

# Readiness Training Program for Historically Underutilized Businesses

Cohort Three, Funnel Two

*Summary of Program Process and Participant Satisfaction*

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## *I. Pre-Session Activities*

### **Recruitment and Admissions**

Initial recruitment began in late March 2024 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 the first week of May 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.

The outreach was quite precise regarding revenue and employee thresholds, and the majority of the 68 subsequent applicants were qualified based on those desired thresholds for revenues (>\$500,000), employees (>1), and several years of operational experience. However, 19 companies were asked to defer to a subsequent funnel one class because of their size and revenues or not having a product or service for government purchasing. Four other companies submitted incomplete applications, did not respond to questions about their businesses, or applied too late. All four were denied admission.

Forty-five companies were admitted. The companies are listed below alphabetically, along with their industries.

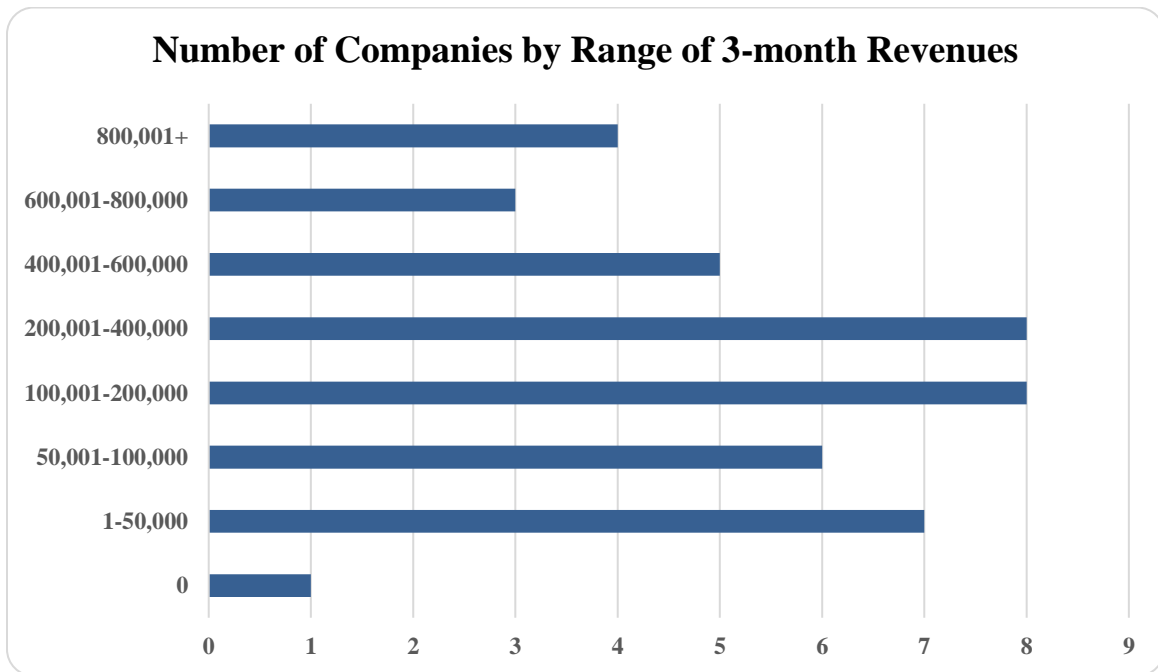
Company Names and Industries—Self-Identified—Spring-Summer 2024— Funnel Two, Cohort Three	
<i><b>Company</b></i>	<i><b>Business Industry</b></i>
TKABO Technical Solutions LLC	Information Technology
Mission Ready Inc.	IT Services
Press8 Telecom	Telecommunications
Boxer Consulting	Recruiting
Tishna Films	Video/Entertainment
Morgan Scott Construction Company	Construction
Absolute Facility Solution, LLC	Software Value Added Reseller
Henderson Professional Engineers	Construction
Corona Food Service, Inc,	Broadline Food Distribution
RM Drone Images	Images for Construction Projects
His & Hers Transport LLC	Transportation & Logistics
Mindful Media	Media and digital content creation
Acachi LLC	Information Technology
Siller Preferred Services	Employment agency

