



## Los Angeles County Assistance Programs and Organizations

Type	Assistance Listing
Advocacy and Outreach	<p><b><i>Metro Vendor Portal</i></b> is Metro's central web resource for small businesses to learn to work with Metro easily and efficiently. The portal gives vendors access to registering to work with Metro and allows vendors to sign up to automatically receive project RFPs/solicitations via email.</p> <p><b><i>Metro Connect</i></b> is Metro's small business resource that provides vendors with informative Tool Kit, certification information, networking events and workshops, and more. Vendors can also sign up for the Metro Connection newsletter which highlights SBE and DBE businesses, updates vendors on Metro events and bid opportunities, notifies vendor of policy changes, and other legislative news.</p> <p>Metro hosts several networking events and workshops including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>How to Do Business with Metro</i></b> which is a monthly workshop on qualification requirements and bidding processes;</li> <li>• The <b><i>Transportation Business Advisory Council (TBAC)</i></b> meets monthly at Metro headquarters and includes hosting guest speakers related to current and future contracting opportunities, and contracting-related legislation updates;</li> <li>• <b><i>Meet the Primes</i></b> is an annual networking event to connect small businesses with prime contractors;</li> <li>• <b><i>Meet the Project Managers and Buyers</i></b> is an annual networking event for small business owners to meet Metro Program Managers and staff; and</li> <li>• Salute to Small Business Celebration.</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Metro 12-Month Look Ahead</i></b> project list on the Vendor Portal identifies current and future bidding opportunities, includes info on type of work, general scope, estimated cost/range, industry specific needs, and DBE and SBE goals</p> <p><b><i>LA Business Portal</i></b> is a central web resource from the City of Los Angeles for small businesses looking to work with the City.</p>
Technical Assistance	<p><b><i>Metro's Business Toolkit</i></b> contains pre-recorded web tutorials on Metro vendor registration and the process of bidding on and fulfilling contracts with Metro. It also contains weekly live webinars for contractor and vendor training (i.e., contract compliance reporting, certification, utilization plan completion).</p>

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Technical Assistance	<p>The <b>Los Angeles District Office (LADO)</b> of the <b>Small Business Administration (SBA)</b> operates the <b>Management and Technical Assistance Program</b> for the greater Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, and Ventura County areas, and provides technical assistance via counseling resource partners, including an extensive network of three SCORE chapters, four Women Business Centers and nine Small Business Development Centers.</p> <p>Services available include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Free counseling, advice, and information on starting a business through SCORE;</li> <li>• Financial assistance for new or existing businesses through guaranteed loans made by area bank and non-bank lenders;</li> <li>• Free consulting services through the network of Small Business Development Centers. SBDCs also conduct training events throughout the district - some require a nominal registration fee;</li> <li>• Assistance to businesses owned and controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals through the Minority Enterprise Development Program;</li> <li>• Women's Business Center (WBC) program - program partially funded by SBA to provide business training, counseling, coaching, mentoring, and other assistance geared toward women, particularly those who are socially and economically disadvantaged;</li> <li>• Special loan programs for businesses involved in international trade;</li> <li>• Guaranteed loans for credit-worthy veterans;</li> <li>• Encore Entrepreneurs program (for business-owners age 50 and older);</li> <li>• Young Entrepreneurs program (for young owners/student entrepreneurs); and</li> <li>• Office of Native American Affairs (ONAA) -- provides a network of training initiatives that include a Native Entrepreneurial Empowerment Workshop, a Native American 8(a) Business Development Workshop, a Money Smart Workshop, an Incubator Workshop, and the online tool, "Small Business Primer: Strategies for Growth."</li> </ul> <p><b>The Los Angeles Public Library</b> offers a range of electronic and print resources to support small business owners and entrepreneurs, including access to free business online courses, marketing and industry research databases, and hosted workshops by small business support groups from the community (for example - 2014 workshop on "starting your own business by <b>PACE [Pacific Asian consortium in Employment]</b>).</p> <p>The <b>Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) Small Business Boot Camp</b> is an eight week program that provides small contractors with the tools necessary to improve their competitive capacity through a comprehensive, hands-on curriculum. At the conclusion of the eight-week program, graduating small contractors will be ready to bid on LAUSD contracts, and will be well-prepared to pursue contracts with other public agencies. The program has both short and long-term benefits for participating contractors and will serve to expand the District's pool of qualified contractors.</p>

