

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
SUPPLIER DIVERSITY POLICY STATEMENT

Small and diverse businesses drive our economy and contribute to the fabric of our local communities, our Commonwealth, and our nation. Fostering an environment for entrepreneurial, high-growth companies to succeed leads to job creation for Virginians. Supporting small and diverse businesses is a vital component of that effort.

As our economic base expands, it is imperative that we foster an inclusive procurement environment that creates the broadest opportunity to compete in all vendor sectors. The business relationships that are forged from that expanded opportunity can provide value both to the Commonwealth and to the business owners without the relaxation of current purchasing policies and procedures. Competitive opportunities for small and diverse businesses must only be awarded on merit and demonstrated performance, and potential for success. Small and diverse businesses across Virginia have demonstrated that, when given the opportunity to compete, they will and perform on their own merit.

Further, the Commonwealth recognizes that there are many advantages to maintaining and fostering competition in the supply of goods and services, and believes that such competition can and should be accomplished without granting preferences based on race and/or gender. A robust supplier diversity program stimulates competition as it increases the number of qualified enterprises in the vendor pool—lowering costs and providing better service for all.

The Commonwealth's Supplier Diversity objectives are to:

- Actively, routinely, and directly seek out qualified small and diverse business enterprises that can provide price competitive and high-quality commodities and services.
- Ensure that small and diverse businesses enterprises are fully aware of the requirements to participate in the Commonwealth's procurement opportunities.
- Identify commodities and services in which small and diverse businesses are the most competitive and publish such procurement opportunities with extended advance notice.
- Encourage large suppliers to actively mentor and partner with small and diverse businesses.
- Engage and partner with supplier diversity advocacy groups, nonprofits, trade associations, and other state and federal agencies to assist in the development and competitiveness of small and diverse businesses through instructional and outreach activities.

- Ensure that procurement professionals involved in the selection, evaluation and/or approval of vendors and contractors share the responsibility for the practices stated in this policy.
- Aggressively identify and remove barriers to entry for small and diverse firms.