



M/WBE Construction Advancement Grant Program

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

In 2022, the City of Worcester (City) commissioned the UMass Donahue Institute (UMDI) to conduct a study with the goal of assisting the City in updating its goals for contracting with Minority-Owned Business Enterprises (MBE) and Women-Owned Business Enterprises (WBE). Upon conclusion of the study, the City updated its goals for diverse procurement to **ten percent (10%) for Minority-Owned Business Enterprises** and **fifteen (15%) for Women-Owned Business Enterprises**.

The study's recommendations for increasing diverse procurement included:

- Removing barriers to Massachusetts Supplier Diversity Office (SDO) certification and encouraging small businesses to obtain certification from the SDO.
- Increasing small and diverse businesses' capacity for contracting with the City.

M/WBE CONSTRUCTION ADVANCEMENT GRANT PROGRAM

The M/WBE Construction Advancement Grant Program aims to reduce historical disparities in public contracting and promote greater equity in the construction industry by expanding the capacity of Worcester-based certified¹ Minority-Owned Business Enterprises (MBE) and Women-Owned Business Enterprises (WBE) to do business in public and private markets.

The City of Worcester (City) has recommended **\$445,000** in funding to establish the **M/WBE Construction Advancement Grant Program** to support Worcester-based small businesses in the construction industry and construction-related industries by providing resources to enhance their operational capacity to compete more effectively for contracting opportunities. This program is funded by settlement funds received through the Attorney General's False Claims Division.

This program builds off the City's Diverse Business Certification Grant Program aimed at growing the number of new certifications for Worcester-based diverse small businesses as a part of a broader Minority and Women Business Enterprise (M/WBE) Initiative. The objectives of this program are to:

- Help small businesses be better positioned for contracting opportunities with government entities, institutions, and other businesses.
- Build a pipeline of procurement ready M/WBEs capable of serving as both prime and subprime contractors on publicly funded construction projects.
- Support construction and construction-related businesses with operational expenses related to their business to provide greater capacity to compete for contracting opportunities.

¹ Small business [certification](#) is a function of the [Massachusetts Supplier Diversity Office \(SDO\)](#) and other recognized third-party agencies.



ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- 1. Certified business by the SDO or recognized third-party certifying agencies**
 - a. To be eligible for this program, businesses must already be Certified or working towards their Certification as a Minority-Owned (MBE) or Women-Owned (WBE) business enterprise by the Supplier Diversity Office or other recognized third-party certifying agencies².
 - b. Certified Minority-Owned Businesses (MBE)
 - c. Certified Women-Owned Businesses (WBE)
 - d. Businesses who are not yet Certified are eligible to apply to this fund, application will not be considered complete until the applicant provides Certification Letter from Massachusetts Supplier Diversity Office.
- 2. An active for-profit business located within the City of Worcester**
 - a. Businesses must have their operations physically located and registered within the City of Worcester.
 - b. Business must already be established and operating to participate in this program.
 - c. Business must have been formed in 2024 or prior and provide at least one-year of Federal Business Tax Returns (2024 or prior).
- 3. Business must be in the construction sector or construction-related sectors**
 - a. Applicant business must be engaged in the construction sector or produce a good/service related to the construction sector.
 - b. Core Construction Sector
 - c. Construction-Related Sectors
- 4. Provide grant reporting with supporting documentation detailing how grant funds were used.**
 - a. If awarded, businesses must be able to provide receipts and/or a grant report detailing how grant funds were used to support operational expenses and how funds will build capacity in participating in public contracting opportunities.
- 5. Be in good standing with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and City of Worcester**
 - a. Businesses must provide a Certificate of Good Standing issued by the Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and sign a Certificate of Tax Compliance with their application.
 - b. Businesses must not be currently listed on State Debarment Lists.

² Recognized Third-Party Certifying Organizations found here: [Apply/Verify for Recognition as a Third-Party Certified Business | Mass.gov](#)



FUNDING LEVELS AND USE OF FUNDS

Each eligible business can receive between **\$10,000 - \$25,000.00** in grant funding from this program dependent on evaluation criteria. Grant funding requests will be capped at 25% of business yearly expenses, up to \$25,000.