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Technical Assistance	<p><b>California’s Small Business Development Center (CA SBDC) Network</b> is one of the state’s primary resource partners for small business development. The CA SBDC Network provides small businesses and entrepreneurs with confidential, no-cost, one-on-one advising, expert training and a wide business network. Small business owners access capital, develop business and financial models, create and implement marketing strategies, connect to global markets, and grow their business online with the CA SBDC.</p>
Capital, Bonding, and Insurance	<p><b>Metro Commercial Insurance Broker Panel</b> was established in 2009 to assist businesses lacking required insurance coverage. The panel provides proposals and insurance placement for contractors in order to assist them in meeting Metro’s risk management requirements. The broker panel is disseminated to small businesses through the <b>Transportation Business Advisory Council (TBAC)</b>, small business outreach events, Metro’s small business orientation classes, and published on Metro’s website.</p> <p><b>LA Business Source Centers</b> are community development finance institutions (CDFIs), or have a formal relationship with a CDFI that offer direct financial assistance for small businesses in addition to their SBE advocacy and technical support or services.</p> <p><b>City of Los Angeles Contractor Development and Bonding Program (CDABP)</b> assists with obtaining or increasing bonding capacity, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to City of L.A. collateral support for bid, performance, and payment bonds for qualified contractors;</li> <li>• Contract review, project assessment, and field support for program bonded contracts;</li> <li>• Assistance with project risk identification and mitigation;</li> <li>• Third party funds administration;</li> <li>• Accounting cost subsidy for CPA prepared financial statements; and</li> <li>• Access to contract specific financing.</li> </ul> <p><b>State of California iBank</b> has a "<i>Just Start Loan Program</i>" that is a state-funded small business microloan program. In the Los Angeles area, loans are financed through the Pacific Coast Regional Small Business Development Corporation and/or the Valley Small Business Development Corporation.</p> <p><b>Pacific Coast Regional (PCR) Small Business Development Corporation</b> administers the <i>Metro business Interruption Fund (BIF)</i> for small business owners in LA area impacted by revenue loss due to Metro construction. PCR is a local guarantor for the California Small Business Loan Guarantee Program and a lender and guarantor of the SBA Community Advantage Loan Program.</p>

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<p>Capital, Bonding, and Insurance</p>	<p><b>Valley Economic Development Corp (VEDC)</b> is a non-profit small business lender headquartered in Sherman Oaks that provides loans and micro-financing options to small businesses, particularly those owned by women and minorities, that do not qualify for traditional financing.</p> <p><b>Business Resource Group (BRG) partners with Merriwether &amp; Williams</b> to provide financing and build financial capacity of diverse contractors seeking to do business with City of Los Angeles, Los Angeles World Airport, and Port of Los Angeles. Through the Contractors Bonding and Development Program, BRG supports the city of LA's commitment to deliver capital access and specialized assistance services for contractors seeking to expand vendor relationships with the city and its affiliated municipal agencies.</p> <p><b>Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) Contractor BondWorks Program</b> provides Information and training to help DBEs and other small businesses with bonding and financing to support LAUSD projects.</p>
<p>Mentor-Protégé Programs</p>	<p>The Los Angeles chapter of the <b>Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE LA)</b> is a volunteer, non-profit organization that serves as a source of free small business advice for entrepreneurs. SCORE mentors, many of whom are business owners or hold leadership positions in successful companies, provide free and confidential business assistance to both prospective entrepreneurs and existing small business owners. The organization also conducts a variety of workshops at locations throughout the greater Los Angeles area that address many of the essential techniques necessary for establishing and managing a successful business.</p> <p><b>Contracting Outreach and Mentoring Plan (COMP):</b>  Proposers bidding on contracts that are greater than \$25 million are required to submit proposals with an innovative DBE Contracting Outreach and Mentoring Plan (COMP). The Proposers' COMP approach will be evaluated as one element of the RFP evaluation criteria, and Metro will review/approve each COMP submittal for the awarded contract. The plans should include the proposers plan for mentoring subcontractors. The goal is for mentors to assist in the advancement of participating protégés, including measurable plans to grow and compete on a larger scale. Mentor Protégés are identified by Proposers/Bidders, not by Metro.</p> <p><b>DBE and SBE Tier Programs</b> Proposers are required to identify strategies to create DBE/SBE subcontracting opportunities based on firm size or average annual gross receipts defined by tiered dollar thresholds (i.e. \$3K-\$500K, \$501K-\$1.0M, \$1.1M-\$5M, \$5.1M-\$10M and \$10.1M-\$23.98M). The purpose is to increase DBE/SBE participation by further levelling the playing field and making it easier for DBE/SBEs to compete with firms of a similar size. Proposers are expected to develop and include sub-contracting opportunities at those dollar threshold levels in the COMP approach submitted in their proposals.</p>