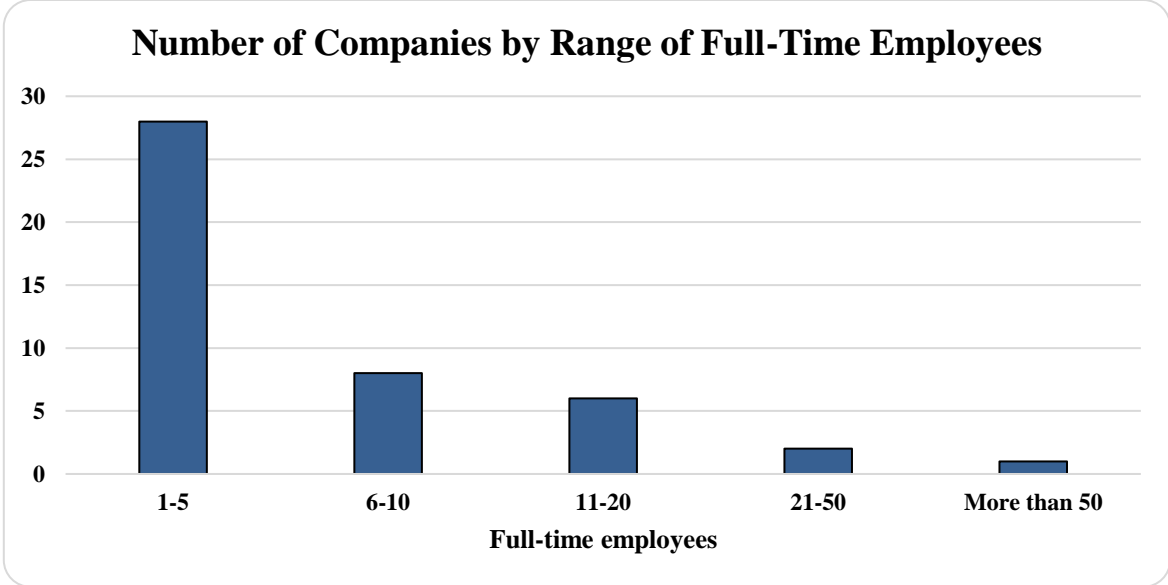
The Red Cape Company	Technology Training
MMD Architecture	Architecture
Sun Star Services, LLC	Engineering
Sagamore LLC	Fence/Deck/Outdoor living
Z-TEX Safety, LLC	Safety & Health Consulting and Training
Genius Road, LLC	Recruiting Services
Levior Energy Austin LLC	Energy Conservation
HCS, Inc.	Construction
Resources for Learning	Professional Services
Yanez Service Company LLC	Construction/Facility Maintenance
Spring Architects	Architecture
Albarez Construction LLC	Construction
Security Operations Group	Security Consulting
Digital iTechnology	IT Staffing & Consulting
Ranger Security Solutions	Manufacturing/Distribution/Sales
Workshop No5	Architecture and Interiors
Express Commercial Cleaning, Inc.	Janitorial Services
ProSkill Solutions, Inc.	IT Staffing
Rule Electrical Services LLC	Construction
Studio Balcones	Landscape Architecture
Trini Construction Builder	Construction
TaylorMade Careers LLC	Professional Services (Career Coaching)
Rolling Suds Austin-Westlake	Power Washing
Baeza Engineering, PLLC	Civil Engineering
ASSET Solutions	Manufacturing
Rachel Bryant Co.	Construction Facility Maintenance
Chugwar, Inc.	Marketing
City Sweep Solutions	Post Construction Clean
Future Link Technologies, Inc.	Environmental Consulting
Leap! Structures	Engineering
Red Heart CPR	Training

Subsequent tables and graphs shown below provide aggregate data for the 45 companies admitted including their approximate 2023 gross revenues, three-month gross revenues (October, November, December 2023), full-time employees, industries, types of certifications, age, race/ethnicity, level of education, and gender.

**Approximate Gross Revenue—2023 Calendar Year**

<b>Spring-Summer 2024 Cohort</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentages</b>
<\$50,000	1	2.3%
\$50,000-\$150,000	7	15.9%
\$150,000-\$500,000	14	31.8%
\$500,000-\$1 million	7	15.9%
>\$1 million	15	34.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>100.0%</b>





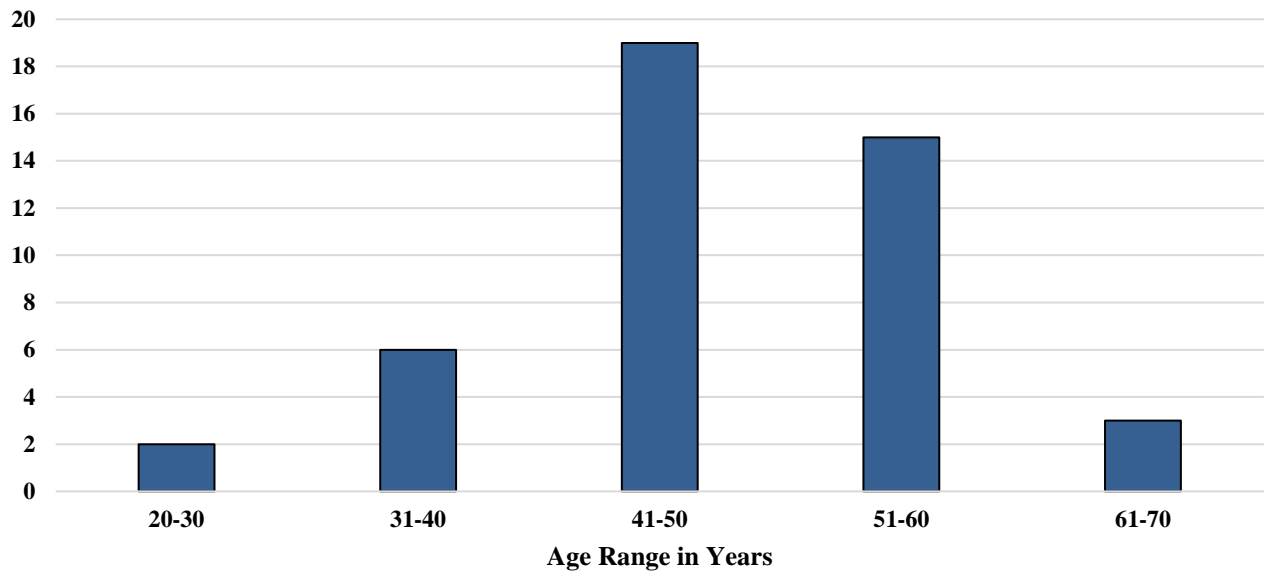
**Industry**

Construction	10
Professional Services (Consulting, training, recruitment)	7
Software & Engineering	6
Information Technology	4
Architecture	4
Logistics & Maintenance	4
Media & Marketing	3
Safety & Health Consulting/Training	2
Telecommunications	1
Food Distribution	1
Manufacturing	1
Security	1
Manufacturing/Distribution/Sales	1

