
<i>Yes - more opps!</i>
<i>Yes, they helped change our strategy for going after bid opportunities and positioning our company and capabilities for them.</i>
<i>RTP training sessions taught me how to be better prepared for strategizing my business services.</i>
<i>For my business, finding a prime is essential.</i>
<i>Cheryl Brown's sessions were the most in line with our current business interests and helped refocus our activities and resource expenditures.</i>
<i>No it was a lot of redundant information that had no use. The presenters didn't give insight as to the RFP process and the ins and outs of proposal writing and resources that would be helpful.</i>
<i>As a digital marketing agency, we tend to be generalist; we work across all marketing channels and have several offerings so when asked "what we do", we have a we do it all mentality. However, this program has made me rethink our company positioning, specifically in the way we share our value. Instead of being a "we do it all" marketing agency, we will focus on highlighting our specialty, influencer marketing.</i>
<i>Yes it definitely, and to focus on really honing in on a particular niche and really becoming extremely knowledgeable in comparison to my competitors.</i>
<i>yes, I changed the the way to present my products.</i>
<i>Yes</i>
<i>Yes!</i>
<i>Yes it did. I am more focused on seeking relevant government organizations that are actively procuring services from my business.</i>
<i>These RTP training sessions changed my way of thinking about my services by reminding me to reword and focus my audience and elevator pitch. I'm grateful for the reminder to keep it simple and blunt, selling to the right audience and/or vendor.</i>
<i>The training sessions changed my thinking about taking a closer look at my services, strategies, and brand. I've been able to enhance my approach and strengthen weaker areas that have been overlooked.</i>
<i>Yes RTP change my thinking and I will be use all that I've learned. It's given me more confidence to be bold and ask for what I need.</i>
<i>Yes, it was a process that has helped me a lot I'm right now a city of Austin registered provider and also SBIR is a program that I'm entering</i>
<i>Yes.</i>

Reactions to the workshops and advisers are shown below in Tables VII and VIII. The third workshop on responding to public procurement solicitations was rated highest and then the first workshop devoted to elevator pitch practice. As shown in Table VIII, satisfaction with the adviser feedback was very high among those that participated.

TABLE VII.*Usefulness of Workshops*

<i>Please rate each of the workshops.</i>	<u>Extremely Useful</u>	<u>Quite Useful</u>	<u>Useful</u>	<u>Somewhat Useful</u>	<u>Not At All Useful</u>	<u>Did Not Use/Not Applicable</u>
Elevator Pitch Practice with Business Advisers-December 7	45%	19%	10%	3%	3%	19%
Benefits of Certification—City of Austin—December 14	29%	19%	16%	10%	10%	16%
Responding to Public Procurement Solicitations and Preparing Your Proposal—Cheryl Brown—January 11	52%	26%	6%	3%	3%	10%

TABLE VIII.*Satisfaction with Workshops and Advisers*

<i>Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with each of the following statements.</i>	<u>Strongly Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>Strongly Disagree</u>	<u>Unable to Attend/Not Applicable</u>
I will be applying for one or more new certifications.	35%	29%	10%	0%	16%	10%
Feedback from the adviser on my draft capability statement was very good.	48%	19%	6%	0%	0%	26%
The elevator pitch advisers provided advice that I have been able to use.	39%	23%	6%	3%	0%	29%
The workshops were the appropriate length of time.	55%	23%	6%	6%	3%	6%

Table IX captures the changes in confidence for the owners. At least three-quarters of the owners said the sessions increased their confidence on all six future-oriented actions.

TABLE IX.						
<i>Changes in Confidence</i>						
<i>After this set of Funnel One sessions, how confident are you in performing the following actions compared to your level of confidence before these sessions?</i>	<u>Much More Confident</u>	<u>More Confident</u>	<u>No Change</u>	<u>Less Confident</u>	<u>Much Less Confident</u>	<u>Not Applicable</u>
Understanding which certifications are appropriate for my business.	39%	35%	16%	0%	3%	6%
Locating bid opportunities.	26%	52%	13%	3%	3%	3%
Knowing how to contact HUB program officials with questions	29%	52%	16%	0%	0%	3%
Communicating your business' past experience to potential customers	32%	52%	10%	0%	3%	3%
Finding a prime collaborator for pursuing bid opportunities	16%	65%	13%	0%	3%	3%
Making good decisions about pursuing a bid opportunity	35%	48%	10%	3%	0%	3%

