

NYC Construction Ramp-Up Program Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

The NYC Dept of Small Business Services (**SBS**), in partnership with the NYC Dept of Design and Construction (**DDC**), the NYC Dept of Transportation (**DOT**), the NYC Dept of Parks & Recreation (**DPR**) and the NYC Dept of Environmental Protection (**DEP**), have developed the NYC Construction Ramp-Up Program to prepare NYC-certified Minority- and/or Woman-owned Business Enterprises (M/WBEs) to prepare and successfully compete for Pedestrian Ramp Rehabilitation and other concrete-based and green infrastructure project work throughout the City of New York.

A. What is the NYC Construction Ramp-Up Program?

The NYC Construction Ramp-Up Program is a 12-session/12-week educational, training, mentoring and technical assistance program for NYC-certified M/WBEs in the construction industry who specialize in or have the capacity to perform concrete curbs, sidewalk, ramp and related flatwork that are interested in competing for pedestrian ramp rehabilitation and other concrete-based and green infrastructure project work throughout the City of New York.

[NYC DOT's Pedestrian Ramp Program](#) is dedicated to upgrading and installing pedestrian ramps to comply with [Federal Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\) standards](#). New and upgraded pedestrian ramps include a red (or white in special districts) detectable warning surface (DWS) to help guide people with visual disabilities. While DOT manages the overall pedestrian ramp rehabilitation program, these projects are solicited through DDC. More than 180,000 sidewalk corners in New York City need rehabilitation to comply with Federal ADA standards. This project work is intended to be a \$5 Billion program over the next 25 years.

Other City projects that incorporate concrete work are additionally solicited through DOT, DPR and DEP. Parks' (DPR) site projects and NYC green infrastructure work include, but are not limited to, playgrounds, restrooms, sidewalk or right of way bioswales and porous pavement installation, rain gardens, green medians, and many other maintenance and infrastructure projects that are solicited by DPR and DEP. The Ramp-Up Program will help NYC M/WBEs understand these agency project requirements and how to apply and compete for these solicitations and available City Pre-Qualified Lists (PQLs).

B. What construction industry sectors are appropriate for participation in this program?

NYC-certified M/WBEs and small businesses in the construction industry, who specialize in or have the capacity to perform concrete curbs, sidewalk, ramps, and related flatwork that are also included in green infrastructure work.

C. What are the components of the Program?

There are seven (7) elements to this Program:

1. **Class sessions**, which will be conducted weekly on Thursdays. Twelve (12) 4-hour sessions will be conducted over 12 weeks, plus any necessary holiday breaks. These sessions are a mix of in-person and virtual, virtual sessions being conducted via Zoom platform.
2. **Mentoring and coaching** by small business and subject matter experts.
3. **Field trips**, which will consist of visits to project sites, as available.
4. One-hour, **1-on-1 technical assistance sessions** (up to 10 sessions per participant) are available for assistance with building operational capacity, preparing to bid on Pedestrian Ramp and other City projects, financial readiness, business development, legal, bid preparation, contract administration and other related business practices as participants pursue these City contracting opportunities.
5. **QuickBooks™ for Construction clinics** – participants who do not have an established accounting software program for their business are strongly encouraged to attend a 6-hour QuickBooks™ for Construction Clinic in addition to the required class sessions. Several QuickBooks™ for Construction Clinic date options are offered at no cost to accommodate availability, but the participant will need to purchase the software to optimize the learning and eventually implement it into their business operations (clinics facilitate individualized software setup with the assistance and guidance from an accredited construction CPA instructor).
6. **Mock Bid Exercise** – the cohort firms are divided into teams for the purpose of completing a mock bid for a past City project solicitation, presenting that mock bid at a mock bid opening at the last class session.
7. **3-Year Growth Plan** – participants are guided by program mentors to contribute to the growth plan based on their current business operations and practices. Mentors then provide participants with recommendations to improve and enhance areas of weakness, all documented for participants' future reference.

D. What are the eligibility criteria for the NYC Construction Ramp-Up Program?

- Owner (or co-owner with decision-making authority) of a construction or trade firm
- Certified by NYC as an M/WBE
- Business has been in operation a minimum of three years
- Experience in concrete or related trade
- Experience successfully completing concrete-related projects at a minimum per-project value of \$25,000 and can provide references for at least two projects
- Minimum annual revenues of \$250,000
- Commercial or government project experience
- Can commit to the 12-week engagement period of the Program

E. How often is the NYC Construction Ramp-Up Program offered?

Currently, the NYC Construction Ramp-Up Program is offered twice per fiscal year (July 1 – June 30) – two cohorts are conducted, one in the Fall/Winter and one in the Spring.

