**This guide provides an overview of resources available to small businesses. Federal resources are listed first, then state resources, then university resources, and finally, regional resources.**

**FEDERAL RESOURCES**

Minority Business Development Agency ([MBDA](https://www.mbda.gov/))

The MBDA is part of the US Department of Commerce. They have a national network of Business Centers with several programs to provide greater access to capital, contracts and markets.

Small Business Administration ([SBA](https://www.sba.gov/))

The SBA helps businesses by offering free business counseling, SBA-guaranteed business loans, home & business disaster loans, and teaches how to find and win small business government contracts.

**STATE RESOURCES**

Governor’s Executive Order 35 ([EO35](https://sbsd.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/EO-35-Advancing-Equity-for-Small-Women-Minority-and-Service-Disabled-Veteran-owned-Businesses-in-State-Contracting.pdf))

EO35 requires Virginia public agencies & institutions to ensure SWaM (Small, Woman & Minority) vendors are given the opportunity to earn business from Commonwealth agencies & institutions. The Commonwealth’s goal for SWaM utilization is 42% of discretionary spending. (ODU’s Board of Visitors has approved a target goal of 47.5% SWaM.)

How does this help? If an agency does not have a contract for a good or service, their next step is to look for a SWaM vendor to provide it. SWaM usage is also considered during the contract award process of Commonwealth contracts.

State agencies & VASCUPP schools report SWaM usage, including SWaM certified subcontractors that are used by their prime and term contractors. Many larger contractors are eager to connect with SWaM firms. ODU’s Board of Visitors is also updated on the university’s SWaM utilization.

A flag with a blue background

Description automatically generatedVirginia House Bill 1404

During the 2024 Virginia General Assembly legislative session, the SWaM Program was codified by the Virginia legislature in [HB 1404](https://lis.virginia.gov/cgi-bin/legp604.exe?241+sum+HB1404#:~:text=The%20bill%20provides%20that%20executive,to%20increase%20their%20utilization%20rate.).

Virginia Department of Small Business & Supplier Diversity ([SBSD](https://sbsd.virginia.gov/))

SBSD’s web page has links to their Certification Division, Business Development & Outreach Services, and the Virginia Small Business Financing Authority. More information about those is below.

**SBSD SWaM Certification**

* + Businesses may qualify for multiple SWaM designations
  + [Documents needed for SWaM certification](https://sbsd.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/SWaM-Documents-Required2018.pdf) are listed on SBSD’s website.
  + Requirements for eligibility:
    - **Micro** – 25 employees or less AND $3M or less in average annual gross receipts over previous three years.
    - **Small** –250 or fewer employees AND no more than $10M in annual gross receipts averaged over previous three years
    - **Women** – at least 51% owned by one or more women, and both management and daily business operations are controlled by one or more women.
    - **Minority** – at least 51% owned by one or more minority individuals, and both management and daily business operations are controlled by one or more minority individuals.
    - **Service-Disabled Veterans** – veteran small business owners designated as such by the [Virginia Department of Veteran Services](http://www.DVS.Virginia.gov) .

**Value of SWaM Certification as a Marketing Tool**

SWaM Certification is a valuable marketing tool. It provides agencies with a “vehicle” -- a path to access your business. Use the certification to market to:

* + **Public Entities**, including State Agencies, Localities, Municipalities, and School Systems.
  + **Prime Contractors** with a state or VASCUPP contract who may be looking to subcontract part of their service
  + **Public agencies** **of other states**. Certification opens the door with states that acknowledge Virginia’s SWaM designations. Those states are called “reciprocal states.” Vendors will need to register with each state. Only 12 states are non-reciprocal: Arkansas, California, Connecticut, Florida, Iowa, Louisiana, Minnesota, Mississippi, New Mexico, Ohio, Texas, and Washington, D.C.

**SBSD Business Development & Outreach Services (BDOS)**

BDOS offers many options for helping businesses begin and to grow.

**Events/Training Opportunities:**

* + Selling to the Commonwealth is a 3-hour workshop with eVA demo.
  + Entrepreneur Express is a half-day workshop for startups & those in business less than three years.
  + Growing Sales Conferences are half-day events with multiple topics from which to choose & target mature small businesses.
  + Regional Connect Events are a networking opportunity for state buyers & small businesses to have one-on-one conversations (4 per year throughout the state)
  + One on One Business Counseling to go over the individual business growth plan
  + [Scaling for Growth](https://sbsd.virginia.gov/s4g/) is a Streetwise MBA in partnership with Interise.org from Boston.
    - Meets weekly for six months
    - Must be SWaM certified
    - Revenue between $250K and $10M
    - Been in business more than three years

**SBSD Small Business Financing Authority**

The [VSBFA](https://sbsd.virginia.gov/virginia-small-business-financing-authority/) is the business & economic development financing area with lending programs & grants.

