



DoW
**SMALL BUSINESS
BULLETIN**

THE BEST OF

Small Business Resources - March 2026

The Small Business Playbook: Programs and Tools to Help Small Businesses Compete for Government Contracts

No matter how old you get, there is always something about fall that brings back memories of freshly sharpened pencils, new notebooks, and the chance to learn something new. For small businesses, it's the perfect reminder that growth comes from continuous learning—whether it's programs, exploring resources, or finding fresh ways to compete in the federal marketplace.

This week's issue of the DoW Small Business Bulletin features a wealth of resources to help small businesses learn how to become a supplier, access



sources of defense contracting opportunities, and sharpen their skills to be competitive and compliant. It features a collec-

tion of valuable program information, training materials, tools, and resources specific to small businesses.

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GETTING READY

business.defense.gov: The official website for the DoW Office of Industrial Base Growth (IBG). This site serves as a central hub for accessing key initiatives, offering direct links to training materials, policy guidance, and contracting resources—empowering businesses to engage with the defense industrial base and contribute to national security priorities.

10 Steps to Winning Your First DoW Contract: This page and its companion PDF guide small businesses through the steps of becoming procurement-ready, from understanding federal acquisition rules and registering in SAM to developing a strong capabilities statement. It provides advice on finding prime and subcontracting opportunities, engaging with DoW buyers, and preparing competitive bids.

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA): A federal agency that provides support to entrepreneurs and small businesses through loan programs, contracting opportunities, counseling, and disaster assistance to help them start, grow, and compete in the marketplace.

FINDING OPPORTUNITIES

sam.gov: The System for Award Management (SAM) is the official U.S. government platform for managing federal awards, where

businesses can register to work with the government, search for contract opportunities, access assistance listings, and track perfor-

mance data—all in one centralized, free-to-use site.

grants.gov: The federal government's centralized online portal where users can find and apply for over 1,000 grant programs across 26 federal agencies, streamlining the grant application process.

SubNet: An SBA-managed database where large prime contractors post subcontracting opportunities for small businesses seeking to enter federal contracting.

SBA Small Business Search: A tool designed to help federal agencies and prime contractors quickly find certified small businesses that meet their contracting needs.



FINDING OPPORTUNITIES

Connect with

DoW Small Business Offices

Small Business Professionals within these offices can:

- Help you understand the mission, priorities, and procurement needs of their organizations
- Provide guidance on upcoming prime and subcontracting opportunities
- Connect you with resources to help you navigate the federal acquisition process

Use the links below to explore Small Business Office websites across DoW and learn how to align your capabilities with defense needs.

Navy

Marine Corps Installations and Logistics

Marine Corps System Command

Military Sealift Command

Naval Air Systems Command

Naval Facilities Engineering Command

Naval Sea Systems Command

Naval Supply Systems Command

Office of Naval Research

Naval Information Warfare Center

Strategic Systems Programs

Army

Aberdeen Proving Ground

Army Contracting Command

Army Corps of Engineers (HQ)

Army Corps of Engineers (Jacksonville District)

Army Intelligence & Security Command (INSCOM)

Army Joint Munitions & Lethality Life Cycle Management Command

Army Materiel Command

Army Medical Research and Materiel Command

Army Program Executive Office Simulation, Training and Instrumentation

Army Space & Missile Defense Command

Army Sustainment Command

National Guard Bureau

TACOM

Air Force

Air Force District of Washington

AFLCMC

ACC Acquisition Management and Integration Center

Space Force

Space Systems Command

Other Defense Agencies

Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency

Defense Contract Management Agency

Defense Counterintelligence and Security Agency

Defense Finance and Accounting Service

Defense Health Agency

Defense Human Resources Activity

Defense Information Systems Agency

Defense Intelligence Agency

Defense Logistics Agency

Defense Microelectronics Activity

Defense Threat Reduction Agency

Department of War Information Activity

Missile Defense Agency

National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency

National Security Agency

Special Operations Command

Transportation Command

Washington Headquarters Services

BEST OF PROGRAMS

APEX Accelerators Program: A nationwide network of over 90 centers that provide no-cost guidance to help businesses navigate and succeed in the government contracting space. They offer hands-on support with registration, market research, bid preparation, and networking – empowering companies to compete for contracts with federal, state, local, and tribal governments.

DoW Mentor-Protégé Program (MPP): Pairs eligible small businesses with larger prime contractors to help the small firms develop technical, managerial, and supply chain capabilities. Over the past five years, the program has helped more than 190 small businesses secure roles in the military supply chain by filling niche needs.

Indian Incentive Program (IIP): A DoW initiative that provides prime contractors with a 5% rebate on the amount subcontracted to Native American-owned economic enterprises or organizations when the subcontract exceeds \$500,000. It's intended to serve as an economic multiplier for Native American communities by encouraging DoW primes to subcontract work to those enterprises.



