

COURSE 15, TUTORIAL 2

WORKING WITH PROCUREMENT TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CENTERS (PTAC)



Another resource that can be extremely helpful to those working on their first SBIR or STTR proposal is the network of **Procurement Technical Assistance Centers, or PTACs**. The PTACs provide many forms of assistance which will be discussed – but of particular note is the assistance provided in registering with the System for Award Management, or SAM. All PTACs provide free, hands-on assistance with completing the registration for the System for Award Management, more commonly known as SAM. To be eligible to submit a proposal to the federal government, all applicants must first register with SAM. The registration process is protracted and can be intimidating. So the ability to secure free, hands-on guidance locally with this registration process will be of great benefit. Look for the PTAC closest to you and seek their help with registering for the System for Award Management. There are more than 300 local PTAC offices with locations in nearly every state in the union plus the District of Columbia and the territories of Puerto Rico and Guam. A URL is available in the Links section of this tutorial that will help you find the closest [PTAC](#).

COUNSELING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Procurement Technical Assistance Centers (PTAC) were started in 1985 specifically to assist those businesses that wanted to work with the federal government and that were capable of participating in the government marketplace. To that end, the PTACs also provide counseling and technical assistance on a number of other matters. For example, a small business may not have the time or staff to look for new [bid] opportunities available on [FedBizOpps](#) or other databases. Your local PTAC will work with you to determine the most appropriate NAICS codes and descriptors to use in looking for bid opportunities for your firm. They will then use the center's **Electronic Bid Matching Service** to look for federal, state, and local government opportunities on a daily basis and send these bid-match opportunities to your email account. Be aware that it does take a while to refine the descriptors so that the opportunities become a better and better match.

Another service that PTACs offer is assistance with understanding a solicitation and its requirements. In order to be responsive to a solicitation you must first understand it, so that you can determine if your firm and its capabilities are a good match. PTACs can also help with analyzing certification opportunities for your business. For example, preferential access to federal procurement opportunities may be available for qualifying firms located in **Historically Underutilized Business Zones** within urban and rural communities that have been designated as [HUBZone](#). Another program of note is the **women-owned small business, or WOSB**, federal contract program. Again, your local PTAC counselor can help you determine if a specific certification option is right for you. Please note that the SBIR and STTR programs do not provide preferential access based on these classifications. However, the firm must qualify as a [small business](#) using SBA's definition.



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EDUCATION AND TRAINING

In addition to the one-on-one counseling, PTACs offer a variety of classes, seminars, and workshops on topics such as:

- » Introduction to government contracting
- » Small business certifications
- » Navigating GSA's System for Award Management (SAM)
- » Doing business with the General Services Administration (GSA)
- » Contract accounting
- » Response to RFPs and proposal writing
- » Proposal writing
- » Teaming arrangements and subcontracting

Historically, PTACs provided guidance exclusively with contracting opportunities. However, in 2017 modifications to the PTAC Program statute, 10 U.S.C. Chapter 142 – allowed Procurement Technical Assistance Centers to have the option of working with grant opportunities as well. The services provided by the PTACs are free of charge and can be of assistance not only when you are preparing your first proposal but also when you become an established firm and are preparing for an audit. Start to explore what your local PTAC can do for you today.

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All PTACs provide hands-on assistance with registering with the System for Award Management (SAM)

Certification Assistance

- » Woman owned small business
- » HUBZone Program
- » Service-Disable Veteran Owned small business
- » 8(a) Business Development Program