



EDGE Program

Overview

Benefits of EDGE certification

Certified EDGE program participants are eligible for:

- contract assistance
- financial and bonding assistance
- management and technical assistance
- protégé opportunities with industry mentors

As its name suggests, the State of Ohio’s EDGE program provides an EDGE to small businesses by **Encouraging Diversity, Growth and Equity** in public contracting. EDGE is an assistance program for economically and socially disadvantaged business enterprises.

The State of Ohio developed the program because it is committed to making all state contracts, services, benefits and opportunities available without discriminating on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age or ancestry.

The state recognizes the need to encourage, nurture and support the growth of economically and socially underutilized businesses to foster their development and increase the number of qualified competitors in the marketplace.

EDGE establishes goals for state agencies, boards and commissions in awarding contracts to certified EDGE-eligible businesses. EDGE applies to procurements of supplies and services, professional services, information technology services, construction and professional design services.

EDGE eligibility

An EDGE participant must be a small socially and economically disadvantaged business enterprise owned and controlled by U.S. citizens who are Ohio residents.

A business enterprise may qualify if it is located in a qualified census tract (Census tracts qualify based on household income level, unemployment level and/or poverty level) **or**, if not located in a qualifying census tract, the business may qualify if the owner meets the criteria in **both** columns below:

Socially disadvantaged criteria
(Must meet one criterion below.)

Socially disadvantaged individuals are those who have at least one objective distinguishing feature that has significantly inhibited their business success, such as:

- race
- ethnic origin
- gender
- physical/mental disability
- long-term residency in an environment isolated from mainstream Ohio society
- other objective relevant reason(s)

Economically disadvantaged criteria
(Must meet both criteria below.)

Economically disadvantaged owners must meet the following thresholds:

- Personal net worth of each owner must not exceed \$250,000 at program entry.
- Personal net worth of each owner must not exceed \$750,000 during program participation.

For more information or an EDGE certification application, contact:

Ohio Department of Administrative Services



Equal Opportunity Division
EDGE Certification Office
30 E. Broad St., 18th floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215-3414

(614) 466-8380
www.ohio.gov/das/EDGE

EDGE**Mentor-Protégé
Program****Overview****Mentor-Protégé Program**

The mentor-protégé program brings publicly recognized business leaders into a working relationship with certified EDGE program participants in a way that commercially benefits both. The program fosters a progressive and supportive environment to enhance the full potential of both companies, leading to job creation and economic stimulation. Participants are matched based on each company's strengths and needs. Protégés and mentors may request a preferred partner.

Protégés

Certified EDGE participants who would like to be mentored by a more established business may apply for the EDGE Mentor-Protégé Program. These protégé businesses will be matched with corporate and other resources to support and nurture their development. They will gain

valuable business insight and knowledge through a structured and supportive environment that will include appropriate training and resource access. Protégés should complete the program with enhanced capabilities, increased business volume and future growth potential.

Mentors

Established businesses dedicated to community and corporate leadership are encouraged to mentor an EDGE-certified company. Fostering such a relationship provides the mentor with the opportunity to increase and diversify its supplier base. Mentors are provided with a supportive and interactive environment in which to work with other like-minded mentors dedicated to strengthening local business talent.

For more information or an application to be a mentor or protégé, contact:

**Ohio Department of Development**

Division of Minority Business Affairs
EDGE Mentor-Protégé Program
77 S. High St., 26th floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215-6130

(614) 466-5700
1-800-848-1300
www.ohio.gov/odod/EDGE