

**2018 Training and Matchmaker Event
Government to Industry: Bridging Opportunities
June 20 & 21, 2018
Killington, VT**



The Agency of Commerce and Community Development (ACCD) – Department of Economic Development is sponsoring a Training and Matchmaker Event: Government to Industry: Bridging Opportunities on June 20 & 21, 2018 in Killington, Vermont.

This two-day event is a unique opportunity for government agencies, prime contractors, and New England area small businesses to engage directly with each other amid the majestic Green Mountains.

Joanne Spaulding, Director with the Vermont Procurement Technical Assistance Center (VT PTAC) is one of the core coordinators. Joanne took time from her busy schedule to talk to us about this upcoming event.

OPC: Joanne, thank you for taking time to talk with us today. Welcome to our new Buyer's Buzz News!

Joanne: Thank you for inviting us! It's quite an honor to be featured in your first edition.

OPC: Joanne, can you tell us a bit about yourself and the role of ACCD/PTAC in the State of Vermont?

Joanne: I've been in state government for 15 years, 13 of those years have been in the VT PTAC. I've spent that time providing one-on-one assistance to hundreds of distinct Vermont businesses to help them connect with government contracting opportunities. I only recently took the

position of program Director and I manage a full team of 6 knowledgeable procurement professionals.

VT PTAC is part of a network of Procurement Technical Assistance Centers throughout the US that share one common goal: to provide businesses with an understanding of the requirements of government contracting and the know-how to obtain and successfully perform federal, state, and local contracts.

Our role in the Department and in the State, is to aid Vermont businesses with these types of contracts. Last year, our program assisted Vermont businesses in winning 1010 federal and state contracts, totaling \$197M.

OPC: You have a Training and Matchmaker Event coming up June 20 & 21, 2018 in Killington, Vermont. Can you give us an overview what this is?

Joanne: The 2018 Training and Matchmaker Event is such a unique opportunity! It combines a full day of training, with subject matter experts, geared specifically for small businesses which are the Suppliers in the procurement world while the Buyers (government agencies and prime contractors) are receiving essential training in a separate area.

All registered participants will have the opportunity to mingle and get acquainted during a networking reception that evening. The matchmaker itself will take place on the second day. Suppliers will have 10 minutes to present a “quick pitch” showcasing themselves, their company and services/products to prospective Buyers. It will be their opportunity to shine and make a big impression on the Buyers they meet. Some call it speed-dating for businesses.

OPC: What is your target audience? Who are the attendees?

Joanne: The Suppliers are businesses from Vermont, New England and New York interested in selling directly to the government or subcontracting with larger corporations. They are meeting with state, federal and local government agencies and prime contractors from around the region and the country. It’s quite an opportunity for both groups to meet face-to-face.

OPC: What is the primary goal of this event?

Joanne: To facilitate interactions between Buyers and Suppliers. By encouraging communication between these groups, it will enhance the supplier database for all the Buyers participating while increasing their supply chain with innovative, dynamic, eager vendors who will strengthen their goals and potentially fulfill their future needs.

For the Suppliers, it will help them create relationships with influential Buyers and obtain information on potential contracting opportunities. All while, educating them on government contracting, providing them with necessary tools they need to do this successfully and introducing them to the many programs and resources available in Vermont and throughout New England.

OPC: What are the expectations from this event?

Joanne: We want people to come ready to interact with others, to learn and share. We want them to seek opportunities to grow their business through government contracting and put into practice what they learned. The overall goal is to have attendees walk away with valuable connections and a better understanding of what the needs are and where to find them. And we want them to have fun and enjoy the beauty of the Green Mountains.

That's the Vermont way: Live, Grow, Work, Play.

OPC: Great! What is the benefit to Vermont and Vermont businesses to work with the State?

Joanne: The State of Vermont, as any buyer, needs quality services and products. We know that Vermont companies can deliver! Anything a regular company needs for its operation, the State does too. It's good for the economy and it gives businesses a sense of pride knowing that their products or services are helping Vermont to move forward.

OPC: How does this help the business community?

Joanne: It helps them create or maintain jobs for Vermonters.

OPC: What type of businesses attend these events? Is there a specific type of business?

Joanne: Any type of business can attend. Attendees range from manufacturing industry, technology, construction, healthcare, etc. They can offer consulting services, food & catering, hospitality services, really anything. What's fabulous about doing business with the government is that they purchase everything!

OPC: What State of Vermont Agencies and Departments are attending?

Joanne: The Office of Purchasing and Contracting of course (😊). The Department of Transportation, the Department of Economic Development, and others.

OPC: What are the workshops about?

Joanne: The workshops cover some of the programs available for government contracting such as the Small Business Innovation Research Programs (SBIRs), the Small Business Administration's Program on HUBzone's and information on General Services Administration Programs. Others introduce businesses to State of Vermont Agencies seeking contracts and guide them through the process to obtain such contracts. There's also a cybersecurity compliance workshop, a condensed course on preparing for the next day matchmaker and panels with key people in their respective field. Businesses will also have the opportunity to meet with local and New England resources and obtain one-on-one consultations with PTACs personnel to review their Capability Statement.

OPC: This sounds like a great event! Do you have to register to attend?

Joanne: Yes, please go to <https://www.vtregionalmatch2018.com/> to register and obtain more information on the event.

OPC: If someone has questions, who can they contact?

Joanne: They can contact Leonarda Stewart, our Administrative Services Coordinator at Leonarda.Stewart@vermont.gov or call (802) 828-5237.

OPC: Thank you for your time Joanne!

Joanne: It was a real pleasure. Thank you for inviting VT PTAC and for being involved yourself in the 2018 Training and Matchmaker Event!

Spread the word! This is a fantastic opportunity to enrich Vermont's economic development and create partnerships with State of Vermont and Vermont businesses!

Check out the following links below for more information:

[2018 Training and Matchmaker Event Killington, Vermont](#)

[Government to Industry: Bridging Opportunities](#)

[How to register](#)

[Matchmaker info](#)

[About the Workshops](#)

[How to contact VT PTAC](#)