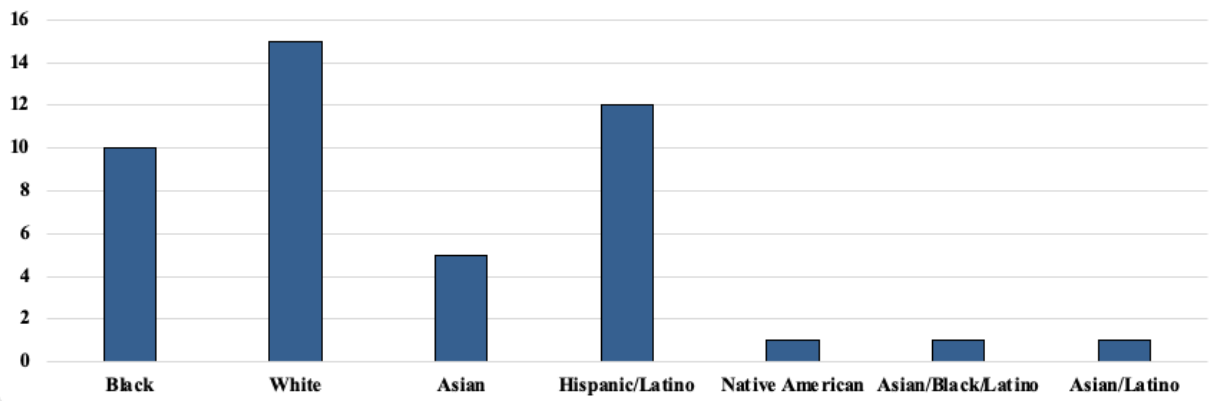
**Certifications**

HUB	43
MBE	23
WBE	27
DBE	17
SBE/SB	6
NMSDC	3
Other	7

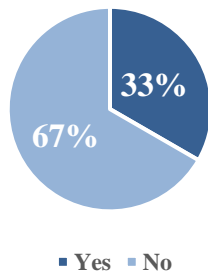
### Age Range of Participants

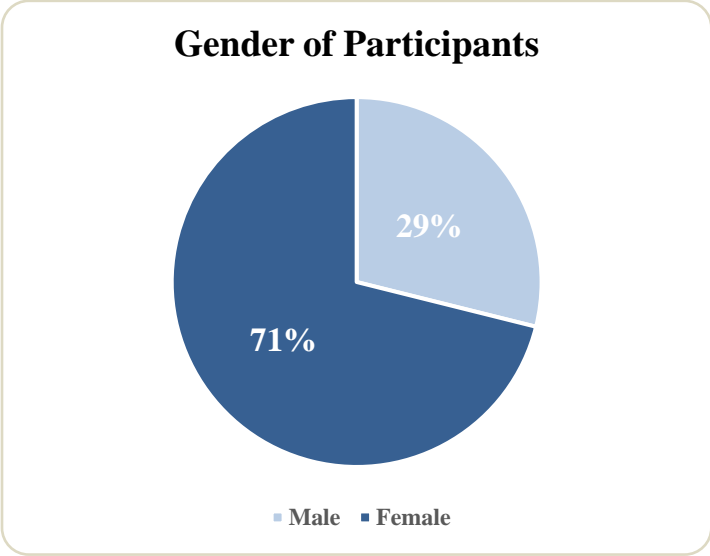
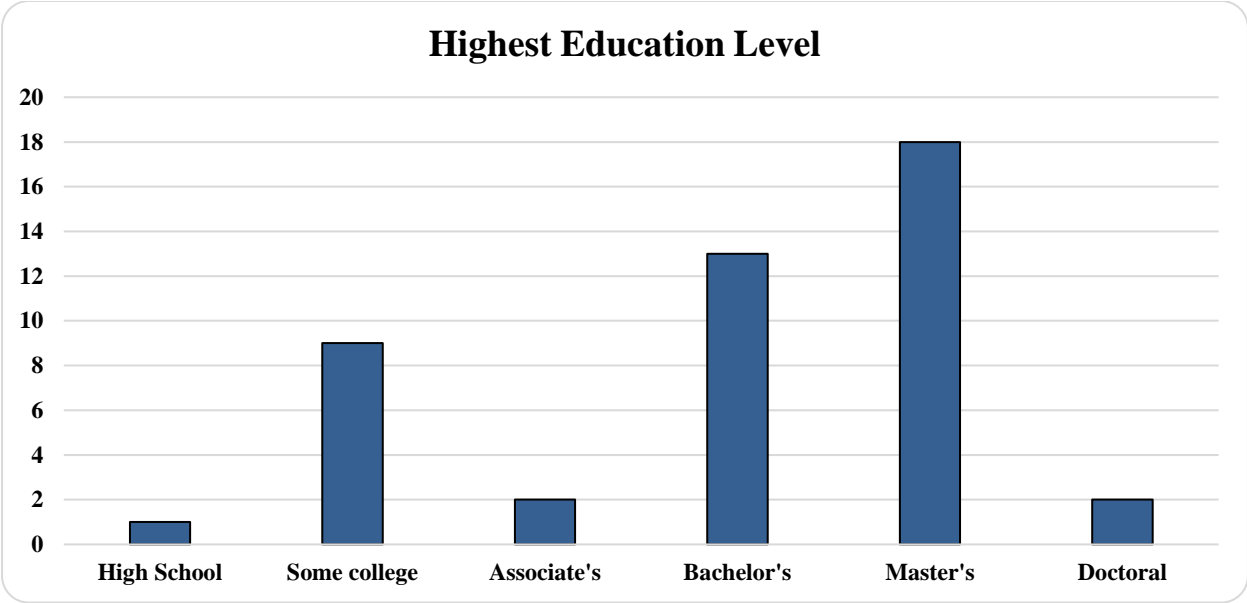


