

Diversity in Contracting

Diversity in Contracting 2026 Q3 Newsletter

October 22, 2026

2026 Business Accelerator Program Kick-Off



On September 10th, we kicked off our 2026 Business Accelerator Mentorship program with the [Northwest Mountain Minority Supplier Development Council \(NWMMSDC\)](#). This annual program included an application process where 13 businesses, who were selected out of a pool of 125 applicants, take part in a cohort experience where they undergo a rigorous curriculum and are paired with a mentor in their industry to scale up and take on new projects with government agencies like the Port of Seattle.

Cohort members, mentors, and partners from the construction, engineering, architecture, energy, and professional services industries filled the room with their questions, stories, and encouragements at the kick-off meeting! We are excited to support the growth of these firms over the next few months to help refine and build upon the great businesses they lead!

To read more about the kick-off, and to meet each of the businesses in this year's cohort, check out the [2025 Port of Seattle Business Accelerator Kick-Off](#) article by NWMMSDC!

If you are interested in hearing more about the Business Accelerator program, please contact [Kelvin Dankwa](#).

Inaugural Port Goods and Services Vendor Day

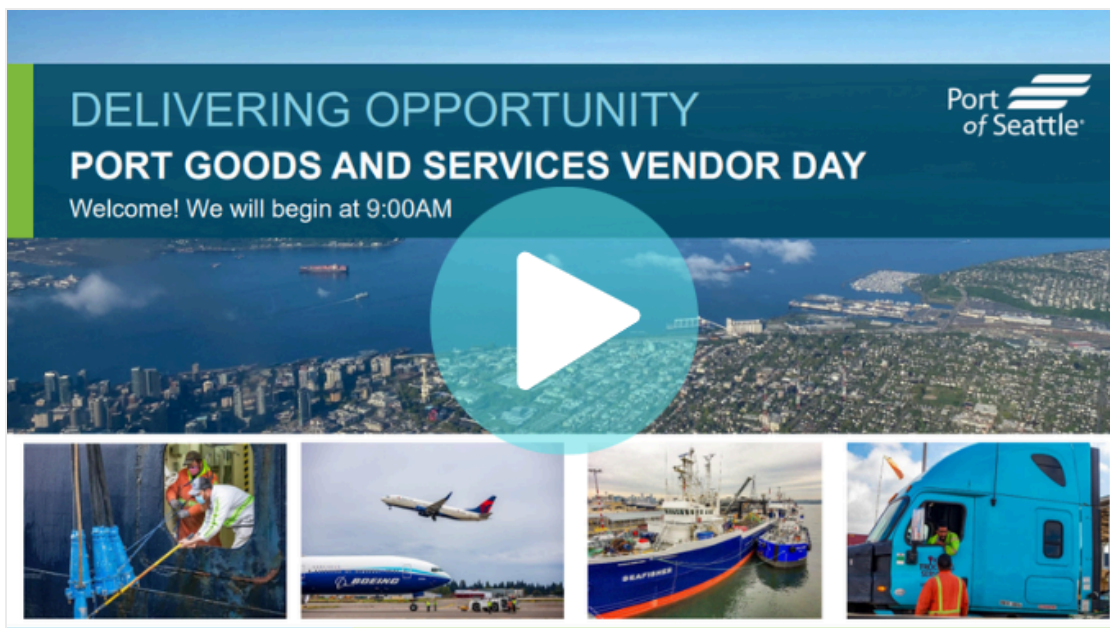


We want to thank you again for joining our inaugural Port Goods and Services Vendor Day event! With over 100 people joining us virtually in the morning and nearly 120 people joining us in the afternoon at Pier 69, attendees had an opportunity to directly interact with Port leaders and purchasers that are looking to partner with more small and diverse businesses in our region!

We appreciate Carnival Corporation and Norwegian Cruise Line for their participation in this event and informing the audience on how they procure cruise-related goods. We are also thankful for the five Port department representatives that presented to our attendees in the morning, the 14 Port departments who met with businesses for three hours straight at Pier 69 for the exhibitor walk, and the 30+ incredible Port of Seattle staff that volunteered their time to make our first Port Goods and Services Vendor Day an immense success!

We look forward to making this event even better next year!

Access the presentation here: [Goods and Services Vendor Day](#)
View the recording of the presentation by clicking the thumbnail below:



Blog Posts

Black Business Month: A Closer Look at Port Diversity in Contracting Data

In August we celebrated Black Business Month by recognizing the strides the Port has made in contracting with Black businesses since the inception of our office while acknowledging areas of improvement.

