

Federal Procurement Awards

- Small Business Prime Contractor of the Year
- Small Business Subcontractor of the Year
- Dwight D. Eisenhower Award for Excellence
- 8(a) Graduate of the Year

8(a) Graduate of the Year Award

SBA will make the 8(a) Graduate of the Year Award to a formerly certified 8(a) Business Development Program participant that **graduated from the 8(a) Program for at least one year as of April 1, 2013**. The firm does not have to currently be a small business.

Who is eligible for the National 8(a) Graduate of the Year Award?

1. Nominees must be residents of the United States or its territories and will be subject to background checks.
2. Firm must have a demonstrated history of successful performance on 8(a) contracts while in the 8(a) Business Development Program.
3. Companies and/or their principal owner(s) must not appear on the suspending or debarred list as published by GSA at www.sam.gov.
4. Firm must still be primarily owned, managed, and controlled by the person(s) whom 8(a) eligibility was based at the time of participation.
5. The most recent fiscal year-end financial statement must reflect non 8(a) sales of not less than 51 percent of total sales.
6. Businesses owned and operated by nominees must comply with federal civil rights laws.
7. If nominee or nominee's firm has an SBA loan, payment record must be satisfactory and the loan must be current and in good standing.
8. Firm must be in satisfactory financial condition, i.e. financial capability: sufficient capitalization, financial performance, bonding capacity, manageable debts. Applicants are ineligible if it is found that the firm, or any of its principals, has failed to pay Federal financial obligations.
9. For government contracts, the nominee must have performed satisfactorily on all contracts, and have had no terminations for default.
10. Before SBA publicly announces any awards, nominee must be cleared by the SBA's Office of Inspector General and EEO/CR offices.
11. The nominee must be a formerly certified 8(a) Business Development Program participant that graduated from the 8(a) Program for at least one year as of April 1, 2013.
12. The firm does not have to be a small business.

Who may submit nominations for this award?

Any individual or organization dedicated to the support of the small business community in the United States, including, but not limited to, trade and professional associations and business organizations, may submit nominations for the 8(a) Graduate of the Year award. Individuals may self-nominate for the 8(a) Graduate of the Year award. Individuals may not be nominated for more than one SBW 2014 award category.

Where are the nominations to be sent?

Nominations must be submitted in one of two ways:

1. Nominations for the Small Business Prime Contractor of the Year Award must be submitted to the Government Contracting Area Office, Attn: Government Contracting Area Director, in which the nominated small business' headquarters is located; or
2. Nominations may be submitted via the online nominations portal on <http://nationalsmallbusinessweek.sba.gov>.

What are the evaluation/selection criteria for the 8(a) Graduate of the Year Award?

In evaluating the nomination packages, the judges will look at the following criteria:

1. Management • Overall Qualifications/Expertise of Management
 - Familiarity with Government Regulations/Contracting Practices
 - Staff Qualifications in line with Contract Requirements (Technical Capabilities)
 - Customer Interface (Customer Support)
 - Response to adversities, obstacles, etc. to achieve present level of success
 - Participation in community projects and charitable affairs.

2. Exceptional Results/Special Achievements • Deliverables in line with, or exceed, contract requirements
 - Full and efficient utilization of assets

3. Cost Performance • Sustained control over Performance Costs
 - Financial Stability over length of contract
 - Contingency Labor Adjustments
 - Value Engineering Change Proposals (Performance Adjustments)
 - Internal Cost Controls

4. Increase in sales and/or unit volume over the last three years
5. Current and past financial performance – document an improved financial position of the business through:
 - Profit-and-loss statements for the last three years, reflecting sustained upward growth
 - Balance sheets for the last three years, showing consistent increase in net worth and/or partners' return
 - Growth in full-time employees
6. Innovativeness of product(s) or service(s) offered: • Specific description of unique/superior product or service
 - Explanation of how product or service fills a niche or technical need not being adequately addressed by the competition

7. Description of exceptional results and/or delivery performance that makes this company a valued product/service provider
8. Economic engagement of the disadvantaged community • Use of minority firms as suppliers, subcontractors, etc.
 - Noted employment of the disadvantaged

What are the selection procedures for this award?

The 8(a) Graduate of the Year Award winner will be selected at the District, Regional and National levels. Each District office will select a winner from which the Regional winner will be selected. Each Regional winner will be sent to the Headquarters Office of Business Development where final selection will be made for the National winner by a panel of judges that will be comprised of SBA employees. The National winner will be announced during National Small Business Week.