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SBA Event Aimed at Helping Local Businesses Gain Access to Capital Features USDA, FDIC, SBDC and More

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The Small Business Administration has announced that it will join forces with federal and state agencies, cooperatives, advocacy organizations, commercial banks and private companies for an event called "Path to Prosperity Lenders Matchmaking" that will offer tools aimed at the growth, expansion and recovery of local businesses.

The SBA said the event, scheduled for March 17 from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., will take place in-person at UVI's Albert A. Sheen Great Hall on St. Croix — [register here](#) — and 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.

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, the SBA said.

"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 Cintro'n, SBA Regional Administrator.

For his part, the District Director of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands of SBA, Josue? 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," Mr. Rivera said. "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."

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.