



Nurturing Promising Vendor Partners

UF Mentorship Program a Win-Win for University and Diverse Businesses



Vendor Diversity Mentor-Protégé Program

- UF's Division of Small Business and Vendor Diversity Relations (SBVDR) hosts annual development program for small, minority- and women-owned businesses
- University selects mentors from among its mature supplier partners and matches them to diverse businesses
- SBVDR recruits promising diversity leads from the University and its affiliates (e.g., UF Foundation) as program protégés
- 13-20 mentor-protégé teams participate in the program each year

Three-Pronged Strategy for Cultivating Vendors

1 Peer Mentoring

- Protégés meet monthly with mentors selected from UF's mature sourcing partners
- Mentors seek protégés as subcontracting partners for sizeable University contracts

2 Business Skills Development

- UF organizes monthly workshops to train diverse vendors in core business skills (e.g., *Identifying Your Target Market, Effective Communications for Small Businesses*)
- University hosts bi-monthly luncheons, where protégés learn from local business leaders

3 Relationship Building

- Protégé vendors meet department-level University buyers during annual Small Business Opportunity Fair and Summit
- Participants attend the Gainesville Supplier Diversity Exchange to network with peers and learn from local and state government buyers

Source: University of Florida, Gainesville, FL; "Mentor-Protégé Program," University of Florida Small Business & Vendor Diversity Relations Division, <https://sbvdr.admin.ufl.edu/initiatives/mentor-protége-program>; "2019 Business Development Workshops," University of Florida SBVDR, <https://sbvdr.admin.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/2019-BDW-Flyer.pdf>; Business Affairs Forum interviews and analysis.



Mentor Program Drives Noteworthy Results

UF Program a Win-Win for University and Diverse Businesses

Mentor-Protégé Program Drives Noteworthy Results in First Four Years

67

small and diverse
businesses graduated
from program to date

50%

of program protégés secure
University contracts, including
major construction projects

30%

of total spend with small,
women-owned, and minority
(SWaM) businesses

Learn more about the University of Florida's Mentor-Protégé Program [here](https://sbvdr.admin.ufl.edu/initiatives/mentor-protége-program).