



**Department of
Design and
Construction**

Eric Adams
Mayor

Thomas Foley, P.E.
Commissioner

DDC Construction Mentoring Program

2024 Transition to the
Mayor's Office of M/WBE
Citywide Mentoring Program

About DDC

The NYC Department of Design and Construction is the City's chief design and construction project manager, providing world-class services to more than 20 City agencies and non-profit organizations that receive City funding. The agency builds infrastructure such as water mains, sewers and public plazas, and public buildings including libraries and firehouses. To successfully manage our portfolio, we collaborate with other City agencies, as well as with emerging and world-renowned architects and consultants.

DDC is committed to building prosperity for minority and women-owned firms

We aim to create an equitable and competitive business environment while ensuring the agency's procurement reflects the diversity of New York City. Through DDC's Office of Diversity and Industry Relations, the agency develops, implements, and monitors policies and procedures to promote compliance with local law and build the prosperity of Minority and Women-owned Business Enterprises (M/WBEs). Our programs and initiatives provide access to guidance, one-on-one assistance, and information.

A new Citywide Mentoring Program

In 2021, DDC launched a mentoring program for M/WBE construction firms and small businesses, the first of its kind of any City agency.

In 2024, following successful State legislation, DDC's program is being transitioned to the new Citywide Mentoring Program led by the Mayor's Office of Minority and Women-owned Business Enterprises.

This document is intended to describe the structure, organization, and lessons learned from DDC's inaugural program in order to facilitate a successful transition.

The mission of the mentoring program

DDC is committed to creating an equitable procurement environment that leads to opportunities for the City's under-represented communities. The mission of DDC's mentoring program was to reshape the business landscape within New York City's construction industry by dismantling barriers to success for small and Minority and Women-owned Business Enterprises.

Participating construction firms can bid on contract opportunities.

Comprehensive support for program participants

Participating businesses are mentored by experienced construction management firms on all facets of procurement and contracting processes and procedures. Participants also receive customized business assessments, business growth planning, industry training and experience, and opportunities to work as prime contractors on specially designated construction projects.

“Government contracts represent a valuable business opportunity, and companies want to know how to compete for those contracts and how to complete them successfully and efficiently. By helping M/WBEs and smaller firms we are not only correcting historic inequities but we’re increasing competition for our contracts and making ourselves more responsive to the needs of all the different communities we serve.”
—DDC Commissioner Thomas Foley



Program Timeline

2019

Following advocacy by DDC, the New York State legislature enacted a law creating a construction mentoring program at the New York City Department of Design and Construction. Later that year, DDC created an agency unit, whose role would include administering the new program.

2020

DDC successfully advocated to secure City funding to support the program. DDC staffed its new unit, worked with DDC's IT team and consultants to create the Mentoring Access Portal (MAP) for the application process, and hired consultants that supported the development and delivery of program content.

2021

DDC began its outreach efforts to promote the program and engage multiple firms. The agency hosted information sessions, spearheaded advertising efforts, and encouraged support from internal and external stakeholders.

2022

Out of 250 applicants that completed required eligibility screenings, DDC selected 49 qualified firms to participate in the first cohort of the program. This cohort started their formal instruction to acquire the knowledge and qualifications needed to successfully compete for public projects.

2023

The first exclusive contract was awarded among participants in the first cohort. Meanwhile, DDC recruited nearly 250 M/WBEs and small business firms to complete the eligibility screening for the second cohort. The agency selected 29 firms to participate in the second cohort and initiated the program process.

2024

Instruction and contract awards are ongoing for both cohorts. The program will transition to become a larger Citywide program with expanded opportunities across City agencies.

To be eligible for participation, a firm must meet certain requirements

- Be an M/WBE certified by NYC Department of Small Business Services (SBS) or a small business that is independently owned and operated;
- Be a construction firm;
- Have average annual gross earnings during the last three (3) calendar years between \$150,000 and \$2.5 million if the firm is a certified M/WBE between \$150,000 and \$1.5 million if the firm is a small business
- Have at least two (2) references valued at \$25,000 individually for each trade of their prequalification request(s); and
- Be in business for one (1) year or more.

DDC conducts extensive outreach to make sure that qualified firms have the opportunity to apply to participate in the mentoring program

When contractors apply to the mentoring program, they are prequalified in specific trades (e.g. Mechanical, Electrical, Plumbing, Concrete, etc.) to bid on DDC projects. During the outreach and enrollment process, DDC focuses on businesses for enrollment based on the forecast of projects designated for the mentoring program to ensure that participating firms have appropriate projects to bid on and the program has the capacity to execute these projects.

A two-tier system helps provide access to larger opportunities

Mentoring program contracts are awarded to program participants through a competitive sealed bids process. Participating firms are invited to bid on contract opportunities based on prequalification trades and the prime construction scope.

Once participants have successfully completed four years in Tier 1, they will be able to transition to the graduate mentoring program, Tier 2, allowing them to compete for projects valued up to \$3 million.

