



**National Institutes of Health  
Office of Acquisition and Logistics Management  
Small Business Program Office  
*The Path to Excellence and Innovation Fact Sheet***



***Presidential Executive Order 13779: The White House Initiative to Promote Excellence and Innovation at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs)***

“...[Federal] agencies are to assist in strengthening HBCU’s ability to equitably participate in Federal programs and explore new ways of improving the relationship between the Federal Government and HBCUs; and establish how the agency intends to increase the capacity of HBCUs to compete effectively for grants, contracts, and cooperative agreements.”

**What is the Path to Excellence and Innovation (PEI)?**

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) is the largest biomedical research organization in the world. NIH’s 27 institutes and centers (I/Cs) annually obligate approximately \$6 billion via contract awards to support the NIH mission. Currently, less than 1% of NIH’s contract awards are obligated to HBCUs. In 2016, Ms. Diane J. Frasier, the NIH Head of Contracting Activity and Director of the Office of Acquisition and Logistics Management (OALM), awarded an 8(a) contract to formalize the Path to Excellence and Innovation (PEI) Pilot Program.

The PEI Pilot Program consisted of 6 HBCUs partnered with a minimum of one business partner to increase the HBCUs’ research capacity and help them pursue contract opportunities at the NIH. The PEI Initiative is increasing transparency between HBCUs and the NIH community through outreach events, training opportunities, and technical assistance.

**Pilot Program HBCUs and Teaming Partners**

<b>HBCU</b>	<b>MBE Partner(s)</b>
<i>Hampton University</i>	<i>ESC Inc.</i>
<i>Howard University</i>	<i>Versa Integrated Solutions</i>
<i>Jackson State University</i>	<i>The Jones Group Longevity Consulting, LLC</i>
<i>Meharry Medical College</i>	<i>ADA Consulting B3 Solutions Millennium Corporation</i>
<i>Morehouse School of Medicine</i>	<i>Supreme Solutions Inc.</i>
<i>The University of the Virgin Islands</i>	<i>Ex Nihilo Management and Omni Systems Inc.</i>

**Government Partners**

The White House Initiative on HBCUs (WHIHBCU)  
The Department of Commerce, Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA)

### **PEI Initiative Goals**

- Identify NIH programs and initiatives where HBCUs are underrepresented and improve HBCUs participation within them;
- Develop WIN strategies using existing small business rules/regulations to leverage potential funding opportunities;
- Encourage public-sector, private-sector, and community collaboration to improve the overall capacity of HBCUs;
- Seek funding to sustain contractual support for the initiative;
- Increase the number of PEI HBCU and business partner participants.

### **PEI Initiative 2021 Enhancements**

- Developed an HBCU reference manual on how to conduct business with the NIH and other Federal agencies;
- Developed an HBCU database that streamlines acquisition resources and simplifies HBCU and private sector partnership;
- Developed a Strategic Plan for the PEI Initiative;
- Developed an HBCU Acquisition Curriculum;
- Developed a PEI Technical Assistance Center.

### **PEI Eligibility Guidelines**

- Federal prime or subcontracting past performance within the last five years;
- Possession of capabilities relevant to the NIH's mission;
- Willingness to commit one representative who will devote a minimum of 10 hours monthly to PEI activities;
- Confirmed endorsement from the institution's senior leadership;
- Willingness to subcontract the first three to five opportunities pursued with a designated PEI business partner.

### **PEI Initiative Milestones**

- **March 2020** - Conducted Pilot PEI Curriculum Training with Howard University;
- **February 2020**-Successful partnership between Hampton University Proton Therapy Institute & the National Cancer Institute was highlighted at the Office of Management, All-Hands Meeting;
- **February 2019** - Conducted acquisition and grants training at the University of Virgin Islands;
- **September 2019** - Recipient of the WHIHBCU Chairman's Award;
- **September 2019** - Coordinated inaugural WHIHBCU HBCU Industry Day;
- **March 2019** - Coordinated NIH HBCU Industry Day;
- **June 2018** - Coordinated NIH HBCU Town Hall.

### **Contact Information**

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