### Race/Ethnicities of Participants



### Latino/Hispanic Identification





## ***II. Funnel Two, Cohort Three Sessions***

The topics, session dates, and speakers are shown on the project website at: <https://www.smallbizxlr8.com/new-ut-austin-training-program-for-hubs/>.

Attendance varied by session. Based on their attendance at the main sessions, the three workshops, and a request for short-term technical assistance, 38 of the 45 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 84%, exceeding our expected rate of 66%, and the previous Funnel Two cohort completion rate of 73%.

Shortly after the first main session, all admitted companies were sent a very short list of topics and subjects and asked to select those of greatest interest to them. The group selected two topics: (1) how to compete with larger firms in their own industry; and (2) federal government opportunities. The first topic became the last main session and the federal government opportunities topic was addressed in a workshop on responding to purchasing solicitations.

A number of proven procedures were created to facilitate interaction and networking and to preserve the session information. A social media networking group was created. Also we developed and publicized a Participant Folder. This folder included links to recordings of the sessions for those unable to attend the live training, links to materials presented by the speakers, and a summary of the session via the software program Otter.ai.

Three workshops were held. The first was staged on May 9 and was designed to provide an overview of the local and state HUB/DBE/SBE programs, bid opportunities, and upcoming initiatives. Approximately 25 companies attended. At the second workshop on May 23, companies learned about responding to public purchasing solicitations. A third workshop on June 13 was devoted to artificial intelligence applications for small businesses. Nineteen companies attended.

At the beginning of June, companies were invited to request technical assistance to address a specific company need. Companies were instructed to complete a form about their need and were informed that assistance would be limited to a maximum of 10 hours. A strict deadline was imposed to encourage a timely response from the most interested parties. Six requests for assistance were submitted across an array of issues. While all technical assistance had been intended for completion by the end of July, two of the arrangements were continuing into August.

Advisers who served at one of the workshops, gave feedback on the capability statements, and/or were providing technical assistance included:

Cheryl A. Brown, Executive Director, North San Diego Small Business Development Center



Christina Mortel, Small Business Advisor, Center for Women Entrepreneurs, Texas  
Women's University  
Vickie Sokol Evans, Founder, The Red Cape Company

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

#### **Summary**

Over 70 percent of the respondents said the program had exceeded their expectations, 85 percent believe they will be able to use the information in their businesses, 95 percent would recommend the training to colleagues or non-competitive businesses, and everyone found the sessions useful for improving their skills. Various 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 Two, Third Cohort 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. <sup>1</sup> Each of the 38 participants received an email invitation on July 15 with a link to an online survey. Non-respondents were sent three reminders. The survey was closed on July 31 with a total of 28 responses. A copy of the survey instrument is attached as a separate document. <sup>2</sup>

#### **General Evaluation of Funnel Two 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.

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<sup>1</sup> As noted earlier, 38 of the companies were considered as participants completing Funnel Two. 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 one response to the short survey are presented afterwards.

<sup>2</sup> A third survey will be conducted to collect information about the workshops on construction bonds. Those results will be submitted in a separate report at the end of August.

**TABLE I.**

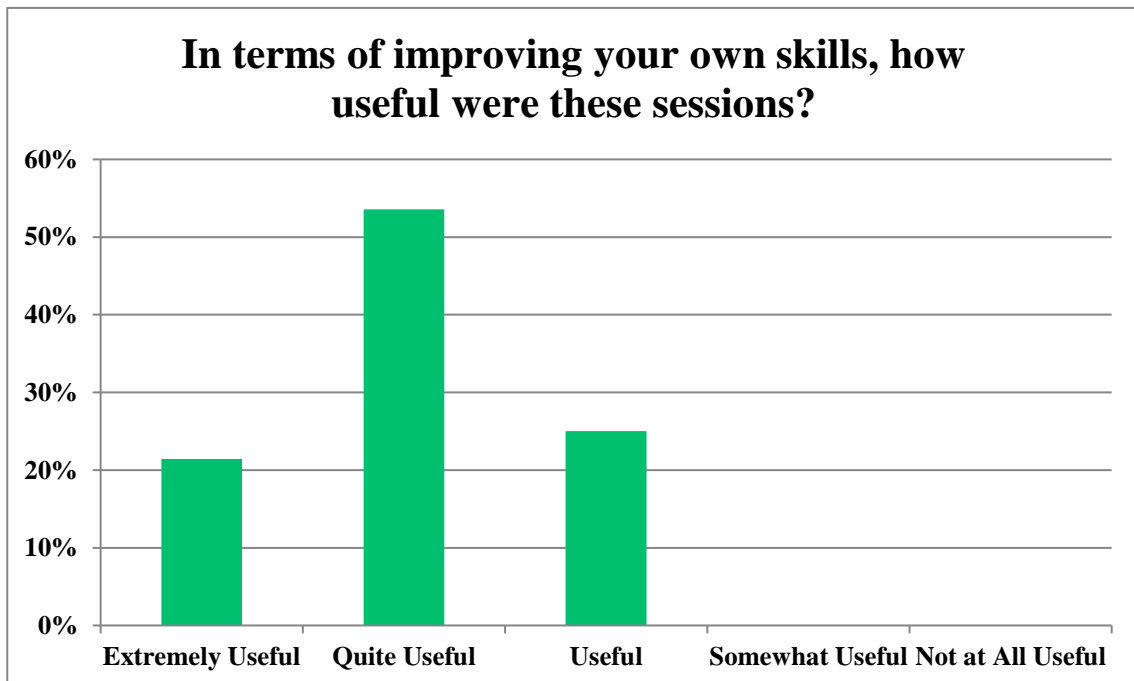
*Now that you have graduated and received your certificate, how would you rate the entire series of RTP Funnel Two sessions? Please choose one answer AND explain your choice.*

