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Mayor's Office of
Contract Services



Information
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Telecommunications

DOING BUSINESS WITH THE CITY OF NEW YORK

A guide for startups, minority and women-owned enterprises, and other small businesses

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Introduction

The City of New York is one of the largest purchasing entities in the country. In Fiscal Year 2015, the City purchased \$13.8 billion of goods and services through more than 68,000 transactions. The City of New York is committed to ensuring that the acquisition of goods and services not only maximizes the value of every taxpayer dollar, but that these opportunities are available to a broad and diverse vendor community that mirrors the City's own diversity.

As the City of New York continues to modernize and improve services, many agencies are looking for innovative technologies to support their programs and capacity. This poses a tremendous opportunity for small, innovative companies to do business with the biggest city government in the country. The City offers sources of valuable information related to purchasing priorities and processes, and this guide will help companies find out where to look and how to get started.

Please note this information is subject to change. For up to date information on city procurement and contracting rules or opportunities, visit → nyc.gov/mocs

This guide is designed to help startups, minority and women-owned enterprises, and other types of small businesses find and secure business opportunities with the City of New York.



Look for helpful tips in the pink circles!

Getting Started

1 Sign up to stay in the know

Like many business opportunities, it's important to know where to look. An easy way to discover new opportunities is to sign up for City sponsored programs and email distribution lists. Here are three to get you started:

- **The Payee Information Portal (PIP)** allows any interested company to sign up for the City's Bidders Lists by 'enrolling for commodities.' After creating and activating a profile, you can receive email notifications with relevant solicitations as they are released by City agencies. When activating your account in PIP, fill out a profile and select the commodity codes that align with the goods and/or services you offer. City agencies use this to generate notifications, so it is important to check off all of the relevant categories.

→ nyc.gov/pip

- If you are seeking opportunities with the Department of Education, register on the **DOE's Bidders List** at:

→ on.nyc.gov/doebidderlist

- **The City Record Online** is a fully searchable database of City notices, including most solicitations and awards over \$100,000. Create an account and sign up for email notifications within your interest area.

→ nyc.gov/cityrecordonline

Make sure to pay specific attention to awards. This may help you identify and pursue subcontractor opportunities.

Sign up for all of these resources to track City opportunities.

NYC Small Business Services (SBS) offers many programs and resources to support new and existing companies looking to do business with government.

- SBS offers [seminars/workshops/trainings](#) on selling to government, one-on-one counseling to assist with bid preparation, and alerts for new contract opportunities.

→ nyc.gov/sbs

- SBS also manages the City's [certification programs](#) for minority and women-owned businesses, emerging business enterprises, and locally-based business enterprises. Visit their website to sign up for seminars and find more information on how to get various certifications.

→ nyc.gov/getcertified

Certified companies receive greater access and more information about contracting opportunities, receive technical assistance to better compete for those opportunities, and benefit from inclusion in the City's Online Directory of Certified Firms.

Certification Type	Description
Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprises (M/WBEs)	A business that is at least 51% owned, controlled and operated by US citizens or permanent residents who are a member of a designated minority group including Black, Hispanic, Asian Pacific, and Asian-Indian or women.
Emerging Business Enterprises (EBEs)	A business that is at least 51% owned, operated, and controlled by persons who can demonstrate social and economic disadvantage who has have experienced chronic and substantial negative treatment in the United States.
Locally-Based Enterprises (LBEs)	A business that is performing at least 25% of its work in an economically depressed area in New York City, or employs a workforce of which at least 25% are economically disadvantaged persons.

2 Explore all opportunities

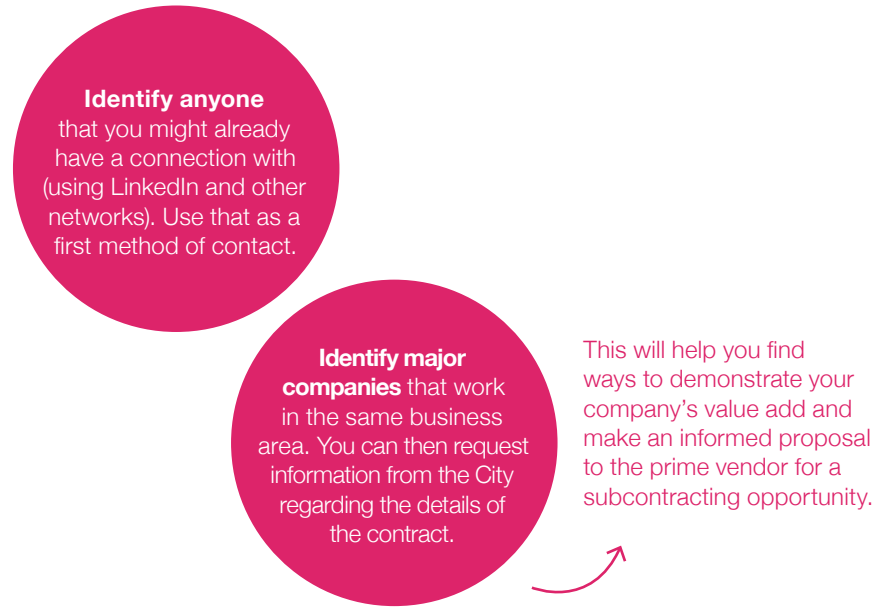
After signing up for City programs and email distribution lists, there are a number of options to proactively explore opportunities to do business with the City.