Comments from Respondents about Their Expectations for the Training (Table I)

<i>I've had some experience with government contracting and the information aligns with what I have been exposed to in the past.</i>
<i>The program was excellent for networking and gaining insights regarding internal business documents (i.e. CS, pitch, etc.). I have previously participated in similar programs through WBENC and NMSDC (through whom we have certifications) but this program offered great reminders and insights specific to local businesses.</i>
<i>Instructors were subpar and sometimes even unprepared, Presentations were often very basic.</i>
<i>Everything to me was so perfect, but the lady that spoke to us about how to negotiate with government agencies blew my mind.</i>
<i>Impressed with course offerings, good experience and good presenters</i>

<i>The truth is I wasn't sure exactly what to expect as far as the structure but I have learned a lot from this and had the opportunity to listen and interact with different with a wealth of knowledge to share</i>
<i>I expected the speakers to be knowledgeable and engaging and they were. The breakouts were valuable bc they gave us opp for specific feedback.</i>
<i>I was very impressed by how organized and informative the program was. I absolutely loved the presentation by Cheryl Brown. She gave tips about government contracts that helped me immensely. I have been trying to do this for years, and sometimes, my APEX organization doesn't tell me what I really need to know, and that's what Cheryl did.</i>
<i>I was not expecting in depth material to be presented at each session. The level of commitment from the presenters and organizers and information was impressive.</i>
<i>The presenters along with information and insight was very informative.</i>
<i>As a new business owner and new to government contract work...the sessions opened up a whole new world for me.</i>
<i>Having been in business for more than a year, I wasn't expecting to find so much useful information in the course and the networking opportunities were quite valuable.</i>
<i>The presenters said that if we had any questions to reach out to them however everyone that I reached out to didn't even bother to respond or answer my emails. If they say they are available to answer our questions then follow through if not please don't say we can contact you if they don't bother responding. Also I didn't get templates or valuable practical information as to how to write a successful RFP. A lot of the information can be found on google or websites. It just seems some of the agency presenter just wanted to keep their jobs and not truly help us.</i>
<i>The program was informative and was a good refresher for my previous research.</i>
<i>A lot of these subjects were introduced to us as we achieved our certifications (HUB/DBE/etc) I wish the content was more high level and focused more on the award process then the programs.</i>
<i>The information shared not only covered the HUB application process, but provided an overview of many areas a Small Business needs to consider before participating in and government project.</i>
<i>At first I was under the impression it was just going to be a seminar with speakers of different backgrounds giving their expertise and advice. But it was extremely engaging and felt that we were all cheering each other on. It is difficult to start and/or grow your own business, so it is nice to feel support and get excited with new ideas that you can use to be successful.</i>
<i>I didn't know what to expect from this program but it provided valuable information. I love how we have the contact info if we want to ask additional questions. At times, the info was overwhelming because there were so many presenters scheduled on the same day but I understand and appreciate that was needed to get all the info across to us.</i>
<i>I am so excited for the next steps in my business. I feel like I really understand the procurement systems a bit better . I think those videos are going to be a resource that I will go back to over and over. It's like I didn't even know what the questions were before the classes so how was I going to ask about what I didn't know! The HUB RTP team did an amazing job with the sessions and the guests were phenomenal.</i>
<i>I found community, learned about how the government procuring works and how I can tailor my business that meets the government needs. Sessions with Cheryl Brown were particularly educational and instructive on how to address proposals and procurement emails.</i>
<i>The overall wealth of information was beneficial from a bird's eye point of view. There was a good variety of all companies and industries. It met my expectations knowing that this is an introductory session, with the foundation being laid.</i>
<i>This invaluable 10-week training, not only inspired me to stay the course, but it elevated my business knowledge, position, and strategy. I mean, I am so impressed and grateful to have been able to be a part of something that is going to sling-shot me into the future. I can feel it in my bones! Wonderful class, experience & small business community <3</i>

I thought the program was for people who already had their HUB certification. So the sessions covering that were not useful at all to me. I'm grateful for all the time and effort put into the program by various organizations, but it often took a lot of time to get to the "meat" of the presentation because of all the introductions, etc. As a small business owner, I'm stressed about time. So I wish the sessions were a little more time-efficient.

