

Pathways & Connections



*News and events from the Massachusetts
Supplier Diversity Office (SDO)*

April 2025

Resources for
Diverse and
Small
Businesses

Open Bid
Opportunities
on COMMBUYS

SDO and
Commonwealth
Training
Opportunities

Directory of
Certified
Businesses

April is Celebrate Diversity Month



April is Celebrate Diversity Month, which of course has a special meaning to us at the SDO. We are proud to offer support and remove barriers to help bring diversity to the Commonwealth's bidding process

To help celebrate, here are a few success stories from our certified businesses!

- **Sterling Printing**, a family owned and operated and a union shop, has been on State printing, mailing, and promo contract OFF48 for years and was just awarded MA State contract CLT09. The new contract covers uniforms, outerwear, and all kinds of apparel.
- Since becoming certified by the SDO, educational consultant **Academic Discoveries, Inc.** has doubled in size each year over the last two years. They have gained significant partnerships with larger organizations throughout the country, and have met other certified businesses to partner with. They now have more than a dozen employees and consultants, growing from a single employee in 2020.
- After receiving their certification from the SDO, **Standard Petroleum Logistics** landed a fuel (gasoline) supply contract for a rental car agency at Boston Logan Airport. Owner Misty Sexton said, "It is a great opportunity for us and is helping us to grow in this market!"
- Julia Cruz of **Good Life Productions** said the video production company is celebrating its 20th anniversary with an outstanding first quarter and a very optimistic outlook. "We're working on projects with some of our longtime clients like the Greater

Boston Chamber of Commerce, WinnCompanies, and Tufts University, as well as newer clients like the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education," Cruz said. "The expanded production schedule has us expanding our staff and scaling up for an impressive 20th year creating high quality productions and happy clients!"

- **RequestFOIA**, a secure public records application that uses Microsoft's Azure government Cloud, will be the provider of important public records software for the City of Everett Police Department starting this month. The city needed an application that could streamline responses and provide tools to communicate effectively between internal recipients and requesters. The Town of Wayland municipal and police departments utilize the RequestFOIA application as well.
- **WBE Performance Plumbing & Heating** added Kerri Rowen to the team as Director of Operations. Owner Lisa Graceffa said Rowen's vast experience in controls, mechanical, telecommunications, and various other trades in construction brings extraordinary value to Performance.

If you have a business success story you'd like to share, [please let us know!](#)

SDO on site in Fall River



SDO Construction Program Lead Meghan Costa (center) at the site of the new Diman Regional Vocational/Technical High School in Fall River with Suffolk Construction Regional Outreach Manager Kharlita Chambers-Walker and Suffolk's Manager of Trade Partner Diversity Jamilee Fish. This is one of the many school construction projects the SDO works on to include opportunities for diverse businesses.



Check out these upcoming events:

Sell Smart: Unlocking Procurement Opportunities

Date: Monday, May 5, 2025

Time: 6 p.m. - 8 p.m.

Location: India Society of Worcester, 152 Main Street, Shrewsbury MA

A practical workshop designed to help local AAPI small businesses tap into the \$750 billion dollar Massachusetts economy through institutional procurement.

Register Here: [Sell Smart: Unlocking Procurement Opportunities - Home](#)

DCAMM & SDO Partnership to Boost MA Construction Capacity

Date: Thursday, May 15, 2025

Time: 3 p.m. - 5 p.m.

Location: The Enterprise Center at Salem State University; 121 Loring Avenue,
Salem MA

Gain insight into certification processes, construction bids, and more!

Register Here: [Boost MA Construction Capacity](#)

Business Resource Fair - Malden Chamber of Commerce

Date: Thursday, May 15, 2025

Time: 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Location: 200 Exchange St, Malden, MA

If you are a business or nonprofit with questions about state resources available to help you grow, you should attend!

Register Here: [Reserve your spot!](#)

Massachusetts Construction Opportunities Virtual Event (Hosted by DCAMM)

Date: Thursday, June 12, 2025

Time: 1 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Learn more about upcoming construction projects, bidding laws, certification, and more!

