

The Path to Sustainability for Historically Black Colleges and Universities



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The National Institutes of Health (NIH) held a symposium on The Path to Sustainability for Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) on March 9, 2016 in Rockville, Maryland. The theme of the symposium was “Teaming for Opportunities in Biomedical ‘Big’ Data.” The National Director of the Minority Business Development Agency, Alejandra Y. Castillo was on hand to deliver the keynote presentation.

Director Castillo spoke about the changing demographics of the country and the importance of minority business enterprises to the growth of the U.S. economy. She also discussed the new MBDA Inclusive Innovation Initiative (I³), saying, “minorities need to be at the front end of innovation.” The Inclusive Innovation Initiative will do just that by facilitating engagement between MBEs, federal laboratories, and the innovation ecosystem.

The Symposium provided a wealth of information on NIH contracting opportunities, HBCU statistics, and Small Business Innovation Research (*SBIR*) and Small Business Technology Transfer (*STTR*) program requirements. NIH, a part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has 27 centers and institutes and its FY16 budget is \$31 billion, \$5 billion of which goes to acquisitions. While HHS awards the second-highest number of contracts

to HBCUs, NIH recognizes that as the largest bureau of HHS, they still have work to do to ensure that HBCUs are getting full access to federal funding.

The goal of the symposium was to find ways to increase the number of grants, contracts, and cooperative agreements to minority institutions. Allowing them to diversify their revenue and increase the number of minorities in Research and Development. For more information, visit the [U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization](#) website.

Photo: From left to right: Darold Hamlin, President and CEO – Emerging Technology Consortium, Ivory Toldson, Ph.D., White House Initiative on Historically Black Colleges and Universities – Department of Education, Diane J. Frasier, Director, Office of Acquisition and Logistics Management (also Head of the Contracting Activity) – NIH, Alejandra Castillo, Esq., National Director, Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) and Lyn R. Williams, President and CEO – Bridge Enterprises Incorporated