

Global Connections

Supplier Diversity in the U.K.

By Mayank Shah

Any procurement activity, be it at a global, national, regional or local level, initiates an economic reaction. It reignites entrepreneurial spirit, brings innovation, sustains and creates jobs and helps the growth of local and national economies. However, the economic benefits of any procurement activity can only be felt by all if the sourcing processes of any purchasing organization are inclusive and engage businesses from the underrepresented groups.

Minority Supplier Development UK (MSDUK) is the United Kingdom's leading membership organization driving inclusive procurement within the public and private sectors. The organization works with over 40 global corporations and helps them to be more inclusive and diverse in their supply chain by engaging with ethnic minority-owned businesses from across the UK. MSDUK is affiliated with the U.S.-based **National Minority Supplier Development Council (NMSDC)** and a part of its global network of organizations in Australia, Canada, China and South Africa.

Over the years, MSDUK has established itself as the benchmark organization in the UK, helping procurement functions across global supply chains to understand the social, commercial and economic benefits that a diverse supply base can bring. Ethnic minority businesses are defined as being 51 percent or more owned, managed and controlled by people of ethnic minority origins and are British Citizens or permanent residents. Since our inception in 2006, over £40 million worth of business has been transacted within our network of 300 ethnic and 40 corporate members.

Supplier diversity in the UK is gaining strategic importance within procurement functions. And with the UK government's push on public sector procurement to meet its aspirational target of 25 percent of all public sector contracts going to small and medium size enterprises, active engagement of minority businesses in the mainstream supply chain is of great importance to both public and private sector organizations.

Within private sector organizations in the UK, supplier diversity is just not the right thing to do but it's a business and economic imperative. Changing demographics, in-

creasing purchasing power and policy push is driving British PLCs to embrace supplier diversity programmes. The 2011 Census identified 14 percent of the UK population as non-white and it is projected to double in next 10 years.

International Supplier Diversity Week, London 13-16, October 2014

MSDUK is organizing the **International Supplier Diversity Week** in London and Midlands on Monday, October 13 through Thursday, October 16, 2014. This week long program of events, seminars and an awards dinner will include our biennial conference and will welcome over 1000 participants including international delegates from Australia, Canada, South Africa and the U.S. Also, members of the U.S.-based Billion Dollar Roundtable Group, Corporate Purchasing Organizations (CPOs), Ministers, policy makers and minority entrepreneurs from all over the UK are also expected to attend. Highlights of the week will include:

- Supplier Diversity policy summit and reception at Houses of Parliament
- International MBE Day
- CPO Roundtable on supplier diversity
- MSDUK 2014 Conference and Awards Dinner
- Supplier Diversity Hub in partnership with Supply Management

For further information about the events, please visit <http://msdukconference.msduk.org.uk>. Contact diversity@msduk.org.uk for any further inquiries. ◆

Mayank Shah is the founder and CEO of Minority Supplier Development UK (MSDUK), the UK's premier supplier diversity advocacy organization. Having founded MSDUK in 2006, Mayank's primary responsibilities include overall leadership of the organization. Working with committed and passionate corporate executives, and helping the entrepreneurial ethnic minority business community to realize their ambitions is what drives him all the time.



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