Register Here: [Construction Opportunities Virtual Event](#)

Check Out these Current and Upcoming Bids!



Bids:

- ENE56: Natural Gas. [Link to the Bid.](#)
- ITS82: IT Accessibility Services. [Link to the Bid.](#)
- PRF85: Enterprise Temporary Help Services. [Link to the Bid.](#)
- The Massachusetts Human Resources Division (HRD): Arbitrators [Link to the Bid.](#)

Intents to Bid:

- PRF86: Advertising, Marketing, & Planning Services. [Link to the Intent to Bid.](#)
- ITT84: Cellular Services and Devices. [Link to the Intent to Bid.](#)
- HSP45: Laboratory Supplier and Equipment (re-opened). [Link to the Intent to Bid.](#)
- ITT85: Network and Communication Services and Hardware. [Link to the Intent to Bid.](#)

There are a number of catering bids, many of which have rolling enrollments:

- Catering Conference - [Link to the bid](#)
- Emergency Assistance Food Services - [Link to the bid](#)
- MassDOT RFR Catering Services - [Link to the bid](#)
- EA Hotel Motel Provider Services - [Link to the bid](#)
- Event Services - [Link to the bid](#)

- RFR 232128 Catering Services, Conference Space, Hotel Room - [Link to the bid](#)
- Restaurant Food Take-out/Delivery Services - [Link to the bid](#)
- Restaurant Food Take-out/Delivery Services - [Link to the bid](#)
- Event and Emergency Services Contracts - [Link to the bid](#)
- MDAR- Conference Service Vendors - [Link to the bid](#)
- Conference Space, General Catering Services, and Hotel Accommodations - [Link to the bid](#)
- DCF Meetings16-Conference Space and Catering Services - [Link to the bid](#)

You can also check out all the newly posted bids on COMMBUYS each week by [visiting this link](#).

Offshore Wind Ready on May 20



The poster is for an event titled "Offshore Wind READY" under the "OCEANTIC NETWORK" banner. It is categorized as "INDUSTRY EDUCATION". The event is scheduled for "May 20" in "Salem, MA" and is specifically "For MA Companies". It is sponsored by the "MASSACHUSETTS CLEAN ENERGY CENTER", which is represented by a logo featuring a stylized green 'C' with blue waves. A prominent orange button at the bottom right says "REGISTER TODAY".

OCEANTIC NETWORK

OffshoreWind**READY**

INDUSTRY EDUCATION

May 20
Salem, MA
For MA Companies

Sponsored by
**MASSACHUSETTS
CLEAN ENERGY
CENTER®**

REGISTER TODAY

To create a safer, more inclusive, and equitable offshore wind industry that benefits all members of our communities, Oceantic Network and the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center (MassCEC) are offering a one-day offshore wind supply chain training program for all

Massachusetts companies — including those owned by underrepresented groups such as women, diverse individuals, Tribal governments, people with disabilities, veterans, and members of the LGBTQ+ community.

[Offshore Wind Ready](#) is designed to provide companies with valuable insights into the U.S. offshore wind industry. Discover business opportunities, understand project development, learn about the offshore wind supply chain, and identify where your business fits in the industry. Led by Oceantic Network's team of skilled trainers and a panel of industry experts, Offshore Wind Ready is the perfect place to begin your company's offshore wind journey.

By the end of the program, attendees will be equipped with the knowledge to determine if the offshore wind industry is a suitable fit for their business and how to navigate the market effectively.

The Offshore Wind Ready training takes place on **Tuesday, May 20 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.** at the Enterprise Center in Salem. Thanks to sponsorship from Massachusetts CEC, this training is available to all Massachusetts companies for only \$30 (*normally priced \$575!*). If you need assistance with the fee, contact jacqueline.baldini@oceantic.org.

[Register today!](#)

SDO Means *Business*

Click here for more!

Meet the SDO: Julia O'Leary, General Counsel

Each month, *Pathways and Connections* will feature a different member of the SDO team, who will share a little bit about themselves and answer some of the biggest questions about the SDO and certification. If you have any questions you'd like to have answered, please send them to Robert.keane@mass.gov.

