**SECTION IV: Proposal Narrative**

The Proposal Narrative responses will be entered directly into the online application portal with the following character limitations (including spaces):

Individual Applications or Centers within a Group-Based Application:

* 3,000 characters available for narrative questions worth 5 points
* 5,000 characters available for narrative questions worth 10 points.

Network-based Applications:

* 4,000 characters available for narrative questions worth 5 points
* 7,500 characters available for narrative questions worth 10 points.

Each center within a group application must complete a separate and unique proposal narrative that is subject to the character limitations of an individual applicant. Narratives that exceed the allowed character count will not be reviewed beyond the allowed character limitation. It is not required that applicants utilize the total character count allotment.

Proposed Metrics & Scope of Work – 35 points

1. Past performance: Describe how the Center has previously supported small businesses with technical assistance and the impact of the previous or ongoing technical assistance programs. (5 points)
2. Scope of Work Design:
   1. Explain the gaps in the Center’s community and specific gaps that underserved businesses in the Center’s community experience. (5 points)
   2. Explain the Center’s overall vision including how the Center will address the above-mentioned gaps.  This should include a description of the Center’s approach including the programs that will be implemented. For example, describe the small business and/or nonprofit training programs, consulting strategies, etc. (10 points)
   3. Explain the Center’s quantitative goals included in the metric proposal. For previous awardees: If any metric goals have been reduced from the previous year, explain why. (5 points)
   4. Describe how this proposed Scope of Work will build on the base programming supported by the Center’s match agreement. (5 points)
3. Match drawdown: Provide a plan of action indicating how the Center will draw down all federal or private funds available during the grant period using local cash match. In addition, if the federal or private award term period is set to expire prior to the end of the TAP2023 Program year (September 30, 2024), please indicate when the Center expects to have proof of continuing award. As a reminder, all TAP participating organizations must have an active federal or private award. (5 points)

Center Strategies and Organizational Capacity – 10 points

1. Describe the Center’s in-take methods including details of any strategies to ensure small businesses are appropriately onboarded. Include any strategies to ensure culturally sensitive and language inclusive onboarding approaches. (5 points)
2. Describe the Center’s management strategy for service delivery and how the work will be coordinated and monitored. Ensure you are detailing how management ensures service for underserved businesses, including any shifts you will implement as part of TAP funding.  Include organizational chart. (5 points)

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Action Plan – 30 points

1. The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Action Plan should include actionable strategy and specific steps to diversify the client pool, provide culturally competent intake and ongoing support, and provide culturally competent and inclusive technical assistance to unserved, underserved, disinvested, and disadvantaged business groups. Include target populations and geographies (for example, rural businesses), in-language services, disparities addressed and associated data points. (10 points)
2. Describe the Center’s outreach strategy including the steps taken to reach underserved businesses including minority, rural, and other hard-to reach business owners.  (10 points)
3. Detail partnerships with community-based organizations and the roles that the partners play in expanding capacity, reach, locations, and in-language capabilities to underserved businesses. Be specific about the nature of the relationships including if there are MOUs or sub-contracts. Please note that a list of partners is not sufficient to receive full points, there must be detail about who the partners are, what they bring in terms of DEI, and the scope of their work under this TAP proposal. Describe counselors, facilitators, etc. that represent those being served. (10 points)

Financial Management – 20 points

1. Include detailed budget breakdown. All costs must be justified and allowable – see excel template. (10 points)
2. Justify the grant funding amount the Center is applying for. Discuss how the Center will leverage funds for maximum impact. Note that TAP is competitive and there is great need across the state. Be specific about why the Center requires the funding requested. (5 points)
3. Describe how the Center will track allowable activities and expenditures. (5 points)

Center Performance – 5 points

1. Existing Centers Only: Has the Center received special recognition from underserved business groups or for its work serving underserved business group for past performance (e.g., awards, letters of recognition, etc.)? Only include awards received in the past 5 years. If yes, explain the work performed to achieve the special recognition and who it was given by (i.e., Assembly Member, federal partner, city, county, etc.) (5 points)

Bonus Points

These questions will be scored separately

1. Complete and timely submission of [Letter of Intent to Apply](https://calosba.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/Letter-of-support-template-TAP-2023-24.docx) (optional but recommended). The Letter of Intent (LOI) should include applicant name, location, and approximate funding request. The LOI should be on letterhead and emailed to [SBTAEP@gobiz.ca.gov](mailto:SBTAEP@gobiz.ca.gov) in PDF format. (2 points)

Yes/No Field – if yes, Date Submitted

1. For TAP Awarded Centers: Is the Center currently, at least, 40% spent down Year to Date (YTD) as of Quarter 2 of the TAP2022 performance period?  (Yes/No) (5 points)

OR

For New Applicants (not a current TAP awardee): Provide a minimum of 3 but no more than 5 letters of support demonstrating the Center’s past performance and ability to spend down previously awarded technical assistance funding within the last 5 years. Refer to section ‘[Required/Supporting Documents’](bookmark://_Required/Supporting_Documents) for required letter template. (Yes/No) (5 Points)