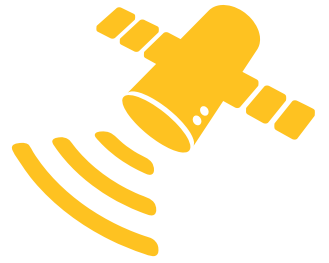
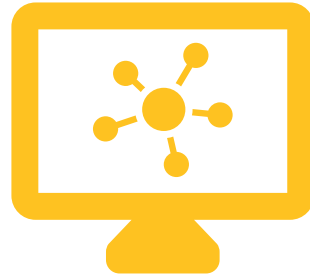




Maryland's

Government Contracting Guide



For more information:
Helga Weschke, Director, Federal Business Relations
Office of Military and Federal Affairs
Maryland Department of Commerce
Helga.Weschke@Maryland.gov
410-767-6920
Commerce.Maryland.gov/B2G

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GOVERNMENT ACRONYMS

APG – Aberdeen Proving Ground

ARL – Army Research Laboratory

ARS – Agricultural Research Service, USDA

ATEC – U.S. Army Test & Evaluation Command

BAA – Broad Agency Announcements

BARC – Beltsville Agricultural Research Center

BDO – Business Development Office

CAGE – Commercial and Government Entity Code_

CFR – Code of Federal Regulations

CLINS – Contract Line Items

CPARS – Contractor Performance Assessment Reporting System

CRADA – Collaborative Research and Development Agreement

D&B – Dun and Bradstreet

DFARS – Defense Federal Acquisition Regulations

DISA– Defense Information Systems Agency

DHS – Department of Homeland Security

DLA – Defense Logistics Agency

DMA– Defense Media Activity

DOC – U.S. Department of Commerce

DOD – U.S. Department of Defense

DOE – U.S. Department of Energy

DOL – U.S. Department of Labor

DUNS – Data Universal Number System

EDI – Electronic Data Interchange

EDWOSB – Economically Disadvantaged Woman-Owned Small Business

EEO Registry – Equal Employment Opportunity Registry

EFT – Electronic Funds Transfer

EIN – Employer Identification Number

EPLS – Excluded Party List System

eSRS – Electronic Subcontracting Reporting System

FAR – Federal Acquisition Regulation

FDA – Food and Drug Administration

FFRDC – Federally-Funded R&D Center

FPDC – Federal Procurement Data System

FR – Federal Register

FSC – Federal Supply Classes

FSS – Federal Supply Schedule

GFE – Government Furnished Equipment

GFP – Government Furnished Property

GPE – Government Point of Entry

GSA – U.S. General Services Administration

GSFC – NASA Goddard Space Flight Center

GWAC – Government-wide Acquisition Contracts

HHS – Department of Health and Human Services

HUB Zone – Historically Underutilized Business Zone

IAE – Integrated Acquisition Environment

IDIQ – Indefinite Delivery/Indefinite Quantity

IFB – Invitation for Bid

JBA – Joint Base Andrews

JPEO - Joint Program Executive

MBIA – Maryland Business Innovation Association

MII – Maryland Innovation Initiative

MIPS – Maryland Industrial Partnerships

MDPTAC – Maryland Procurement Technical Assistance Center

MDSBDC – Maryland Small Business Development Center

MTA – Material Transfer Agreement

NAICS – North American Industry Classification System

NASA – National Aeronautics and Space Administration

NASA SEWP V – NASA Solutions for Enterprise-Wide Procurement

NAWCAD – Naval Air Warfare Center – Aircraft Division

NCI – National Cancer Institute

NIH – National Institutes of Health

NIST – National Institute of Standards and Technology

NTIS – National Technical Information Service

ORCA – Online Registration and Certificate Application (replaced by SAM)

OSDBU – Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization

PLA – Patent License Agreement

POC – Point of Contact

PSC – Product Service Code

PTAC – Procurement Technical Assistance Center

R&D – Research and Development

RFI – Request for Information

RFQ – Request for Quotation

RFP – Request for Proposal

SAM– System for Award Management

SBA – U.S. Small Business Administration

SBDC – Small Business Development Center

SBIR – Small Business Innovation Research Program

SDB – Small Disadvantaged Business

SDVOSB – Service Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business

SLIN – Subline Item Number

SOW – Scope of Work

STTR – Small Business Technology Transfer Program

TCF – Technology Commercialization Fund

TEDCO – Maryland Technology Development Corporation

TIN – Taxpayer Identification Number

TSA – Test Service Agreement

UCF – Uniform Contract Format

USAMRDC – United States Army Medical Research and Development Command

USDA – United States Department of Agriculture

USNA – United States Naval Academy

VETS 2 – Veterans Technology Services

VETS – DOL Veterans’ Employment and Training Service

VHA – Veterans Health Administration

VOSB – Veteran-Owned Small Business

WOSB – Woman-Owned Small Business

I. INTRODUCTION

Maryland’s technology-based economy coupled with more than seventy federal research and development facilities in the state—more than twice as many as any other state—offers an abundant range of contracting opportunities for new and existing Maryland businesses.

Maryland’s Government Contracting Guide, edited by the Maryland Department of Commerce Office of Military and Federal Affairs, provides a comprehensive resource for small business owners as they navigate the complexities of contracting requirements. The Guide offers vital insight to key questions and concerns, includes a list of government acronyms, guidance on the State of Maryland’s procurement system, an annotated list of useful websites, examples of successful strategies and information on additional federal and state resources.

“How To” Questions and Concerns:

- Define and present your capabilities
- Find the right contact at an installation, laboratory or agency
- Determine a “fit” with an agency’s needs
- Decide what “not” to bid on
- Find an appropriate opportunity
- Prepare a proposal
- Price a response
- Do business with the state of Maryland
- Use Maryland’s resources to your advantage.

NOTE:

- **To obtain an electronic version of this publication with hyperlinks to further information, go to: <http://commerce.maryland.gov/grow/business-to-government>**

II. HOW TO DEFINE AND PRESENT YOUR CAPABILITIES

A. IDENTIFY YOUR BUSINESS

Defining your business is important for accurate representation when submitting contract proposals. Federal government contracts can be set-aside for small businesses in the following certification programs and socio-economic categories. In addition, there are sole source opportunities under the 8(a) program, HUBZone, SDVOSB, WOSB and EDWOSB programs.

1. Small Business Concern

A small business concern is a business entity that:

- Is organized for profit
- Has a place of business in the United States
- Makes a significant contribution to the U.S economy by paying taxes or using American products, materials or labor
- Does not exceed the numerical size standard for its industry.

To be eligible for federal government contracts reserved for small businesses, the business must meet the size requirements set by the SBA. These size standards define the maximum size of the business and its affiliates. The SBA assigns a size standard based on each [North American Industry Classification System \(NAICS\)](#) code and are usually based on number of employees or average annual receipts. A small business must meet the size standard stated in the solicitation. The contracting officer designates the size standard of the procurement by selecting the industry that best describes the principal purpose of the procurement.

To determine if the business qualifies as “small” for federal government contracting purposes, use the SBA’s [Size Standards Tool](#). The regulations specifying size standards and governing their use are set forth in Title 13, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), part 121 (13 CFR part 121), Small Business Size Regulations. Click [here](#) to access an electronic version of 13 CFR part 121. SBA's size regulations pertaining to federal procurement are also found in the [Federal Acquisition Regulation, 48 CFR, Part 19](#).

2. Socio-Economic Designations

- **Small disadvantaged business concerns (SDB)**
 - The firm must be 51% or more owned and controlled by one or more disadvantaged persons.
 - The disadvantaged person or persons must be socially disadvantaged and economically disadvantaged.
 - The firm must be small, according to SBA’s size standards.

You can self-represent your business as an SDB through the System for Award Management (SAM).

- **8(a) Program small disadvantaged business concerns**

The 8(a) Business Development Program offers a broad scope of assistance to firms that are owned and controlled at least 51% by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals. 8(A) designated firms can receive sole sourced contracts along with set asides. This designation requires certification through the SBA.

- Participation in the program is divided into two phases over nine years: a four-year developmental stage and a five-year transition stage
- Participants can receive sole-source contracts, up to a ceiling of \$4 million for goods and services and \$6.5 million for manufacturing
- 8(a) firms are also able to form joint ventures and teams to bid on contracts. This enhances the ability of 8(a) firms to perform larger prime contracts and overcome the effects of contract bundling, the combining of two or more contracts together into one large contract.

- **Historically Underutilized Business Zone (HUB Zone)**

The HUB Zone was created to promote economic development and employment growth in distressed areas by providing access to more federal contracting opportunities. The program provides for set aside and sole source procurement opportunities. To qualify for the program, a business (except tribally owned concerns) must meet the following criteria:

- It must be a small business by SBA standards
- It must be owned and controlled at least 51% by U.S. citizens, or a Community Development Corporation, an agricultural cooperative, or an Indian tribe
- Its principal office must be located within a “Historically Underutilized Business Zone,” which includes lands considered “Indian Country” and military facilities closed by the Base Realignment and Closure Act
- At least 35% of its employees must reside in a HUBZone.

This designation requires certification through the SBA.

- **Service-disabled veteran-owned small business concerns (SDVOSB)**

The SDVOSB program provides for set asides and sole source opportunities to help agencies meet their procurement goals.

To be eligible for the SDVOSBC, you and your business must meet the following criteria:

- The Service-Disabled Veteran (SDV) must have a service-connected disability that has been determined by the Department of Veterans Affairs or Department of Defense
- The SDVOSBC must be classified as a small under the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) code assigned to the procurement
- The SDV must unconditionally own 51% of the SDVOSBC
- The SDVO must control the management and daily operations of the SDVOSBC

- The SDV must hold the highest officer position in the SDVOSBC
- **Woman-Owned Small Business (WOSB) and Economically Disadvantaged Woman-Owned Small Business Concerns (EDWOSB)**
 This program authorizes contracting officers to set aside certain federal contracts for eligible women-owned small businesses. It was enacted to assist WOSB's to compete for set-aside federal contracts that are in industries where they are underrepresented. To be eligible, the firms must meet the following criteria:
 - The firm must be at least 51% owned and controlled by one or more women
 - The firm must be primarily managed by one or more women
 - The women who own and control the firm must be U.S. citizens
 - The firm must be small in its primary industry in accordance with SBA's size standards for that industry.

In addition to the above, for a WOSB to be deemed an “economically disadvantaged” woman-owned business (EDWOSB), its owner(s) must demonstrate economic disadvantage. The program provides for set asides for only certain NAICS codes. The EDWOSB designation has an expanded list of qualifying NAICS codes. To become certified, you must go through an SBA-approved Third-Party Certifier. Alternatively, you may self-certify in accordance with current SBA regulations.

For further details about these programs, refer to the [SBA website](#).

B. IDENTIFY YOUR PRODUCT OR SERVICE

After you have met the guidelines for qualifying as a small business, you must also identify your product or service. It is essential to know the Federal Supply Code (FSC) or the Product Service Code (PSC) and NAICS codes for your products or services.

1. The Federal Supply Code (FSC)

The FSC is a four-digit code used by government buying offices to classify and identify the products and supplies that the government uses and buys. It is important to understand which FSCs apply to your products so that you can find appropriate opportunities and register to do business with the government. Government buying offices have responsibility for specific products; you will also use FSCs to identify potential buying offices. You can also do marketing research based on the FSC by reviewing contracting forecasts issued by the buying offices.

2. North American Industry Classification System (NAICS)

The NAICS is the standard for use by federal statistical agencies in classifying business establishments for the collection, analysis, and publication of statistical data related to the business economy of the United States. NAICS replaced the Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) system in 1997. Every registered company is assigned a NAICS code.

Below is a list of the top five NAICS codes based on awarded amount and percentage of total awarded in Maryland:

- 541512 Computer Systems Design Services

- 541330 Engineering Services
- 541519 Other Computer Related Services
- 336611 Ship Building and Repairing
- 541712 Research and Development

Source: USASpending.gov

C. REGISTER YOUR BUSINESS

1. Obtain a Data Universal Number (DUNS)

In order to register your business, you must obtain a [DUNS Number](#). A DUNS is a unique nine-character identification that is used by both government and corporate officials searching for background information on companies.

You can access your DUNS number through this [searchable database](#) or by contacting Dun & Bradstreet customer service at 800-526-9018.

2. Register with the System for Award Management (SAM)

[beta.SAM.gov](#) is the official U.S. government website for people who make, receive and manage federal awards. This new system is a consolidation of FedBizOps, Federal Procurement Data System and the Wage Determinations Online Program. The searchable database allows you to learn about and search:

- Contract Opportunities
- Contract Data Reports
- Wage Determination

The database designed to hold information relevant to procurement and financial transactions for the U.S. Federal Government. You must register with [beta.SAM.gov](#) to be awarded a contract from the federal government. Create an effective profile that will allow agencies to search for your business based on multiple factors, including capabilities, size, location, experience and ownership.