MySBA Certifications: SBA certifications are essential for small businesses aiming to compete in federal contracting. They provide access to set-aside contracts and sole-source awards, helping agencies meet procurement goals for specific business categories. These certifications make companies more visible to federal buyers and prime contractors, increasing their chances of winning work and building long-term partnerships in the government marketplace.

- **Veteran Owned & Service-Disabled Veteran Owned Small Businesses (VOSB/SDVOSB):** Eligible for set-asides and sole-source contracts reserved for veteran-owned and service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses.
- **Veteran Small Business Certification (VetCert) program:** SBA certification process for veteran-owned businesses seeking federal contracting opportunities.
- **Woman-Owned Small Business (WOSB):** Access to set-aside contracts in industries where women-owned businesses are underrepresented.
- **HUBZone Small Business:** Federal contracting preferences for small businesses located in historically underutilized business zones.
- **Small Disadvantaged Business (SDB):** Businesses may self-certify as Small Disadvantaged in SAM to access certain contracting benefits.
- **8(a) Business Development Program:** Business development support and contracting opportunities for socially and economically disadvantaged entrepreneurs.

Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) / Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) program: SBA-administered programs that provide non-dilutive funding to small businesses to conduct innovative research and development, with SBIR focusing on individual companies and STTR requiring partnerships with research institutions.

KEY INITIATIVES

Critical Technology Areas: In 2025, the DoW consolidated its Critical Technology Areas (CTA) into six disciplines where the Department will accelerate transitioning key capabilities to the Military Services and Combatant Commands. Those areas are: Applied Artificial Intelligence (AAI), Biomanufacturing (BIO), Contested Logistics Technologies (LOG), Quantum and Battlefield Information Dominance (Q-BIT), Scaled Hypersonics (SHY), and Scaled Directed Energy (SCADE).”

Cybersecurity Maturity Model Certification (CMMC): DoW published its CMMC rule on September 10, 2025, with requirements taking effect November 10, 2025. The rule began a three-year rollout that will make cybersecurity compliance a standard part of all DoW contracts.

Check out our **CMMC Resource Kit** and visit **Project Spectrum** for support in ensuring your business is CMMC compliant. The Department of War has entrusted Project Spectrum to be the cornerstone of cybersecurity for small and mid-size businesses of Defense Industrial Base.

Contracting officers are incorporating the new CMMC requirements into new solicitations and contracts, making cybersecurity a formal part of doing business with the DoW and strengthening national security through enhanced cyber hygiene. In the meantime, underlying cybersecurity responsibilities



remain in effect and continue to apply.

Click here for what you need to know.

Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Overhaul: The Office of Federal Procurement Policy and the FAR Council launched a page on **Acquisition.gov** dedicated to the ongoing FAR Overhaul initiative. The initiative, driven by **Executive Order 14275** and **OMB Memorandum M-25- 26**, aims to simplify the FAR by removing non-statutory procedural language and clarifying existing requirements.

The site provides small business owners and acquisition professionals with access to draft texts, model deviations, buying guides, and practitioner tools. For small businesses, these resources can help simplify compliance and make

it easier to compete for federal contracts. It will be regularly updated with new resources, making it a one-stop hub for staying informed on federal acquisition changes.

Foreign Ownership, Control, or Influence (FOCI): FOCI happens when a foreign entity has the power to direct or influence the management or operations of a company. This can lead to unauthorized access to sensitive information and potentially compromise national security. IBG created a FOCI resource page to help small businesses understand the issue and how it may affect their ability to work on defense contracts. The page explains how foreign ties can impact eligibility for handling sensitive information and provides guidance on risk mitigation, reporting requirements, and due diligence.

BEST OF TRAINING

DoW Office of Industrial Base Growth (IBG) Training Webinars On-Demand: IBG provides on-demand access to recorded training webinars for small businesses and contracting professionals. These sessions cover topics such as the DoW Mentor-Protégé Program, Foreign Ownership, Control or Influence (FOCI), and Project Spectrum cybersecurity resources. Each webinar includes a knowledge check, allowing viewers to review material and test their understanding at their own pace.

Project Spectrum: A DoW IBG initiative that helps small and medium-sized businesses strengthen cybersecurity to meet federal contracting requirements. This program provides training, tools, and resources to enhance awareness of cyber threats, protect Federal Contract Information (FCI) and Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI), and understand regulations such as the Cybersecurity Maturity Model Certification (CMMC).

SBA Learning Platform: Offers free online courses, coaching programs, and growth opportunities tailored to help small businesses start, scale, and succeed—including specialized tracks for military-owned and disadvantaged enterprises.

Veteran Institute for Procurement (VIP): Offers no-cost, market-based training programs led by government and industry experts to help Veteran-Owned Small Businesses win and manage federal, corporate, aerospace, and international contracts—accelerating growth and long-term success.



