



The U.S. Small Business Administration

Federal Contracting Opportunities for Women-Owned Small Businesses



Women's Business Ownership Representatives are located in every SBA district office across the country to help women access services to start and grow successful businesses. These representatives are specifically trained for assisting women entrepreneurs. To find a district office near you, go to www.sba.gov/localresources.

For information on SBA procurement assistance programs to help women-owned small businesses, contact the Women's Business Ownership Representative in your district office, or visit www.sba.gov/gcbd (select government contracting).

SBA programs and services are provided on a nondiscriminatory basis.

The U.S. Small Business Administration offers specialized services to women-owned small businesses including business consultation, assistance for start-up or expansion, and identification of government procurement opportunities.

The federal government has established a governmentwide 5 percent contracting goal for women-owned small businesses. The SBA works with federal agencies to increase contracting opportunities and increase the number of women-owned businesses that successfully compete in the federal marketplace. Contracts to women-owned small businesses accounted for \$11.6 billion in 2006 and 3.4 percent of federal procurement, an increase of \$1.4 billion from 2005.

Doing Business with the Government

The first step to becoming a federal contractor is to register your firm in the *Central Contractor Registration* database. *CCR* is an online business portal that helps small businesses market their goods and services to the federal government and prime contractors. Federal agencies and prime contractors also look in the database to find small business contractors. You can register your firm's profile in the *CCR* database at www.ccr.gov.

The *CCR* database also houses the SBA's *Dynamic Small Business Search* function, an interactive database that permits small firms registered in *CCR* to post their profiles and key word description for prospective buyers such as federal procurement officers or purchasing agents of prime contractors. Small businesses interested in doing business with the government must register in the *CCR* database.

Increasing Government Contracts

SBA has implemented initiatives to increase small business access to government contracts, which will be advantageous to women-owned small businesses. A semi-annual Scorecard reports on federal procuring agencies' progress toward small business contracting goals, including the 5 percent goal for women-owned small businesses.

- Over the last several years, women-owned small businesses have been winning an increasingly greater share of federal procurement dollars.
- In 2000, these businesses received 2.3 percent of the federal government's \$200 billion in contracts. That share increased to 2.49 percent in 2001, 2.5 percent in 2002, 2.98 percent in 2003, 3.03 percent 2004 and 3.4 percent in 2005.

- Because those percentages are applied to a steadily increasing total dollar amount for federal contracts, the actual contracting dollars to women-owned small businesses have increased dramatically over that period, by more than double. Prime contract dollars increased from \$4.6 billion in 2000 to \$10.2 billion in 2005. Subcontracting dollars also have increased, from \$3.6 billion in 2000 to over \$6 billion in 2003.

Counseling and Training Assistance

There are many resources currently available nationwide to help women-owned small businesses find and procure contracts at federal agencies, including Small Business Development Centers, Women's Business Centers, SCORE, Procurement Technical Assistance Centers, and the Office of Small Disadvantaged Business Utilization centers. There are often women's business advocates within the Office of Small Disadvantaged Business Utilization at the major agencies.

Women's business ownership representatives in every SBA district office coordinate services for women, helping them access appropriate training, counseling, mentoring, federal contracting opportunities, financing, and more. SBA's district offices provide counseling on government contracting to women-owned small businesses. To locate the SBA district office nearest to you, go to www.sba.gov/localresources.

The SBA's Women Business Centers are a nationwide community of 114 centers providing counseling, mentoring and other assistance geared to women, particularly those who are socially and economically disadvantaged. To meet the needs of women entrepreneurs, the WBCs offer their services at convenient times and locations. Some offer child care during training, and many provide assistance and materials in different languages, depending on the needs of the community.

SBA's Small Business Training Network is a virtual campus complete with courses and programs to help the small business owner. Entrepreneurs interested in government contracting should take the free course, *Business Opportunities: A Guide to Winning Federal Contracts*, which outlines how to participate in federal contracting programs. View this and other small business courses at www.sba.gov/training.

Want to Know More About Government Contracting?

Opening Doors to Federal Government Contracting—Small Business Opportunities

This publication guides you step-by-step through the procurement process including information on registering your business on the Central Contractor Registration system; SBA's counseling services; how to identify contracting opportunities; and how to market your business. View and download this publication at www.sba.gov/openingdoors.

Online Resources for Women

SBA's Women's Business Ownership Web site – www.sba.gov/women

SBA's Small Business Development Centers – www.sba.gov/sbdc

SCORE – Counselor to America's Small Business – www.score.org

Procurement Technical Assistance Centers – www.dla.mil/db/procure.htm

Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization – www.osdbu.gov/offices/html