

September 11, 2021

Tracee Gilbert, Managing Member  
System Innovation, LLC  
408 North Lombardy Street  
Arlington, Virginia 22203-1069

Dear Ms. Gilbert:

Congratulations! Your firm has been certified as a Participant in the U.S. Small Business Administration's (SBA) 8(a) Business Development (BD) Program. Your nine (9) year program term begins on the date of this letter.

During participation in the 8(a) BD Program, you will receive business development assistance from an assigned Business Opportunity Specialist in the Washington Metropolitan Area District Office. The phone number is (202) 205-8800 and email address is: [wmadoee@sba.gov](mailto:wmadoee@sba.gov). We are sending a copy of this certification letter to the SBA Washington Metropolitan Area District Office. That office will contact you to schedule an orientation session. This could take up to 4-6 weeks. In the meantime, there are steps you should take to start your participation in the program.

**Next Steps:**

- **Read and Sign the Participation Agreement:** SBA requires the 8(a) Participant's highest-ranking officer, the individual upon whom eligibility is based, to sign the Participation Agreement showing he or she understands the conditions of the 8(a) BD program participation. Please find the Agreement attached with this letter. Read the Agreement carefully, sign and date it, and make a copy for your records. Once connected with your assigned Business Opportunity Specialist, please provide your signed electronic copy of your Participation Agreement.
- **Develop Your Business Plan:** We encourage you to start developing your business plan. Each newly admitted Participant must submit its business plan to SBA as soon as possible after program admission. Once approved, the business plan will be reviewed annually and may be modified as appropriate. SBA will suspend your firm from receiving 8(a) BD program benefits, to include 8(a) contracts, if you do not submit your business plan to your assigned Business Opportunity Specialist within 60 days after program admission. We offer an optional format for business plans. The optional 8(a) Business Plan, Form 1010C, is located at <https://www.sba.gov/sites/default/files/SBA%201010C.pdf>.
- **Develop Your Strategy for Winning Contracts in Year 1:** Though your firm's approved North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) Code is 541330 your firm may be awarded contracts under other NAICS Codes, as long as your firm is determined to be responsible to perform the required service or task. In this regard, please note that contracts awarded under the 8(a) BD Program authority generally result from the self-

marketing efforts of participating firms. You must build relationships with potential federal customers, pursue federal prime contractors for subcontracts, and actively pursue prime contract opportunities to grow your business. Successful 8(a) firms regularly respond to competitive small business contracting opportunities posted on [beta.sam.gov](https://beta.sam.gov).

- **Complete Training:** SBA has training courses that will benefit 8(a) Participants. You will learn the different strategies and tactics to win contracts and grow your business, and how to effectively use the 8(a) certification to position your company for sole-source awards and teaming. For firms in the first 12 months of program participation, five training courses will be offered. The training courses are: 1: How to do Business with the Federal Government, 2: Bids and Proposals, 3: Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) and Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Overview, 4: Market Research in Federal Procurement, and 5: Capabilities: Statement and Briefings. This training is offered via interactive webinars and can be coordinated through your respective District Office Business Opportunity Specialist.
- **Utilize Resources:** There are valuable FREE resources available to you right now that offer expertise in all areas of business operation including reviewing your business plan and strategy. Three resources that you can utilize today are:
- **SBA Resource Partners:** I encourage you to locate your nearest Resource Partner at the following link: <https://www.sba.gov/tools/local-assistance>. This link will also provide access to upcoming small business events and the webpage for your District SBA Office.
- **7(j) Management and Technical Assistance:** While your firm's acceptance into the 8(a) BD program is not a guarantee for contracts, the SBA will make every effort to assist you in implementing your business plan and strategy. Your success in the program is dependent upon the extent to which you take advantage of SBA's efforts to support you. One of the agency's major tools for your success is the **7(j) Management and Technical Assistance Services Program**. The trainings and classes offered can be an integral part of achieving your business objectives and goals.
- **8(a) Surplus Property:** Among the resources that are designed to foster the business growth and development of 8(a) BD program Participants, the Federal Surplus Property program provides a great opportunity for 8(a) firms to access additional equipment and items needed to expand and grow their business. SBA has 45 signed Memorandum of Agreements with General Services Administration and State Agencies for Surplus Property to provide this resource. The Federal Surplus Property program is available in most states. Please let your Business Opportunity Specialist know if your firm is interested in the Federal Surplus Property program.
- As a certified firm in the 8(a) Business Development Program, **you MAY** use the [SBA 8\(a\) Certified Icon](#) on your business' website, business cards, social media profiles, and in your capability statements and proposal bids. However, **you MAY NOT** use the digital icon to express or imply endorsement of any goods, services, entities, or individuals. Thus, **they may not be used** on a company's letterhead, marketing materials

or advertising, whether paid or PSA, traditional or digital.

- Instructions:

1. Click on the “[SBA 8\(a\) Certified Icon](#)” hyperlink in this letter;
2. Under General Materials, click on “Decals and Web Icons”;
3. The Icons should download on your computer; select “Open File”; and
4. Select/use **only** the Icon(s) that reflect the Program(s) in which you are currently certified

Please contact your assigned [SBA District Office](#) if you have any questions. I am excited about your future and welcome you as an 8(a) BD Program Participant. Wishing you much success!

Sincerely,

Dr. Donna L. Peebles, Associate Administrator  
Office of Business Development