Favorite quote: “The headless chicken can only know where he’s been. He can’t see where he’s going. Do not be that chicken.” – Spice World

Favorite song: It’s so hard to pick a single song! Lately I’ve been really liking Brian Eno’s album *Ambient 1: Music for Airports*.

Favorite vacation spot: One of my favorite trips with my husband was to the San Juan Islands in Washington. The view from the top of Mount Constitution on Orcas Island is spectacular. Closer to home, there’s nothing I love more than spending the day on Crane Beach.

Favorite food: Cherry pie

Last book read: *Persuasion* by Jane Austen for the nth time

Last TV Show seen/binged: *Shrinking*. Harrison Ford is hilarious.

Dog person or cat person?: Cat person and proud adopted mother of Arthur the orange cat



Julia O'Leary with a fresh coconut.

What made you come to work at the SDO?: I have long admired the work SDO does support small and diverse businesses, and I couldn’t be happier to join such a talented, dedicated team!

Tell us something about you that people may not know: I like to quilt! My aunt taught me when I was a teenager and one of my favorite ways to spend an afternoon is across the table from her, bent over a sewing machine and listening to music.

Julia can be reached at
Julia.OLeary2@mass.gov

How does the SDO legal team support diverse and small businesses in Massachusetts? I

like to say that my team is doing our job when you can't tell we're here!

Our job is to make sure that everything runs smoothly so that the rest of the staff can focus on their important work of helping to support our constituents.

Third Sector New England (TSNE) to Host Open House for Nonprofits



Nonprofit organizations do immense work in shifting the lives of people and communities. Yet, this work, although rewarding, can be complex and challenging. From staff capacity concerns, operational gaps, and more, TSNE wants to meet these challenges by investing in the administrative, financial, and organizational resources nonprofit organizations need to thrive. Through Shared Services, TSNE provides the resources nonprofits need to mitigate these challenges.

TSNE is hosting an Open House for nonprofits to learn more about their services and dialogue with other nonprofit stakeholders on these important topics.

Details:

 May 8, 2025

 The NonProfit Center, 89 South Street, Boston, MA

 12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m. (Drop-in hours 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.)

[Click Here to Register](#)



Are you SDO Certified?

If you have a business owned by minorities, women, veterans, those with a disability, members of the LGBT community, and/or you own a small Massachusetts-based business, you are eligible for a vital source of support: SDO Certification.

Once you are certified, you will get updates on upcoming state contracts, have access to hours of free training, be given access to

the Supplier Diversity Hub, and you will be added to the SDO's diverse and small vendor database, which is used by Prime Vendors, state departments, cities and towns, and private businesses looking to spend with diverse and small businesses.

SDO certification is free and can provide your business with new opportunities and prospects.

In FY2023, the Commonwealth spent \$3.38 billion with diverse and small businesses. Many Massachusetts businesses say certification not only helped them stay in business during the pandemic but thrive because of new prospects.

Please note that if you are already certified with one of our partner organizations (such as Center for Women & Enterprise (CWE), Greater New England Minority Supplier Development Council (GNEMSDC), City of Boston, etc.), the steps to becoming SDO certified are simple and straightforward.

[To learn more about SDO Certification please click here!](#)



New Updates to the Supplier Diversity Hub

The Supplier Diversity Hub ("The Hub"), a networking tool used to connect diverse and small businesses with interested parties, recently made a number of updates to make the system even more essential.

Now, with these updates, vendors using the Hub will be able to receive important notifications on bids, update their profiles, and upload brochures for their businesses. Agencies and prime vendors will be able to search vendors by departmental contracts and by ethnicity (MBEs only).

If you are a vendor or agency who has yet to use The Hub, [please click here to get started](#); if you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us at webmaster.sdo@mass.gov.

Supplier Diversity Office

Supplier Diversity Hub

Welcome to the Massachusetts Supplier Diversity Hub (The Hub).
This online portal facilitates connections between diverse and small businesses,
Commonwealth public buyers, prime bidders, contractors, and resource providers.