Eligible Expense:

- a. Bonding & Insurance
- b. Rent & Utilities
- c. Equipment & Inventory
- d. Financial Management Software & Services
- e. Construction Management Software or Estimating Tools
- f. Professional Licensing & Certifications
- g. Consultant Services
- h. Payroll Costs
- i. Apprenticeship Programs
- j. Storage Costs

APPLICATION DEADLINE

Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis until program funds are exhausted.



CONSTRUCTION SECTORS AND CONSTRUCTION RELATED SECTORS

The construction sector encompasses a variety of sectors and related industries as it relates to the building of residential, commercial, industrial, infrastructure, site preparation and land development activities. Below is an overview of these sectors. Applicants will be required to explain how their business is primarily engaged in one or more of these sectors supporting construction.

Construction: construction of buildings, heavy and civil engineering construction, specialty trade contractors.

Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services: architectural services, landscape architecture, engineering drafting services, building inspection, surveying and mapping, environmental consulting, computer systems design and related services.

Administrative Support, Waste Management & Remediation Services: waste collection, waste treatment and disposal, remediation and other waste management services.

Merchant Wholesalers, Durable Goods: lumber and other construction materials merchant wholesalers, furniture wholesalers, professional and commercial equipment and suppliers wholesalers, household appliances and electrical goods wholesalers, plumbing and heating wholesalers, machinery and equipment wholesalers.

Commercial and Industrial Machinery and Equipment Rental: Construction Equipment Rental and Leasing.

GRANT ADMINISTRATION AND REPORTING

All applicants that are selected to receive M/WBE Construction Advancement funding must enter into a grant agreement/contract with the City of Worcester for use of said funds. The grant agreement will contain requirements and expectations regarding provisions for grant compliance. Grant awards should be expended within one year and grantees are expected to provide reporting on how award was used.

KEY DISCLOSURES AND NOTICES

- A. The application documents contained herein do not commit City of Worcester make an award, execute a contract, or pay for costs incurred in the preparation of said application, or to procure or contract in connection therewith. The City of Worcester reserves the right to accept or reject any or all applications received through this program, or cancel in part or in its entirety.
- B. The City may seek to obtain further information from any and all applicants as reasonably necessary and potentially waive any defects to form or content of any applications.



- C. False statement or misrepresentations in application documents, or subsequent award contract documents, may automatically disqualify applicants and/or result in immediate repayment of federal funds to the City of Worcester.
- D. Upon submittal to the City of Worcester, all application documents become Public Record and property of the City of Worcester.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

- A. The applicant meets all eligibility criteria and submitted a complete application (as outlined above).
- B. The applicant has demonstrated how grant funds will provide greater capacity to compete for contracting opportunities and includes a detailed budget. There is a clear connection established between the applicant's receipt of grant funding and their business' capacity to submit bids for City contracts.
- C. The applicant either has a demonstrated history of bidding on publicly funded contracts, or
- D. If the applicant has not previously bid on publicly funded contracts, applicant clearly explains the barriers to submitting a bid and have outlined how grant funds will support their ability to submit future responsive bids.

SUBMISSION CHECKLIST/

DOCUMENT	COMPLETED	Notes
Completed Application	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Certification Letter Issued by SDO	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not required when submitting.
Completed W-9 Form	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Budget for Proposed Use of Funds	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Copy of One Year of Federal Tax Returns for Business (2024 or prior)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Certificate of Good Standing ³	<input type="checkbox"/>	

³ Certificate of Good Standing is provided by the Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and can be requested here - corp.sec.state.ma.us/CorpWeb/Certificates/CertificateOrderForm.aspx.



M/WBE CONSTRUCTION ADVANCEMENT GRANT PROGRAM: APPLICATION

Business Entity Legal Name: _____

Business Owner Name: _____

Business Address: _____
Street

City, State, ZIP

Phone Numbers: _____
Cell Business

Email Address: _____

Ownership/Management:

Name	% Interest Owned	Position Held
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- Business Type:**
- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sole Proprietor | <input type="checkbox"/> Limited Liability Company (LLC) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Corporation | <input type="checkbox"/> Partnership |



What year was your business formed? _____

Which sector is your business in?