Upon initial enrollment in the mentoring program participants are enrolled in Tier 1 of the program. Tier 1 offers exclusive bidding opportunities for construction projects valued up to \$1.5 million.

Throughout each tier, spanning four years each, participants benefit from tailored business management and growth planning support, along with project-specific technical assistance.



Mentoring program participants contributed to renovation work on Rikers Island.



Laland Baptiste is the program's construction management consultant.



Mentoring program
participants
contributed to
demolition work
on Hart Island.

The mentoring program is built on four pillars of support for participants

1. Outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Engage with M/WBEs and small businesses;Assist applicant firms with navigating the enrollment process.
2. Technical Assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Assess applicants' experience to determine suitability for program participation;Collaborate with technical consultant to develop curriculum based on needs;Improve participants' competitive advantage and capacity to successfully compete for construction contracts.
3. Business Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Create customized business growth roadmaps for each firm enrolled in the program;Develop business growth curriculum and processes in partnership with the Technical Assistance Consultant;Identify and create financial resources for program participants.
4. Advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Establish relationships with other City agencies to expand resources for participants;Align with local, regional, and national M/WBE contracting and small business best practices;Strategically address barriers to participant success and growth.

DDC has enrolled two cohorts into the program

Cohort One	Cohort Two
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Enrolled in April 202349 firms8 Projects awardedDDC will manage all 8 projects to completion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Enrolled in December of 202329 firmsWill be transitioned directly to the Citywide mentoring program

In 2023, the program's first contract was awarded

Approved General Contracting of Mineola, New York, was awarded the first exclusive contract under DDC's mentoring program to investigate and document the structural integrity of the Bellevue Men's Shelter in Manhattan.

Approved General Contracting Owner Jose Fernando Garcia created his firm 20 years ago after moving to New York City from South America.



Jose Fernando Garcia, Approved General Contracting

“I’m thankful to be selected as part of the first cohort for DDC’s new M/WBE mentoring program. The program offers great tools for minorities and small businesses such as support from consultants and project managers.”
—Jose Fernando Garcia



A participating firm was awarded a contract for the Bellevue Men's Shelter project.

McKissack is the Technical Assistance Development (TA) Consultant

McKissack is the oldest minority/women-owned professional design and construction firm in the United States. The firm has been in business for more than 118 years, and has been a leader in the planning, design, and construction of over 6,000 projects.

The TA Consultant implements a comprehensive general curriculum to facilitate technical and financial growth of participants. Training consists of construction-related and business development courses.

The TA Consultant creates a tailored strategic business roadmap informed by the goals, attributes, and potential of each firm. If participants are engaged in active projects, the TA Consultant conducts training interventions for firms flagged by the CM Consultant to improve outcomes.

Laland Baptiste is the Construction Management (CM) Consultant

Certified M/WBE Laland Baptiste is committed to excellence and client service. Civil engineers by training and profession, the firm has more than 25 years of combined experience in site development and construction management.

The CM Consultant provides support from project award through construction closeout under a contract for standard CM services and mentoring services. They assist with project planning, meetings, coordination,

and processing certified payroll, subcontractor approvals, payment requisitions, and direct technical assistance in the field. During active projects, they conduct and submit a monthly evaluation for each contractor. The CM Consultant also develops trainings and provides general assistance to DDC on the program.

Construction Management (CM) Consultant	Technical Assistance (TA) Consultant
Field Support	Create detailed strategic business roadmaps
Input on Technical Assistance Curriculum	Develop and execute general curriculum in areas related to construction, technology, and finance
Assess participants' field performance	Conduct interventions to facilitate contractors' success
Standard construction management services	Advise participants of financial strategies to empower them to effectively manage business finances and develop financial strength
Provide individual guidance and project-specific assistance to contractors	

The inaugural group of mentoring projects includes subcontracting opportunities on select emergency work

Rikers Island	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• DDC was charged with renovating various complexes at Rikers Island• Project valued at over \$229M• Mentoring program participants provided support to the minority-owned general contractor, working on a variety of scopes, including painting and tiling
Reade Street Façade Roof	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Project valued at over \$30M• Mentoring program participants were awarded subcontracts for general contracting
Hunters Point Library ADA Compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• DDC charged with bringing the library in compliance with ADA• Project valued at over \$20M• Mentoring program participants are providing support to the general contractor
Hart Island	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• DDC was charged with the demolition of various structures on Hart Island• Project valued at over \$50M• Mentoring program participants were awarded subcontracts for fencing and concrete work

A new citywide mentoring program has been authorized

<p>Following State legislation passed in 2023, the Mayor's Office of Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprises will oversee a new Citywide construction mentoring program.</p> <p>DDC's two inaugural mentoring program cohorts will transition to this citywide program, and they will be joined by firms partnering with other City agencies.</p>	<p>DDC is proud that the agency's mentoring program has served as a model to expand opportunities across the City, greatly increasing opportunities for M/WBEs and small businesses. This document is intended to share information and lessons learned to support a successful transition.</p>
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