Answer Options	All Sessions (# of responses)	Percentage of Respondents
Far exceeded my expectations	4	14%
Exceeded my expectations	16	57%
Met my expectations	7	25%
Did not meet my expectations	1	4%
No value add	0	0%

Note: Comments from respondents to this question are shown later starting on page 21.

**GRAPH I.**

**SKILL IMPROVEMENT**



**TABLE II.**

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

Answer Options	<u>All Sessions</u> (# of responses)	<u>Percentage of</u> <u>Respondents</u>
Yes definitely	19	68%
Yes likely	8	29%
Don't know	1	4%
No unlikely	0	0%
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>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
The sessions provided information and content new to me.	25%	39%	29%	7%	0%
The information and content were appropriate for my needs.	14%	71%	14%	0%	0%
I will be able to use this information in my business.	25%	61%	14%	0%	0%
The structure of presentations, exercises, and discussions was appropriate for my needs.	21%	61%	18%	0%	0%

**TABLE IV.**

*Should the Readiness Training Program series (Funnel Two) be offered again?*

Answer Options	<u>All Sessions</u> (# of responses)	<u>Percentage of</u> <u>Respondents</u>
Yes, without revision	12	43%
Yes, with some revisions/modifications	15	54%
Yes, with substantial revisions/modifications	1	4%
Probably not	0	0%
Definitely not	0	0%

## **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 May 14 was ranked the highest. Once those absent from the session are deducted, every session was considered “useful, quite useful, or extremely useful” by at least 93 percent of the participants.

<b>TABLE V.</b>						
<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>
Welcoming Remarks & HUB Company Self-Introductions—April 30	39%	32%	25%	4%	0%	0%
Marketing for Growth—Cheryl Brown—May 14	54%	29%	14%	0%	0%	4%
Human Resources—Deirdre Pattillo, Mike Haggerty—June 4	43%	21%	25%	4%	0%	7%
Small Business Finance—Jim Nolen—June 18	36%	29%	21%	0%	7%	7%
Strategies for Competing with Larger Companies—Hay, Moledina, Mortel, Amber—July 2	43%	14%	29%	0%	4%	11%

Table VI shows the owners’ reactions to several program components. The links for uploading materials, the links to watch missed sessions, and the website were most useful.

**TABLE VI.**

*Usefulness of Program Activities and Components*

<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	41%	26%	22%	0%	0%	11%
Social Media Networking Groups	33%	15%	19%	11%	7%	15%
Link to Watch a Session I Missed	61%	7%	11%	7%	0%	14%
Links for Uploading Written Materials	42%	27%	19%	4%	0%	8%
Communication & Interactions with Project Staff	39%	25%	11%	7%	0%	18%
Communication and Interactions with Session Presenters	46%	14%	14%	7%	0%	18%

One question sought information from the HUBs about the most important benefit 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.”**

Four companies did not specify a benefit. Verbatim responses from the other companies are shown below in italics.

<i>Researching how AI would be beneficial to my business</i>
<i>Networking, elevator pitch, follow up all so important</i>
<i>Learning the specifics of what government buyers look for.</i>
<i>Same as above on the session understanding how to read and respond to RFPs</i>
<i>An in-person or one-on-one session would be beneficial if feasible.</i>
<i>Federal clients. Federal clients. Federal clients.</i>

<i>How competitive the market is right now and the importance of follow up with potential prospects.</i>
<i>Creating a capabilities statement.</i>
<i>Marketing for growth was an extremely helpful session along with meeting with a student willing to help give advice.</i>
<i>Loved the Workshop #3. Very relevant and timely.</i>
<i>I learned how AI can help me with my business.</i>
<i>Sourcing new business within the federal government.</i>
<i>See above... getting our name out there, and telling people what it is that we do, is so important.</i>
<i>More awareness about government contracting requirements</i>
<i>Interaction with real people</i>
<i>How/when to develop tools to set my company for successful growth.</i>
<i>There are websites to view bid opportunities.</i>
<i>We will continue to explore AI and see how that can improve our deliverables. We will also apply some of the techniques described in competing with larger firms. There were really some small takeaways in every session.</i>
<i>Trying to get bids with the city or the state can be a challenging task. Getting information from the various websites can be overwhelming at times - however some of these sessions helped to narrow down where to start in that process.</i>
<i>I need to review some of the later sessions. The schedule was a bit challenging for me at times.</i>
<i>As of now, I am unsure, but will be happy to follow up once I rewatch the sessions I missed and those I had to leave early.</i>
<i>Thinking outside the box I don't have my notes with me but I think it was Cheryl that stated that. I also have a better idea to know the bids I should and should not pursue.</i>
<i>The availability of business advisors that was given to us as a result of being in this program. The advisor assigned to me gave valuable feedback that was concrete and practical advise and changes to my capability statement. This helped to provide a inside look at what state agencies look for.</i>
<i>Marketing for growth.</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."**

