



## Targeted Outreach Recommendations

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### Engaging with small and diverse businesses through targeted outreach.

Targeted outreach includes genuine efforts to identify small and diverse businesses that are not currently certified but (1) are eligible to bid on or have participated in contracts with public agencies, and (2) may be eligible to become certified. In Washington, The Office of Minority and Women's Business Enterprises (OMWBE) certifies minority and women owned businesses, The Department of Veteran's Affairs (DVA) certifies veteran owned businesses, and the Department of Enterprise Services (DES) registers small businesses. Certified minority and women owned businesses are found on [OMWBE's Directory of Certified Firms](#). Veteran owned businesses are found on [DVA's Directory of Certified Firms](#). Small businesses are found on DES's [WEBS system](#).

### Targeted outreach is important because:

- It helps identify small and diverse businesses that are not OMWBE or DVA certified or registered in WEBS. Any agency can perform targeted outreach to uncertified businesses and connect them with certification resources and state bidding opportunities.
- Increasing the size and depth of the overall pool of certified small and diverse businesses benefits agencies looking for more options in fulfilling their small and diverse business goals. Increasing the pool of businesses also diversifies an agency's supply chain, giving it more options when selecting contractors or suppliers.
- Strengthening opportunities for small and diverse businesses strengthens Washington's economy, supports our communities, improves the quality of life for everyone, and increases competition and innovation while lowering costs.

### Strategy

The following strategies and examples should be used to increase the number of certified small and diverse businesses. Increasing the number of certified businesses will maximize contracting bid opportunities for small and diverse businesses.

- A government agency forecasts its contracting needs over a period of time to make sure they have resources and planning in place to accomplish the needs. This should be done, at minimum, on a biennial basis based on the entity's budget and adjusted each fiscal year. Click here for tips on [how to best forecast spending](#).
- The agency then compares those needs against OMWBE's [Directory of Certified Firms](#) and small and veteran owned businesses in [WEBS](#).



- If there are no certified businesses in the directory eligible to perform the work needed, the agency works with OMWBE, DES, or DVA through a data company or other methods to identify businesses in areas of work that are potentially eligible for certification.

This strategy requires proactive planning and communication and is a great benefit for current and future contracting opportunities. It can also add more small and diverse businesses to the pool of certified businesses in areas the state spends, so they are easier to identify for future contracting opportunities.

## Example for OMWBE \*

1. Your agency has significant contracting needs over the next several years. It has forecasted this work and identified the work that can be fulfilled through subcontractors.

Your agency expresses those needs in terms of [NAICS codes](#) (see below).

212321: Construction Sand and Gravel Mining

236220: Commercial and Institutional Building Construction

237110: Water and Sewer Line and Related Structures Construction

237130: Power and Communication Line and Related Structures Construction

237310: Highway, Street, and Bridge Construction

237990: Other Heavy and Civil Engineering Construction

238350: Finish Carpentry Contractors

238910: Site Preparation Contractors

484121: General Freight Trucking, Long-Distance, Truckload

2. Your agency checks [OMWBE's certified firm directory](#), sorting by NAICS code, and by type of certification and location if relevant.
3. Your agency conducts outreach to the businesses identified to share information about upcoming opportunities. Your agency also determines if the businesses are available for the particular work. Available, in this context, means qualified to do the work, meets state licensing and bonding requirements, and able to complete the work within the specified timeframe.

If your agency encounters any available businesses that are not OMWBE/DVA certified or registered in WEBS, your agency should provide information on how they can become certified and contact information for which agency can help them do so.



4. If there is a lack of certified businesses, your agency contacts OMWBE. OMWBE and your agency partner to create a plan to reach non-certified businesses in your area that:
  - Do work in the needed NAICS codes
  - Are in a specific area if that is relevant
  - Are small
  - Are likely owned by a minority or a woman
5. Your agency partners with OMWBE to provide certification information to businesses. Bidding opportunities should be sent to OMWBE to share with certified businesses as well as the dates of any pre-contract info sessions and events. OMWBE offers certification workshops and is available to answer questions to help businesses begin the certification process. This increases the pool of diverse, qualified contractors who can help your agency, as well as boosts diversity in innovation, new approaches to work, and can mean more competitive bids for your agency.

\* This example is specific to how to conduct targeted outreach to increase the number of OMWBE certified businesses. The process is similar for increasing the number of DVA certified businesses or businesses registered in WEBS, but there may be small differences. Please contact DVA or DES for more information.

### For questions about certification and registration:

#### OMWBE Certification

- [TechnicalAssistance@omwbe.wa.gov](mailto:TechnicalAssistance@omwbe.wa.gov)
- (360) 664-9750

#### Veteran Owned Business Certification

- [vob@dva.wa.gov](mailto:vob@dva.wa.gov)
- (360) 725- 2169

#### WEBS questions may be directed to

- [WEBSCustomerService@des.wa.gov](mailto:WEBSCustomerService@des.wa.gov)
- (360) 902-7400