2025 marked our most successful year yet in diverse contracting where we saw the Port boast record highs of 15.3% (\$151M) in contract spend going to WMBE firms, and 400 WMBE firms with whom the Port contracted! This also marked a year where we saw record highs in contracting with Black or African American firms:

- 46 Black firms were utilized, surpassing our previous record of 41 firms in 2023
- \$30M in contract expenditure went to Black firms, surpassing our previous Black contract expenditure record of \$18.5M in 2024



Read the full blog on the [Diversity in Contracting website!](#)

Hispanic Heritage Month: A Closer Look at Port Diversity in Contracting Data

Hispanic Heritage Month, which is observed from September 15th to October 15th, recognizes the important contributions of Hispanic culture and people to the nation's achievements, culture, and history. This year we celebrated

Hispanic Heritage Month by recognizing the progress the Port has made in contracting with Hispanic businesses since the inception of our office while acknowledging areas of improvement.

Last year, the Port had its most successful year of diverse contracting. We also saw encouraging contracting metrics with Hispanic firms:

- 38 Hispanic firms were utilized, surpassing our previous record of 36 firms in 2023.
- \$9M in contract expenditure went to Hispanic firms

Read the full blog on the [Diversity in Contracting website!](#)



Q3 Outreach Report

Q3 Outreach Statistics:

- PortGen Events: 1 event
 - PortGen Connects (9/29/26): [Goods and Services Vendor Day, Recording \(Youtube\)](#)
- Total PortGen Attendance: 118 attendees
- PortGen Unique Business Attendance: 118 Firms
 - 85 WMBE Firms
 - 46 DBE Firms
 - 91 SBE Firms
 - 3 VOB Firms
- Collaborative Presentations & Tabling Events: 3 events
 - SEA Sparks presentation with PNW African Chamber of Commerce (7/2/26)
 - Kent Chamber of Commerce CEO Breakfast (8/25/26)
 - [Planes, Trains, and Automobiles](#) (9/17/26)

Please check out our [How to do Business with the Port](#) page to view all presentations, recordings, and registrants lists for our events

Upcoming Events

North Puget Sound Contracting Conference

Thursday, October 29th
9AM – 3PM

Lynnwood Event Center
(3711 196th St SW Lynnwood, WA)



More Info and Registration

This premier regional event connects businesses, government agencies, prime contractors, and industry professionals for two days of networking, education, matchmaking, and contracting opportunities. Following significant growth in 2025, NPSCC is expanding again in 2026 with additional programming, deeper engagement opportunities, and more ways for attendees to build meaningful connections across the government contracting ecosystem.

Don't miss this must-attend event for anyone doing—or looking to do—business with government agencies and prime contractors. **Sign up today!**

End of Year Celebration & Accelerator Graduation



Celebrate the success of small businesses with us at our End of Year Celebration & Accelerator Graduation!

During this event we'll celebrate our 2026 Business Accelerator cohort, recognize outstanding small/diverse business partners in 2026, and provide one last chance to network and connect before the year closes!

Tuesday, December 15th
Pier 69
2711 Alaskan Way Seattle, WA

Save the Date!

In Case You Missed It



Another Planes, Trains, and Automobiles event is in the books, and this was the most well attended one yet! Collaborating with our colleagues at Sound Transit and WSDOT helped take this event to the next level and we couldn't be more grateful for their partnership. We also know this event couldn't have been the success it was if it wasn't for the nine prime contractors and consultants, six organizations and WMBE assistance providers, and the five government agencies that met with attendees during the exhibitor walk. Thank you for helping us make this a success and we look forward to an even better event next year!

[All Current Solicitations](#)[Future Solicitations](#)[Sign on to our Mailing List](#)

About the Port

Founded in 1911 by a vote of the people as a special purpose government, the Port of Seattle's mission is to promote economic opportunities and quality of life in the region by advancing trade, travel, commerce and job creation in an equitable, accountable and environmentally responsible manner. In 2025, Port Commissioners adopted a new Diversity in Contracting (DC) policy, Resolution 3836, building upon our previous policy directive from 2018, Resolution 3737. Our directives seek to drive equity in Port contracting. Last year we established new five-year goals from 2025-2029 to increase the number of women and minority owned businesses doing business with the Port to 500 firms, and to increase the amount of spend on WMBE contracts to 16%.



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