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## Local Small Business Owners Ecstatic Over Corporate and Institutional Support in 2023

e-Local Marketplace (“ELM”) Offers a Win-Win for DEI Initiatives and Local Spend with Chicagoland Small Businesses and MBE/WBE/DBE/VBEs

**Chicago, January 2, 2022** – e-Local Marketplace (“ELM”), provides a direct solution to corporate and institutional buyers’ DEI initiatives and other entities committed to supporting local, women, minority, and veteran-owned businesses in the 9,581 square mile Chicagoland area. Formal diversity certification is not required. Through ELM, Buyers generate economic transformation via spend with local small business owners. “I really appreciate what ELM and VIT has done for my business. Without them I would not have been able to expand my business beyond my brick and mortar storefront.” shared Jared Hicks, of Englewood Hardware and Paint, a 100-year old business in the heart of Chicago’s south side Englewood neighborhood.

“The significance and mutually positive impact of supporting local small businesses within the communities our buyers serve is potentially generationally life-changing.” stated e-Local Marketplace (ELM) Executive Director Anita Summers. ELM presently has 14 vendors which collectively offer over 100,000 in B2B products. “In 2022, early adopters, i.e., local small business owners, saw ELM as a means of expanding sales outlets, and quickly signed-up as ELM Vendors.” stated Clarence Weaver, ELM President. He added, “We are confident existing platform sales will continuously increase; and more buyers and vendors will join e-Local Marketplace in 2023, benefitting ELM buyers, local small businesses and community residents.”

Current e-local marketplace vendors include AWE-Sauce, Back of the Yards Coffee, C&W Market and Ice Cream Parlor, Englewood Hardware & Paint, Good to Go Jamaican Cuisine, Hecky’s BBQ, Kribi Coffee Company, Lemoi Ace Hardware, Logsdon Stationers, WallScott Solutions, Digital Worxx Design & Print and October Lotus (health and wellness teas). “I am extremely excited that October Lotus has the opportunity to become an e-Local Marketplace vendor. As a small business owner, building awareness can be challenging, especially when seeking wholesale retail opportunities. Working with e-Local Marketplace allows my brand to reach markets I may not have had access to otherwise. As an admirer of ELM, and their dedication to diversity and small business, this is a huge win for October Lotus.” shared founder/owner Asha Dickens.

Also forthcoming in 2023 will be e-Local Marketplace (ELM) Vendors offering wholesale personal care products, customizable travel accessories, corporate gifts, overhead doors, commercial laundry machines and repairs, custom cabinetry and appliances, While ELM is open to small business owners and minority/women/veteran vendors in a range of industries, there is high demand for MRO (Maintenance Repair Operations), industrial and medical supplies, safety, production, branded apparel, audio/visual equipment, books, magazines, and subscriptions, cables and wiring, branded merchandise, suppliers of electrical and equipment, foodservice, furniture, industrial and janitorial, lab, packaging, plumbing/HVAC supplies, shredding services, telecommunications equipment and uniforms. Vendors with collegiate licensing agreements in good standing are also of particular interest.

Small business owners with questions email [info@e-localmarketplace.org](mailto:info@e-localmarketplace.org) or register to become a vendor at: <https://evanstonlocalmarketplace.elinkgateway.com/administration/vendorRegform/vendorregpage.xhtml>.

Prospective corporate and institutional buyers should direct calls to Anita Summers at (224) 357-1107. e-Local Marketplace (ELM) is powered by eLink Gateway™, a proprietary software of Value Innovation Technologies.

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