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MAYOR BRANDON JOHNSON AND THE CITY OF CHICAGO SELECT ORGANIZATION FOR THE CHICAGO SUPPLIER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Women's Business Development Center has been selected to provide community level targeted support to prepare small businesses to compete for City of Chicago contracts.

CHICAGO – Today, Mayor Brandon Johnson and the Chicago Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection (BACP) announced Women's Business Development Center (WBDC) as the organization to oversee the Chicago Supplier Development Program, formerly known as the EDGE: Supplier Development Program. WBDC will work with the City to design, organize, and execute capacity building programs and provide community-based outreach to small businesses interested in contracting with the contracting with the City of Chicago. The program will also provide targeted support and resources to assist firms who are generally selected as subcontractors on how to become prime contractors on City funded projects. Businesses interested in participating in the program, can apply by visiting Chicago.gov/SupplierDevelopment.

"We are taking a significant step toward empowering our small businesses and ensuring they have the tools needed to succeed with the selection of the Women's Business Development Center to lead the Chicago Supplier Development Program," said **Mayor Brandon Johnson**. "This initiative reflects our commitment to building an inclusive economy where every entrepreneur has the opportunity to live out their dreams and become a part of the rich fabric of our great city."

"The Chicago Supplier Development Program demonstrates the City's commitment to fostering diversity and inclusivity in contracting opportunities, said **BACP Acting Commissioner Ivan Capifali**. "BACP is supporting and advocating for our small businesses through this program. The program aims to increase equal access to contracting opportunities through specialized technical assistance."



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WBDC will work with the City to design culturally relevant programming and work to build strong relationships at the community level, to connect individual small businesses with relevant contracting opportunities. WBDC will also play an integral part in assuring small businesses are informed and prepared for contracting opportunities. In all aspects of the program, WBDC will strengthen small business' skills and knowledge within contracting, specifically as it relates to accessing capital, financial management, estimating and bidding, business planning, and more.

"The Women's Business Development Center is proud of its collaboration with the Chicago Supplier Development Program. This partnership allows us to leverage our expertise to empower diverse entrepreneurs, ensuring they have the resources and opportunities needed to thrive in Chicago's vibrant business landscape," said **Emilia DiMenco, President and CEO of Women's Business Development Center**. WBDC will provide procurement advising sessions, host weekly webinars, and deliver three multi-week cohorts. "We are eager to support the continued creation of an inclusive environment where every entrepreneur, regardless of background, can achieve their full potential and contribute to the economic growth of our city."

Through the Chicago Supplier Development Program, BACP supports and advocates on behalf of Chicago's small business ecosystem by creating robust initiatives and programs that target businesses with limited or no experience contracting with the City of Chicago to increase their participation in economic development and government contracting. For more information about the program, visit Chicago.gov/SupplierDevelopment.

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