



## Supplier Diversity Inclusion Plan ▪ Fiscal Year 2019

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**Agency:** Washington State Department of Agriculture

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### FY18 – FY19 WSDA Supplier Diversity Inclusion Plan

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

Since WSDA makes approximately 50 percent of its purchases/contracts through DES Master Contracts, our Supplier Diversity Inclusion Plan addresses the other procurement areas where we can successfully increase our percentage of OMWBE vendors utilized. We have assessed our purchasing and procurement history and known upcoming needs.

Our best opportunity to increase diverse business continues to be in the MRO and janitorial contracting categories. In that light we have identified OMWBE and other diverse qualified firms that can provide those services and are increasing our purchases through them over time through monitoring and working with divisions to understand the suppliers they should be utilizing.

WSDA also has the ability to influence diverse spend in HR related contracting categories, such as mediation and personnel investigations available through the DES Master Contract. We are selecting diverse vendors to contract with when suitable for the specific engagement and we will continue doing so.

Lastly, we are advertising procurements to small businesses for each procurement whenever possible to allow a fair and open opportunity to a diverse range of businesses.

### Continued approach to improve:

- Increase diverse business is in the MRO and janitorial contracting areas.
  - We actively solicit diverse businesses and subcontractors with every contract issued; 63% of current WSDA janitorial agreements are with diverse vendors.
- When the new contract is negotiated by DES, it would help agencies be more successful if new contracts have more diverse vendors available to contract with because we aim to utilize DES Master Contracts whenever available.
- We run quarterly reports related to our MRO spend and work with end users to shift spend to the diverse vendors available.
- When making direct buy purchases we actively search for diverse businesses to purchase through.



**Subcontractors:**

After another extensive search we are not able to identify any diverse subcontractors within our internal contracts. However we request credit for our portion of the Charlotte Holt contract with the Business Diversity Subcabinet, as we are effectively subcontracting them.

**Food for thought:**

The OMWBE roster is predominately public works vendors and the majority of the WSDA procurements are for scientific equipment, research, accredited laboratory testing, and supplies, which produces its own challenges. It would seem easier for agencies to meet the diverse vendor requirements if there were more OMWBE certified vendors in other spend categories. Some questions I have to pose to you are:

- How does OMWBE incentivize vendors outside of the public works arena to certify as OMWBE? I believe the incentives may need to be looked and to determine if they could be revised to attract other vendor types.
- What are the barriers for entry for those groups? How would certification directly benefit them? It seems that benefits have to be clear and tangible for vendors.

By statute we are required to advertise our competitive procurements via the WEBS system. It remains a point of frustration that OMWBE firms are not automatically registered in the WEBS vendor registration system. It seems to make sense to facilitate WEBS registration as a part of OMWBE certification as it would improve process efficiencies for all agencies and assist with getting procurements in front of a more diverse audience of vendors to allow for greater support of diverse firms.

Our approach is working as we have increased our OMWBE certified vendor usage from .60 percent in June 2016 to 6.22 percent in October 2017 and to 7.41 percent in January 2019. Additionally, we have increased Veteran support from 0.27 percent in June 2016 to 2.76 percent in January 2019; small business support has increased from 3.54 in June 2016 percent to 13.37 percent in January 2019. Please note the timeframes cited coincide with the timeframe when Supplier Diversity reports were provided to WSDA. Additionally we work worth with a variety of diverse businesses that are not certified through OMWBE, such as small and local farms.