Information Needed to Register:

- Your NAICS codes
- Your Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS)
- Your Federal Tax Identification Number (TIN) or Employer Identification Number (EIN)
- Your Product Service codes (optional but useful)
- Your Federal Supply Classification codes (optional but useful).

3. Registration in SBA's [Dynamic Small Business Search Database \(DSBS\)](#)

At the end of your [beta.SAM.gov](#) registration and completion of your profile, you will be automatically registered with the SBA. You are now ready to bid on federal contracts.

The SBA maintains the DSBS. As a small business registers in SAM, there is an opportunity to fill out your small business profile. The information provided populates DSBS. DSBS is another tool contracting officers use to identify potential small business contractors for upcoming contracting opportunities. Small businesses can also use DSBS to identify other small businesses for teaming and joint venturing.

4. Get a Commercial and Government Entity (CAGE) Code

A CAGE code is a five-number code that identifies companies doing or interested in doing business with the federal government. The code provides a standardized method of identifying a given facility at a specific location and may be used for a facility clearance, a pre-award survey, automated bidders' lists, pay processes, source of supply, *etc.* In some cases, prime contractors may also require their subcontractors to have CAGE codes.

CAGE codes registration is incorporated in the SAM registration. Once your registration is active, you may view your CAGE code on the web by [searching the active registrations](#). After you have identified your business, identified your products and services and registered your business, you will have all the information needed to be placed on a vendor list.

D. PREPARING YOUR CAPABILITIES STATEMENT

Before you begin marketing to the federal government, you should prepare a capabilities statement. The capabilities statement is your opportunity to clearly and precisely state your firm's ability to satisfy agencies' requirements. The information should also include your current and past performance with government customers along with commercial customers, particularly if you have no experience in the government sector. Include a succinct description of your competitive advantage with an emphasis on differentiating factors against the competition in your niche. It is recommended that it be only one page, but no more than two, on the front and back of one sheet. This assumes that your business has a well-developed business plan showing that your company is ready to do business with the federal government.

Your capabilities statement should include the following:

- I. Company Overview
 - A. Company Name and Address
 - B. Company Point of Contact
 - C. Company Background Information – What does your firm do?
 1. Experience in the field
 2. Financial stability
 - D. List of Corporate Facilities
 1. Your firm's equipment and resources
 - E. Client List
 1. A list of clients or testimonials from clients
- II. Corporate Capabilities Statement

A. Scope of Business

1. Products and services offered
2. Narrative description of your business, including NAICS codes
3. List of past and current clients along with brief descriptions
4. Detailed description of the development process for the project
5. Description of your firm's competitive edge, *i.e.*, the compelling reason why a customer would buy from your company as opposed to a competitor

B. Representative Corporate Projects

1. List current and recent company projects

III. Personnel Capabilities and Experience

A. Management and Professional Staff Capabilities and Experience

1. Include curriculum vitae of management and/or personnel
2. Include special qualifications, experience and awards that management/personnel has that will help your firm provide services that are superior to competitors

Make sure your scope of the products and services is not too broad or too narrow. If the scope is too broad, you will have difficulty focusing on a particular customer's need, particularly if you are learning the process. If the scope is too narrow, it may be difficult to find an agency that wants or needs your products or services.

To have a thorough capabilities statement, make sure you:

- Know your areas of expertise
- Evaluate your ability to support the added business
- Make sure that you can provide the quantity of product required in the timeframe required
- Define your competitive edge
- Have a well-developed business plan
- Select a range of products and services that is neither too broad nor too narrow.

III. HOW TO FIND THE RIGHT CONTACT AT A MILITARY INSTALLATION OR AGENCY IN MARYLAND

The goal is to link you to federal technology, technical expertise and research and development (R&D) assets. Below is a list of federal installations, laboratories and agencies located in Maryland. By utilizing the contact information, you can pursue the licensing of technology, forming R&D partnerships, accessing scientific knowledge, and learning how to access federal R&D assets. Also reach out to the Small Business Development Center and the Procurement Technical Assistance Center in your region for further assistance to access target agencies.

Note: In some cases, the small and disadvantaged business utilization contacts are located at a service (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corp and Coast Guard) office or in the Pentagon. The contact names and information provided in the sections below are subject to change.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

U.S. Department of Defense Office of Small Business Programs

AIR FORCE

Air Force Small Business

Contact Email

Air Force Small Business Research/Small Business Technology Transfer Program

Air Force Research Laboratory (AFRL/SB)

Wright-Patterson AFB, OH 45433

800-222-0336

ARMY

Office of Small Business Programs

Kimberly D. Buehler, Director

106 Army Pentagon, Room 3B514

Washington DC 20130-0106

703-697-2868

Email

Army Small Business Innovation Research Program and Technology Transfer Program

US Army Research Laboratory

2800 Powder Mill Road

Adelphi, MD 20783

MARINE CORP

Office of Small Business Programs

Austin Johnson, Deputy Small Business Programs

703-432-3944

mcsosbp@usmc.mil

NAVY

Office of Small Business Programs

Emily Harman, Director

OSBP.infor@navy.mil

Find Your Small Business Professional

Navy Small Business Innovation Research /Small Business Technology Transfer Programs

Robert Smith, Director

Department of Navy

875 North Randolph Street

Arlington, VA 22203-1995

robert.l.smith6@navy.mil

A. ABERDEEN PROVING GROUND (APG)

APG Office of Small Business Programs

Andrea S. Armstrong, Director

6001 Combat Drive

Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD 21005

443-861-4340

Email

Supports Commands:

U.S. Army Materiel Command

U.S. Army Communications– Electronics Command (CECOM)

U.S. Army Combat Capabilities Development Command (CCDC)

Chemical Biological Center

U.S. Army Test & Evaluation Command (ATEC)

B. ARMY RESEARCH LABORATORY (ARL)

Army Research Laboratory Small Business

2800 Powder Mill Road

Adelphi, MD 20783

301-394-2898

SDBA@arl.army.mil

C. FORT DETRICK

NAVAL MEDICAL LOGISTICS COMMAND (NAVMEDLOGCOM)

Office of Small Business Programs

Marianna McReal, Small Business Program Officer

639 Neiman Street

Fort Detrick, MD 21702-9203

301-619-3097

Email

U.S. ARMY MEDICAL COMMAND (USAMEDCOM)

Office of Small Business Programs

Jerome K. Maultsby, Assistant Director

820 Chandler Street

Fort Detrick, MD 21702-5014

301-619-2471

Jerome.K.Maultsby.civ@mail.mil

Supports Commands:

U.S. Army Medical Research and Development Command (USAMRDC)

U.S. Army Medical Research Acquisition Activity (USMRAA)

**U.S. ARMY MEDICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES
(USAMRIID)**

Office of Technology Transfer

Cindy K. Fuchs, Director

1425 Porter Street

Ft. Detrick - Frederick, MD 21702-5011

301-619-9835

Technology Transfer Program

D. FORT GEORGE G. MEADE

Mission Installation Contracting Command-Installation Contracting Office

Installation Contracting Office, Fort Meade

4550 Parade Field Lane

2nd Floor, West Wing

Fort Meade, MD 20755-5081

301-677-5102

Small Business 301-677-5148

DEFENSE ADJUDICATION ACTIVITY

Barbara Campbell, Facilities Manager

600 10th Street

Fort Meade, MD 20755

barbara.a.campbell@us.army.mil

DEFENSE INFORMATION SYSTEMS AGENCY (DISA)

Small Business Programs

Carlen Capenos, Director

6910 Cooper Avenue

Fort Meade, MD 20755-0549

301-225-6003

Email: [Small Business Office](#)

[For Industry Partners](#)

DEFENSE MEDIA ACTIVITY (DMA)

[Small Business Programs](#)

Cindy Sierra, Small Business Contact
6700 Taylor Avenue
Fort George G. Meade, MD 20755
Dma.smallbusinessoffice@mail.mil

NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY (NSA)

Acquisition Resource Center
9800 Savage Road, Suite 6623
Ft. Meade, MD 20755
Business Opportunities

U.S. CYBER COMMAND

Small Business
smallbusiness@cybercom.mil

E. JOINT BASE ANDREWS NAVAL AIR FACILITY WASHINGTON

316th Wing Small Business Office

Juanita Hunt, Small Business Professional
316th Wing
Joint Base Andrews, MD 20762
240-612-5657
Juanita.t.hunt.civ@mail.mil

AIR FORCE DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON (AFDW)

Teresa L. Clark
Director, Small Business Programs
Headquarters Air Force District of Washington
Joint Base Anacostia, Bolling DC 20032
202-767-7967
theresa.clark@mail.mil
Office Email

F. NAVAL AIR STATION PATUXENT RIVER (NAS Pax River)

Small Business Programs

Dorothea Holley
Naval Facilities Engineering Command Washington, FEAD Patuxent River
22445 Peary Road, Bldg. 504
Patuxent River, MD 20670
301-757-1001
dorothea.holley@navy.mil

Small Business Innovation and Research Program

John Williams, Director, Navy SBIR Programs
Office of Naval Research
One Liberty Center

875 North Randolph Street
Arlington, VA 22203-1995
john.williams6@navy.mil

NAVAL AIR WARFARE CENTER AIRCRAFT DIVISION (NAWCAD)

Naval Warfare Center Patuxent River Business Office

Business & Partnership Office

22473 Millstone Road
Building 505, Room 116
Patuxent River, MD 20670
301-342-1133
nawcad.nvo@navy.mil

Office of Small Business

Lawrence Butts, Deputy Director
22473 Millstone Road, Bldg. 505
Patuxent River, MD 20670-1127
301-757-5258
Lawrence.Butts@navy.mil
Webpage

NAVAL AIR SYSTEMS COMMAND (NAVAIR)

[Office of Small Business Programs](#)

Victoria Butler, Deputy Director
22473 Millstone Road, Bldg. 505
Patuxent River, MD 20670-1127
301-757-9087
Victoria.Butler@navy.mil

G. NAVAL RESEARCH LABORATORY (NRL)

Office of Small Business

Deputy for Small Business
455 Overlook Avenue, S.W.
Washington D.C. 20375
202-767-6815
susan.kelly@navy.mil

Contracting Division

Valerie Hall
202-767-5227
valerie.hall@nrl.navy.mil

H. NAVAL SUPPORT ACTIVITY BETHESDA

WALTER REED NATIONAL MILITARY MEDICAL CENTER BETHESDA

[Department of Research Programs](#)

4494 North Palmer Road
Bethesda, MD 20889
301-295-8239

Walter Reed Army Institute of Research

UNIFORMED SERVICES UNIVERSITY OF HEALTH SCIENCES
Henry M. Jackson Foundation for the Advancement of Military Medicine
Subcontract and Vendor Contract Services
240-694-2143
Email

Technology Transfer and Commercialization
6720-A Rockledge Drive, Suite 100
Bethesda, MD
240-694-2000

NAVAL FACILITIES ENGINEERING COMMAND – MID-ATLANTIC
Small Business Professional
Thuy Le
Bethesda
301-295-2954
Thuy.t.le@navy.mil

I. NAVAL SUPPORT FACILITY INDIAN HEAD

NAVAL SURFACE WARFARE CENTER (NSWC)
INDIAN HEAD NAVAL EXPLOSIVE ORDNANCE DISPOSAL TECHNOLOGY
DIVISION
Indian Head Small Business Office
Sandy Mary
4158 W. Patton Rd
Indian Head, MD 2064
301-744-6604
Mary.Sandy@navy.mil
nswciheadtdsbo.fct@navy.mil

CHEMICAL BIOLOGICAL INCIDENT RESPONSE FORCE (CBIRF)
Office of Small Business Programs
Carlos Duran
703-784-3527
carlos.duran3@usmc.mil

Naval Facilities Engineering Command – Mid-Atlantic
Small Business Professional
Susan Swann

540-653-3362
Susan.Swann@navy.mil

J. NAVAL SURFACE WARFARE CENTER CARDEROCK DIVISION
Carderock Division Small Business Program Office

Suanne Coonrad
9500 MacArthur Blvd
West Bethesda, MD 20817-5700
301-227-5499
Suanne.Coonrad@navy.mil

Small Business Innovation and Research Program Office

James E. Wood, SBIR Program Manager
Naval Sea Systems Command Carderock Division Code 0122
950
0 MacArthur Blvd
West Bethesda, MD 20817-5700
301-227-2690
james.e.wood@navy.mil

K. U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS – BALTIMORE DISTRICT

Contracting Division

2 Hopkins Plaza
Baltimore, MD 21201
410-962-2196

Small Business Office

Tamika Gray, Deputy
410-962-2587
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L. U.S. COAST GUARD YARD

Surface Forces Logistics Center

Acquisition Directorate
Contracting and Procurement Division
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M. UNITED STATES NAVAL ACADEMY