The series exceeded my expectations, information was clear and relatable.

I was expecting less information from participating, but now, after participating in the group, I understand the contracting responsibilities for my company to grow.

Future RTP Programs

Two final survey questions elicited suggestions about possible changes and improvements to future Funnel One programs.

Comments about Possible Revisions to the Program

The presentations could survey attendees for questions and base their presentations responsive to those questions.

This is an excellent program for budding businesses or those looking for a refresher on specific topics.

Need better presenters

Breakouts the last 30 mins of allotted time

Possibly shorten the time to 1 hr sessions.

I would suggest a better form of contact for those presenters in regards to contact numbers along with email addresses.

More time on prime/subcontractor relations.

Subcontractor strategies to secure a prime.

Have the presenters response to participants emails and actually help not just show up to present to keep their jobs.

Focus more on the grant writing and/or solicitation response writing aspect of doing business with the Government. I think that's where most people could use the help. If you have participants that don't have a basic working knowledge of the available programs you may want to refer them to their local PTAC or SBA office for one-on-one training.

Maybe reduce the number of presenters in one day.

Well done

It would be beneficial if the presenters knew that we would be able to gain access to the ppts after the meetings. There were a few meetings where a presenter would read off the ppt, decreasing sharing time for other presenters. I would prefer to read it on my own, and allow a presenter to elaborate the ppt they created, giving more insight on their expertise.

Provide all contact info during presentations for each presenter.

Question: If you have any additional comments, criticisms, or recommendations for improving this set of training sessions (Funnel One), please describe them. Use as much space as you need. Otherwise, please enter "none."

<i>See question 13; To the extent that the delivery of information can be responsive to the questions of attendees; I wouldn't collect those questions during the session because there are always attendees that enjoy hearing themselves talk or fall into endless self promotion.</i>
<i>To the extent that the presentations can be engaging, almost entertaining that would be a big benefit.</i>
<i>I was very interested in following up with one of the pitch evaluators. Maybe that can be something that is more openly an option in future sessions...if the evaluators are willing.</i>
<i>I'm very appreciate to all those who took the time out to provide their insight and expertise for the program!</i>
<i>Appreciate the access not only to experts and processes - but also a new crop of potential collaborators and Partners in the other companies. Thanks!</i>
<i>I would suggest a long list of all the organizations represented in the program and their contact information on one sheet. I had to go to each of the slides and write those down. That would be helpful. Also, I would like a better way to get notified of new bids, like www.bidnet.com or any recommendations. I don't like Bidsmart. It uses keywords instead of NAICS codes. Also, help finding the points of contact for HUB in the different state organizations would be helpful too.</i>
<i>I loved the sessions. I'm eager for more education. If anything, the sessions helped me realize that I have a lot of work to do to prepare my business for procurements.</i>
<i>Great work and so helpful. Tkabo Tech has appreciated the effort that went into crafting this program and we're very grateful to have been a participant in it.</i>
<i>Just remind those presenters to respond to emails and follow through with their commitment to help especially if they say please contact me if you have any questions and if I can help but don't actually respond to any emails more insight in the RFP process and templates or handout we can use and help with knowing the language of the RFP process. It would have been better to have multiple sessions or a longer session with Cheryl because she actually gave practical advice and best strategies that we can actually take with us to help us be successful and insight as to the RFP process.</i>
<i>I was under the impression that this program was created for companies that have already obtained some form of certification, so a few of the courses felt redundant.</i>
<i>Thank you for your work. Small businesses are the engine that keeps Austin moving. Programs like this help not only the small business, but the entire metro area.</i>
<i>Thank you. I appreciate all of your efforts :)</i>
<i>For the elevator pitches practices, ensure that the facilitator understands how they should be providing feedback to us. One of the people we had, since I went first, feedback was asking me why I'm in the program? I was taken aback because I was waiting on feedback not an inquiry about why I'm in the program. She never gave feedback. When we changed people the second person was helpful.</i>
<i>Excellent team of facilitators and panelists</i>
<i>The only thing I would add to this experience is more workshops and one-to-one sessions with specific businesses.</i>
<i>Thank you for the time and wisdom! I gained a lot of knowledge, one being that HUB may not be in my best cards at the moment of my business stage.</i>
<i>I think it would be beneficial to have more communication, interaction and networking between</i>

students in the class. I can only name on one hand of other participants. However this would require more class time, which passes the hour mark.

