

# 5 TIPS FOR ENSURING YOUR SBA MENTOR-PROTÉGÉ PROGRAM APPLICATION IS BETTER THAN ALL THE REST



Your small business can learn from an experienced government contractor through the SBA Mentor-Protégé Program (SBA MPP). Plan to make sure all necessary items are prepared before applying.

## STEP 1: START ON OUR WEBSITE

Make sure the SBA MPP is a good fit for your business. Read the FAQs for more information.

- Do you meet the qualifications to be a protégé?
  - You must be a [small business](#) with industry experience. You can find out if your business qualifies as small by using the [Size Standards Tool](#), or by referencing the [SBA's table of small business size standards](#). Both the tool and the table help you find the small business classification requirements according to [individual NAICS codes](#).
  - You must be organized for profit or as an agricultural cooperative.
  - You must have a proposed mentor prior to applying for the program.
- Do you meet the qualifications to be a mentor?
  - You must be organized for profit or as an agricultural cooperative.
  - You must be able to carry out its responsibilities to assist the protégé.
  - You must possess good character.
  - You must not appear on the federal list of debarred or suspended contractors.
  - You must be able to impart value to a protégé firm due to lessons learned and practical experience gained or through your knowledge of general business operations and government contracting.

## STEP 2: TAKE THE ONLINE TUTORIAL

As a requirement to participate in the SBA MPP, both businesses will need to complete the SBA online tutorial and submit their completion certificates with the SBA MPP application.



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### STEP 3: COMPLETE YOUR APPLICATION IN CERTIFY

Make sure the protégé and mentor businesses have already found each other before applying.

- You must be approved by the SBA to participate in the SBA MPP.
- You'll need to have a profile at [SAM.gov](https://sam.gov) before you can use the certification website. Make sure to register both businesses at [SAM.gov](https://sam.gov).
- Use the [certify.SBA.gov](https://certify.sba.gov) website to apply.
- Have your [NAICS code](#) on hand.
- Read the instructions carefully to make sure you provide all the necessary information.

### STEP 4: UPLOAD MENTOR-PROTÉGÉ AGREEMENT (MPA) AND CERTIFICATES TO CERTIFY

Create and agree to a Mentor-Protégé Agreement using the [SBA template](#). For the SBA to approve the MPA:

- The SBA must determine that the mentor-provided assistance will promote real developmental gains for the protégé, not just act as a vehicle to receive federal small business set-asides.
- An SBA “determination of affiliation” must not exist between the mentor and the protégé.
- If you're pursuing a joint venture, the affiliation waiver does not apply until the MPA is approved.
- The MPA should address your business development needs—specifically how your mentor will address those needs—and set a developmental timeline for the delivery of assistance that the mentor commits to provide.

### STEP 5: APPLY USING PROTÉGÉ DUNS

When you're ready to apply, go to [certify.SBA.gov](https://certify.sba.gov) and apply to join the MPP using the protégé's DUNS number.

#### Our application processing timeframe is:

- 15 days screening plus 90 days processing (if you do not withdraw your application).
- This totals 105 days.

Make sure to frequently check the email address you used when applying in Certify.

For general questions about the SBA MPP or questions about your application, email [sbampp@sba.gov](mailto:sbampp@sba.gov).