

# San Bernardino Investment Playbook

## Project Details: Supply SB

Supply SB will organize and leverage the purchasing power of area anchor institutions in order to help local small businesses—particularly Latino-, Black-, and/or woman-owned firms—secure anchor purchasing contracts and grow.

The Inland Empire Center for Entrepreneurship (IECE) and its Procurement Center program (which is run through the Inland Empire Small Business Development Center) will serve as lead organization for this initiative. IECE will work with local partners to develop and implement a comprehensive array of programs aimed at aligning member anchors' procurement processes and engaging minority- and women-owned small businesses in the local contracting process. It will employ a staff of 3-4 FTEs to handle day-to-day operations and ensure communication and coordination among member anchors. Supply SB staff will work with the city's anchors to assess purchasing demand, improve procurement policies and practices, and inventory local vendors—all with an eye toward matching member anchors with area firms that can meet their procurement needs.

Supply SB will also work to expand the capacity of local small businesses to take on procurement contracts, with particular emphasis on Latino-, Black-, and/or woman-owned vendors. As a key component of the proposed downtown Entrepreneurial Resource Center (ERC), it will work with local partners to connect local business owners to the programming, resources, and expertise they need to compete successfully for anchor contracts.

## RATIONALE

Local public- and private-sector anchor institutions in and around San Bernardino spend millions each year on procurement. In many cases, these institutions meet their purchasing needs by contracting with large non-local vendors and bypass smaller local vendors entirely. Anchors are increasingly interested in expanding and diversifying their potential vendor pool in order to boost growth among local small businesses, but structural challenges and information gaps make supplier diversity difficult to achieve. Meanwhile, local small businesses, particularly minority-owned firms, often lack familiarity with procurement processes and need additional knowledge and preparation to be competitive for these local contracting opportunities.

## OBJECTIVES

- Leverage anchor purchasing power in support of local small businesses (with a focus on Latino-, Black-, and/or woman-owned firms)
- Increase diversity of vendors winning procurement contracts
- Promote wealth-building by boosting sustainable growth among local small businesses

## ADDITIONAL DETAILS

Supply SB will occupy approximately 500 ft<sup>2</sup> within the ERC. It will have a staff of 3-4 employees and will implement the following program elements:

### *Regional Purchasing Council*

We will convene all major procurement agencies in San Bernardino and across the region to form a Regional Purchasing Council that will meet on a regular basis to improve local procurement and supplier diversity. The Council's primary goal will be to ensure consistent communication, coordination, and collaboration among the agencies such that barriers to contracting for local small businesses are addressed. Activities will include streamlining and establishing common procurement processes, policies, and outreach programs in order to increase the participation of local small businesses in the contracting process.

### *Vendor Portal*

We will develop a distinctive online platform that provides local small businesses a single point of connection to local procurement agencies. The portal will include vendor registration, information about agency procurement processes, and current opportunities.

### *Procurement Assessment and Vendor Development Programs*

We will develop and implement a diagnostic tool to help classify and qualify procurement-ready small businesses in the region. Companies will be directed to one of three pathways:

1. Foundation Building – Companies that have limited to no experience in contracting will be offered the opportunity to participate in an introductory contracting boot camp program aimed at preparing them to take the first steps into vendor contracting.
2. Procurement Ready – Companies that are procurement-ready and willing to make a substantial commitment to pursuing contracting opportunities will be invited to participate in a Procurement Accelerator program that will help them as they secure their first vendor contracts.
3. Next Level Procurement – Companies with some experience contracting that are ready to expand their efforts will be asked to join the Next Level Procurement program. This fellowship style, cohort-based experience will help them grow their contracting efforts, whether by increasing the number and/or size of contracts or by becoming prime contractors for larger projects. Companies that graduate from the Procurement Accelerator program will be offered a pathway into the Next Level program.

Additional services will be offered through local partners such as the Small Business Development Center Procurement Center program, which focuses on assisting small businesses with vendor certifications and winning procurement contracts at the state, local, and private-sector levels via monthly education and training opportunities and one-on-one consulting with our team of procurement experts.

## **COST**

\$19M Programming over seven years (\$2.7M per year on average)

*Regional Purchasing Council*

*Vendor Portal*

*Procurement Assessment and Vendor Development Programs*

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**\$19M TOTAL** over seven years

## POTENTIAL FUNDING

### *Federal*

Small Business Administration (SBA)  
Economic Development Administration (US Commerce)  
Department of Defense (Procurement Technical Assistance Centers)

### *State*

Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz)  
Community Economic Resilience Fund (CERF)

### *Philanthropic*

Member anchor contributions  
Kauffman Foundation  
Irvine Foundation  
San Manuel Foundation

## LEAD ORGANIZATION

Inland Empire Center for Entrepreneurship (IECE) and School of Entrepreneurship (SoE)  
at California State University San Bernardino

Michael Stull, Director, IECE and SoE

Paul Nolta, Program Director, Small Business Development and Director,  
Inland Empire Small Business Development Center (IESBDC)

Karla Gonzalez, Business Consultant/Procurement & Certification Specialist, IESBDC

## SIMILAR PROJECTS ELSEWHERE

[Illinois Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Procurement Collaboration](#)

[Equity in Infrastructure Project](#)

Supply SA (San Antonio)