

# Supplier Diversity Inclusion Plan Template

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**Agency:** Department of Commerce

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Agency's plan to increase participation of small minority-, women- and veteran-owned firms:

- **Provide technical assistance to potentially eligible businesses:** Commerce staff will become trained in how to refer businesses to OMWBE to learn more about becoming registered as minority-, women-, and veteran-owned firms. Commerce will also encourage enrollment with DES as master contractors to increase opportunities for firms to contract with state agencies, as opportunities arise.
- **Continue to Require Diverse Business Inclusion Plans in Competitive Procurements:** Since May 2015, Commerce procurement templates have included a requirement for prospective vendors to submit Diverse Business Inclusion Plans as a component of their proposals. Proposals not including Diverse Business Inclusion Plans are to be deemed non-responsive by Commerce. Unfortunately, this requirement alone has not increased participation in competitive procurements. Commerce was without a contracts officer for a long period after this requirement was implemented, which hampered agency understanding and implementation. We will now provide additional training and assistance on competitive procurements.
- **Develop Staff Training for Supplier Diversity:** Commerce will develop and provide supplier diversity training for all staff who manage contracts.
- **Internal and External Communications:** Commerce will develop internal communications to support the agency's Supplier Diversity Plan. Commerce will provide guidance for staff on their expectations with respect to this goal. Commerce will also strengthen its communication to businesses throughout Washington, including targeted communications that provide advance notice to certified businesses of upcoming Commerce bidding opportunities.
- **Pass-Through Funding:** Commerce will begin tracking minority-, veteran-, and women-owned business participation in its nearly \$2 billion of pass-through (grants and loans) funding. This is intended to encourage increased diverse participation in the capital and non-capital projects we fund throughout the state, and it is a first step toward requiring inclusion plans for pass-through funds.

# Supplier Diversity Best Practices

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## 1. Proactively identify your contracting and procurement needs.

This allows time to identify the availability of minority-, women- or veteran-owned firms and conduct outreach.

## 2. Review existing state resources to identify currently certified firms.

- Review OMWBE's [Directory of Certified Firms](#) and the Department of Veteran Affairs' [website](#) to identify certified firms in your areas of need.
- Businesses that register in the [Washington Electronic Business Solution](#) (WEBS) can identify themselves as seeking subcontracting opportunities and share their status as a small, minority-, women- and/or veteran-owned businesses.
- Contact OMWBE if you need any help cross referencing your agency's purchasing or contracting needs with certified firms.

## 3. Consider structural changes to procurement approach to identify small businesses.

Examples:

- Break down projects to encourage participation by small businesses. Identify subcontracting opportunities prior to advertising. This can be done by the agency and/or the prime contractor.
- Understand agencies' [direct buy purchasing authority](#).

## 4. Conduct outreach and targeted recruitment.

Examples:

- Advertise contracting opportunities with OMWBE or other organizations that regularly interact with small businesses owned by minorities, women and veterans.
- Host, sponsor or attend trade to inform small businesses of contracting opportunities. [OMWBE's website](#) is one source to find upcoming events.
- Contact OMWBE for assistance in helping identify small businesses that may be eligible for certification in certain markets. OMWBE currently subscribes to a specialized database that can perform these detail searches.
- Know where to refer a business that wants to be certified by OMWBE or DVA. The attached fact sheet is a good starting place.

## 5. Monitor

- Monitor your organization's spend with certified businesses so you know what is working and can adjust your strategies as needed.

### Questions?

Please contact Lawrence Coleman, Assistant Director of Communications and External Relations, at [supplierdiversity@omwbe.wa.gov](mailto:supplierdiversity@omwbe.wa.gov) or 360-664-6759