F. How long is the NYC Construction Ramp-Up Program?

The cohort consists of 12 class sessions, a QuickBooks™ for Construction Clinics, and up to ten (10) 1-on-1 technical assistance sessions with subject matter experts. Class sessions are held once every week on Thursdays and are up to four hours per class session from 9:00am – 1:00pm. In general, the cohort lasts about 12 weeks (but may be longer if have to incorporate breaks for holidays). A graduation ceremony is conducted on the last class session.

G. What are the key take-aways for each participating entrepreneur/firm?

Each enrolled firm will be evaluated and provided with a business assessment that identifies specific strengths and areas for improvement and/or focus within their business. The various topics, exercises, and homework assignments conducted over the 12 class sessions of the cohort help provide business owners with essential financial, operational, and project management best practices that can help their businesses prepare to bid on and successfully compete for pedestrian ramp rehabilitation, Parks, DOT, or DEP projects. It is the responsibility of the bidder (prime and subcontractors) to read and understand all contract and project documentation to ensure an accurate and complete bid. The goal is to help M/WBE contractors build understanding and capacity, and provide them with any resources available, to qualify for this project work. Graduates will leave the cohort with a wealth of knowledge, suggested best practices, numerous free resources, tools to add to their business toolkit, a 3-year individualized Growth Plan for their business, a Certificate of Completion from SBS and program graduate status on their Online Directory for NYC Certified Firms company profile – all towards being better prepared to pursue and successfully perform on City project work.

H. How much does this Program cost?

This Program is offered at no cost to participants.

I. Who can I contact with questions about the NYC Construction Ramp-Up Program?

For more information on this Program, you may contact the SBS Program Team at mwbecapbldg@sbs.nyc.gov. Please enter “NYC Construction Ramp-Up Program” in the email subject line.

J. Will participating in the NYC Construction Ramp-Up Program guarantee my firm a contract?

Participation in any program offered by the City of New York does NOT guarantee the award of a contract. Most City contracts are competitively bid out. There is an exception with certain discretionary procurements, sole-source contracts, emergency purchases, and some negotiated acquisitions. The NYC Construction Ramp-Up Program is designed to help M/WBE contractors build capacity in order to qualify to successfully compete for this project work. The goal is to increase the number of project contracts awarded to M/WBEs by creating procurements for this pedestrian ramp rehabilitation and other concrete-based and green infrastructure work that qualified M/WBEs can compete for and successfully perform.

K. I’m a minority/woman business owner and want to certify with the City of New York, or my NYC M/WBE Certification has expired. How do I certify or re-certify?

To certify with the City of New York as an M/WBE or to renew an expired NYC M/WBE certification:

- Get more information at www.nyc.gov/getcertified
- Submit your application for certification or recertification through the SBS Connect portal: <https://sbsconnect.nyc.gov>.
- Get help completing the certification application at any one of the [NYC Business Solutions Centers](#) or with one of SBS’ [M/WBE Leadership Association members](#).

L. My firm is not a certified M/WBE and not eligible to get certified, but I would still like to access SBS' services.

In addition to the City's M/WBE program and the NYC Construction Ramp-Up Program, SBS offers procurement technical assistance through a federally-funded APEX Accelerator team to help all businesses learn to sell to all areas of government (City, State and Federal). Learn more about the APEX Accelerator services [here](#).

Additionally, you may visit SBS' [NYC Business Solutions Centers](#) located in every borough of the City to access many free services available to all small businesses located in NYC, including business courses, business planning, financing assistance, legal assistance, hiring and employee training assistance, assistance with navigating NYC regulations, and many, many more. You can contact SBS and/or a Business Solutions Center by calling our hotline: **888-SBS-4NYC** (888-727-4692). Learn more about all the free business services provided by the NYC Department of Small Business Services at www.nyc.gov/nycbusiness.

M. I applied for the NYC Construction Ramp-Up Program. When will I know if my firm is accepted?

After review of applications received, firms considered to be initially qualified may be invited to a virtual interview, if needed. Acceptances will be offered on a rolling basis in the weeks prior to the start of the cohort.

N. What if my application is not accepted for a cohort?

In general, we have limited spots for each cohort and receive more applications than available spots. If you are not accepted into one cohort, please apply for the next one and feel free to take advantage of the many free programs, services and resources available through SBS.