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Richard Rawlings

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N. WALTER REED FOREST GLEN ANNEX

WALTER REED ARMY INSTITUTE OF RESEARCH (WRAIR)

Office of Research and Technology Applications

503 Robert Grant Avenue

Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

301-319-9000

NAVAL MEDICAL RESEARCH CENTER

Office of Partnerships & Business Development

503 Robert Grant Avenue

Silver Spring, MD 20910-7500

301-319-9000

Partnerships@mail.mil

FEDERAL CIVILIAN AGENCIES

A. BELTSVILLE AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH CENTER (BARC)

Contracting

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Office of Small & Disadvantaged Business Utilization

Saurabh Vasudeva

Agriculture Research Service

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Office of Technology Transfer

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B. CENSUS BUREAU

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C. CENTERS FOR MEDICARE AND MEDICAID SERVICES (CMS)

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D. CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION (CPSC)

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U.S. CPSC

Washington, D.C. 20207
888-531-9070
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E. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY (DOE)

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Tom Dussault, Deputy Director
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Office of Small Business Programs

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G. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES FOOD AND DRUG

Office of Small & Disadvantaged Business Utilization

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FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION

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Technology Transfer Center

NCI Shady Grove

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Bethesda, MD 20892-9702

240-276-5530

Office of Acquisition

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National Cancer Institute at Frederick

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Debi Hogarty, Commercial Products Purchasing Manger

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NATIONAL LIBRARY OF MEDICINE (NLM)

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Grants and Funding

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H. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY (DHS)

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Office of Small & Disadvantaged Business Utilization

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NASA Office of Small Business Programs

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Strategic Partnership Office

K. NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF STANDARDS AND TECHNOLOGY (NIST)

Department of Commerce Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization Office

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IV. HOW TO DETERMINE A "FIT" WITH AN AGENCY'S NEEDS

It is not often that a solicitation comes out that is just the right project for your company. An opportunity may meet your financial goals in terms of new business, but the more important question is: “Are my team and company’s capabilities appropriate for this solicitation?” Everyone tailors a résumé to fit with what an employer is looking for, and the same is true for detailing skills and current and former customers. The right “fit” is differently defined.

The fit is the first criteria that an agency’s proposal evaluators judge to determine qualified companies. You must be able to demonstrate through both experience and innovative approaches that your company can meet the procurement needs of that specific agency. To determine the correct fit, the goal is to reach out to the program or contract officers before ever bidding on a product or service. A procurement or small business office should be able to guide you through the process.

Government procurement personnel and small business specialists should be able to suggest some disciplines or skills that you may want to acquire, which your business may not have. Teaming with small or large business may provide you with additional capabilities that meet the opportunity requirements. An agency solicitation may require specialized equipment, ties to a certain geographic area or other credentials.

There may be special rules about pricing – *e.g.*, use of part-time workers, consultants, travel and other unallowable costs important to know before bidding on a contract, but may not be obvious in a solicitation. You should be able to obtain examples of winning proposals through a direct request or a Freedom of Information Act request. Pricing data is proprietary, but technical proposals are not. Peers in your field may also offer assistance in terms of determining agency needs, preferences, biases and processes. Teaming with an experienced contractor will provide you with the knowledge and experience needed to pursue contracts on your own.

V. HOW TO DECIDE WHAT “NOT” TO BID ON

Deciding which proposals not to bid on can be critical in terms of valuable time and resources. Many businesses put a great deal of effort into a bid and proposal that they are likely not to win. But how do you know? Most solicitations include a pre-bid conference, a means to gain insight into the bid process and contract specifications. Through these conferences, you may learn who the competitors are. In turn, these competitors may offer potential partnering opportunities. Use this opportunity to present your own questions. The agency will make a transcript of all questions and supply the answers to all bidders. Obvious questions include: “Is there an incumbent?” and “Is the incumbent eligible to bid on this solicitation?” For instance, is it a set-aside for an 8(a) or other socio-economic classification (GSA and SBA Small Disadvantaged Business certifications providing advantages for contract opportunities)? If there is an incumbent, ask around to see if the project work they conducted met the agency’s needs in a satisfactory manner. If there is an incumbent, and they have been doing a good job, you may consider not bidding.

It is also important to determine exactly what credentials the agency is looking for in a contractor, ie. 8-A, HUB Zone, Service-Disabled Veteran or Women-Owned companies. If your company cannot fully meet requirements, you may be able to team with another bidder to present a more unified proposal, with each company bringing different strengths. If your strengths are marginal for your firm - do not bid.

It is important to be on the lookout for deal breakers. Carefully check the past performance, staffing, personnel and evaluation criteria as well as the scope of work (SOW) requirements. Make a realistic assessment of your strengths and weaknesses. You may be able to overcome weak areas by hiring individuals or teaming with firms who have the capability your company may lack.

Keep a paper trail of your bid in case you or other bidders wish to protest an award. Request a debriefing from the contracting officer to determine why your proposal was unsuccessful.

Look for large prime contractors who may need to subcontract and are looking for a small/minority business teaming partner or subcontractors to meet their small or socio-economic classification goals stipulated by a solicitation.

In all cases, be sure to:

1. Meet the prospective buyers
2. Plan for their future requirements
3. Assess pre-solicitation/ solicitation requirements
4. Review evaluation criteria
5. Have the right experience
6. Have the time or capacity to prepare a quality response.

If any of these points cannot be satisfied - do not bid.

VI. HOW TO FIND AN APPROPRIATE OPPORTUNITY

The government applies standardized procedures to buy products and services it needs from suppliers who meet certain qualifications.

Contracting officials use procedures outlined in the Federal Acquisition Regulation, commonly known as the FAR, to guide government purchases.

The primary contracting methods used by the government are: micro-purchases; simplified acquisition procedures; sealed bidding; contract by negotiations; and consolidated purchasing programs, such as the use of GSA schedules, Government-Wide Acquisition Contracts and other multiple award vehicles.

In addition, the government supports innovation through formal cooperative agreements and grants to promote technology transfer and commercialization.

A. CREDIT CARD PURCHASES

Government purchases of individual items under \$10,000 are considered micro-purchases. Such government buys do not require competitive bids or quotes and agencies can simply pay using a Government Purchase Card or credit card, without the involvement of a procurement officer. Seventy percent of all government procurement transactions are facilitated with a credit card.

B. SIMPLIFIED ACQUISITION PROCEDURES

The Federal Acquisition Streamlining Act and other statutory amendments removed many competition restrictions on government purchases under \$250,000. Agencies can use simplified procedures for soliciting and evaluating bids up to \$250,000. Government agencies, however, are still required to advertise all planned purchases over \$25,000 in beta.SAM.gov.

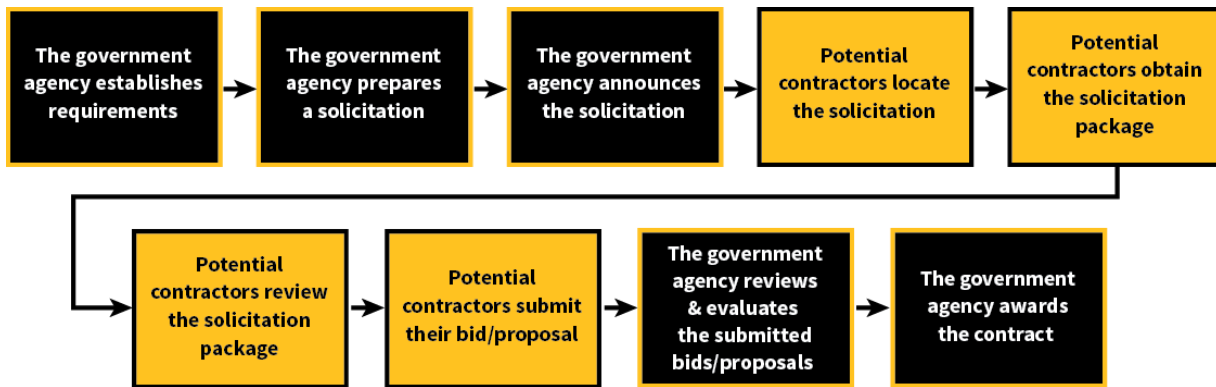
Simplified acquisition procedures require fewer administrative details, fewer approval levels, and less documentation. The procedures require all federal purchases greater than \$10,000 and less than \$250,000 to be reserved for small businesses. This small business set-aside applies, unless the contracting official cannot obtain offers from two or more small firms who are competitive on price, quality and delivery.

C. UNDERSTANDING SOLICITATIONS

In evaluating a Request for Information (RFI) or solicitation, it is important to understand the different types of bid and proposal opportunities. Each type of opportunity has different requirements, regulations, timetables, and contact points that create advantages and/or disadvantages.

Consider investigating agencies that may have a vehicle for unsolicited proposals. After thoroughly researching the agency, determine if your business could address their needs or solve a problem that they do not even know about. Do you have the innovation, technology, products or services that could be of value to share? A successful outcome could result in a formal solicitation.

The federal procurement process is highly structured to ensure that the award of a contract is accurate and fair. Below is an illustration of the federal procurement process:



Once you learn of a procurement opportunity through beta.SAM.gov, request the solicitation or bid package. The solicitation notice identifies how to obtain the bid package, which could likely be available on their website.

When requesting a bid package, be sure to:

- Have the correct solicitation number
- Ask for notification for any issued amendments, changes to the requirements or terms that might have been issued.

It is important to read the solicitation package very carefully, not only once, but twice and even a third time. Make sure that you have the exact product or service required, along with the staff and financial capacity to successfully complete the contract. The package contains all the information you will need to respond with your offer. It is also essential that you provide the response in the exact format required.

The solicitation package will include the following information:

- What the agency wants to procure
- The type of contract (*e.g.*, fixed-price, cost-reimbursement, time and materials)
- Quantities, timeframes and delivery schedules
- Special requirements or conditions
- The point of contact (POC) with phone number or email address

If the contract is awarded to you, your bid/proposal constitutes a binding contract and you will be required to fulfill the terms of the contract as specified.

The following are descriptions of different types of solicitation packages and small business opportunities.

1. Sealed Bidding

Sealed bidding is how the government contracts competitively when its requirements are clear, accurate and complete. An Invitation for Bid (IFB) is the method used for the sealed bid process. Typically, an IFB includes a description of the product or service to be acquired, instructions for preparing a bid, the conditions for purchase, packaging, delivery, shipping, payment, contract clauses to be included and the deadline for submitting bids. Each sealed bid is opened in a public forum, where prices are displayed for public viewing at the purchasing office.

An award is made to the lowest bidder who is responsive to the government needs, meets all the specifications and is responsible, reputable and financially sound. If the lowest bid is judged too low to be reasonable or the government has documented in the solicitation package “other price-related factors,” it will influence the award decision.

Government-wide IFBs are available daily for review at beta.SAM.gov.

2. Request for Quotation (RFQ)

The federal government uses RFQs in order to request information and pricing with no pending request to purchase commercial products and services. An RFQ may or may not result in a contract.

RFQs are used in simplified acquisitions, *i.e.*, a streamlined process for procurements that do not exceed \$100,000. Contract awards based on RFQs usually go to the lowest bidder, but not always. Buyers are often allowed to analyze the quotes and award a contract based on best value. When evaluating best value in an RFQ, buyers may consider, among other things, any or all of the following:

- Ability to provide special features of the product or service that is required
- Environmental and energy efficiency considerations
- Maintenance availability
- Past performance of the supplier
- Probable life of an item as compared to the life of a comparable product
- Trade-in considerations
- Warranty considerations

3. Request for Information (RFI)

An RFI is usually an effort to ascertain whether companies exist that may have relevance to what the government is looking for. RFI is issued solely for information and planning purposes – it does not constitute a Request for Proposal or a promise to issue an RFP in the future. This request for information does not commit the government to contract for any supply or service whatsoever. Not responding to this RFI does not preclude participation in any future RFP, if any is issued. If a solicitation is released, it will be synopsized in beta.SAM.gov.

4. Request for Proposal (RFP)

An RFP is a solicitation that asks companies to propose methods for addressing the need and to provide a price quote for implementing the proposed solution. RFPs are used in large, publicly announced negotiated procurements. The procurement is open to all qualified companies. An RFP will generally tell you what the customer is interested in procuring and provide instructions regarding how to prepare and submit your proposal. Government procurement is highly regulated and, therefore, the RFPs have a particular format and structure. For a complete explanation on how to organize your response to an RFP, see Section VII, part C.

There are several different kinds of RFPs:

- Full and open (for all qualified firms)
- Small business set-aside
- 8(a) competitive
- 8(a) sole source (rare)
- 8(a) invitation.

5. Broad Agency Announcements (BAA)

A BAA is a method of soliciting proposals for R&D using notices published on the beta.SAM.gov website and individual federal laboratory websites.