**SBSD Representative for** **ODU**

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| --- |
| **Angela Barber**  ***Business Services Manager, Eastern Virginia Region***  The HIVE Business Resource Center – Virginia Beach    (804) 201-0074 (Cell)    (757) 385-6407 (Desk)  [**angela.barber@sbsd.virginia.gov**](mailto:angela.barber@sbsd.virginia.gov)  [**https://www.sbsd.virginia.gov/**](https://nam11.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.sbsd.virginia.gov%2F&data=05%7C02%7Chsomerva%40odu.edu%7C8f0173b36b624106e5f908dc282e84cb%7C48bf86e811a24b8a8cb368d8be2227f3%7C0%7C1%7C638429427520136237%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=4wbA6lxv5v2r1NmU4XLp%2BHxaqSYWH8G7dOFc%2F4pcJeA%3D&reserved=0)  [FOR WORKSHOPS/EVENTS CLICK HERE](https://nam11.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.sbsd.virginia.gov%2Fbusiness-development-and-outreach%2Fevents%2F&data=05%7C02%7Chsomerva%40odu.edu%7C8f0173b36b624106e5f908dc282e84cb%7C48bf86e811a24b8a8cb368d8be2227f3%7C0%7C1%7C638429427520146184%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=Q3f%2BfXz8uaBA5bzL0Vy4%2BL8%2BZh1%2BI6WCgDg42PFyj8U%3D&reserved=0) |

**SBSD Social Media Pages**

[LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/company/virginia-department-of-small-business-and-supplier-diversity/) [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/VirginiaSBSD) [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/VirginiaSBSD/) [Twitter](https://twitter.com/VirginiaSBSD)

Small Business Development Council Hampton Roads ([SBDC](https://hrchamber.com/programs/small-business-development-center/))

Located in Norfolk’s World Trade Center and hosted by the Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce, SBDC is a state organization funded through the SBA program to help small businesses on a grass roots level. They offer no-cost advising to businesses from start-up to established businesses.

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Description automatically generated Virginia’s e-Procurement Portal ([eVA](https://eva.virginia.gov/))

Used by all state agencies, many localities & colleges.

Excellent for researching who in Virginia is buying what you’re selling.

Highly recommend taking one of the eVA for vendors courses (Selling to the Commonwealth) done by Kim Pritchett. She is excellent at showing just how much valuable information you can get out of eVA.

A blue and white logo

Description automatically generated Virginia Department of Transportation ([VDOT](https://www.vdot.virginia.gov/doing-business/))

VDOT spends millions of dollars annually. Their website has information on business opportunities, technical guidance and support, programs for businesses, digital tools and training opportunities.

 Virginia Port Authority [(VPA)](https://www.portofvirginia.com/)

The VPA advertises IFBs (Invitation for Bids) and RFPs (Requests for Proposals) in the Commonwealth of Virginia e-procurement portal, eVA. Contracting opportunities are listed on the VPA webpage. Contact [proposalsvpa@portofvirginia.com](mailto:proposalsvpa@portofvirginia.com) for information on IFB’s and RFP’s.

**UNIVERSITY RESOURCES**

Virginia Association of State College & University Purchasing Professionals ([VASCUPP](https://vascupp.org/))

VASCUPP schools include CNU, GMU, JMU, Longwood, NSU, ODU, Radford, UMW, UVA, VCU, VMI, Virginia Tech, and William & Mary.

The VASCUPP Members page links to each school’s procurement page.

The Contracts page lists all the VASCUPP schools’ contracts that have cooperative language.

* + - Cooperative language allows not just VASCUPP schools to use the contract. It can be marketed to other public entities, such as localities/cities, public school systems K-12, and regional authorities (like HRSD, Port Authority, Virginia ABC, etc.)
    - Full list of authorities here - <https://law.lis.virginia.gov/authorities/>

A logo of a university

Description automatically generated ODU Procurement Services [Website](https://www.odu.edu/procurement)

Old Dominion University is committed to excellence in supplier diversity.

