



Supplier Diversity Inclusion Plan • Calendar Year 2020

Agency: Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction

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2020 Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction Supplier Diversity Inclusion Plan

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

The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction's (OSPI's) plan to increase participation of certified minority-, women-, and veteran-owned firms include the following best practices:

1. Proactively identify OSPI's contracting and procurement needs.

OSPI is responsible for contracting and procurement activities, including direct buys and competitive solicitations. Our plan to increase participation of minority-, women-, and veteran-owned businesses is an ongoing effort. OSPI is committed to encouraging procurement opportunities with certified minority-, women-, and veteran-owned businesses. OSPI will continue to review historical data to identify general categories of goods and services regularly purchased for the inclusion of Office of Minority & Women Business Enterprise- (OMWBE-) certified firms.

2. Procurement Practices.

- Consistent with RCW 39.26.090 (6), OSPI will continue to review how purchases are bundled and whether unbundling these contracts will create more inclusion opportunities. OSPI's Procurement Office works closely with our programs to ensure purchases are for a cohesive body of work, but also looks for opportunities where a purchase may be separated into more than one contract/purchase to provide an opportunity for a minority-, woman-, or veteran-owned business to participate and obtain a contract for part of the total project. However, in compliance with DES Policy #DES-125-03 related to Direct Buy Contracts, OSPI discourages unbundling or manipulation of a purchase in order to circumvent the sole source filing or competitive procurement processes.
- Ensure staff understand Direct Buy purchasing authority and use this purchasing authority when appropriate to do business with certified firms.



- Write solicitations in plain talk, which will assist *all* bidders, but most specifically, small business who do not have legal teams dedicated to wading through and interpreting legal jargon.
- Review standard procurement and contract language and evaluate whether any content or requirements may be barriers to certified firms.
- Consider announcing upcoming competitively contracting opportunities further in advance so small businesses have an opportunity to compete with larger firms that have teams dedicated to writing proposals. This concern was expressed by the vendor community at the DES 2019 Fall IT Training & Open House. We may implement this strategy by 1) lengthening the advertisement period of solicitations when practicable, and/or 2) by posting a brief advertisement about the upcoming solicitation before it is released (e.g. a pre-release informational document). We are currently developing an internal, electronic Planning and Risk Assessment that will help Procurement Staff identify opportunities and consult with programs regarding contracting earlier.
- Continue to allow for electronic bid response submission, reducing administrative overhead for small businesses. In addition, our agency is very close to implementing an electronic signature policy, which will further reduce the administrative burden of printing and mailing original, wet ink contract signatures.

3. Identify & Confirm Diverse Vendors through market research.

- Utilize DES's Master Contract search tool to identify master contracts with diverse vendors.
- Utilize WEBS to confirm certification status of veteran-owned businesses and research the market for all businesses.
- Utilize OMWBE's directory of certified minority- and woman-owned firms to confirm certification of vendors and research the market for small and diverse businesses

4. Outreach and Education.

- Advertise contracting opportunities with OMWBE or other organizations that regularly interact with small businesses owned by minorities, women, and veterans. In an ongoing effort, we will continue to post procurement opportunities (excluding those that are pre-vetted DES 2nd Tier Solicitations) on OMWBE's website whenever possible.
- Continue to include language in our procurement templates that encourages participation with firms certified by OMWBE and the Department of Veterans Administration (DVA).



- Know where to refer a business that wants to become certified with OMWBE or DVA. Our website and procurement documents include instructions about certification for OMWBE and DVA.
- Update OSPI's internal-facing contracting and purchasing sites to include information about where our program staff (Contract Managers) can direct vendors who are interested in obtaining OMWBE or DVA certification.
- Conduct outreach to vendors to encourage their registration in WEBS and request they maintain an updated profile. Since WEBS uses an automatic mailing system when any agency posts a procurement, the more small, women-owned, OMWBE-, and DVA-certified vendors that are registered in WEBS, the more success we will achieve contracting with diverse groups.
- Provide OMWBE and DVA certification information/packets to vendors that could potentially meet certification criteria and encourage them to explore certification.

5. Monitor.

- Document contractors who self-certify during the pre-contract/planning phase using our *Contractor Intake Form* and *Business Enterprise Certification Form*.

6. Training.

- Make efforts, when practicable, to separate purchases to maximize small, OMWBE-, and veteran-owned businesses participation.
- Plan and develop a quarterly report to document diverse contracting metrics.
- Encourage Contract Managers to track subcontractors that are OMWBE or DVA certified.
- Encourage Procurement Staff to attend DES' IT Training and Open House events, which provide valuable feedback from the vendor community to agencies, as well as opportunities for diverse vendors to connect with potential customers.