GROWING YOUR SALES BY SELLING TO THE COMMONWEALTH

Virginia Department of Small Business & Supplier Diversity

The Commonwealth of Virginia buys more than $7 billion in goods and services, including construction, each year. This purchasing represents potential new markets and growth opportunities for businesses interested in selling to state government. Historical information on what the state spends on products and/or services you sell, critical information on getting your business state-certified and details on how to register on eVA are listed below:

Step 1: Find out who's buying what you sell.

Use the NIGP LookUp tool, located from the eVA website homepage (www.eva.virginia.gov) on the left navigation bar, to assist you with finding commodity codes that describe the goods and/or services you sell.The NIGP code is the numeric identifier used by the Commonwealth to categorize the products and services it purchases. Commodity codes are also used to tell eVA buyers what you sell and to match
you with bid opportunities. The NIGP code structure is made up of main commodity code classes. Under each main class, you will find numerous item commodity codes. The item code provides a more detailed description of specific products and/or services associated with that main commodity code class.

To find commodity codes that describe what you sell when you don't know your codes, start by entering one or more keywords. This is a simple keyword search, which means your search will return commodity codes with your keyword(s) in the description and only in the order the words were typed. (For example, lighting equipment might include keywords like 'light,' 'halogen,' etc.)

Now that you know your codes, find out if buyers are using these codes to purchase! Use eVA's free public reports, located from the eVA website homepage under Quick Links, Public Reports and PPEA Opportunities to access spend information for all of the purchasing processed through eVA. These reports will tell you information like who's buying, who they're buying from (is it you or your competitors?), buyer contact information, prices being paid and more. For additional assistance using these reports, click on the link on the Reports landing page that says ATTN Vendors - click HERE to learn which report you should run! Additional help materials are available from the eVA website homepage under the Vendor Resource Center link and the Training tab.

Step 2: Evaluate upcoming opportunities and statewide contracts.

Search eVA's public posting board, Virginia Business Opportunities (VBO), to find solicitations, including both Quick Quotes and larger solicitations typically over $50K. From the eVA website homepage under Quick Links click on Solicitations & Awards (VBO). You can search in a variety of ways (by keyword, agency/entity, status, categories, etc.) to find current bid opportunities. Future business opportunities are also available from the eVA website homepage under the Quick Links section by clicking on Future Business Opportunities. Search by either keyword or commodity code for general details about contracts being planned in the future, including estimated purchase date, buying agency, contact name and more. You can also view existing statewide contracts and determine if one exists for your product/service
by clicking State Contracts under Quick Links from the eVA website homepage.

Step 3: If you are a small, woman- or minority-owned business (SWaM), obtain state certification and micro-business designation to be included in Virginia's initiative to increase access to state contracting for small firms.

Access the FREE SWaM certification and micro-business web application at www.sbsd.virginia.gov. Simply click on SWaM Certification to begin the eligibility and application process.You may contact the Department of Small Business & Supplier Diversity for information on certification at (804) 786-6585.

Step 4: Register on eVA, the state's electronic purchasing system (www.eva.virginia.gov). The registration is FREE.

What you'll need in order to register:

- Federal Tax Identification Number (TIN) - The 9-digit TIN or social security number that identifies your organization
- DUNS number (required for e-commerce) - This FREE 9-digit number is issued by Dun & Bradstreet and identifies unique locations within a given company
- Addresses and contact information
- Commodity codes and service areas

Topic	Source	Telephone	Website
Certification SWaM & Micro Business	Department of Small Business & Supplier Diversity	1-804-786-6585	www.sbsd.virginia.gov
eVA Registration	Department of General Services	1-866-289-7367	www.eva.virginia.gov
DUNS Number	Central Contractor Registration	1-877-DLA-CALL	www.fed.gov.dub.com/webform
Supplier Assistance & Networking	Department of Small Business & Supplier Diversity	1-804-786-6585	www.sbsd.virginia.gov
State Purchase Card/ VISA	Bank of America	1-800-228-5882	jason.canik@bankofamericamerchant.com

Step 5: Set up your ARIBA account.

ARIBA is the FREE order delivery system which allows purchase orders to route electronically to suppliers. From the eVA website homepage, click on the ARIBA button on the upper left navigation bar to register.

Step 6: Use of Business to Business Connect - B2B

eVA offers vendors the opportunity to post your interest in subcontracting on a solicitation by adding a B2B post which will autofill your contact information for the successful vendor to see. Add your website address in the comment box and wait for your opportunities.

Step 7: Maximize your cashflow.

Get paid faster by accepting VISA, the Commonwealth's preferred purchase card. Suppliers get paid directly by the card issuer, rather than waiting 30 days for a check from the Commonwealth.

Step 8: Utilize an array of FREE services from the Virginia Department of Small Business & Supplier Diversity, including:

Business and professional development training events are offered throughout the Commonwealth weekly with our Business Outreach staff starting a business, selling to state agencies and navigating eVA, marketing, technology in business and more. Find one near you, visit http://events.vastartup.org.The Virginia Business Information Center (VBIC) provides assistance with starting a business, finding financing and certification via live chat from the SBSD website (www.sbsd.virginia.gov), by calling 1-866-248-8814, or emailing vbic@sbsd.virginia.gov.

Virginia Department of Small Business & Supplier Diversity
101 North 14th Street 11th Floor, Richmond, VA 23219
804-786-6585 or 276-676-3768 or 434-385-0881

SBSD
Virginia Department of Small Business & Supplier Diversity