Supplier Diversity Program
Frequently Asked Bid Questions

In addition to including an SDP presentation into a bidders' conference, departments may use the COMMBUYS Q&A functionality to highlight and explain the SDP requirements of the bid. Please consider posting the following questions and answers during the bid Q&A period.

What is the Supplier Diversity Program?
Pursuant to Executive Order 565, the Supplier Diversity Program (SDP) requires all bidders to make a significant financial commitment to partnering with partnering with one or more businesses and non-profit organizations ("SDP Partners") certified or recognized by the Supplier Diversity Office (SDO).

What does the SDP require of my company at the time of bid?
All Bidders must complete the SDP Plan Form included in this solicitation and attach it to their bid response. On the form, bidders must propose an SDP Commitment percentage and list one or more SDP Partner(s) that will be utilized to meet the bidder's SDP Commitment.

What is the SDP financial commitment?
Your SDP financial commitment is the percentage of contract sales resulting from this solicitation that would be spent with the SDP Partner(s).

What is the minimum percentage I must commit?
The minimum acceptable Total SDP Commitment is 1%. Bidders shall be awarded additional evaluation points for higher SDP Commitments.

If I am already certified as a diverse business, can I list my own company as an SDP partner?
No. Your SDP partner may not be your own company, or its affiliate or subsidiary. It must be a different business.

Do I have to subcontract a portion of my contract to my SDP partner?
No. Subcontracting is not required. Bidders are allowed to use SDP partners to purchase "ancillary products and services," which are products or services that meet the bidder's general business needs and are not directly related to the contract with the Commonwealth.

Can I change SDP partners during the life of the contract?
Yes.

Is my choice of SDP partners limited to Massachusetts-based companies?
No. Your SDP partner(s) can be located anywhere in the United States.

What type of certified businesses are acceptable SDP Partners?
SDP Partners must be business enterprises and/or non-profit organizations certified or recognized by the SDO in one or more of the following certification categories:

- Minority-Owned Business Enterprise (MBE)
- Minority Non-Profit Organization (M/NPO)
- Women-Owned Business Enterprise (WBE)
- Women Non-Profit Organization (W/NPO)
- Veteran-Owned Business Enterprise (VBE)

- Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Business Enterprise (SDVOBE)
- Disability-Owned Business Enterprise (DOBE)
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Business Enterprise (LBGTBE)

Where can I find SDP partners?
The two primary sources for SDP partners are the SDO Directory of Certified Businesses or in the U.S. Dept of Veterans Affairs VetBiz Vendor Information Pages directory. See the Supplier Diversity Program section of the RFR for more information on partnerships acceptable at the time of bid.

Can I discuss my SDP plan with someone before I submit it with my bid?
Contractors seeking assistance in the development of their SDP Plans or identification of potential SDP Partners may visit the SDP webpage, www.mass.gov/sdp, or contact the SDP Help Desk at sdp@mass.gov. While the SDO will answer general questions about the program, it cannot advise on specific information to be included in your company's bid.

Additional Q&A

Can I list a partner that is not yet certified or recognized by the SDO?
Yes, but with two important notes. (1) The SDP partner must be certified by a state or regional organization that certifies businesses in this category. (2) Spending with such partners will not contribute to meeting the Contractor's SDP Commitment unless they apply for and are granted SDO supplier diversity certification or recognition.

What if a proposed SDP partner that was not SDO certified or recognized does not receive SDO certification or recognition after my contract award?
If proposed SDP Partners do not receive SDO supplier diversity certification or recognition, the Contractor must find alternative SDP Partners to meet the SDP Commitment.

What does the SDP require of my company if my company is awarded a contract?
All contractors are required to submit regular spending reports to their contracting agency showing that they have met their SDP commitment. SDP commitment compliance is measured on a Massachusetts fiscal year (July 1 – June 30). SDP reports are due within 45 days of the end of each quarter.

Beside financial commitment and SDP partners, what other information may be evaluated?
It is **desirable** for Bidders to provide an SDP Focus Statement that describe the bidder's overall approach to increasing the participation of diverse businesses in the provision of products and services under this proposal/contract (subcontracting) and in the Bidder's general business operations (ancillary products and services). Such a description may include but not be limited to:

- A clearly stated purpose or goal.
- Specific types of diverse and small businesses targeted.
- Which departments/units within the business are responsible for implementing supplier diversity.
- Types of opportunities for which diverse and small businesses are considered.
- Specific measures/methods of engagement of diverse and small businesses.
- An existing internal supplier diversity policy.
- Public availability of the Bidder's supplier diversity policy.