Construction	<input type="checkbox"/>
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	<input type="checkbox"/>
Administrative Support, Waste Management & Remediation Services	<input type="checkbox"/>
Merchant Wholesalers, Durable Goods	<input type="checkbox"/>
Commercial and Industrial Machinery and Equipment Rental	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

Other: _____

Please provide a brief explanation of how your business is in the construction sector or a construction-related sector.

Which Certification do you currently hold?

Businesses who are not yet Certified are eligible to apply to this fund, application will not be considered complete until the applicant provides Certification Letter from Massachusetts Supplier Diversity Office (SDO).

Minority-Owned Business Enterprise (MBE)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Women-Owned Business Enterprise (WBE)	<input type="checkbox"/>
I do not have Certification from the SDO or other recognized third-party agencies.	<input type="checkbox"/>



Have you ever applied for a publicly funded bid?

Yes, I have applied and have been awarded a public contract in the past. ☐

Yes, I have applied but was not awarded the contract for a public bidding opportunity in the past. ☐

No, I have never applied for a public contract in the past. ☐

If you have applied and were awarded a public funded contract in the past, please describe the award.

If you were not awarded a public contract or have never applied in the past, please describe barriers to submitting a bid.



Funding Request : _____

Each eligible business can receive between \$10,000 - \$25,000.00 in grant funding from this program dependent on evaluation criteria. Grant funding requests will be capped at 25% of business yearly expenses, up to \$25,000.

If funded, how do you plan to use funds?

Bonding and Insurance	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rent & Utilities	<input type="checkbox"/>
Equipment & Inventory	<input type="checkbox"/>
Financial Management Software & Services	<input type="checkbox"/>
Construction Management Software or Estimating Tools	<input type="checkbox"/>
Professional Licensing & Certifications	<input type="checkbox"/>
Consultant Services	<input type="checkbox"/>
Payroll Costs	<input type="checkbox"/>
Apprenticeship Programs	<input type="checkbox"/>
Storage Costs	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please describe how grant awards will support the ability to respond to future contracting opportunities.



STATEMENT OF APPLICANT

Through my/our signature, I/we hereby certify the information provided in this application is complete and correct to the best of my/our knowledge. I am aware of eligibility requirements of the City of Worcester's M/WBE Construction Advancement Grant Program as outlined in this application. I/we hereby certify that I/we understand that if the City of Worcester finds my information to be fraudulently represented, I/we will be liable for repayment of all program funds.

I/we hereby authorize the City of Worcester's Executive Office of Economic Development to independently verify the information provided in this application.

Applicant Signature: _____

Co-Applicant Signature: _____

Date: _____

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

INFORMATION PROVIDED ON THIS FORM BELOW IS OPTIONAL, KEPT CONFIDENTIAL AND IS NOT SHARED WITHOUT YOUR PERMISSION.

SELF-DECLARATIONS

Please state your ethnicity and race from the boxes below.

Ethnicity (please select only one)

☐ Hispanic or Latino

☐ Not Hispanic or Latino

Race (please select only one)

☐ White

☐ Black/African American

☐ Asian

☐ American Indian/Alaska Native

☐ Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander

☐ American Indian/Alaskan Native *and* White

☐ Asian *and* White

☐ Black/African American *and* White

☐ American Indian/Alaskan Native *and* Black/African American

☐ Other Multi-Racial: _____



CERTIFICATE OF TAX COMPLIANCE

City of Worcester

CERTIFICATE OF TAX COMPLIANCE

Pursuant to Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 62C, Section 49A(b):

The undersigned certifies under the pains and penalties of perjury that said property owner has complied with all laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the City of Worcester and is current with all local, state, and federal taxes and other assessments including child support payments as required under the law.

Business Owner Signature

Date

Federal Identification Number: 04-_____ or TIN: _____