



## General Outreach Plan

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### Goal

The purpose of General Outreach is to:

- Assist businesses with understanding how to work with the state, prepare for bids, and foster more participation in contracting opportunities.
- Guide the evaluation and management of supplier diverse business and inclusion commitments during the procurement process.
- Support the state's equity in public spending goals.

### Steps

Your agency can implement a general outreach plan by doing the following:

#### **1. Create an outreach team with clear roles and responsibilities.**

Agencies can determine the membership of their outreach teams, as long as the agency complies with [EO 22-01](#), which requires "Each executive and small cabinet agency must designate a staff person or persons to oversee the implementation of this Executive Order for the agency to be included in the OMWBE inclusion plan."

#### **2. Determine your agency's current state.**

Evaluating current policies and practices helps your agency assess the effectiveness of its current efforts, which provide a baseline to improve and strategically plan general outreach efforts.

- a. Confirm your agency's delegated procurement authority with your agency's supplier diversity leader. Most state agencies have limited procurement authority by law, rule, and policy.
- b. Conduct an agency Procurement Risk Assessment. To prepare for additional procurement authority, review and update the last procurement risk assessment submitted by your agency to the Department of Enterprise Services. Your agency's supplier diversity leader will have a copy of the most recent assessment.
- c. Proactively identify your contracting and procurement needs.
  - Identify your agency's schedule of planned procurements for the fiscal year or the biennium.
  - If a schedule is not available, review past spend data to identify general categories of goods and services your agency regularly purchases.



- Break down your spending needs by procurement type (goods, services, IT) and method (Statewide contracts, competitive solicitation, sole source, direct buy).
  - Create a schedule for outreach to the diverse business community and make sure this schedule aligns with agency messaging and target markets.
- d. Identify your agency's staff who are involved in conducting business outreach. Engage with them to understand upcoming procurement needs and typical agency purchases.
  - e. Review your agency's [Statewide Contracts Sales data](#), which can help identify opportunities to use a diverse business.
  - f. Analyze which outreach events your agency already attends. Contact other agencies that send representatives to events and identify opportunities for partnership. Host, sponsor, or attend trade shows to inform small and diverse businesses of contracting opportunities. Check [OMWBE's website](#) or [WDVA's website](#) for upcoming events, or call OMWBE at (360) 664-9750.

### **3. Establish a general outreach baseline.**

Identify outreach gaps (i.e. what groups are either not contacted or are underrepresented):

- a. Analyze and take inventory of sources, businesses, and partnerships the agency uses to locate gaps or opportunities for increased supplier diversity – fill any gaps by reaching out to businesses or organizations that were missed before.
- b. Identify outreach gaps by examining current outreach, recording what businesses are responding to procurements and attending events, and looking for communities that may be underrepresented. Create a schedule for outreach to the diverse business community and make sure this schedule aligns with agency messaging and target markets.
- c. Track which businesses are responding to competitive solicitations.
- d. Track which businesses are invited to and attend events.

### **4. Conduct Other Market Research and Outreach.**

Conduct outreach consistent with your agency's annual plan submitted to OMWBE:

- a. Send staff to represent your agency at events that are attended by small and diverse businesses. Consider virtual opportunities. Agencies need to budget for travel, marketing/attendance fees, and trained staff to attend outreach events and networking functions. Some events are non-profits and charge to attend.
- b. Partner with federal, state, or local funded outreach opportunities. OMWBE provides a list of some organizations: [Supplier Diversity Partner Resources](#).
- c. Identify organizations that are associated with the businesses that offer goods and services that the agency typically needs. Examples of organizations include ethnic organizations, industry specific organizations, and local chambers of commerce.



- d. Contact OMWBE and WDVA to identify other options for utilization of small and diverse businesses that are not currently certified.
- e. Identify businesses you currently contract with that may qualify for OMWBE or DVA certification. If any of these businesses are not certified, send them to OMWBE or WDVA for certification.
- f. Contact groups and business associations that have minority-, woman-, and veteran-owned businesses as members and ask for them to share opportunities with their members and contacts.
- g. Advertise contracting opportunities on your agency's website, newsletters, and social media channels. Share these opportunities with OMWBE, the Governor's Office of Indian Affairs (GOIA), the Equity Commissions, and other organizations that distribute contracting opportunities. For a list of organizations, see [Supplier Diversity Partner Resources](#).

## 5. Create and define General Outreach Plan success measures.

Assess the efficacy and impact of outreach efforts:

- a. Track opportunities created to partner with other state agencies, nonprofits, and other organizations. Best practices include:
  - Attend events that align with your agency's goals/needs. For a list of events, click [Upcoming Events, Training, Conferences, and Summits](#).
  - A tool for planning for event attendance is the [Outreach Events Checklist](#).
  - Consider creating your own event or partnering with other agencies to hold one. Hosting and attending events will help you build trust, establish and maintain relationships, assist businesses in navigating contract opportunities, and create a path to small and diverse business participation.
  - Partner with organizations in your area of expertise and your locale to learn about more events that may apply to your agency.
- b. Track the connections made with businesses at outreach events.
- c. Track the benefits of partnerships established with other agencies and key stakeholders.
- d. Address outcome accountability. Agencies must be accountable for the outcomes of their actions and outreach to build trust with the businesses they serve. This includes advising businesses on how to navigate through government processes, connecting them with new opportunities, and developing meaningful partnerships. Below are some strategies to create accountability in your agency:
  - Measure accountability by creating and defining outcome measures and plan out how they will be shared transparently and incorporated into your agency's outreach plans and activities.
  - Have outreach staff complete available cultural awareness/sensitivity, implicit bias, and equity training.



- Seek feedback – using surveys, debriefs, and other methods – from stakeholders consistently, including businesses, successful and unsuccessful bidders, and community leaders and organizations.
- Work with OMWBE to help your agency develop strategies to improve your outreach and support your efforts to meet diverse spending goals.

## **6. Engage in post-outreach follow-up to gain feedback.**

Use feedback for improvements and positioning for ongoing or future business opportunities. Outreach plans should describe agency internal processes for ensuring a culture of quality assurance and improvement.

- a. Engage in post-outreach follow up to gain feedback for improvements and positioning for ongoing or future business opportunities.
- b. Survey contractors and partners and use the information gathered to make meaningful improvements to outreach efforts.
- c. Conduct regular performance and process reviews (e.g., outreach, certification, contract).
- d. Connect with potential participants, use results from data driven targeted marketing campaigns, and convene a workgroup of key internal stakeholders to monitor progress, track outcomes, and meet participation goals.
- e. Balance new outreach strategies and approaches, as well as enhancements to existing efforts, that seek to build upon the agency's success at increasing the dollar value of contracts and procurements awarded to small and/or veteran-owned businesses.
- f. Examine trends in diverse contracting participation to guide future efforts or changes.
- g. Assess feedback gathered (i.e. bid debrief feedback) and apply it to your procurement process to improve future outreach efforts.
- h. Publishing the bid award and give other bidders feedback to increase their chances of obtaining future contracts.