

Answering Good Faith Effort Phone Calls

By Leslie Ann McMillan

What do you do when someone calls on behalf of a prime contractor bidding or already working on a big public project? I've personally made many thousands of those outreach calls during the past several years, and I'd like to share a few thoughts and examples with you.

If your small business is certified diversity-owned, you've probably received emails, faxes, ads, letters, or phone calls about specific agency projects that require the participation of eligible small business contractors, suppliers, or service providers. This might happen rarely or much more frequently than you ever imagined possible when you first certified your MWBE or SDVOB or DBE or SBE or other disadvantaged business.

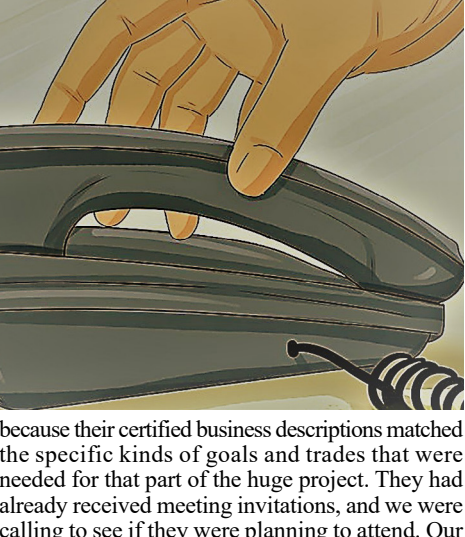
You might receive an emailed or faxed bid invitation from a prime contractor, then one or more follow-up phone calls to see if you've gotten the information and are interested in bidding. This is all part of the careful *good faith effort* process to assure greater government contract participation

by small businesses owned by minorities, women, or disadvantaged entrepreneurs.

Let me first give you a cringeworthy, real-life, unforgettable example of what *not* to do when you receive a follow-up outreach call. If only they had realized then what I'm sharing now . . .

Our company, Small Business Exchange, has been providing outreach services since 1984 on behalf of small and large clients from coast to coast. In the spring of 2018, we were contacting eligible small businesses to invite them to a meeting and networking event hosted by the prime contractors that had recently won the contract to construct the huge new venue for a major professional sports team. During the actual several days that we were phoning, the team was in the playoffs and about to win its third national championship in four years. How exciting! Many small business people were happy about the opportunity and made the extra effort to attend the event, meet the contractors, and perhaps prepare to bid. But one lost opportunity is so, so memorable as an example *not* to imitate.

As always, we were phoning small businesses that had been selected from specialized databases



because their certified business descriptions matched the specific kinds of goals and trades that were needed for that part of the huge project. They had already received meeting invitations, and we were calling to see if they were planning to attend. Our

Small Business Exchange • Voice of Small, Emerging, Diversity-Owned Businesses Since 1984

Click to read more

Sub-Bid Requests

SKANSKA

HALMAR

SKANSKA HALMAR JOINT VENTURE (SHJV)

INVITES EXPERIENCED SUBCONTRACTORS BASED IN WASHINGTON, DC TO EXPRESS THEIR INTEREST IN PARTICIPATING IN

Phase 1 of the Anacostia Area Sewer Rehabilitation Project

DC Water Contract No. 250110

Bid Date: September 9, 2025

Description of Project:
This initial phase offers early-stage subcontracting opportunities, including trucking/hauling, pipe inspection, pipe testing, material/compaction testing, erosion and sedimentation control, flagging, traffic control, seeding, restoration, construction materials supply, temporary facilities, cleaning services, photography/video services, electrical, and bypass pumping. Certified DBE firms are strongly encouraged to express interest.

If you are interested in bidding on this project, please contact SHJV's Outreach Coordinator: Aislinn.Speranza@skanska.com • EOE/Vet/Disabled

SMALL

BUSINESS

EXCHANGE NORTHEAST

SBE OUTREACH SERVICES

With over 1.6 million businesses in our active database—the country's largest non-public diversity database—SBE sets the professional standard for diversity outreach across the nation. For more than four decades, we have served small businesses, prime contractors, and agencies—with proven results.

Advertisements
Placed in various Small Business Exchange Northeast digital publications each month, and at www.sbenortheast.com

Fax, Email, and Postal Solicitations
Targeted mailings sent to businesses chosen according to your criteria

Live Call Center Follow-Up
Telephone follow-up calls using a script of five questions that you define

Computer Generated Reports
Complete documentation that will fit right into your proposal, along with a list of interested firms to contact

Special Services
Custom design and development of services that you need for particular situations such as small business marketing, diversity goal completion, and agency capacity building

Call for more information: 800-800-8534

41

Years

SBTRC

Small Business Transportation Resource Center

NORTHEAST REGION

US DOT Small Business Transportation Resource Center- Northeast Region

JOIN OUR FREE WEBINAR

Access to Capital for Government Contractors

FUNDING →

THURSDAY, August 21, 2025 1:00PM EST

GAIN ACCESS TO CAPITAL: GROW YOUR BUSINESS

Learn About:

- How to get funding for your business
- SBA's Lender Match, Readiness is All
- SBA's Financing Programs including Loans: 7(a), 504, Microloan, International Trade Loans and Surety Bonds
- Grants for R&D
- Investment Capital
- Disaster Assistance
- One-on-One Assistance to prepare your loan package through SCORE, SBDC, VBOC and WBC

THURSDAY August 21, 2025 1:00PM EST

Scan the QR code to register online.