[Summary Procurement Limits](https://www.odu.edu/sites/default/files/2023/documents/summary-procurement-limits.pdf) is a quick summary of dollar thresholds for purchase types. More details for purchases under $100,000 can be found in the ODU [Small Purchase Guidelines](https://www.odu.edu/sites/default/files/2023/documents/small-purchases.pdf).

At ODU, purchases over $5,000 go through eVA (more below). VASCUPP schools may vary, due to their levels of authority (how much flexibility they have been granted through legislation) and their determination of best practices.

[ODU contracts page](https://www.odu.edu/procurement/contracts)

We recommend looking at what contracts are available & when their next renewal dates are. It is good to reach out to buyers 4-6 months before the contract is up for renewal/resolicitation. Links to other cooperative contract databases & the state contract database are on our contracts page.

ODU Institute for Innovation & Entrepreneurship 

Located in Downtown Norfolk, [ODU](https://ww1.odu.edu/iie) IIE offers several programs. Programs have email lists to keep abreast of events. They partner with SBSD & eVA, as well as providing other business and entrepreneurial training.

**Business Development Center (**[**BDC**](https://ww1.odu.edu/iie/bdc)**)**

The BDC helps entrepreneurs develop & grow businesses with personalized business advising, training workshops, mentoring & adaptive general support.

**TempO**

[TempO](https://ww1.odu.edu/iie/tempo) focuses on business creation, incubation & acceleration.

**Veterans Business Outreach Center (**[**VBOC**](https://ww1.odu.edu/iie/vboc)**)**

VBOC provides entrepreneurial development services for eligible veteran small business owners.

**Women’s Business Center (**[**WBC**](https://ww1.odu.edu/iie/wbc)**)**

WBC promotes success through education, counseling, networking resources & entrepreneurial training.

**REGIONAL RESOURCES**

 Chesapeake Economic Development [Website](https://chesapeakeva.biz/business-resources/)

Chesapeake Economic Development has partnership organizations focused on helping small businesses grow.

Hampton Economic Development [Website](https://hampton.gov/3053/Resources)

Hampton Economic Development houses a SWaM program. It also has Business Innovation Centers, located at Hampton University and the National Institute of Aerospace.

Hampton Roads Workforce Council [Website](https://www.theworkforcecouncil.org/)

**Areas served:** Chesapeake, Franklin, Gloucester, Hampton, Isle of Wight, James City County, Newport News, Norfolk, Poquoson, Portsmouth, Suffolk, Virginia Beach, Williamsburg and York County.

**Programs and Initiatives:** Virginia Career Works Hampton Roads, Hampton Roads Veterans Employment Center, NexGen, Campus 757, and Regional Maritime Training System.

 Newport News Shipbuilding [Website](https://hii.com/)

As part of Huntington Ingalls Industries (HII), Newport News Shipbuilding is the largest industrial supplier in Virginia. HII spends an estimated $1 billion annually, and nearly half of that is with small businesses. The Supplier section of the website has a link to register as a supplier, as well as a Supplier Resources page with the option to become a supplier for Newport News Shipbuilding.

 Newport News SWaM Services Office [Website](https://www.nnva.gov/689/Small-Women-Minority-Program-SWAM)

The City of Newport News SWaM Services hosts a variety of workshops to aid vendors. Vendors can register on the Newport News e-Procurement Portal and provide evidence of SWaM certification during portal registration.

Note: The City of Newport News recognizes NMSDC and CVMSDC (Carolinas Virginia Minority Supplier Development Council) minority certifications in addition to SBSD SWaM.

Norfolk Economic Development DEI Office [Website](https://www.norfolk.gov/4624/Diversity-Equity-and-Inclusion)

Take advantage of [Norfolk’s Small Business Registration](https://norfolk-dei-dei.app.transform.civicplus.com/forms/34719) process by completing this form that allows vendors to indicate whether they would like assistance starting & growing a business and/or would like assistance becoming certified as SWaM, Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE), Minority Business Enterprise (MBE), or Women’s Business Enterprise (WBE).

Virginia Beach HIVE Business Resource Center [Website](https://www.yesvirginiabeach.com/key-industries/small-business-resource-center)

The HIVE is a business resource center that offers a robust collection of programs that help with getting a business off the ground, starting up, and childcare financial programs.

The HIVE offers one-stop shop free counseling services with:

* 1 Million Cups Entrepreneurial Engagement Program
* Hampton Roads Workforce Council
* Operation Hope
* Promise Land Capital
* SCORE
* VB SWaM Business Office
* Virginia APEX Accelerator (formerly PTAC)
* VB Public Library
* Virginia Small Business and Supplier Diversity (SBSD)