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

<i>Start marketing</i>
<i>Reminded me of things needed to help grow</i>
<i>Learned how to market to government agencies and that it's a different segment that I'm not currently marketing to.</i>
<i>Business strategy is the most helpful for us, especially the session on understanding RFPs.</i>
<i>In person or one on one session would be helpful if possible.</i>
<i>The aspect of reaching out to federal clients have been really useful. Cheryl Brown sessions were practical and really helpful.</i>
<i>It has helped me to take a different approach to our marketing strategy.</i>
<i>I have a better understanding of what it takes to seek and secure government contracts. We are already providing services to public sector employees on an individual basis for smaller purchases or one-off services for a particular team. We now have a map with actionable steps when we're ready to go after contracts.</i>
<i>Continuing to have a positive and energetic approach to all things associated with my business. It won't happen over a short period, but they will happen as long as I stay the course.</i>
<i>Although a lot of the content was familiar (HR and Marketing for example), definitely great information on finding additional contract opportunities.</i>
<i>I am very grateful to be a part of this session, which affected my thought process on how to do business in 2024. Sometimes, the old ways don't always work, the sessions helped me to tweak my business strategies for the better.</i>
<i>I had the realization that we've been operating in a black hole. Communication and anything we can do to make ourselves visible is key. And there are some very easy ways to do this!</i>
<i>The depth of information equipped me for greater success in bid applications</i>
<i>Made me more aware of opportunities out there.</i>
<i>I found the session on AI to be helpful, as we are exploring different tools. I also found the session on competing with larger firms helpful. As a DIR contract holder and former gov employee I didn't find the working with government discussions as helpful, but it was good information for people new to working with public entities and probably still appropriate for business of \$500k+ in revenue.</i>

<i>Although the sessions didn't dramatically change my thinking about our business, it helped me to be more comfortable and confident because we are already using many of the same approaches discussed in the program. In addition, there were definitely some great comments that I can incorporate to the business.</i>
<i>I found the HR information and the session on the RFPs particularly helpful to my business.</i>
<i>They always challenge me to think of the bigger picture while reminding me of the immense local resources that are available to tap into.</i>
<i>Identifying the need and providing the service was crucial for me. To manage costs, I reached an agreement with the San Marcos Probation Office, which was signed by the judge. Through my nonprofit, they now send volunteers to me, and I have the authority to assign these volunteers to any necessary tasks. This arrangement provides free help, allowing me to scale my costs effectively.</i>
<i>The last presentation was helpful because she gave us resources to find freelancers which is helpful for small businesses.</i>
<i>The idea of not overbidding what you are capable of handling was great advice. Plus the RFP process and bidding was really useful.</i>

**Question: Did you obtain other noteworthy benefits from the sessions? If you did, please explain below. If not, please skip to the next question.**

Sixteen owners cited other noteworthy benefits as shown below.

<i>Capabilities statement</i>
<i>I really enjoyed the insight from the AI and marketing sessions.</i>
<i>Yes, learning of other portals where we could register as a HUB that we would not have known about if not for these sessions.</i>
<i>The 'Marketing for Growth' session was both impressive and enlightening. It provided valuable insights into the specific tasks required to approach diverse markets and entities, including government agencies.</i>
<i>Community was really helpful as I met other students in other sessions.</i>
<i>Yes! Greater insights into the process of government bids and more confidence in the need for businesses like ours to compete in this space.</i>
<i>Finding additional contract opportunities and reviewing even Federal contracts.</i>
<i>I learned how to do more government/federal bids and that it's good to keep in mind that they do take forever to pay you. That your business cannot solely survive on those contracts.</i>



<i>Yes, on expanding my marketing techniques.</i>
<i>Overview of all the public procurement options was helpful. Hearing successful business owners tell their stories, and sticking to their values, was great. AI session was fascinating, and yes, I became slightly less terrified.</i>
<i>I benefited from the experience of the presenters and available resources for potential contractors</i>
<i>The opportunity to learn more about the Austin market.</i>
<i>It was good to step out of the business and spend time focusing on different topics. It did force me to think about how we are working each of these areas and what could we do better.</i>
<i>Every session was beneficial. Though some sessions were more relevant than others, I learned something in every session I attended.</i>
<i>I always appreciate the perspectives speakers bring.</i>
<i>The finance presentation gave insight into what lenders look for and what a successful application looks like.</i>

Another question asked about technical assistance.

