

Small-Scale Manufacturing

By Ilana Preuss

Makers of everything from food to hardware to components for bigger companies need a boost, which better state and local policies could provide.

Our on-again, off-again trade wars have an underlying theme: that tariffs on imports will boost domestic manufacturing. The assumption is that more United States-based large-scale manufacturing, like auto plants, will quickly scale up, but that kind of manufacturing takes years to plan and build, and economic uncertainty undercuts the potential. The far greater opportunity lies in small-scale manufacturing, which can ramp up quickly and broadly, as it did in response to COVID-19 supply-chain disruptions. Prioritizing small-scale manufacturing with specific initiatives should be a national priority.

Much of the sweeping tariff regime that President Donald Trump announced on April 2 is now on hold, and at this writing it's impossible to predict how things might play out in the months to come. But when those tariffs were announced,

the White House emphasized that “increasing domestic manufacturing is critical to United States national security” and underscored the importance of large-scale manufacturing, saying that “the need to maintain a resilient domestic manufacturing capacity is particularly acute in advanced sectors like autos, shipbuilding, pharmaceuticals, transport equipment, technology products, machine tools, and basic and fabricated metals.”

That focus on large-scale production is to be expected, but it overlooks the vital importance of small-scale manufacturing on many levels. It's small-scale manufacturers that can adapt quickly to meet short-term needs by applying their skills and expertise to new requirements.

Small-scale manufacturing businesses create products—from artisan crafts to food to hardware and components for advanced manufacturing—that are sold both to consumers and to larger businesses. Since these companies can emerge from the talents and heritage of any community, they can arise anywhere, not just in communities that can attract major production facilities. Benefits spread broadly.

Small Business Exchange joins in mourning Pope Francis and acknowledges the leadership spoken in his message on Easter Sunday.

“On this day, I would like all of us to hope anew and to revive our trust in others, including those who are different than ourselves, or who come from distant lands, bringing unfamiliar customs, ways of life and ideas! For all of us are children of God!”

~ Pope Francis ~

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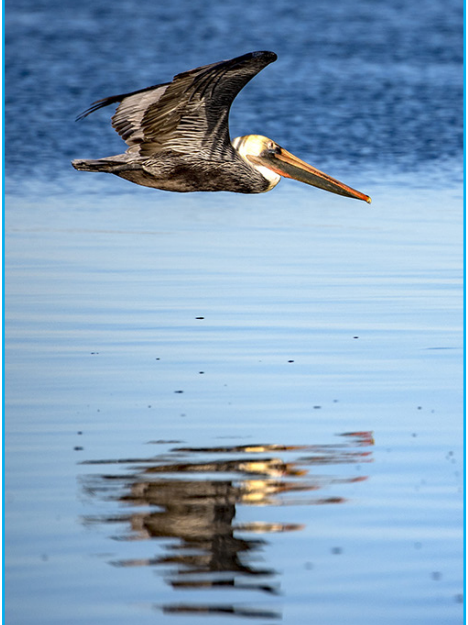
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Thursday, April 24, 2025, 12:00 pm–3:00 pm CDT Online
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Contact: George Tapia, 610-382-3086, george.tapia@sba.gov
Fee: Free; registration required
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Federal Contracting: Woman-Owned Small Business (WOSB) Certification Program Webinar
Tuesday, May 20, 2025, 1:00 pm–3:00 pm CDT Online
Main Sponsor(s): US Small Business Administration
Contact: Patrice Dozier, patrice.dozier@sba.gov
Fee: Free; registration required
SBA is creating a space for Woman-Owned Small Businesses, via WOSB certification!

8(a) Orientation and SAM Registration Webinar
Wednesday, May 21, 2025, 9:30 am–11:00 am CDT Online
Main Sponsor(s): US Small Business Administration
Contact: SBA Illinois District Office, 312-353-4528, illinois.do@sba.gov
Fee: Free; registration required
Join the Small Business Administration (SBA) Illinois District Office for a virtual workshop providing an overview of the 8(a) Business Development program, eligibility requirements, and program benefits. Also learn how to increase your potential for federal contracting opportunities through System for Award Management (SAM) registration, including information that you need for the registration process. SBA presenters will offer additional tips, address FAQs, give directions on where to get further assistance, and answer your other questions. For this and other events, one goal is to better address the needs of attending current and soon-to-be business owners. To register for this free webinar, visit <https://www.sba.gov/event/65219>

CERTIFICATION

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