A BAA is intended to solicit research ideas and is issued under the provisions of the Competition in Contracting Act of 1984 (Public Law 98-369), as implemented in the Federal Acquisition Regulations. Research proposals are sought from educational institutions, nonprofit organizations and private industry. The BAA provides a general description of the federal agencies research programs, including specific areas of interest; defines the evaluation and selection criteria; and provides proposal preparation instructions and formats. The BAA is a continuously open announcement. Pre-proposals, however, may be submitted at any time for consideration. Program Specific BAAs, Program Agency Announcements and supplements to the BAA are issued to solicit research proposals for specific programs.

Pre-Proposals

Because the BAA is continuously open, pre-proposals may be submitted and will be evaluated at any time throughout the year. All pre-proposals will be assigned an identification number after receipt. Brochures or other descriptions of general organizational or individual capabilities will not be accepted as a pre-proposal.

Full Proposals

Full proposals should be submitted within 90 days after requested. Receipt of full proposals will be acknowledged by e-mail or postcard. The identification log number for the full proposal will be the same number used for the pre-proposal (if one was submitted). Proposals should be prepared according to the instructions by each agency. Electronic and scanned signatures are acceptable. The length of time requested for support should be consistent with the nature and

complexity of the proposed research. The government should forward an award decision within 180 days after submission.

6. Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) Programs

SBIR and STTR provide funding to transform technologic discovery to a commercial product. These programs have helped thousands of small businesses compete for federal research and development (R&D) awards. These programs are highly competitive and encourage small business to explore their technological potential and provide the incentive to profit from its commercialization. By reserving a specific percentage of federal R&D funds for technology development for small business, SBIR/STTR are set-aside programs from agency extramural funding.

To qualify for the SBIR/STTR programs, you must meet certain eligibility criteria to participate in the program. To qualify, your business must be:

- American-owned and independently operated
- For-profit
- Principal researcher employed by business
- Company size not greater than 500 employees.

The SBIR/STTR program goals are:

- Stimulate technological innovation
- Meet federal research and development needs
- Foster and encourage participation in innovation and entrepreneurship by socially and economically disadvantaged persons
- Increase private-sector commercialization of innovations derived from federal research and development funding.

In addition, STTR has a goal to foster technology transfer through cooperative R&D between small businesses and research institutions.

For the SBIR program, each year federal agencies with extramural R&D budgets that exceed \$100 million are required to allocate 3.2 % in FY2017 of their extramural budget to these programs. Currently, eleven federal agencies participate in the SBIR program:

- Department of Agriculture
- Department of Commerce: NIST and NOAA
- Department of Defense
- Department of Education
- Department of Energy

- Department of Health and Human Services
- Department of Homeland Security
- Department of Transportation
- Environmental Protection Agency
- National Aeronautics and Space Administration
- National Science Foundation

Under the STTR program, federal agencies with extramural R&D budgets that exceed \$1 billion are required to reserve .45% in FY2017 of this research budget for STTR awards to small businesses. Currently, five agencies participate in the STTR program:

- Department of Defense
- Department of Energy
- Department of Health and Human Services
- National Aeronautics and Space Administration
- National Science Foundation

These participating agencies designate R&D topics and accept proposals. Following submission of proposals, agencies make SBIR awards based on small business qualification, degree of innovation, technical merit, and future market potential. Small businesses that receive awards or grants then begin a three-phase program:

Phase I is the startup phase. Awards of up to \$250,000 support exploration of the technical merit or feasibility of an idea or technology. Phase I projects typically have a six-month period for SBIR and one year for STTR of performance. Successful Phase I recipients are invited to submit Phase II proposals.

Phase II awards of up to \$1,500,000, for up to two years, expand Phase I results. Phase II contracts enable recipients to establish the proof of principle and produce a prototype of their concepts. During this time, the R&D work is performed and the developer evaluates commercialization potential. The SBIR/STTR only considers Phase I award winners for Phase II. Phase II projects typically run for 24 months.

Phase III is the period during which Phase II innovation moves from the laboratory into the marketplace. No SBIR/STTR funds support this phase. Your business must find funding in the private sector or other non-federal agency funding. Therefore, you must develop a marketing strategy and plan for taking the SBIR-developed product/technology to the marketplace.

SBIR/STTR funds are usually awarded at specific times of the year, determined by each agency. Also, each agency determines the size of the award and length of time to complete each phase. Check each agency's website to determine deadlines for proposal submission, the size of the award and the length of time to complete each phase.

7. Small Business Set-Asides

Small business set-asides are a powerful tool for helping small businesses compete for and win federal contracts. Every year, the federal government purchases approximately \$400 billion in goods and services

from the private sector. When market research concludes that small businesses are available and able to perform the work or provide the products being procured by the government, those opportunities are “set-aside” exclusively for small business concerns.

There are many different types of set-asides. Some are open to all small businesses; others are open only to small businesses with certain socioeconomic designations. In addition, there are sole source development opportunities under the 8(a) program and sole source conditional opportunities under the HUBZone, SDVOSB, and WOSB programs. Refer to Section II, *How to Define your Capabilities*, for more information.

The Small Business Administration has several special set-aside programs for minority-owned businesses, including the aforementioned 8(a) Program as well as for Women-Owned Small Businesses (WOSB) and Economically Disadvantaged Women-Owned Small Business (EDWOSB). The SBA website has great detail about the eligibility and criteria for these programs, and there is much material about changes in the law affecting these programs.

D. GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION (GSA) OPPORTUNITIES

GSA is the federal government’s business manager, buyer, real estate developer, telecommunications manager, and IT solutions provider. GSA offers businesses the opportunity to sell billions of dollars’ worth of products and services to federal agencies through contract vehicles. GSA advertises locally and nationally. All GSA contracting opportunities over \$25,000 are advertised on beta.SAM.gov. GSA offers resources and means to pursue solicitations.

1. Office of Small Business Utilization (OSBU)

GSA’s OSBU advocates for small, minority, veteran, HUB Zone, and women business owners. The office’s mission is to promote increased access to GSA’s nationwide procurement opportunities.

OSBU monitors and implements small business policies and manages a range of programs required by law. GSA’s small business programs nurture entrepreneurial opportunities, open doors to new business horizons, and enhance technological capabilities.

OSBU’s outreach activities make it possible for the small business community to meet key contracting experts and be counseled on the procurement process.

These activities include:

- Electronic commerce/electronic data interchange training sessions
- Interagency networking breakfasts
- Marketing strategies and techniques workshops
- Procurement conferences
- Procurement networking sessions
- Roundtables
- Trade missions

The OSBU conducts monthly briefings (and sometimes nationwide telecasts) on “How to Obtain a GSA Schedules Contract.” The [homepage](#) provides information on upcoming sessions. Additionally, the Regional Small Business Utilization Centers are staffed with specialists who provide current information, counseling services, and literature concerning the Schedules Program. Contact the center in your area for information on Schedules orientation sessions.

2. GSA Local Services

The Mid-Atlantic OSBU is GSA’s regional advocate for small, minority, veteran, service-disabled veteran, HUB Zone, and women-owned businesses. This office is committed to providing access to federal business opportunities to small businesses and to working with the GSA’s acquisition community to reach the goals that have been mandated by law. The office serves the business community in the following regions:

- Delaware
- Maryland
- Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
- Southern New Jersey
- Commonwealth of Virginia (excluding the cities of Alexandria and Falls Church, and Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun, and Prince William counties, which are served by GSA’s National Capital Region, located in Washington, D.C.)
- West Virginia
- National Capital Region, including Montgomery and Prince George's Counties

3. Registering on a GSA Schedule

Getting on a GSA schedule involves negotiating labor rates within various categories. To become a GSA Schedule contractor, however, a vendor must first offer in response to the applicable GSA Schedule solicitation.

GSA awards contracts to responsible companies offering commercial items, at fair and reasonable prices, that fall within the generic descriptions in the GSA Schedule solicitations. In order to fully understand the process, GSA recommends that all vendors review information on its webpage, “[Getting Started with GSA Schedules.](#)” Within the site, prospective vendors can obtain valuable, decision-making information:

- Various features of the GSA Schedules Program
- How to submit an offer
- The evaluation and contract award process
- How to successfully market supplies and services
- Sources of information related to Schedule contract administration

GSA offers essential training for vendors looking to sell to the government and those already on contract with the government.

Featured training includes:

- On-site Schedules contract training, targeted specifically to small business
- Scheduled webinars
- Web-based, self-learning modules found at the Vendor Support Center

For information on scheduled workshops in Maryland, please contact:

[Vendor Support Center](#)

Phone: (877) 495-4849

Getting Started

To start, identify the GSA Schedule solicitation that covers your supplies or services. This step may be accomplished in several ways. One is to review the GSA Schedule Solicitations link to determine the applicable GSA Schedule and corresponding solicitation number under which the supplies or services may be offered. Click on the appropriate Solicitation Number to link directly to the solicitation files in beta.SAM.gov. Download the solicitation and follow the instructions in the document. The GSA Schedule Solicitations page also identifies those Schedules that accept offers using eOffer, a web-based application that allows vendors to prepare and submit their GSA Schedule offers electronically. Also, investigate the GSA Contract Teaming Agreement (CTA) which is a great means for small businesses to participate in large contracts (*i.e.*, bundled solicitations) and generate revenue against their respective GSA schedules.

Another way is to search [Schedules e-Library](#) by keyword to identify supplies or services covered by GSA Schedules. Click on the box, “Vendors: Click here to view the current solicitation on beta.SAM.gov.” Download the solicitation and follow the instructions in the document.

You can also review the [Federal Supply Schedule Listing](#) in Schedules e-Library to determine the applicable GSA Schedule under which the supplies or services may be offered. Click on any Schedule number under the “Source” column to view descriptions of the generic categories of supplies or services under each Schedule. Click on the box, “Vendors: Click here to view the current solicitation on beta.SAM.gov.” Download the solicitation and follow the instructions in the document. Finally, you can visit beta.SAM.gov to obtain a copy of the GSA Schedule solicitation.

Other helpful hints to assist vendors in obtaining a GSA Schedule contract:

- Register in the [SAM](#)
- Obtain an Open Ratings, Inc. reference check (see Past Performance Evaluation form in the solicitation) and make sure your company is financially sound
- Complete all information in the solicitation and be ready to negotiate your company’s best offer.

E. AGREEMENTS

Outside of the regular procurement process, there are other mechanisms to partner with a federal agency and to access technologies and facility resources.

1. Teaming Agreements

Teaming agreements are established when two or more companies form a partnership or joint venture to act as a potential prime contractor; or a potential prime contractor agrees with one or more other companies to have them act as its subcontractor under a specified government contract or acquisition program.

Subcontracting or teaming with a prime contractor can be a profitable experience as well as a growth opportunity for your business. If, after assessing the capabilities and capacity of your business you conclude that you are not ready to bid competitively for prime contracts, consider the opportunities available through subcontracting.

The many benefits of teaming or subcontracting include:

- Increasing annual revenue
- Working on large government procurements
- Increasing working capital
- Gaining experience and past performance
- Expanding and/or diversifying products
- Networking to develop strong business relationships
- Realizing advancements in management and technical skills
- Increasing contract awards.

You can search for federal teaming arrangements on the beta.SAM.gov website. Small businesses seeking federal procurements can search, monitor and retrieve opportunities solicited by the entire federal government through beta.SAM.gov. The Small Business Administration's SUB-Net is another site where small businesses can search for procurement opportunities through teaming arrangements. Prime contractors post teaming solicitations, opportunities and Notice of Sources Sought on the [SUB-Net site](#). The [SAM](#) is also an excellent resource to search for teaming partners.

The Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU) or small business specialists located in each federal agency has information about how to market your company and to find teaming arrangements. Find the listing of all the OSDBUs [here](#).

The SBA maintains a list of subcontracting opportunity contacts. The information is obtained through the names and addresses from the listing of subcontracting plans that are submitted to the government when a large business receives a federal contract over \$650,000. For more information about subcontracting contacts, visit the [subcontracting opportunities page](#).

2. Collaborative Research and Development Agreements (CRADA)

A CRADA is not an acquisition instrument (such as grants, contracts, and cooperative agreements), but is an agreement between a federal laboratory and a non-federal party to perform collaborative research and development in any area that is consistent with the federal laboratory's mission. CRADAs are the most frequently used mechanism for formalizing interactions and partnerships between private industry and

federal laboratories and the only mechanism for receiving funds from non-federal sources for collaborative work.

CRADA is an excellent technology transfer tool. It can:

- Provide incentives that help speed the commercialization of federally developed technology
- Protect any proprietary information brought to the CRADA effort by the partner
- Allow all parties to the CRADA to keep research results emerging from the CRADA confidential and free from disclosure through the Freedom of Information Act for up to 5 years
- Allow the government and the partner to share patents and patent licenses
- Permit one partner to retain exclusive rights to a patent or patent license.

