



U.S. Small Business
Administration

PRESS RELEASE

PRESS OFFICE

Release date: March 8, 2023

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Federal and state agencies, advocacy organizations and private entities join in event to facilitate access to resources for the island's business class

Saint Croix, VI – In order to facilitate access to vital resources that enhance the economic development of the nation's business community, the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) will join other federal and state agencies, cooperatives, advocacy organizations, commercial banks and private companies focused on generating action by offering tools that empower small businesses to start, grow, expand and recover through the **Path to Prosperity Lenders Matchmaking** event, next Friday, March 17, 2023 in the UVI Albert A. Sheen Campus Great Hall Room.

The activity, which will run from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, will feature the participation of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC), the Small Business and Development Center (VI SBDC), the United States Department of Transportation, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), the U.S. Department of the Treasury, the Virgin Islands Economic Development Authority, and financial institutions, among other organizations and entities, who will join forces with the SBA to encourage entrepreneurship and strengthening economic development in rural areas of the country. Those entrepreneurs who attend will have the opportunity to access business training programs and individual meetings in which they can identify opportunities to access capital through our partnering financial institutions.

"At SBA we are committed to promoting entrepreneurship by recognizing the great impact that the creation and development of new businesses has on our nation's economy. With this event, which takes place as we celebrate SBA's National Women's History Month, we redouble our efforts to support our entrepreneurs and with this special initiative, the island's female entrepreneurs to open a Path to Prosperity and financial independence for all," said Marlene Cintrón, SBA Regional Administrator.

For his part, the District Director of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands of SBA, Josué Rivera, urged the business community to participate in the "Path to **Prosperity Lenders Matchmaking**" highlighting the unique opportunity represented by having more than five federal and state agencies, and private entities, united under one roof with the common purpose of supporting them by giving them access to a multiplicity of available resources. "We want to ensure that the nation's small businesses receive the support they need to access federal aid programs that can assist them. These types of events are designed to reduce the

barriers that underrepresented and underserved entrepreneurs often encounter to access the programs they need to recover, grow or start their businesses, resulting in more sustainable communities and strengthening their economies," Rivera reiterated.

Participants will be able to attend information panels where they will learn about the programs and services offered by agencies such as USDA, FDIC and SBA; as well as financial institutions and other organizations supporting small businesses. In addition, they will learn how to prepare to apply for business financing and will have the opportunity to connect with representatives of banks and other financial institutions to get guidance on their capital programs.

This activity is open to the business community and the general public. Those interested in participating in person or virtually should separate their space into: <https://sbdcvl.ecenterdirect.com/events/2262>.

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About the U.S. Small Business Administration

The U.S. Small Business Agency helps advance the American dream of owning a business. As the only resource and voice for small businesses backed by the strength of the federal government, the SBA empowers entrepreneurs and small business owners with the resources and support they need to start, grow, expand their businesses, or recover from a declared disaster. It provides services through an extensive network of SBA field offices and partnerships with public and private organizations. For more information, visit www.sba.gov or www.sba.gov/espanol.
