



U.S. SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20416

April 27, 2015

Sagar Pandya, Managing Member
Middleground Technologies, LLC
5101 Tollview Drive, Suite 160
Rolling Meadows, IL 60008

Dear Mr. Pandya:

Congratulations! Your firm has been certified as a Participant in the U.S. Small Business Administration's (SBA) 8(a) Business Development Program. Your nine (9) year program term begins on the date of this letter.

During participation in the 8(a) BD Program, you will receive business development assistance from an assigned Business Development Specialist in the SBA Illinois District Office located at 500 W. Madison Street, Suite 1150, Chicago, IL 60661. The phone number is 312-353-4528. We are sending a copy of this certification letter to the SBA Illinois District Office. That office will contact you to schedule an orientation session. This could take up to 4-6 weeks. In the meantime, there are steps you should take to start your participation in the program.

Next Steps

Read and Sign Participation Agreement: SBA requires the 8(a) participant's President or Chief Executive Officer sign a Participation Agreement showing he or she understands the conditions of 8(a) BD program participation. Please find the Agreement attached to the approval email associated with this letter. Please read the Agreement carefully, sign and date it, and make a copy. Return one copy to the SBA Illinois District Office at the address shown in the second paragraph above. The second copy is for your records.

Develop Your Business Plan: We encourage you to start developing your business plan. Current 8(a) BD program regulations require a firm, once certified, to promptly submit a business plan which must be approved by the SBA before the firm is eligible to receive 8(a) benefits; including 8(a) contracts. Once approved, the business plan will be reviewed annually and may be modified as needed. We offer an optional format for business plans. To consider the optional 8(a) Business Plan Form 1010C, please go to: <https://www.sba.gov/sites/default/files/SBA%201010C.pdf>.

Develop Your Strategy for Winning Contracts in Year 1: Though your firm's approved North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) Code is 541512, your firm may be awarded contracts under other NAICS Codes, as long as your firm is qualified to perform the required service or task. In this regard, please note that contracts awarded under 8(a) Business Development Program authority generally result from the self-marketing efforts of participating firms. You must build relationships with potential federal customers, pursue federal prime contractors for subcontracts, and aggressively pursue prime contract opportunities to grow your business. Successful 8(a) firms regularly respond to competitive small business contracting opportunities posted on www.FBO.gov. Establish a goal and vision for winning at least two (2) competitive contracts during your first year.

Utilize Resources: There are valuable FREE resources available to you right now that offer expertise in all areas of business operation including reviewing your business plan and strategy. Two resources that you can utilize today are:

o SBA Resource Partners: I encourage you to locate your nearest Resource Partner, please go to: <https://www.sba.gov/tools/local-assistance>. This link will provide access to upcoming small business events and the webpage for your District SBA Office, also.

o 7(j) Management and Technical Assistance: While your firm's acceptance into the 8(a) Business Development program is not a guarantee for contracts, the SBA will make every effort to assist you in implementing your business plan and strategy. Your success in the program is dependent upon the extent to which you take advantage of SBA's efforts to support you. One of the agency's major tools for your success is the 7(j) Management and Technical Assistance Services Program. For more information, click on the following link: <https://www.sba.gov/about-sba/sba-initiatives/7j-management-and-technical-assistance-services-program>

I am excited about your future, and I welcome you as an 8(a) Business Development Program participant. Wishing you much success!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jackie Robinson-Burnette". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jackie Robinson-Burnette
Associate Administrator
Office of Business Development