Thank you!

Oustanding job to Dr. Jarrett & the entire IC2 & UT team. You all are doing the Lord's work <3

Thank you for everything.

Again, Cheryl's advice made the program exceptional, because it was guiding us on how to make sense of a very confusing process. More information like that would be great!

Great job, I consider it a privilege to be present in the meetings. Each session, motivated and opened my thoughts and expanded my knowledge. Thank you I am very appreciative of the opportunity.

Second Survey (Inactive Participants)

Our experience with training has shown that every program beyond a single session has inactive participants. There were seven in this second cohort of Funnel One. Several attended the first and second sessions and several others attended three or four main sessions. To determine why, each received an email invitation on January 29 with a link to a five-question online survey. Non-respondents were sent two reminders, and the survey was closed on February 9, with five companies having responded.

Question 1: Would you like to participate in a future set of similar training sessions if UT-Austin offers them? Please choose one answer AND explain your choice if you want to.

One said “yes, definitely,” two said “yes, probably,” and two said “undecided.”

The comment was:

It would depend on session times, and the topics being covered.

Question 2: Although you did not participate in many sessions, did you watch any of the sessions later?

Four of the individuals indicated they had watched at least one of the videotaped sessions.

I did not watch any sessions later	1
Yes, I watched one	2
Yes, I watched two or three	2
Yes, I watched most of them	0
Yes, I watched all of them	0

Question 3 identified a variety of reasons for lack of consistent participation.

<u>QUESTION 3.</u>					
<i>Reasons for Lack of Participation</i>					
<i>Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with each of the following statements about why you did not participate in the sessions.</i>	<u>Strongly Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>Strongly Disagree</u>
I had unexpected work tasks that prevented me from attending.	4	1	0	0	0
My vacation plans precluded more participation	0	0	0	2	3
I did not think the information would be useful in my business.	0	1	4	0	0
I was interested only in several of the topics.	1	3	1	0	0
The Tuesday afternoon schedule and length of the sessions were inconvenient.	1	2	2	0	0
Illness/Personal Matters	0	2	0	1	2
Content was too advanced for my needs	0	0	0	4	1
Content was too elementary for my needs	0	1	2	2	0

Question 4: What could we have done differently for you to participate more frequently in the program sessions?

Comments:

I think approaching this more as a business coaching workshop and less as a technical overview of different programs would be useful. More interactivity, more person-centered content and less instruction-style meetings with presenters reading the powerpoints. Breakout rooms for participants to discuss together. Brainstorming activities.

The 4:30 start times interfered with my work schedule. I am a research contractor, and project times are unpredictable. I think an in-person workshop would benefit those of us looking for partnerships.

Pick and choose where we can know in advance the level of contents and profile of speakers.

Many of the speakers were knowledgeable in their areas but were not good speakers. A little too dry which isn't helpful for subjects as dense as the ones covered.

Starting during the work hours was difficult. Starting at 530PM or after would have been ideal. Having shorter more frequent meetings.

Question 5: If you have any additional comments, criticisms, or thoughts to share about this set of training sessions (Funnel One), please share them below.

My business received two short-term contracts during this time that required a shift in my time to turn around work very quickly. I ended up with a conflict during a few of the sessions that I wasn't able to shift.

It was helpful to see the capability statement examples. I had a primary question regarding the contracting process that was kind of brushed aside and not really taken seriously.

The 1st and 2nd sessions were the most helpful in terms of business strategies. I am a HUB but I generally work alone. It's discouraging that so many RFP would require me to build a larger team. It appears that my best strategy is to join a team that is bidding on a job.

The back-to-back PowerPoint presentations were a little sleepy - again shorter more frequent meetings after the work hours would have been easier to digest and follow through.