**Question: Every company was given an opportunity to receive technical assistance. If you did not request assistance, please indicate the primary reason you chose not to pursue this opportunity. If you did, please skip to the next question.**

<i>We are in our busy season and time did not allow for me to request the help. I would have signed up for a TA to review a recent RFP we submitted this year to get feedback on how we filled it out and what we could have done better. We have learned we were not assigned the contract so having the time to walk through what we put together and what we could have done better would have been helpful. This was on me as I was juggling a lot all at once.</i>
<i>I didn't need the assistance since I am already receiving assistance with prior contacts I made.</i>
<i>I missed some sessions and that is why I didn't pursue the opportunity.</i>
<i>Priorities at work prevented me from taking advantage of the offer.</i>
<i>I did not know that this was something I could request therefore I did not.</i>
<i>I didn't request technical assistance due to a busy schedule.</i>
<i>I would love the opportunity to receive technical assistance. However, I have not heard back from you all. I would also like to have the UT analyze our bus as well.</i>

<i>I was unable to receive the assistance because I was out of the country for 3 weeks, making it very difficult to work on this aspect of the training.</i>
<i>I was not aware of the technical assistance.</i>
<i>I didn't feel I needed additional assistance with the topics presented. The content was clear and useful.</i>
<i>Time</i>
<i>I believe I applied. I haven't heard back. If I missed it, that is my fault.</i>
<i>The opportunity to receive technical assistance was a game changer for me. I received help on my capability statement. The feedback helped me to make changes that were beneficial and specifically target to state agencies. The feedback on what has changed in state agencies were helpful too such as EIN are no longer used on CS because of confidentiality.</i>
<i>Did not need technical assistance.</i>

Reactions to the workshops and advisers are shown below in Table VII. The first workshop devoted to current and near-term contracting opportunities was the most highly rated. Advisers were very highly rated.

**TABLE VII.***Satisfaction with Workshops and Advisers*

<i>Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with each of the following statements about the workshops and advisers.</i>	<u>Strongly Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>Strongly Disagree</u>	<u>Unable to Attend</u>	<u>Not Applicable</u>
The first workshop on current and near-term contracting opportunities with local governments was very useful for me.	43%	54%	4%	0%	0%	0%	0%
The second workshop on responding to public purchasing solicitations was very useful for me.	36%	36%	21%	4%	4%	0%	0%
The third workshop on the potential of artificial intelligence for small businesses was very useful for me.	39%	21%	21%	0%	4%	11%	4%
The workshops were the appropriate length of time.	39%	32%	18%	7%	0%	0%	4%
Feedback from my technical assistance adviser was appropriate for my situation.	29%	32%	7%	0%	4%	0%	29%
The advisers had the appropriate knowledge, skills, and abilities.	57%	32%	4%	0%	4%	0%	4%
I would recommend the advisers to others in the future.	57%	36%	4%	0%	4%	0%	0%

Table VIII captures the changes in confidence for the owners. At least 60 percent of the owners said the sessions increased their confidence on all five future-oriented actions, with the most positive impact being on how to contact HUB program officials with questions.

**TABLE VIII.***Changes in Confidence*

<i>After this set of Funnel Two sessions, how confident are you in performing the following actions compared to your level of confidence before these sessions?</i>	<u><b>Much More Confident</b></u>	<u><b>More Confident</b></u>	<u><b>No Change</b></u>	<u><b>Less Confident</b></u>	<u><b>Much Less Confident</b></u>	<u><b>Not Applicable</b></u>
Knowing how to contact HUB program officials with questions	36%	54%	11%	0%	0%	0%
Making good decisions about pursuing a bid opportunity	29%	54%	18%	0%	0%	0%
Finding a prime contractor or potential partner for pursuing bid opportunities	14%	46%	25%	4%	0%	11%
Submitting bids as either a prime or a subcontractor	25%	46%	21%	4%	0%	4%
Communicating your business' past experience to potential customers	32%	36%	25%	0%	0%	7%

**Future RTP Programs**

Several final survey items attempted to elicit suggestions about possible changes and improvements to future Funnel Two programs.

Table IX shows owners' preferences for possible changes in the topics. There is a desire that future Funnel Two classes have an expanded session on competing with larger companies. Otherwise, there is general satisfaction as illustrated by the relatively equal distributions.

**TABLE IX.**

*Possible Changes in Topics for Future Sessions*

<i>Please rate each of the sessions.</i>	<u>No Change Needed</u>	<u>Should Be Reduced</u>	<u>Should be Omitted</u>	<u>Should be Expanded</u>
Welcoming Remarks & HUB Company Self-Introductions	82%	14%	0%	4%
Marketing for Growth	68%	11%	0%	21%
Human Resources	68%	14%	0%	18%
Small Business Finance	56%	19%	7%	19%
Strategies for Competing with Larger Companies	42%	8%	0%	50%

Owners also were asked how the sessions compared to their expectations at the beginning.

<i>The speakers were extremely thorough in their presentations.</i>
<i>I wasn't sure exactly what to expect but the content and presenters were wonderful and I certainly took away valuable information I did not have previously</i>
<i>The sessions were informative, and the presenters put in considerable effort. However, the content remained introductory and lacked depth.</i>
<i>The sessions have been really helpful for my small business. Cheryl Brown sessions have been the best!</i>
<i>This was such a valuable experience. Thank you for all the resources, education, and opportunities to connect. I can appreciate all the time and attention given to this program. So grateful for the opportunity to participate.</i>
<i>I am looking to get contracts through this and I don't see a connection to contracts.</i>
<i>I was able to participate in Funnel One of the RTP and felt the material and information provided was a bit more useful than this session.</i>
<i>A lot of the content was familiar, but great refresher. The best portions were really on reviewing opportunities to continue to explore and secure other federal contracting opportunities.</i>