A CRADA is an agreement exempt from FAR and DFAR. Although locally reviewed and approved, agency level oversight is possible. Under a CRADA agreement, for the purposes of joint research, the government may engage in development, engineering, and testing but not the manufacture a product. A federal laboratory may provide personnel, services, facilities, and equipment, but no funds, to the joint R&D effort. A non-federal party may provide funds, in addition to personnel, services, facilities, and equipment to the joint R&D effort. These agreements are usually made for five years but have sometimes been approved for 20 years and are terminable at will. They can be used as a precursor to other agreements. These agreements cannot be used to circumvent the procurement code or to allow competition with private sector organizations.

Any proprietary information provided to a federal employee is protected from disclosure provided that the disclosing party clearly indicates what is proprietary. This federal law only addresses federal employees. Proprietary information in a CRADA – *e.g.*, trade secrets, commercial or financial information that is obtained in the conduct of research or as a result of activities addressed in the Technology Transfer Act, originating from a nonfederal party participating in a CRADA – can never be disclosed unless the information becomes public knowledge.

Data (subject data) developed as a result of the research conducted under a CRADA is proprietary for five years from the time derived unless both parties agree to publish or disclose the subject data.

Remember, the rules that govern a CRADA are as follows:

- There must be one or more federal parties
- There must be one or more nonfederal parties
- Resources under the CRADA must be used for research and development
- Funds can flow to the federal party but not from the federal party
- Research and development conducted under the CRADA must be consistent with the mission of the federal laboratory

- Preference is given to small businesses
- Preference is given to businesses that agree to manufacture CRADA inventions substantially in the United States
- Foreign partners are allowed to enter CRADAs on condition that the partner's country allows U.S. entities to enter into R & D agreements and that the foreign partner is not part of the foreign government (in which case the partnership is covered by an International Agreement)
- CRADAs with foreign partners must be approved by the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative in the Department of Commerce
- Export Administration Regulations further restrict CRADAs by controlling materials that can be shipped to a foreign government, regardless of the status of the foreign partner
- Intellectual property rights in existence prior to collaboration are retained by the owner of those rights, while any rights to intellectual property newly created under the CRADA (called subject inventions) are negotiated on a case-by-case basis.

3. Patent License Agreements (PLA)

A PLA is an agreement between a federal laboratory and a non-federal organization. The PLA agreement allows a nonfederal organization to enter into an agreement (exclusive, partially exclusive, or nonexclusive license) for the use of federal government-owned or assigned patent applications, patents, or other intellectual property (*e.g.*, software, copyrights, *etc.*).

A PLA offers you access to intellectual property already developed by a federal laboratory. This access will save you the expense and time doing the developmental research yourself. This approach frees your resources so they can be used to apply the federal government's intellectual property for your own commercial purposes.

The terms of the license follow commercial practice and can include initial payments, progress payments, running royalties, minimum royalties and pass-through royalties on sublicense income. Performance milestones are often required. Federal patent licenses are often limited to specific fields of protection.

In regard to royalties, your company should be prepared to negotiate the royalty rate; however, some agencies have standard royalty provisions. For example, U.S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command (USAMRMC) provides that the inventor receives the first \$2,000 and 20 percent thereafter up to \$150,000/year of any royalties/payments resulting from commercial licensure.

The USAMRMC laboratory receives the residual income, which can be used by the Commander to do any of the following:

- Reward laboratory employees, including inventors of technology regardless of whether it has commercial application
- Fund research projects within the institute

- Further scientific exchange among laboratories
- Educate and train laboratory employees
- Pay the expenses incidental to the administration and licensing of inventions
- Support technology transfer marketing activities

Occasionally, federal laboratories will protect the federal patent in foreign jurisdictions, but this is most often accomplished by the licensee. Locally reviewed and approved, the funds received from a patent license agreement are shared with the inventor and the laboratory where the invention was made.

4. Test Service Agreements (TSA)

A TSA is a technology transfer mechanism that enables federal laboratories to perform work for hire. Title 10 U.S. Code 2539(b) authorizes federal laboratory directors and commanders to make testing services available to private industry. Under a TSA, a federal laboratory performs a test or technical service for a fee. The fee must cover all direct and indirect costs. Materials, processes, equipment, models, devices, computer software, *etc.*, may all be tested.

Unlike a CRADA, the TSA is not a joint R&D effort. All inventions and data belong to the TSA partner; for some companies, this type of agreement may be more appealing than the CRADA. TSAs must involve some unique government capability and no “undue competition” with the private sector. A simple statement in a cover letter, written by the recipient of the services, serves as a certification that the conditions are met. A TSA requires minimal effort to execute and can be enacted in a reasonably short time. Because a TSA is an abbreviated agreement it typically consists of several pages and a cover letter.

5. Material Transfer Agreements (MTA)

MTA is utilized when any proprietary material is exchanged, and when the receiving party intends to use it for his/her own research purposes. Neither rights in intellectual property nor rights for commercial purposes may be granted under this agreement. MTAs define the terms and conditions under which the recipients of materials, provided by either the government or the other party, may use the materials. Included in the MTA are the requirements that the materials be used for research purposes only and that the materials cannot be used in human testing. Federal agencies require that all materials received by their scientists originating from humans be collected under 45 CFR 46, Protection of Human Subjects.

6. Grants

A grant is a legal instrument used to enter into a relationship, the principal purpose of which is to transfer a thing of value to the recipient to carry out a public purpose of support or stimulation authorized by a law of the United States, rather than to acquire property or services for the Department of Defense's direct benefit or use. Further, it is a relationship in which substantial involvement is not expected between the Department of Defense and the recipient when carrying out the activity contemplated by the grant.

7. Cooperative Agreements

A cooperative agreement is a legal instrument used to enter into the same kind of relationship as a grant except that substantial involvement is expected between the Department of Defense and the recipient when carrying out the activity contemplated by the cooperative agreement. The term does not include “cooperative research and development agreements” as defined in 15 U.S.C. §3710a.

F. CONTRACT VEHICLES

Federal agencies use a number of contract vehicles to procure goods and services in a quicker manner than the usual government procurement process. These contracts often provide goods and services across many federal agencies. Agencies may utilize the GSA's Multiple Awards Schedule Contracts (also known as the GSA or Federal Supply Schedule), Government Wide Acquisition Contracts, or Multi-Agency Contracts.

The GSA describes these three contract vehicles as:

GSA Multiple Award Schedule (MAS) contracts, also referred to as GSA Schedule and Federal Supply Schedule contracts, are indefinite delivery, indefinite quantity (IDIQ) contracts that are available for use by federal agencies worldwide. Under the MAS Program, GSA enters into government wide contracts with commercial firms to provide over 11 million commercial supplies and services. Agencies place orders directly with MAS contractors.

Government Wide Acquisition Contracts (GWACs) are pre-competed task order or delivery order contracts for information technology established by one agency for government wide use. Each GWAC is operated by an executive agent designated by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) pursuant to section 5112(e) of the Clinger-Cohen Act. Through this vehicle, the federal government can buy cost-effective, innovative solutions for information technology. It provides access to IT solutions such as systems design, software engineering, information assurance, and enterprise architecture solutions. The three GWACs are GSA, NIH Information Technology Acquisition and Assessment Center (NITAAC) and NASA’s Solutions for Enterprise-Wide Procurement (SEWP). See below for more details.

Multi-Agency Contracts (MACs) are task order or delivery order contracts established by one agency for use by government agencies to obtain a variety of supplies and services.

The **Interagency Contract Directory (ICD)** is a central repository of Indefinite Delivery Vehicles (IDV) awarded by the federal agencies where the IDV is available for use at both the intra-agency and interagency levels. IDVs include Government-Wide Acquisition Contracts (GWAC), Multi-Agency Contracts, Other Indefinite Delivery Contracts (IDC), Federal Supply Schedules (FSS), Basic Ordering Agreements (BOA), and Blanket Purchase Agreements (BPA).

The following information is about various schedules, GWACs and MACs that are offered by federal agencies.

1. Air Force Network-Centric Solutions (NETCENTS)

The Air Force's NETCENTS and NETCENTS-2 contract vehicles provide the Air Force, the Department of Defense, and other federal agencies a primary source of networking equipment/product supply and a means of system engineering, installation, integration, operations, and maintenance for a family of Department of Defense adopted commercially standardized networking solutions. The NETCENTS contract includes Network-Centric Information Technology, Networking, Telephony and Security (NCITNTS) Voice, Video and Data Communications including Commercial-off-the-Shelf products, system solutions and systems hardware and software.

2. U.S. Army Computer Hardware, Enterprise Software and Solutions (CHESS)

The CHESS program is the Army's primary source to support the Warfighters's information needs. CHESS manages a variety of vehicles, including ITES-2S, for IT hardware, software, and services.

3. Defense Information Systems Agency (DISA)

DISA provides an extensive list of information technology contracts across the Department of Defense. These contracts focus on a wide range of services and commodities across the United States and theatres that the Department of Defense operates in. The full listing includes extensive contract, contact and prime contractor information.

4. Enterprise Acquisition Gateway for Leading Edge Solutions II (EAGLE II)

The Department of Homeland Security's Enterprise Acquisition Gateway for Leading Edge Solutions series of contracts focus on information technology services and commodities procurement for both the department and all other departments.

5. GSA Networx

GSA Networx is a contract vehicle that provides telecommunications services and products across many federal agencies. The vehicle consists of two contracts, Networx Universal and Networx Enterprise, which provide a broad range of services, coverage, and solutions.

6. GSA Schedules

Also known as Multiple Award Schedules (MAS), GSA manages a vast number of long-term government wide contracts with commercial firms that provide agencies access to over 11 million commercial supplies and services at volume-discounted prices. A listing of schedules and a guide to getting onto the schedules can be found at the GSA's website.

7. MAS Information Technology

The GSA's MAS IT Schedule grants agencies access to commercial experts who can address the needs of government IT through 20 special item numbers (SINS) that cover the most general-purpose commercial IT hardware, software, and services. A list of the SINS and a description of each can be found at the GSA's MAS IT Schedule website.

8. NIH Information Technology Acquisition and Assessment Center (NITAAC)

A GWAC, the NITAAC program manages IT solutions, services, products and imaging to

multiple federal agencies. NITAAC operates three major contracts: CIO-SP2i (services/solutions), ECSII (products), and IW2nd (imaging).

9. NSA Set-Aside for Small Business (NSETS)

The NSA's NSETS contract allows the NSA to competitively acquire agency requirements for business, engineering, information technology, operations support, and training services from teams of highly qualified small businesses.

10. NASA's Solutions for Enterprise-Wide Procurement (SEWP)

A GWAC, NASA's SEWP contract vehicle provides the latest in IT products for all federal agencies through 146 prime pre-competed contract holders, including 120 small businesses. The contract calls for UNIX-, Linux-, and Windows-based desktops and servers, along with peripherals, network equipment, storage devices, security tools, software, and other IT products and product-based services.

11. Professional Services Schedule (PSS)

Business consulting solutions include a full range of management and consulting services that can improve a federal agency's performance, and help customers meet their mission goals. Business services range from consulting, facilitation, quality assurance, analysis, strategy formulation, advisory and assistance, research, and training to acquisition and program support.

VII. HOW TO PREPARE A PROPOSAL

Solicitations consist of standardized forms that must be completed, as well as an explanation of your plan for solving the stated problem and meeting the requirements. Your proposal must include all requested, relevant and supporting documentation. In addition, your proposal must be easy to understand, concise and complete.

A. WHAT YOU WILL FIND IN A REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

Most solicitations will be in the form of an RFP. Most RFPs are available in an electronic format and can be downloaded. Although there are standard sections in any RFP, the most important are: Section C – the statement of work; Section L – proposal preparation instructions; and Section M – the evaluation criteria. Be sure to analyze these sections carefully. The standard sections of an RFP are:

Section A - Solicitation/Contract Form: Identifies the title of the procurement, procurement number, point of contact (POC), how to acknowledge amendments and how to indicate “No Response” if you decide not to bid. Section A often appears as a one-page form.

Section B - Supplies or Services and Prices/Cost: Provides a listing of all supplies, data and services to be acquired. This section also provides pricing information, identifies the type of contract, identifies Contract Line Item Numbers, (CLINs), and Subline Items Numbers (SLINs) that identify billable items, describes period of performance, identifies option periods, if any, and provides cost and pricing guidelines.

Section C - Description/Specification/Statement of Work: Describes what the government wants you to do or supply. Outside of your pricing, most of your proposal will be responding to this section, telling them how you will deliver what they need. Sometimes this section is contained in a separate appendix, and is frequently associated with other appendices in Section J with other details to enable the bidder to understand the nature and scope of the tasks requested in Section C.

