



# Procurement Diversity Quarterly Connection

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## Director's Note

Greetings,

As we are all adjusting to our new "normal", I hope that you all are finding creative and strategic ways to leverage your platforms and connections to other organizations and resources.

Some strategies our department and other organizations have employed include collaborating with community partners virtually. Whether it's through social media, virtual meeting platforms, and other online engagement tools, we are grateful to be able to partner across the state and even nationwide virtually.

As the effects of COVID-19 unfold, roles and conditions will change. Businesses and other organizations must continue to evaluate the structure of their business and relationships. As always, the Office of Procurement Diversity is here to assist you with your efforts.

Kind Regards  
-Sharla

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## Pivoting Business in a Crisis

All the reasons for change are in play right now. We are experiencing nearly complete cessation of business life as we knew it. Loss of revenue, market shifts and demand modulation are making the original concepts that formed the foundation of the enterprise no longer options to success.

Pivoting means rethinking your value proposition — what are you offering? What needs, wants or desires are you fulfilling? View your target market through a new lens. Whose need, want or desire are you fulfilling? Communication channels: How are you going to reach them? What key activities will your enterprise be engaged in after you reopen? Will your resource needs change?

Last quarter's spotlighted vendor, B2B Strategic Solutions, Inc., pivoted by adding re-entry training sessions to their list of service offerings.

The sessions cover topics centered around systemic racism including deep listening, biases, conflict management, resolutions, and culturally responsive leadership, to name a few.

*"Everyone's normal has been disrupted and we are all in various stages of coming to terms with the changes. These disruptions were not planned for, and everyone had to pivot fast."*

**- B2B Strategic Solutions**

**President,  
Donna Bryant**

The Office of Procurement Diversity has done its own pivoting by changing how it conducts outreach events.

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## In the Spotlight

### Iyka - Top Data Solution and Service Provider



Founded by Ms. Poonam Gupta-Krishnan in 2000, Iyka has served private and public sector clients in three continents. Iyka is BEP/MBE/WBE certified and currently provides services to the university through the KRS102 contract for IT Consulting and Staff Augmentation Services. As such, Iyka is primed and ready to meet your current IT needs.

Iyka's IT products and services are focused on Data-management, AI and related services such as software development, maintenance and IT staffing. Iyka has been involved in keeping its clients' mission critical and extremely time-sensitive services up and running, delivering services on-time and within budget. Iyka's track record has earned highly favorable performance evaluations by Dunn & Bradstreet with scores ranging between 97-99 percentage points for eight consecutive years.

Iyka has been providing IT Services (IT consulting, staffing, application development, and software products/services) to state, local, and federal governments, as well as commercial customers, winning eight master contracts in IT professional and consulting services, one of which being KRS102.

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## Procurement & Purchases

### Discovery Partners Institute (DPI)

With a budget of \$250mil, DPI will construct a new iconic building in the South Loop as part of Chicago's 78 Development. The Illinois Capital Development Board in cooperation with the University of Illinois is seeking professional services consultants for the design, bid/award, construction, and administration services for a new facility. Check back for bidding opportunities [here](#).



### Support Diversity with South Coast Paper

Don't forget to order your Letter Size copy paper in iBuy and Central Stores from South Coast Paper. South Coast offers "Destiny" paper and a 30% Recyclable paper "Envirocopy".

### Woman-Owned Bienali PPE and Health Promos

As schools and businesses begin opening and plans for re-entry are underway, there are many goods and services to consider purchasing for your safety and well being. Check out the latest [Bienali Health & Wellness Promos](#) that are available in [iBuy](#) and the [Bienali website](#).



## Resources



### Small Business Association (SBA) Paycheck Protection Program

The Paycheck Protection Program is a loan designed to provide a direct incentive for small businesses to keep their workers on the payroll. SBA will forgive loans if all employees are kept on the payroll

for eight weeks and the money is used for payroll, rent, mortgage interest, or utilities.

You can apply through any existing SBA 7(a) lender or through any federally insured depository institution, federally insured credit union, and Farm Credit System institution that is participating.

[Frequently Asked Questions for Lenders and Borrowers](#)

**Grants** - Funders from across the country are extending opportunities for small and microbusinesses to seek grant aid. Many small and microbusinesses do not have the capacity to absorb additional debt. The various grant programs aim to address the gap. Learn more about the grants that help small businesses.

- [Chicago Microbusiness Recovery Grant Program](#)
- [Facebook Small Business Grants Program](#)
- [The Red Backpack Fund](#)
- [Hello Alice Grants](#)



# Iyka

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## IYKA VALUE PROPOSITION TO THE UNIVERSITY

Iyka's goal is to become the icon for the fourth-wave of technology by bringing the most innovative personalized and collaborative products and solutions to the world. One way to meet this goal is by providing long-term value that helps reduce data-management costs up to 40%.

During the pandemic, not only did Iyka continue to help reduce customer costs, it provided new products for COVID-19 emergency relief and back to work/college strategies, including:

- Thermal Alert system, Zyter (a Cloud-enabled IoT platform with dual spectrum - visible and thermal scanning)
- Mobile app to help detect COVID-19 in the air to control the spread of the virus. Cost per application is less than \$1.
- EpidTrace – A contact tracing tool for the public health sector & NGOs worldwide.
- EpidSafe – A mobile app to help employers worldwide bring back their employees to a safe work environment similar to the "Social Passport" app that utilizes a live risk score.

When asked what are some of the challenges Iyka faces as a small business, Mrs. Gupta-Krishnan responded, "Marketing and limited resources to invest in developing great products and services. So, my suggestion is that specialized boutique shops collaborate and team up with other boutique shops to bring complimentary expertise."

For questions about the KRS102 and other offerings, please email Poonam Gupta-Krishnan at [contact@iyka.com](mailto:contact@iyka.com) or call 630-372-3900 ext. 105

Website: <https://iyka.com/>



# Pivoting Business in a Crisis

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Known for in-person events that attract masses of attendees, earlier this month the department teamed up with UIC Purchasing and Central Management Services to provide virtual interactive sessions on topics such as, COVID-19 guidance and resources, and benefits of certifying with the state. Feedback was very positive with participants providing ideas on other topics to be considered for the future.

A more recent collaboration was with Amazon Business to show business owners How to Become a Seller with Amazon Business and tips on how to do business with the university.

As the university begins to adopt Amazon Business as a preferred method for purchasing small purchase items, diverse vendors are eager to learn what that means for them. How will they be identified as a diverse vendor? Will these purchases count towards the 20% diversity goal?

To learn more, upcoming events, Q&As and past presentations are posted [here](#).

## Support & Uplift

[Buy Black Chambana](#) is a community organization dedicated to empowering and creating space for ALL people. It aims to celebrate and honor black culture, support black businesses, and uplift the community through its many events, workshops, partnerships, and networking functions. "When you support a black business, you help close the racial wealth gap, strengthen local economies, foster job creation, and celebrate black culture."

[Black Owned Chicago](#) is a website used to discover and connect with great local black businesses.