New Users

To see if you qualify to use the Hub, diverse and small businesses, Commonwealth public buyers, prime bidders, contractors, and resource providers should click here:

[Start Registration](#)

Existing Users

Login

Password

[Reset Password](#)

[Sign In](#)

[Supplier Diversity Office \(SDO\) Home](#)

[Help and Questions](#)

Notice: Emails from The Hub come from the address noreply.sdo@iacgovolutions.com. Please add this email to your safe senders list as they may end up in your spam folder. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact us at webmaster.sdo@state.ma.us

The new Hub log-in screen

Reminder - Race/Ethnicity Information for MBEs

Currently, the Supplier Diversity Office (SDO) makes public the race and ethnicity of our certified Minority Business Enterprises (MBEs). This change is in response to many buyers looking to make purchases from Black, Latino/Hispanic, Asian, and Native American/Indigenous Persons-Owned Businesses. These businesses are still classified as MBEs, but the additional racial makeup is publicly available in our search engine.

While this information is public, it does not affect any vendor's diversity status as an MBE, their ability to bid on and win bids, and their benefits with the SDO.

If any MBE would prefer to make their race and ethnicity information private, please contact us at webmaster.SDO@mass.gov.



Diverse Business Certification Updates

The SDO certified 53 businesses in March 2025. For the latest list of newly-certified businesses, please click [here](#).

REMINDER: SDO certification expires three years after the date of issue and renewal notices are sent via email to the primary contact on file. SDO-certified businesses should [log in](#) and review your contact information periodically to ensure that your certification stays up to date.



Pre-Certification Webinars

For businesses wishing to apply for SDO certification, attending a Pre-Certification Webinar is a must. This webinar covers the different types of SDO and SDO-recognized third-party certifications as well as the State certification process.

Registration is now available for webinars through June 2025. Sign up [here](#).



Spring Vendor Classes

Certified Vendor Onboarding – Using Your Certification to Unlock Opportunities

(PRE-REQUISITE: for Certified Diverse Businesses)

Learn more about using your certification to identify opportunities in public procurement and develop business-to-business relationships with other vendors. This training covers SDO programs, exploring business opportunities, creating SDP partnerships, and introducing free resources available to help grow your business.

Upcoming dates:

- May 20, 9 -11AM
- June 24, 9 -11AM

[Link to register](#)

Prime Contractor Onboarding

(PRE-REQUISITE: This class is for Prime Contractors currently on Statewide and/or Departmental contracts).

Prime contractors are required to spend a percentage of contract sales with certified diverse businesses and report the spend. This webinar will help prime contractors understand how to meet the Supplier Diversity Plan (SDP) requirement. This class gives an overview of SDP, where to find eligible partners, and how to report SDP spend.

Upcoming dates:

- June 4, 9-10AM

[Link to register](#)

Vendor Hub Reporting- for Prime Contractors

(PRE-REQUISITE: for Prime Contractors currently on Departmental contracts)

As part of all contract terms and conditions, prime contractors are required to report spending in the Supplier Diversity Hub. In this class, you will learn how to register in the Hub, submit SDP spend reports, add and manage users, and view current spend.

Upcoming dates:

- May 28, 9-10AM
- June 5, 9-10AM

[Link to register](#)

Don't Miss Out! Responding to RFQs

(PRE-REQUISITE: for Small Business Purchasing Program participants currently on Statewide and/or Departmental contracts)

Don't miss out on another COMMBUYS opportunity! In this class you will learn the benefits of the SBPP, the mechanics of a Request for Quotes, how to identify and respond to an RFQ, and how RFQ's are evaluated.

Upcoming dates:

- May 15, 9-10AM

[Link to register](#)

Supplier Diversity Program for Health and Human Service Providers

(PRE-REQUISITE: This class is for Service Providers currently on Purchase of Service contracts)

Service providers on state contracts are required to develop partnerships with certified diverse vendors and report spend. This class gives an overview of the Supplier Diversity Program (SDP), where to find eligible partners, and how to report SDP spend in the UFR.

Upcoming dates:

- May 8, 9-10AM
- June 26, 9-10AM

[Link to register](#)

Follow us on:



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