Section D - Packaging and Marking: Defines how all contract deliverables such as reports and material will be packaged and shipped. This information is important as these instructions may affect costs and raise logistics issues.

Section E - Inspection and Acceptance: Describes the process by which the government will officially accept deliverables and what to do if the work is not accepted. This process can also affect costs and identifies tasks you must be prepared to undertake.

Section F - Deliveries or Performance: Defines how the Government Contracting Officer will control the work performed and how you will deliver certain contract items by describing the time, place and method for delivering the procured line items, SLIN items and services.

Section G - Contract Administration Data: Describes how the Government Contracting Officer and your firm will interact and how information will be exchanged in administration of the contract to ensure both performance and prompt payment.

Section H - Special Contract Requirements: Contains a range of special contract requirements important to this particular procurement, such as procedures for managing changes to the original terms of the contract, government furnished equipment (GFE) requirements, and government furnished property (GFP) requirements.

Section I - Contract Clauses: Identifies the contract clauses incorporated by reference in the RFP. These clauses will be incorporated into the contract. Although this section does not require a separate response, its terms will be binding. The appropriate regulation clauses from the FAR and DFARS will be selected and inserted into this section.

Section J - List of Attachments: Lists the appendices to the RFP. These attachments can cover a wide swath of subjects ranging from technical specifications through lists of GFE, and it is generally used to provide data you need in order to respond to the Statement of Work. The list of attachments will include a title, date, and number of pages for each.

Documents that may be identified in Section J include:

- Specification
- Statement of Work
- Statement of Objectives
- Training Systems Requirements Document
- Training System Functional Description
- List of Addressees for Contracts Data Requirements List (CDRL) Exhibits
- DD Form 254, Contract Security Classification Specification

For further information, refer to the DOD website's *Doing Business with the DOD*.

Section K - Representations, Certifications and Other Statements of Offeror: Contains information that you must certify to bid on this contract, such as certification that you have acted according to procurement integrity regulations, your taxpayer identification, the status of personnel, ownership of your firm, type of business organization, authorized negotiators that your facilities are not segregated, that you comply with affirmative action guidelines, whether you qualify as a small business, disadvantaged business, and/or women-owned business, *etc.*

Section L - Instructions, Conditions, and Notices to Offerors or Respondents: Section provides instructions for preparing your proposal. These instructions may include any formatting requirements, how the material should be organized or outlined, how to submit questions regarding the RFP or procurement, how the proposal is to be delivered, and sometimes notices, conditions, or other instructions.

For example, the instructions may specify further organization of proposal or response parts, such as:

- Administrative

- Management
- Technical
- Logistics
- Past performance
- Cost or pricing data (FAR 15.408), or information other than cost or pricing data

Section M - Evaluation Factors for Award: Defines the factors, sub-factors, and elements that the government uses to “grade” the proposal. The government grades proposals and then considers cost to determine who wins the award and gets the contract.

B. RESPONDING TO A SOLICITATION

Your response to a government solicitation to provide the products or services is called an “offer.” There are two types of offers: bids and proposals. Bids are used in sealed bidding purchases, while proposals involve awards to be made following negotiations. The published solicitation will indicate whether it is a bid or proposal.

Bids and proposals always should be prepared with the utmost care. Contracts awarded on erroneous offers may result in serious financial loss or other difficulty for the bidder. Before preparing an offer, you should carefully study the specifications to ensure that your company can meet all the requirements. Particular attention should be given to the instructions to offerors, and to the conditions of purchase, delivery and payment. When determining the amount of the offer, you should be especially careful to include all costs of material, labor, overhead, packaging, and transportation. Also, you should be sure to comply with such important provisions of the solicitation as submitting the required number of copies, mailing the offer in sufficient time to reach the purchasing office before the closing date, and properly tagging, marking, and mailing any required samples well in advance of the closing date.

If you want to change or withdraw a bid, you may send a letter to the purchasing office. However, the notification must reach the office prior to the time set for the bid opening. When preparing a proposal on a negotiated procurement, the same care should be taken as with a sealed bid. However, because the negotiated purchase procedure is more flexible than the sealed bid procedure, there is greater opportunity to seek modification of specifications, conditions of purchase, or delivery and payment. If the contracting officer decides to negotiate on your company’s proposal a complete cost analysis may be required. Therefore, your company should be prepared to support the quotation with facts and figures.

C. ORGANIZING YOUR PROPOSAL

Your proposal must demonstrate that:

- You understand the agency’s need
- You understand the product or service requirements
- Your proposed solution meets (or exceeds) the requirements, is appropriate to the problem, is viable, is without great risk of failure, and is reasonably priced

In addition, you may be asked to include:

- Relevant product samples
- Resumes of key personnel
- Management plans
- Other documents that demonstrate your company's capability to fulfill the requirements

These requirements illustrate why it is important that you have a capabilities statement completed!

Most proposals are divided into three sections: (1) technical, (2) price, and (3) past experience. The technical proposal will consist of how you will respond to the scope of work. The price proposal includes your estimated cost, the number of employees who will perform the work, and the time it will take to complete the project. The past experience section includes a list of pertinent projects, contacts and clients.

You may include any documentation you think strengthens your proposal; all supporting documentation that is requested in the RFP must be submitted to be considered for the contract award.

Regardless of the type of offer you are preparing, there are certain guidelines that you should follow. Make sure:

- The products and services you are offering fulfill the needs (meet the requirements, as stated in the solicitation)
- You complete and submit all the appropriate standardized forms
- Your offer is clear, concise, and understandable
- Your pricing makes sense for you and the government

Also, if there is a page limit, be certain not to exceed it. (Sometimes attachments like résumés are not included in the limit.) Remember, the contract is awarded to the vendor whose proposal achieves the highest "score" in the evaluation. The award decision is fully documented to withstand public scrutiny and a possible formal, legal protest from a losing vendor.

It is also important, both in the technical proposal and in the past experience section, that you stress certain "win" themes, such as your firm has:

- Experience supporting the requesting agency or similar work
- Successfully performed on a project of similar work scope and complexity
- Credentialed staff or has access to required personnel that can be directed to this project
- Work facilities in close proximity to project work site

D. FORMS YOU MAY ENCOUNTER IN SEALED BIDS

Among the forms that you may be required to submit in a sealed bid are:

Standard Form 33, Solicitation, Offer, and Award: To solicit offers and award the contract. The bidder completes and signs the form, which constitutes the bid. Upon acceptance of the bid (award), the government signs the same document, establishing a binding contract.

Standard Form 30, Amendment of Solicitation/Modification of Contract: To amend (change the requirements of) the solicitation before it closes or to modify the contract once it has been awarded. The government completes and sends the form to the bidder or contractor for signature.

Standard Form 1149, Solicitation/Contract/Order for Commercial Item: To buy, ship, and receive commercial items when using simplified acquisition procedures.

Forms required for a sealed bid will be provided in the solicitation package.

E. FORMS YOU MAY ENCOUNTER IN A REQUEST FOR QUOTATION (RFQ)

Among the forms that you might be required to submit in response to an RFQ are:

Standard Form 18, Request for Quotation: To obtain company information and the quote.

Standard Form 26, Award/Contract: To specify the contract conditions if a contract is awarded.

Standard Form 44, Purchase Order-Invoice-Voucher: For on the spot, over-the-counter supplies and services where the supplies or services are immediately available, and one delivery/one payment will be made.

An RFQ may require the submission of a proposal.

It should be noted that there is a paperless contracting DoD-wide application designed to eliminate paper from the receipts and acceptance process of the DoD contracting lifecycle. This is called the [Wide Area Work Flow – Receipts and Acceptance \(WAWF-RA\)](#). The goal is to enable authorized defense contractors and DoD personnel the ability to create invoices, receive reports and access contract related documents.

VIII. HOW TO PRICE A RESPONSE

Make sure that your pricing makes sense for you and the government. Carefully consider your pricing, as you will be held to it if you are awarded the contract.

You should identify and estimate every cost such as direct labor, fringe benefits, materials and services, overhead, royalties and travel. In addition, you should research past historic costs for similar contracts to get an idea of your projected costs.

Your cost strategy should be based upon information provided by the federal agency and your competition, as well as your company's goals. You should always research the agency to obtain information about the agency's budget and target price.

Make sure you accurately calculate your figures to avoid mathematical errors. You do not want to lose a contract because your bid was too high or be hit with a substantial loss because you miscalculated your bid. Make sure your budget analysis is clear, concise and easy to understand.

Consider the following when you establish your price:

- Your fully loaded costs to provide the products and services
- What your competitors might bid to provide the same products or services
- A reasonable profit

If your response involves either service or construction workers be careful to adhere to the wage determinations established, often on an area or regional basis, for certain categories of workers.

Federal contracting officers must make sure that all pertinent contracts adhere to these rates whether covered by the Service Contract Act or the Davis-Bacon Act. These rates also specify fringe benefit rates for each classification of worker. Wage determinations change frequently, so it is best to go online to the [U. S. Department of Labor's website](#) and follow the link to the Wage and Hour Division. From there you can find the rates for the region or area where the workers will be.

It is extremely important to follow and conform to the various regulations affecting the proper pricing of proposals and preparations of bids.

IX. HOW TO DO BUSINESS WITH THE STATE OF MARYLAND

Maryland's [Procurement System](#) has some similarities to the Federal Government system. It offers a bid board system along with small business and socioeconomic programs. Agencies have a corporate purchasing card for purchases under \$5000. Additionally, purchases and contracts between \$5000 and \$15,000 are considered as small procurements and are typically handled as direct solicitations by agency buyers. Most agency websites have their own "How to Do Business ..." along with bid boards. Larger solicitations are through an equivalent to beta.SAM.gov – eMaryland Marketplace Advantage.

A. EMARYLAND MARKETPLACE ADVANTAGE (EMMA)

[eMaryland Marketplace Advantage](#) is the State of Maryland's internet-based bid board system. It is a

business tool that provides access to State and local procurement opportunities. Over 200 government organizations use eMMA to solicit contract opportunities. Solicitations from state agencies over \$15,000 must be posted on this system.

Vendors have the ability to:

- Receive notice of bid opportunities
- Search for contracting opportunities
- Complete the Small Business Reserve and Veteran-Owned Small Business Enterprise self-certification
- Submit bids electronically
- Obtain bid results online

B. HOW MARYLAND'S PROCUREMENT SYSTEM WORKS

The Maryland Department of General Services **Office of State Procurement** is the control agency for procurement functions with the exception of the following:

- [State Treasurer's Office \(STO\)](#) controls banking, investment, other financial services, insurance, and insurance-related services.
- The University of Maryland System has an independent but similar system managed the [USM Office of Procurement](#). The University System follows the same purchasing guidelines as all state agencies.

Maryland's [Procurement Forecast](#) is a searchable database for both state- and federally funded contracts that are being administered by a state agency. This valuable tool includes both recurring and projected opportunities.

C. MARYLAND'S SMALL BUSINESS PROGRAMS

The state offers three programs to provide greater access and opportunity for small businesses seeking to do business with the state:

1. Small Business Reserve Program (SBR)

The SBR program is committed to the growth and success of small businesses. SBR provides small businesses with the opportunity to participate as prime contractors on state contracts and procurements by competing against other small businesses instead of larger, more established companies. Vendor registration is through eMMA.

A small business in the state of Maryland is a business, other than a broker, that meets the following criteria:

- The business is independently owned and operated
- The business is not a subsidiary of another business
- The business is not dominant in its field of operation
- The wholesale operations of the business did not employ more than 50 persons, and the gross sales of the business did not exceed an average of \$4,000,000 in its most recently completed three fiscal years
- The retail operations of the business did not employ more than 25 persons, and the gross sales of the business did not exceed an average of \$3,000,000 in its most recently completed three fiscal years
- The manufacturing operations of the business did not employ more than 100 persons, and the gross sales of the business did not exceed an average of \$2,000,000 in its most recently completed three fiscal years
- The service operations of the business did not employ more than 100 persons, and the gross sales of the business did not exceed an average of \$10,000,000 in its most recently completed three fiscal years
- The construction operations of the business did not employ more than 50 persons, and the gross sales of the business did not exceed an average of \$7,000,000 in its most recently completed three fiscal years.
- The architectural and engineering operations of the business did not employ more than 100 persons, and the gross sales of the business did not exceed an average of \$4,500,000 in its most recently completed three fiscal years.

Note: If a business has not existed for three years, the gross sales average is computed for the period of the business's existence. For newly formed businesses, the determination will be based upon employment levels and projected gross sales.

Small businesses will be able to bid for State contracts without competing with larger, more established companies. The 23 designated agencies and departments will be required to award a minimum of 10 percent of their units' total dollar value of goods, supplies, services, maintenance, construction, construction-related, architectural service and engineering service contracts to small businesses. The websites for these agencies can be accessed through Maryland.gov.