<i>I had an idea in my head what it would be like and I was right. I learned the information I needed to.</i>
<i>The session with Ms. Cheryl Brown was amazing. It gives a boost to my confidence on how to source new business and also learning new techniques on how to maximize business strategies.</i>
<i>I did not know what to expect, honestly. I found this to be a supportive and encouraging program full of really great individuals. Even if I/we are not quite ready to take advantage of all that was presented, the knowledge base is extremely helpful for future decisions.</i>
<i>It was wonderful to learn directly from the experiences of business owners.</i>
<i>There were good presenters and topics. It would have been nice to have conversation in the presentations, not just posted questions. Also, some in person interaction would have been nice, even if just at the end.</i>
<i>I didn't know what to expect at first, but by the end of the program I can definitely say all the sessions exceeded my expectations. The program was very well organized and provided great information that covered different areas in the business.</i>
<i>It would have been even better if some of the topics could have provided more in-depth information.</i>
<i>Overall, very grateful for the workshops.</i>
<i>These sessions are incredibly insightful! It'll be most beneficial (and possible to see how the input works) after I've had a chance to implement recommendations from the discussions. Admittedly, things have been hectic, so I must revisit the recordings to ensure I get all the takeaways and can put them into an actionable plan - specifically for sessions I may have missed or had to leave early.</i>
<i>The program was very helpful for me. It expanded my thinking capacity and gave me more confidence.</i>
<i>I was able to follow up with one of the presenters and received valuable feedback. The small business finance was really helpful to show what lenders are looking for and many resources available. The last presentation was helpful because she gave us resources to find freelancers which is helpful for small businesses.</i>
<i>The speakers were extremely helpful.</i>

A final question solicited comments of all kinds about potential improvements.

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

Verbatim responses are shown below.

*Maybe more on figuring out cashflow. How to be prepared for a larger job checklist. Some ideas on what is needed to ask for a line of credit. How to inquire without hurting your personal/business credit report.*

*The time of some sessions were hard because I have small children and pick up on some days did not allow me to attend a session. The sessions were recorded which was helpful. For me personally the lunch hour is good as that is almost always available.*

*I would also like HUB training program for specific industries such as video production. I would also love to learn about where to learn about carry over funds which I can access.*

*Thank you for this opportunity and all the work that you put into the program. Well done!*

*Thank you very much! I've had the opportunity to revisit some sessions for a deeper understanding, and I truly value having access to the recordings. I hope they will continue to be available.*

*As an owner, while I find some of the content familiar, I would also suggest allowing us to invite other senior leadership members from our company to attend certain sessions. For instance, our Senior Sales Director could benefit from sessions on procurement processes and proposal writing, our CFO might find the financial snapshot on valuation insightful, and our Senior Customer Success Manager could gain valuable insights from sessions on marketing and HR.*

*Lastly, I'd like to give special recognition to Carly for her exceptional assistance and promptness. A big shout-out to her!*

*Thank you for the program!*

*Thank you so much for an excellent program*

*Thank you for the opportunity to learn!*

*I really appreciate the fact that you have this program and are making efforts to support small businesses. It's great to hear from representatives from the different entities and have their backing. I hope my feedback was constructive. Thanks!*

*None, thank you for the program*

*I really wanted to hear more on the topic of Human Resources, mainly because the presenters were so interesting.*

*Again, I will be happy to follow up and provide additional feedback once I've had a chance to review the recordings.*

*I believe I need help with going back to review the contacts, I was not familiar with the program and didn't go back to review the content. I made notes as I went along. It would be helpful just to have list with all contacts at the end of the program and send to participants.*

*Please continue to offer the technical assistance because this truly was a game changer and provided the opportunity to hone my document and to improve it significantly.*

*More on AI would be great since it's new and being more widely utilized throughout businesses.*

## **Second Survey (Inactive Participants)**

Our experience with training has shown that every program beyond a single session has inactive participants. There were 8 in this third cohort of Funnel Two. Several did not attend any session and several attended only the first session. To determine why, each received an email invitation on July 15 with a link to a five-question online survey. Non-respondents were sent two reminders, and the survey was closed on July 31, with one company 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.” Her comment was:

*I love the program, and it is very valuable to me. Even though I was not able to attend them live, I still like to watch, and it helps to watch the recordings..*

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

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

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



**QUESTION 3.**

*Reasons for Lack of Participation*

<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>	<b><u>Strongly Agree</u></b>	<b><u>Agree</u></b>	<b><u>Neutral</u></b>	<b><u>Disagree</u></b>	<b><u>Strongly Disagree</u></b>
I had unexpected work tasks that prevented me from attending.	1	0	0	0	0
My summer vacation plans precluded more participation	1	0	0	0	0
I did not think the information would be useful in my business.	0	0	0	0	1
I was interested only in several of the topics.	0	1	0	0	0
The Tuesday afternoon schedule and length of the sessions were inconvenient.	0	0	0	1	0
Illness/Personal Matters	1	0	0	0	0
Content was too advanced for my needs	0	0	0	0	1
Content was too elementary for my needs	0	0	0	0	1

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

Comment:

*Maybe if they were after 5 o'clock. But in general I was able to attend. I had a death in the family and I had a hip replacement. So I was not available as much as I was last time.*

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

Comment:

*I love the program, and I think it's very helpful. I am now working on my 8 (a) certification. So that is taking a lot of my time as well. But the classes are invaluable for me. Thank you so much!!*