BEST OF HELPFUL RESOURCES

DoW Office of Small Business Programs FAQs: A detailed FAQs page that answers common questions such as how to find classification codes like Federal Supply Classification Code (FSC) or the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS), register in the System for Award Management (SAM), and access contracting procedures and clauses in the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) and Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement (DFARS).

acquisition.gov: An official U.S. government website run by the General Services Administration (GSA) that serves as the central repository for the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) system, including the FAR itself and its agency-specific supplements. It also provides

tools, updates, and guidance for federal acquisition professionals, such as contracting officers and program managers, to stay compliant with acquisition policy, track amendments, compare regulations, and access relevant resources.

Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR): The primary set of rules that governs how the federal government purchases goods and services. It establishes uniform policies and procedures for acquisition, ensuring that contracting across federal agencies is conducted fairly, transparently, and in compliance with law.

The FAR is maintained jointly by the DoW, GSA, and NASA, and it encompasses a wide range of topics, in-

cluding competition requirements, contract types, contractor responsibilities, and ethics. Agency-specific supplements, such as the Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement (DFARS), add additional requirements tailored to particular agencies while still operating within the FAR framework.

USAspending.gov: The government's official open data portal for tracking how federal funds are used—it shows who gets contracts, grants, loans, and other awards, for what purpose, and where. It was created under the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 (as amended by the DATA Act) to improve transparency and accountability in federal spending.

Defense Logistics Agency FedMall: An e-commerce ordering system for the DoW, federal, state, and authorized local agencies to search for and acquire products from government reserves and commercial sources.

Defense Studies Military Base Index: A centralized resource from the Defense Studies Institute that provides small businesses with contracting information, product and service requirements, and points of contact for military bases and DoW organizations across the U.S.

Find Your Small Business Professional: A resource from the U.S. Department of the Navy, is designed to help small businesses connect with Navy command representatives nationwide. These professionals serve as key points of contact for small businesses seeking to engage with the Navy, offering guidance and support on procurement opportunities and partnerships.



Publications and Informational Websites

DoW Small Business Strategy: Outlines a department-wide plan to harness the power of America's small, innovative, and agile companies and grow their contributions to the defense mission by implementing a unified management approach to streamline entry points, consolidate its workforce, and improve access to decision-makers; aligning small business activities with national security priorities through scaled programs, data tools, and policy engagement to attract innovation and secure supply chains; and strengthening engagement and support by enhancing outreach, training, and cybersecurity assistance, with a focus on inclusivity and resilience across the defense industrial base.

SBA Contracting Guide: A step-by-step resource to help small businesses understand how to sell their products or services to the U.S. government. This page explains

the benefits of government contracting, outlines the basic requirements, describes various contract types, and provides guidance on finding set-aside and sole-source contracts. Additionally, it explains how the SBA supports businesses throughout this process.

Defense Procurement & Acquisition Policy (DPAP): Responsible for pricing and contracting policy matters across the DoW. DPAP executes statute, executive order, and policy through updates to the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) and Defense FAR Supplement (DFARS) and issuance of memoranda and guidance.

Acquisition Forecasts: A planning tool to help businesses anticipate future contracting opportunities by reviewing forecasts published by many OSBP offices. Please note, these forecasts are for informational purposes only and subject to change.

GSA eLibrary: Provides the latest GSA contract award information.

Innovation Programs

Defense Innovation Unit (DIU):

The DoW organization focused on accelerating the adoption of commercial and dual-use technology to solve operational challenges at speed and scale. DIU awards scalable contracts to companies offering solutions to national security challenges across a variety of technology areas.

AFWERX: The U.S. Air Force's innovation arm that accelerates the development and adoption of cutting-edge technologies by connecting entrepreneurs, small businesses, and commercial innovators to the Air Force.

NavalIX: The U.S. Navy's innovation organization that bridges the gap between the fleet and innovators by facilitating rapid experimentation,

technology adoption, and partnerships with industry and academia.

Army Applications Laboratory

(AAL): The U.S. Army's innovation hub that works directly with soldiers to rapidly prototype, test, and field new technologies and applications to address immediate operational challenges.

Defense Industrial Base Consortium

(DIBC): A resource to accelerate DoW access to technologies typically reserved for commercial development.

Notable Trade & Membership Organizations

National Defense Industrial Association (NDIA)

American Society of Naval Engineers (ASNE)

Society of American Military Engineers (SAME)

Armed Forces Communications Electronics Association (AFCEA)

National Contracts Management Association (NCMA)

Quick Links

[NAICS Codes](#)

[Controlled Unclassified Information CUI Registry](#)

[Dun & Bradstreet Guide](#)

[Federal Procurement Data System \(FPDS\)](#)

[Facility Security Officers \(FSO\)](#)

[Security Clearances](#)

KEEP IN TOUCH



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