The reserve does not apply to procurements that are subject to existing preferences for State Use Industries, Blind Industries and Services of Maryland, sheltered workshops, and procurements for which this program would represent a violation of federal law. If you are interested in registering with the Small Business Reserve Program, you may apply online at [eMaryland Marketplace Advantage](#).

2. Veteran-Owned Small Business Enterprises Program (VSBE)

The VSBE Program provides for each agency to structure its procurement procedures to try to achieve an overall minimum of 1% of the unit's total dollar value of procurement contracts to be made directly or indirectly from veteran-owned small business enterprises. To achieve this goal, an agency must assess the potential for VSBE prime contractor and subcontractor participation in each contract. If, after assessing the specific solicitation considering the factors set forth in the regulation and the agency determines that subcontractor participation is the appropriate procurement strategy the agency establishes a VSBE subcontract goal. Agencies may establish a VSBE goal and an MBE goal in the same solicitation if the assessment supports such an action.

When a VSBE subcontract goal is established, bidders/offerors must submit a Utilization Affidavit and a Participation Schedule. If an agency does not use the recommended forms, a written determination justifying the need for different forms must be included in the contract file.

[Veteran-Owned Small Business Enterprises](#) must be verified by the Center for Veterans Enterprise of the United States Department of Veterans Affairs.

To learn more about Veteran-Owned Small Business programs, go to [Maryland Department of Veteran Affairs](#).

3. Minority Business Enterprise Program (MBE)

The MBE program encourages socially- and economically-disadvantaged small business owners to participate in state procurement and contracting opportunities. Current regulations direct 70 designated State agencies to make every effort to award an overall minimum goal of 29% of the total dollar value of their procurement contracts directly (prime contractors) or indirectly (subcontractors) to certified MBE firms. MBE goals are set on a contract-by-contract basis. Only the work of certified firms can be counted toward the MBE contract goal.

The Maryland Department of Transportation's [Office of Minority Business Enterprise](#) conducts the certification and renewal process for the Minority Business Enterprise (MBE), Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE), Airport Concessions Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (ACDBE), and Small Business Enterprise (SBE) programs. A directory of certified firms is available on their website. Certain local jurisdictions within the state also accept these certifications for their procurement opportunities.

4. Maryland Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC)

Supported by the federal and state government, PTAC provides counseling and training of the requirements of government contracting and the market know-how they need to obtain and successfully perform federal, state, and local government contracts.

D. GOVERNOR’S OFFICE OF SMALL, MINORITY & WOMEN BUSINESS AFFAIRS

The primary role is to connect the small business community to greater economic opportunities in both the public and private sectors. The Office monitors the state’s Small Business Reserve, Minority Business Enterprise and Veteran-Owned Small Business Enterprise procurement programs. The conduct a statewide outreach campaign that provides general education as well as technical training for those firms that want to do business with the state.

E. WORKSHOPS AND RESOURCES

The following organizations offer vendor outreach sessions and workshops on “How to Do Business...”

- Maryland Department of Transportation’s [Office of Minority Business Enterprise](#) provides monthly application assistance [workshops](#).
- [Governor’s Office of Small, Minority & Women Business Affairs \(GOSBA\)](#) offers “Ready, Set, GROW!” a workshop series that connects vendors with agency buyers and shares best practices for navigating the procurement process. GOSBA also provides a Technical Training Classroom that covers a broad range of topics designed to help small business owners improve managerial efficiency and gain understanding of the government contracting arena.

X. HOW TO USE MARYLAND'S RESOURCES TO YOUR ADVANTAGE

There are many resources in Maryland that can assist to strengthen and grow your business and guide you in doing business with government.

A. MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

The Maryland Department of Commerce stimulates private investment and fosters job creation by attracting new businesses, encouraging the expansion and retention of existing companies, and providing financial assistance to Maryland companies. The Department promotes the State's many economic advantages and markets local products and services at home and abroad to spur economic development and international investment, trade and tourism. Because they are major economic generators, the Department also supports the arts, film production, sports, and other special events. Programs and resources include:

- [Building and site location](#) assistance for existing or relocating businesses
- [Maryland Business Express](#) is a platform that offers portals to step-by-step processes to plan, register, manage and grow your business
- [Finance programs](#), including direct financing and loan guarantees for support and growth of small, existing or relocating businesses, with special programs for minority or economically disadvantaged firms
- [Tax credits](#) provided to new and existing businesses in various activities, industries and geographic locations with the opportunity to reduce costs, spur investment and create jobs
- [Workforce recruitment and training](#) to help identify and train new workers, or upgrade the skills of your existing workers
- [State, local and federal contracting opportunities](#)
- [Business advocacy](#) and consulting to locate the tools they need to sustain, grow and prosper by navigating a path through a variety of government programs, private organizations, community partnerships and business service providers
- [Technology transfer](#) information to support entrepreneurs looking to develop, transfer or accelerate defense technology-based products
- [Export consulting and marketing](#) for companies planning to enter new foreign markets or advance their export sales. The team includes foreign representatives in 11 countries

The Department of Commerce also offers resources to assist you in identifying and pursuing new business opportunities with the federal, state and local governments. The [Business to Government \(B2G\)](#) website provides helpful tips and guides along with links to federal and state contracting opportunities. B2G is a portal to federal agencies' and over 60 prime contractors' "how to do business" sites. B2G also provides procurement resources for the state and links to Maryland's counties' procurement operations.

B. MARYLAND SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (MSBDFA)

MSBDFA promotes the viability and expansion of businesses owned by economically and socially disadvantaged entrepreneurs. The program uses include working capital, supplies and materials, machinery and equipment acquisition, land acquisition or real estate improvements. Other uses include the purchase of an existing franchise, construction or renovation and franchise fees or obtaining bid, performance and payment bonds for contracts.

Financing for the approved small businesses include:

- Contract Financing Program
- Equity Participation Program
- Long Term Guaranty Program
- Surety Bonding Program

Meridian Management Group, Inc.
Randy Croxton, Chief Investment Officer
826 E. Baltimore Street
Baltimore, MD 21202
410 333-2548
randy.croxton@mmggroup.com

C. MARYLAND'S MILITARY ALLIANCES

Maryland has 12 military installations and more than 60 federal agencies throughout the state. The Department of Commerce's Office of Military and Federal Affairs' mission is to sustain, support, and leverage the presence of federal agencies in Maryland. To support the military installations, the Department of Commerce supports seven military alliances associated with military installations.

Andrews Business and Community Alliance

(Joint Base Andrews)
Greater Prince George's Business Roundtable
10201 Martin Luther King, Jr. Highway, Suite 220
Bowie, MD 20720
Jim Estep, President
301-860-0809
jestep@bizroundtable.org

Army Alliance, Inc.

(Aberdeen Proving Ground)
2021 E. Pulaski Highway, Suite D
Havre de Grace, MD 21078
Sue Nappi, Executive Director
410-838-2769
APGArmyAlliance@gmail.com

Fort Detrick Alliance

P.O. Box 822
Frederick, MD 21702

Eileen Mitchell, Executive Director
301-788-9896
director@fortdetrickalliance.org

Fort Meade Alliance

1350 Dorsey Road, Suite G
Hanover, MD 21076
Steven Tiller, President
Tim O’Ferrall, General Manager
410-850-4940
toferrall@ftmeadealliance.org

Military Alliance Council (MAC)

(Naval Surface Warfare Center Indian Head)
4275 Hawthorne Road
Indian Head, MD 20640
Brian Klaas, President
301-743-6622
brian.klaas@verizon.net

Maritime Technology Alliance

(Naval Surface Warfare Center – Carderock Division)
16710 Batchellors Forest Road
Olney, MD 20832-2703
Ivan Caplan, President
410-647-7048
ilcaplan@verizon.net

Southern Maryland Navy Alliance

(Naval Air Station Patuxent River)
46610 Expedition Drive, Suite 101
Lexington Park, MD 20653

In addition, the Food and Drug Administration at White Oak has a community advocacy organization called Labquest:

Federal Research Center at White Oak

LABQUEST Partnership
10903 New Hampshire Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland, 20903
Betsy Bretz, Chairperson
301-439-8655 (Office)
bbretz@comcast.net

D. MARYLAND GOVERNOR’S OFFICE OF SMALL, MINORITY & WOMEN BUSINESS AFFAIRS (GOSBA)

GOSBA is responsible for facilitating minority business enterprise activities through coordinating and promoting government programs aimed at strengthening and preserving the State’s minority business enterprises. GOSBA connects small, minority- and women-owned businesses to state contracting and procurement opportunities through the Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) and Small Business Reserve (SBR) programs while working with state agencies to implement and monitor these programs in accordance with applicable policies, laws and regulations. GOMA offers training and workshops on doing business with the State.

Maryland Governor’s Office of Small, Minority & Women Business Affairs
100 Community Place
Crownsville, MD 21032
410-697-9600

E. MARYLAND’S COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS

County economic development organizations are state partners supporting local economy and business community in their jurisdiction. Like Maryland’s Department of Commerce, these organizations offer support to encourage the expansion and retention of existing employers and the attraction of new ones.

Allegany County
Anne Arundel County
Baltimore City
Baltimore County
Calvert County
Caroline County
Carroll County
Cecil County
Charles County
Dorchester County
Frederick County
Garrett County
Harford County
Howard County
Kent County
Montgomery County
Prince George’s County
Queen Anne’s County
St. Mary’s County
Somerset County
Talbot County
Washington County
Wicomico County
Worcester County

F. SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (SBA) – MARYLAND DISTRICT OFFICE

SBA provides small businesses access to capital in the form of loans and loan guarantees, entrepreneurial development, advocacy and government contracting.

The U.S. government is the largest single purchaser of goods and services in the world, awarding approximately \$500 billion in contracts every year. The SBA's Office of Government Contracting & Business Development works with federal agencies to award at least 23 percent of all prime government contract dollars to small businesses and help federal agencies meet specific statutory goals for [small disadvantaged businesses](#), [women-owned small businesses \(WOSB\)](#), [service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses \(SDVOSB\)](#), and small businesses that are located in [historically underutilized business zones \(HUBZone\)](#).

In addition, SBA's [8\(a\) Business Development Program](#) assists eligible socially- and economically-disadvantaged individuals in developing and growing their businesses through one-on-one counseling, training workshops, matchmaking opportunities with federal buyers, and other management and technical guidance.

SBA offers how-to guides, counseling and workshops, and resources for finding customers, subcontracting opportunities. The [SBA website](#) provides extensive information about their many resources and programs. To reach out to the Maryland District Office, contact:

SBA Maryland District Office

SBA Maryland District Office
100 South Charles Street, Suite 1201
Baltimore, MD 21201
410-962-6195

For Montgomery and Prince George's counties contact:

SBA Washington Metropolitan Area District Office

409 3rd Street SW
Washington, DC 20416
202-205-8800

G. MARYLAND SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER (SBDC) NETWORK

The SBDC Network provides training, confidential consulting and market and industry research to help Maryland's small businesses find practical solutions to business needs. If you are new to entrepreneurship, or a seasoned small business owner, instructors and small business consultants share their real-world experience and expertise to help you broaden your business knowledge and skill, and increase your chances for success. The center also provides intellectual property and technology commercialization assistance. Counseling in Spanish is available. Services include:

- Consulting: no-cost confidential consulting includes identifying local markets for your business, developing and reviewing a strategic business plan, and compliance issues that need clarification.

- **Training:** a variety of comprehensive trainings for a better understanding of what it will take to establish and operate a successful business at no or low cost. Online courses offer a convenient way to obtain training. Face-to-face sessions will provide invaluable knowledge and an opportunity to share ideas and issues with entrepreneurs with similar experiences.
- **Resources:** hundreds of research resources on print, video and electronic media where you can obtain the information you need to start, manage and grow your small business. Resources include guidance for: business plans, finance, government and international markets, minority business programs and market research.

Lead Center

7100 Baltimore Avenue, Suite 400
College Park, MD 20740
301-403-0501

The state is divided into six regions and each region offers services with special emphasis on programs that meet the unique needs of businesses within its jurisdiction.

Western

Serving Allegany, Garrett and Washington counties
888-237-9007

Corridor

Serving Anne Arundel, Baltimore City, Frederick, Howard, Montgomery and Prince George's counties
301-403-8300

Northern

Serving Baltimore, Carroll, Cecil and Harford counties
443-412-2237

Southern

Serving Calvert, Charles and St. Mary's counties
301-539-4687

Eastern

Serving Caroline, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's, Somerset, Talbot, Wicomico, and Worcester counties
410-548-4419

H. MARYLAND PROCUREMENT TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CENTER (PTAC)

PTAC, a program of the Maryland SBDC Network, is designed to help small businesses sell products and services to federal, state and local agencies. At no cost to small business owners,

this program provides assistance in successfully identifying, obtaining and performing government contracts. Small businesses (as defined by the SBA) that have a product or service needed by a government agency can apply for these services.

