

Programs for Small, Disadvantaged, and Women-Owned Businesses

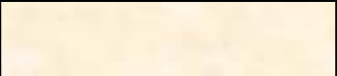
Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU)

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU) was established on June 26, 1979, and tasked with responsibility for fostering the use of small and small disadvantaged businesses as federal contractors. OSDBU's goal is to provide as much information, guidance and technical assistance as possible to assist the small business community in increasing its competitiveness through increased participation in USDA's procurement and program activities. Small businesses may contact the OSDBU at the following address:

USDA Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization
1400 Independence Ave., SW, Room 1566-South Building
Washington, D.C. 20250
Telephone: (202) 720-7117
Internet Website: <http://www.usda.gov/osdbu>

OSDBU Customer and Outreach Services

- Guides and advises small business representatives on strategies for marketing to USDA agencies;
- Coordinates and monitors the small business goaling program for the Department;
- Identifies and eliminates contracting barriers that prevent or severely restrict small businesses access to USDA procurements;
- Updates small businesses on contracting regulations;
- Educates small businesses on how to obtain certifications;
- Promotes the use of small business, 8(a), HUBZones and service-disabled veteran-owned small business set-asides;
- Mediates disputes between contractors and the contracting activity to resolve misunderstandings;
- Publishes, updates and disseminates brochures, fact sheets, and forecasts for USDA's contracting programs;





Monthly Vendor Outreach Sessions – The purpose of these sessions is to continually make available for small businesses, the opportunity to meet on a regularly scheduled basis with USDA contracting officials. At these sessions, USDA is introduced to new businesses that procurement offices may use to increase their small business resource base. Additionally, small businesses are provided marketing strategies and information on how to market their capabilities to USDA in one central location.

First Tuesday Trade Association Meeting – This meeting is designed to provide the various trade associations an opportunity to voice their concerns, opinions and ideas concerning current small business issues and take their findings back to the small businesses they represent.

Small Business Programs

Small Business Set-aside Program permits competition on certain solicitations among small businesses only.

The Section 8(a) Program (started in 1968 under the authority of Section 8(a) of the Small Business Act, as amended) is administered by the Small Business Administration (SBA). The 8(a) program allows USDA to enter into contracts for supplies and services with SBA, who then subcontracts these requirements to approved socially and economically disadvantaged firms.

Small Disadvantaged Business Program under the SDB Program, the Department takes a proactive role to ensure that contracts are competitively awarded to disadvantaged businesses. Prime contractors can receive evaluation credit for using SBA certified small disadvantaged business subcontractors.

Women-Owned Business Program requires best faith effort to increase procurements from women-owned firms by apprising them of opportunities to bid on solicitations. A federal 5% contracting goal is mandated for small women-owned businesses.


Historically Underutilized Business Zone (HUBZone) Program is the SBA program for qualified small businesses located in historically underutilized business zones. The program is designed to increase employment opportunities; stimulate capital investment in those areas; and empower communities through creating and sustaining successful small business enterprises. To participate in the HUBZone Program, a concern must be determined to be a “qualified HUBZone small business concern.”

A firm can be found to be a qualified HUBZone concern, if:

- (1) it is small;
- (2) it is located in an “historically underutilized business zone” (HUBZone);
- (3) it is owned and controlled by one or more U.S. Citizens; and
- (4) at least 35 percent of its employees reside in a HUBZone.

Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Businesses (SDVOSB) – Congress has enacted two laws and the President has issued an Executive Order to assist small businesses owned and controlled by SDVOSBs. The Veterans Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development Act of 1999 (P.L. 106-50) set a 3 percent





federal-wide procurement goal for contracts and subcontracts for SDVOSBs. The Veterans Benefits Act of 2003 (P.L. 108-183) enables SDVOSBs to receive sole source and restricted competition contracts for goods and services used by the U.S. government. Executive Order 13360 (Service-Disabled Veterans Executive Order) will increase federal contracting and subcontracting opportunities for service-disabled veteran businesses.

Subcontracting Program requires prime contractors (except small businesses) with contracts over \$500,000 (\$1 million for construction) establish subcontracting plans that provide the maximum utilization of small business concerns.

The Small Business Competitiveness Program studies the ability of small businesses to compete successfully in four designated industry groups: (1) Construction, (2) Refuse Systems and Related Services, (3) Architectural & Engineering Services (including surveying & mapping), and (4) Ship Building and Repair for the purpose of increasing procurements in 10 industry categories lacking small business participation. USDA's targeted industry categories are: Maintenance & Repair/Automated Data Processing (ADP) Equipment, Installation of ADP Equipment, Technology Studies, Other Photo/Mapping/Printing Services, Vocational/Technical Training, Leasing Special Industrial Machinery, Chemical Products, ADP Central Processing Units, Bags and Sacks, & Outerwear (Men's).

Small Business Innovation Research Program

The Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Program at the USDA makes grants that are competitively awarded to qualified small businesses for the purpose of supporting high quality research proposals containing advanced concepts related to important scientific problems and opportunities in agriculture that could lead to significant public benefit if the research is successful. The SBIR Program does not make loans and does not award grants for the purpose of helping a business get established.

Objectives of the SBIR program are to stimulate technological innovations in the private sector, strengthen the role of small businesses in meeting Federal research and development needs, increase private sector commercialization of innovations derived from USDA-supported research and development efforts, and foster and encourage participation by women-owned and socially and economically disadvantaged small business firms in technological innovations. The types of research projects awarded under this program include, but are not limited to:

- Forests and related resources,
 - Plant production and protection
 - Animal production and protection,
 - Air, water and soils,
 - Food science and nutrition,
 - Rural and community development,
 - Aquaculture,
 - Industrial applications,
 - Marketing and trade,
 - Wildlife and
 - Animal waste management
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USDA's SBIR program is administered by the Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service (CSREES). For additional information please visit the SBIR website: <http://www.reeusda.gov/sbir/> or contact:

Dr. Charles Cleland, SBIR National Program Manager
CSREES/USDA, STOP 2243
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USDA Office of Small & Disadvantaged Business Utilization (www.usda.gov/osdbu)

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To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, DC 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

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