- **Become familiar with the work of relevant City agencies.** The City of New York has over 100 agencies, departments, boards and authorities. Check their websites for solicitations.

→ nyc.gov/agencies

- The Mayor’s Office of Contract Services (MOCS) posts **Annual Procurement plans** on behalf of certain agencies. These are posted on their website yearly and are amended throughout the year. Utilize these documents for planning purposes.

→ on.nyc.gov/procurementplans



- **Make sure to take advantage of available public documents.** Every year, the Mayor publishes comprehensive plans and emphasizes administrative priorities in the State of the City speech. Make sure to review these items, and take a look at the budget to see where the City of New York is spending money.
- **Pay special attention to existing procurements.** Often, the quickest and easiest way to work with the City is to subcontract with an approved City vendor. Existing contracts can be found on Checkbook NYC.

→ checkbooknyc.com






Use the **Green Book Online** to identify and contact employees and project business owners.


→ nyc.gov/greenbook



Common Ways to Do Business with the City

This section outlines eight of the most common ways to do business with the City. For each contract type, the time frames and dollar amounts can vary, so it's important to prepare accordingly as you begin the procurement process.

Timeframe Key	
	A few weeks
	A few months
	Longer time period

Type	Dollar Amount	Timeframe
Micropurchase	\$20,000 or less	


A **micropurchase** includes procurements that are valued at \$20,000 or less. This method does not require formal competition. Micropurchase opportunities are not always posted, and are frequently created through direct vendor communication with agencies.

A **micropurchase** is the easiest and quickest opportunity for companies to do business with the City. To get in the door, consider how to package your product for \$20,000 or less and make sure you have an active account in PIP.

Steps

- 1 Get to know the end users, project managers and service providers in your selected agency and the agency procurement needs
- 2 Package your solution for \$20,000 or less
- 3 Send your proposal to the agency



Type	Dollar Amount	Timeframe
Subcontract	Varies	

Once approved by a contracting agency, a vendor may enter into a **subcontract** with a city contracted prime vendor. This is a common way for new companies to do business with the City for the first time.


→ checkbooknyc.com

Certain agencies like the Department of Design and Construction (DDC) and the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) publish **plan holder lists** that specifically identify prime contractors. Firms can look to these for subcontracting opportunities.

→ on.nyc.gov/depplanholderlist
→ on.nyc.gov/ddcbiddocuments

Steps

- 1 Research prime vendors using CheckbookNYC, or that hold a Master Agreement with a City agency like DoITT's Systems Integration Services
- 2 Request specific information from the City regarding specific contracts of vendors with whom you would like to work
- 3 Give the prime contractor a proposal demonstrating your value add and contribution to the project

Type	Dollar Amount	Timeframe
RFI	Varies	


The City issues **Requests for Information (RFIs)** to collect information about the capabilities of suppliers. Any company can respond to an RFI, and these responses will inform contract strategies made in the future.

→ nyc.gov/cityrecordonline

Although RFIs precede RFPs or a contact award, think of them as an opportunity to establish your industry thought leadership with agencies.

Steps

- 1 Sign up for notifications on the City Record Online
- 2 Use the City Record Online to explore open and upcoming RFIs
- 3 Respond to the RFI and follow up with agencies once the application window closes

Type	Dollar Amount	Timeframe
Small Purchase	\$100,000 or less	


Small purchases are procurements that are valued at \$100,000 or less. Awards given as small purchases are typically given to the lowest responsive and responsible bidder, or the most advantageous offer. During this process, City agencies must utilize a 5+10 system in which five (5) non-m/wbe vendors and ten (10) m/wbe vendors are included for each solicitation.

Small purchases can add up. If you are awarded an aggregate of \$100,000 or more over a 12 month period, you will need to complete the VENDEX Questionnaire. Keep tabs and start early.