Funded in part through the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA), the Procurement Technical Assistance Centers (PTAC) train businesses on how to do business and solve problems with government agencies through workshops and individual one-on-one counseling sessions. Counseling is free, but some training programs may have a small fee. Services PTAC provides:

- Access to library of federal, state, and local procurement resources
- Assistance in obtaining solicitations, references, specifications, and drawings from buying offices
- Assistance with preparation of bidders mailing list applications
- Assistance with registrations and certifications
- Assistance with solicitation interpretation and bid package preparation
- Automated bid matching from hundreds of buying offices, tailored to individual client specifications
- Help in locating subcontracting opportunities
- Information on federal/state/local procurement actions
- Market research to locate government agencies who buy your product or services
- Pre/post award contract assistance
- Referrals to other assistance activities where appropriate
- Workshops/seminars on a variety of contracting topics

For more information, contact your local [SBDC](#) office or go to:

Maryland Procurement Assistance Center

5825 University Research Court
Suite 1300
College Park, MD 20740
301-405-6550

I. MARYLAND TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (TEDCO)

TEDCO is an independent instrumentality of the State of Maryland to facilitate the creation of businesses and support their growth in all regions of the State. TEDCO's role is to be Maryland's leading source of funding for early-stage, technology-based businesses; to provide other business assistance to entrepreneurs throughout the State; and to foster technology transfer and commercialization from the State's universities and Federal labs. TEDCO is leading innovation to market in Maryland and contributing to a robust entrepreneurial ecosystem in the State through its various programs and funds. Entrepreneurial support includes

- Advisory Services

- Business Resources
- Pre-seed and seed investment, and venture funds
- Technology transfer support

J. TECHNOLOGY INCUBATORS IN MARYLAND

Maryland's 45+ business incubators, accelerators and co-working spaces offer early stage companies shared resources, business assistance, and access to equipment and facilities. Business incubation accelerates the successful development of start-up and fledgling companies by providing entrepreneurs with an array of targeted resources and services. These services are usually developed or orchestrated by incubator management and offered both in the business incubator and through its network of contacts. An incubator's main goal is to produce successful firms that will leave the program financially viable and freestanding. These incubator graduates have the potential to create jobs, revitalize neighborhoods, commercialize new technologies, and strengthen local and national economies. Maryland Department of Commerce provides an [interactive tool](#) to help identify the right incubator.

The [Maryland Business Innovation Association](#) (MBIA) is an association to advance of business incubation in Maryland. MBIA supports 550 companies across the state and is dedicated to sharing resources, information, and best practices among the members with the overall goal of promoting business incubation excellence within all Maryland's incubators.

K. TECHNOLOGY COUNCILS AND ASSOCIATIONS

The following organizations promote technology-based businesses for the region and provide programs and networking opportunities.

[Carroll Technology Council](#)

[Charles County Tech Council](#)

[Howard Tech Council](#)

[Maryland Tech Council](#)

[Northeastern Maryland Tech Council](#)

[The Patuxent Partnership](#)

XI. ADDITIONAL FEDERAL CONTRACTING RESOURCES

Public Purchasing Fact Sheet

Common procurement terminology used by federal, State and local governments.

Contractor Assessment Performance Reporting System (CPARS)

Contains a database of many departments' past performance reports from previous fiscal years and information on contractors.

Grants.gov

Grants.gov allows organizations to electronically find and apply for more than \$400 billion in federal grants. Grants.gov is the single access point for over 1,000 grant programs offered by all federal grant-making agencies. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services is proud to be the managing partner for Grants.gov, an initiative that is having an unparalleled impact on the grant community.

Federal Laboratories Consortium (FLC)

FLC is a nationwide network of federal laboratories that provides the forum to develop strategies and opportunities for linking the laboratory mission technologies and expertise with the marketplace. The mission of the FLC is to add value to the federal agencies, laboratories and their partners to accomplish the rapid integration of research and development resources within the mainstream of the U.S. economy. Maryland has over 74 federal laboratories.

Federal Procurement Data System (FPDS)

FPDS provides details on specific contracts and is the authoritative source for entering and viewing details about contract awards.

Contract Data Reports

Formally provided by the Federal Procurement Data System, these reports transitioned to beta.Sam.gov. Contract data is detailed post-solicitation and award data on contract actions over \$3,500. One may use it to search public award data to find competitive information, learn when existing contracts expire, and identify potential subcontracting opportunities.

Maryland Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC)

Free counseling and training on "how to do business" with state, local and federal government.

North American Industry Classification System (NAICS)

The standard used by Federal statistical agencies in classifying business establishments for the purpose of collecting, analyzing, and publishing statistical data related to the U.S. business economy.

Small Business Offices at Federal Agencies

Many federal agencies have a dedicated office to help small businesses search and compete for contract opportunities within the agency. These offices are known as either an **Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU)** or an **Office of Small Business Programs (OSBP)**. They may hold informational trainings and outreach events, or provide contact information for businesses to use to ask questions about contracting with their agencies.

U.S. Small Business Administration

The federal agency that provides information, assistance and counseling on starting or managing a business, loans and government contracting.

USA Spending.gov

The official open data source of federal spending information. It is an interactive tool that explores elements of the federal budget such as federal loans, grants and contract data.

Networking & Training Organizations for the Contractors:

- **GovConnects:** a Howard County Chamber of Commerce initiative providing educational opportunities, a forum for networking focused specifically on this niche market, targeted events and current information guided by experienced contracting participants.
- **Government Contracting Network (GovConNet):** Federal procurement resource for education, connections and information, sponsored by the Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce.
- **Veteran Institute for Procurement (VIP)** a comprehensive educational training program for veteran business owners sponsored by the Montgomery County Chamber Community Foundation.

Sources:

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1/2021

XII. **DOs** and **DON'Ts** of Government Contracting

Define your business and be able to succinctly describe your product or service—including preparing a concise capabilities statement and a 30 second elevator speech.

FEDERAL OPPORTUNITIES

BE PREPARED WITH:

- [NAICS Code](#) for your product or service
- [Produce and Service Code](#) to classify products and services, and read the [manual](#)
- [DUNS Number](#) obtained from Dun & Bradstreet

DO

- Learn the [basics of contracting](#) from the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA)
- Get classified as a small business and pursue certification of applicable socio/economic categories through [SBA](#)
- Register with the System for Awards Management - [beta.SAM.gov](#), the database is a primary source that federal agencies use to identify prospective vendors
- Obtain Commercial & Government Entity Code (CAGE) through the SAM registration
- Become familiar with agency regulations and the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) and take [training courses](#)
- Establish a website and a capabilities statement that contains key information, qualifications, certifications, NAICS codes, Qualified Bidders List (QPL) or CAGE codes, past performance, awards and recognitions that are verifiable
- Create a profile in SAM that goes in the Dynamic Small Business Search ([DSBS](#)) to be used by procurement officers to identify qualified government contractors
- Register with prime contractors' vendor websites
- Ensure that your accounting system meets the Federal requirements based on your size
- Work with your lender to arrange advancement payment and receivables financing
- Establish the ability to accept credit cards and electronic funds transfer capability
- Ensure sufficient staffing to complete project before bidding

DON'T

- Limit your NAICS codes or description if they accurately describe your business
- Fail to keep your capabilities statement, website, data & profile in SAM and DSBS, & agency/prime registration up to date
- Pursue solicitations requiring security clearances if you don't possess them
- Offer too broad of a scope of products or services
- Be unprepared with staffing and financing to complete the project

PREPARATION PREPARATION PREPARATION

STATE and LOCAL OPPORTUNITIES

DO

- Register in [eMaryland Marketplace Advantage \(eMMA\)](#) - an interactive bidding service for state and local opportunities
- Register in the [Maryland Small Business Reserve Program](#) through eMMA
- Pursue MBE and DBE status through [Maryland's Minority Business Enterprise Program](#)
- Review processes and identify opportunities with Maryland's [county governments](#).
- Check the agencies' s bid boards for small opportunities
- Review Maryland's state agencies' [procurement forecasts](#)

DON'T

- Lose your active registration by not annually updating your eMaryland Marketplace data and MBE certification
- Attempt to use your federal socio-economic certification for Maryland's MBE program and vice versa.

PREPARATION PREPARATION PREPARATION

HOMEWORK

DO

- Review the solicitations you receive through [beta.SAM.gov](#) or eMMA to determine if you have accurately classified and described your business
- Regularly review business opportunities on [beta.SAM.gov](#) over \$25,000 and eMMA over \$15,000, along with contract awards
- Research subcontracting opportunities through SBA's [Sub-Net](#) database
- Research the agency website to learn their mission, how to's, what and how they buy, and the key NAICS codes
- Narrow your target agencies
- Use agency resources such as acquisition forecasts, prime contractor database & outreach events
- Contact Maryland's Small and Minority business Liaisons
- Learn how agencies advertise small procurements, review bid boards
- Consider pursuing agency Sources Sought and RFI's and determine the preferred contract vehicles
- Consider contract vehicles that preauthorizes you as a supplier
- Track awarded contracts and contract winners through agency websites and the [Federal Procurement Data System](#)
- Determine the agency's challenges and how you can help to solve them
- Identify the agency's small business office to learn how best to pursue their opportunities
- Get training and counseling through the [Governor's Office of Small, Minority & Women Business Affairs](#) (GOSBA) and the [Procurement Technical Assistance Center](#) (PTAC)

DON'T schedule a meeting until you:

- Complete all the steps above
- Finish all your homework, reviewed customer websites and research their needs
- Understand the agency culture
- Identify the problem you will solve with your specific product or service niche
- Prepare a customized capabilities statement with product/service niche and technical specifications

HOMEWORK HOMEWORK HOMEWORK

RELATIONSHIPS

DO

- Listen and learn
- Seek informational and networking opportunities to meet small business liaisons, project officers (PO) or prime contractor through forums, and industry or vendor days
- Use federal or state agency or prime small business liaisons to connect you with project officers whose issue you want to solve
- Pursue subcontracting and teaming opportunities with primes or event competitors
- Present succinctly and clearly to a PO or prime contractor precisely how you will resolve their need or problem
- Distinguish your firm's niche and competitive advantage
- Be prepared to provide technical specifications and take technical experts to meetings
- Be honest about your firm's experience and capability
- Identify subject matter experts for assistance
- Pursue mentor protégé relationships with primes
- Ask agency contacts for referrals

DON'T

- Lead with your socio-economic status, but lead with your unique capability
- Ask "how can I help you." Come with a solution
- Fail to reach out to buyers handling smaller purchase to get on their vendor list
- Forget about your rolodex
- **Give up on your outreach – be persistent**

RELATIONSHIPS

RELATIONSHIPS

RELATIONSHIPS

PERFORMANCE

DO

- Start with small purchases to build past performance through local, state & federal opportunities
 - Read the solicitation carefully, complete the forms and RFI/RFP's accurately.
 - Offer value and quality service or goods in line with your business expertise
 - Contact the contracting officer (CO) with questions about the solicitation and requirements
 - Communicate with the government CO on a regular basis
 - Be helpful and provide solutions to problems that arise
 - Have a quality assurance or control plan and follow it
 - Inspect the work you perform frequently and make sure it is compliant with the contract specifications
 - Discuss problems that come up on the job as work progresses with the contracting agency
- Offer sustainable or "green" and energy efficient products or materials (USGBC-LEED)
- Be prepared to obtain a [Surety Bond](#) to ensure contract completion in the case of default
 - Request a debriefing if your bid was unsuccessful

DON'T

- Waste yours and the government's time on solicitations when your firm is not qualified
- Pursue prime contracts without having past performance
- Submit an offer that differs from what was requested (non-responsive)
- Submit incomplete documentation that lacks signatures, bond certifications, or required information
- Wait to inform the CO if there are problems encountered
- Overextend yourself financially
- Be unprepared with staffing requirements and propose workers or tradesmen that cannot pass the security background checks
- Fail to perform as the word gets out
- Attempt to sell or transfer your government contract without agency consent and agreement Seek or propose on more work than you can manage

PERFORMANCE

PERFORMANCE

PERFORMANCE

KEY POINTS

DO

- Utilize SBA, SBDC, PTAC & GOSBA
- Understand your customer
- Have a great Statement of Capabilities and website
- Hone your elevator pitch
- Gain past performance through commercial, small, sub or teaming opportunities
- Find a mentor
- Be persistent!

DON'T

- Miss networking opportunities and vendor/industry days
- Waste your customer's time
- Be unprepared with staffing or financial capacity
- Forget your contacts and rolodex
- Fail to perform!

Authored by Helga Weschke of the Office of Military & Federal Affairs (OMFA). The mission of OMFA is to enhance the economic viability and partnering capabilities of Maryland's military and civilian federal agencies, to protect and assist these important economic engines and to assist businesses with opportunities in the federal arena in support of the Department's core focus of job creation and economic growth