Presenter:

Ms. Man-Li Lin
Economic Development Specialist
U.S. Small Business Administration
New York District Office

Learn More

NMSDC

National Minority Supplier Development Council



Small Business Exchange Northeast DEI

- Advertise
- ITB to Targeted (NAICS/SIC/UNSPSC) Certified Businesses
- Telephone Follow-Up (Live)
- Agency/Organization Letters
- Computer Generated Dated and Timed Documentation
- Customized Reports Available

For more info contact Valerie Voorhies at vvv@sbeinc.com

SMALL

BUSINESS

EXCHANGE NORTHEAST

PUBLIC LEGAL NOTICES

With a database of over 1.6 million businesses, SBE assists agencies with public legal notices

Advertisements
Placed in various Small Business Exchange Northeast digital publications each month, and at www.sbenortheast.com

Special Follow-Up Services
Custom design and development of services that you need for particular situations such as small business marketing, diversity goal completion, and agency capacity building

Call for more information: 800-800-8534

41

Years

VIRTUAL EVENTS FOR YOUR BUSINESS

2025

Selling to the Federal Government Webinar
Thursday, August 28, 2025, 1:00 pm–4:00 pm Online
Main Sponsor(s): US Small Business Administration
Contact: George Tapia, 610-382-3086, george.tapia@sba.gov
Fee: Free; registration required

Did you know that the federal government is the largest purchaser of goods and services in the world? Interested in learning how your business can market your services or goods to the federal government? Register online at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/how-to-sell-to-the-federal-government-tickets-21790713611> SBA helps to ensure small businesses get fair opportunities to share federal government prime contracts. Topics will include: How to Register, Small Business Certifications, Finding Opportunities, Marketing Your Firm, Federal Supply Schedules, Getting Paid, Tips to Prepare Your Offer, How to Seek Additional Assistance. All training sessions are held via Microsoft Teams Meeting.

Federal Contracting: Woman-Owned Small Business (WOSB) Certification Program Webinar
Tuesday, September 16, 2025, 2:00 pm–4:00 pm Online
Main Sponsor(s): US Small Business Administration
Contact: Patrice Dozier, patrice.dozier@sba.gov
Fee: Free; registration required

SBA is creating a space for Woman-Owned Small Businesses, via WOSB certification!

Are you a woman owner of a small business? The federal government's goal is to award at least five percent of all federal contracting dollars to woman-owned small businesses each year. Join us for training on how to register for SBA's Woman-Owned Small Business (WOSB) program, which helps eligible small businesses to qualify for federal contracting opportunities. The monthly sessions include an overview of the self-certification process, and a discussion of the WOSB codes that qualify as WOSB or EDWOSB. Register at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/woman-owned-small-business-wosb-certification-program-tickets-1123668515779>

8(a) Orientation and SAM Registration Webinar
Wednesday, September 17, 2025, 10:30 am–12:00 pm Online
Main Sponsor(s): US Small Business Administration
Contact: SBA Illinois District Office, 312-353-4528, illinois.do@sba.gov
Fee: Free; registration required

Join the Small Business Administration (SBA) Illinois District Office for a virtual workshop providing an overview of the 8(a) Business Development program, eligibility requirements, and program benefits. Also learn how to increase your potential for federal contract opportunities through System for Award Management (SAM) registration, including information that you need for the registration process. SBA presenters will offer additional tips, address FAQs, give directions on where to get further assistance, and answer your other questions. For this and other events, one goal is to better address the needs of attending current and soon-to-be business owners. To register for this free webinar, visit <https://www.sba.gov/event/65214>

SMALL

BUSINESS

EXCHANGE NORTHEAST

Serving CT, ME, MA, NH, NJ, NY, RI, VT, or any other states that you need to reach



Advertise in our digital EXTRA



weekly or whenever wherever to whomever you need to reach among agencies contractors diversity firms

CORPORATE OFFICE

1160 Battery Street East, Suite 100
San Francisco, California 94111
sbe@sbeinc.com • www.sbeinc.com

Tel 800-800-8534
Fax 415-778-6255
www.sbenortheast.com

Copyright © 2025 Small Business Exchange, Inc.