→ nyc.gov/vendex

Steps


- 1 Make sure you are listed on the City Bidder List
- 2 Pay attention to email notifications that are sent out by the City Bidder List
- 3 Respond to the emailed solicitations and follow up with agencies once the application window closes

Type	Dollar Amount	Timeframe
Demonstration Project	Varies	

A **demonstration project** is a short-term (3 years or less), pilot exercise designed to evaluate and test the feasibility and application of an innovative product, approach, or technology that is not currently used by the City.

Steps

- 1 Research agency priorities and goals
- 2 Plan out how a demonstration project could work with your solution or service and create a proposal
- 3 Set a meeting with the agency project manager or business owner to present a proposal

Type	Dollar Amount	Timeframe
Intergovernmental Purchasing	Varies	

Procurement rules allow agencies to purchase goods or services using existing contracts at the state or federal level. This is called **intergovernmental purchasing**. Many agencies look to the New York State Office of General Services (OGS) or the U.S. General Services Agency (GSA) IT Schedule as convenient vehicles to purchase technology goods and services.

This is the most common method for agencies to make IT purchases. Make sure to research companies on the New York State OGS or Federal Schedule 70 and explore how your product may be offered by a contracted reseller.


- ogs.ny.gov
- gsa.gov/schedule70

Track 1

- 1 Visit the State OGS and US GSA IT Schedule 70 websites to explore how to get a contract at the state or federal level
- 2 Apply to become a contractor at the state or federal level
- 3 After becoming a state or federal vendor, connect with City agencies to identify how they can purchase and utilize your product

Track 2

- 1 Visit the State OGS and US GSA IT Schedule 70 websites to identify companies that have contracts
- 2 Narrow your target list to companies that could best utilize your product or services
- 3 Reach out to these prime contractors with a proposal that demonstrates your value add and contribution to the master contract

Type	Dollar Amount	Timeframe
CSB/CSP	\$100,000 or more	

Agencies post notification of formal **Invitation for Bid (IFB)** or **Request for Proposal (RFP)** on the City Record Online. Awards that result from the **Competitive Sealed Bid (CSB)** process go to the lowest responsive and responsible bidder, and awards that result from the **Competitive Sealed Proposal (CSP)** process go to the proposer whose proposal represents the best value to the City by optimizing quality, cost and efficiency.


→ nyc.gov/cityrecordonline

Consider partnering with other companies to apply to large scale RFPs. This will help your chances.

Remember to use the resources available at SBS to help prepare your application.

Steps

- 1 Sign up for notifications on the Payee Information Portal and the City Record Online. Autogenerated notifications of large purchases come through the City Record
- 2 Explore open RFPs on the City Record Online
- 3 Apply to the RFP

Type	Dollar Amount	Timeframe
Sole Source Procurement	Varies	

Sole source procurement is an option when an agency and company can make the case that there is only one available source for the required good or service.

Steps

- 1 Conduct thorough research to determine that your company is the only available source for a good or service
- 2 Meet with agencies to demonstrate subject matter expertise
- 3 Communicate value proposition of going through sole source procurement with agencies

What to Expect After Bidding / Proposing

- **Every time you submit a bid or proposal for a City contract it presents a learning opportunity.** If you are not successful during the first attempt, there is the chance to adjust your approach for your next try and review successful contracts for guidance. Companies that win contract awards tend to be persistent in applying to contracts.



- **There are some basic items to make sure to keep track of once you apply.** Make sure your business is in good standing and that you have paid all of your taxes. Also make sure that your business insurance is up to date. All of this information will be requested if you are given the contract. Finally, become familiar with VENDEX requirements and begin filling out your paperwork early if it seems likely that you will get an award. This process can take smaller companies a longer time to complete, and it will benefit you to get a head start.

→ nyc.gov/vendex

Good luck!

This guide is designed to assist your company in identifying and participating in opportunities to do business with the City of New York. Many vendors that have successful business relationships with the City use that as a launching point to work with governments throughout the world.

Resources

The Payee Information Portal (PIP)	→ nyc.gov/pip
DOE's Bidders List	→ on.nyc.gov/doebidderlist
The City Record Online	→ nyc.gov/cityrecordonline
NYC Small Business Services (SBS)	→ nyc.gov/sbs
The City's certification programs	→ nyc.gov/getcertified
List of City Agencies	→ nyc.gov/agencies
Annual Procurement Plans	→ on.nyc.gov/procurementplans
Green Book Online	→ nyc.gov/greenbook
Checkbook NYC	→ checkbooknyc.com
Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Plan Holders List	→ on.nyc.gov/depplanholderlist
Department of Design and Construction (DDC) Plan Holders List	→ on.nyc.gov/ddcbiddocuments
VENDEX	→ nyc.gov/vendex
New York State Office of General Services (OGS)	→ ogs.ny.gov
U.S. General Services Agency (GSA) IT Schedule	→ gsa.gov/schedule70

