



Policy Title:	Policy on Supplier Diversity
Policy Owner:	Office of Finance and Business Affairs
Effective Date:	October 1, 2022
Last Updated:	September 30, 2022
Scheduled Review	October 1, 2024
Related Policies:	See Section VII
Related Forms:	SU Vendor Data Form

I. POLICY STATEMENT

Seattle University recognizes the importance of increasing the number of business opportunities for diverse suppliers. This Policy on Supplier Diversity codifies the University’s dedication to inclusion, equity, and justice by making it clear that the University’s business practices are to be guided by a belief in inclusiveness and equity. Pursuant to the procedures below, the University will actively engage diverse and small businesses to create opportunity and transparency and to promote the broader economy of our community.

II. PURPOSE & BACKGROUND

Seattle University (“SU” or “University”) is dedicated to inclusion, equity, and justice, which are central to the University’s mission and the fulfillment of its Jesuit values. The University is therefore committed to implementing purchasing practices that promote and expand contracting opportunities for diverse suppliers while practicing good stewardship of University resources, maintaining procedural integrity, and providing fair and open access for all.

III. APPLICABILITY/RESPONSIBILITY

This Policy applies to all University commitments for goods or services. Exceptions may be approved by the President, the Provost, or the CFO.

IV. DEFINITIONS

Business Owner: The representative from the University department seeking to hire a supplier or vendor who will lead process for procuring goods or services.

Diverse Business Enterprise (“DBE”): A “DBE” or “Diverse Business Enterprise” is a business that identifies as and attests to being majority owned by Black, Indigenous, or other people of color, or LGBTQIA+, veteran, women, or socially and economically disadvantaged persons. Although the University prefers in its contracting that such business enterprises be [certified by the Washington OMWBE](#), DBEs are not required to be certified by the OMWBE unless an anticipated expenditure is required to be competitively bid under the University’s Procurement Policies. In this situation, certification by entities other than OMWBE will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

OMWBE: The Washington State Office of Minority and Women’s Business Enterprises. OMWBE is responsible for certifying minority, women-owned, and socially and economically disadvantaged business enterprises to participate in contracting and procurement.

OMWBE certification process: A review process designed to ensure that a small business is actually owned, controlled, and operated by the minority, women, and socially and economically



disadvantaged persons. OMWBE certifies businesses in order to increase contracting opportunities for certified businesses.

Qualified DBE: A DBE that has the skills, specialization, experience, and resources necessary to perform the work called for under an intended University contract.

V. POLICY REQUIREMENTS

It is Seattle University's desire to ensure that DBEs have a fair opportunity to participate in University contract opportunities. The following requirements are adopted to ensure compliance with this policy:

A. *Non-Discrimination Requirements*

Seattle University will never discriminate against any business or person on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, age, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, political ideology, or status as veteran or disabled veteran in connection with the award and/or performance of any of its commitments for goods or services, or otherwise.

B. *DBE Contracting Processes*

In procuring goods or services on behalf of the University, all business owners should use race- and sex-neutral procurement procedures, and procedures designed to encourage DBE participation, even if the contract is not required to be competitively bid, including:

1. Arranging solicitations, times for presentation of bids, quantities, specifications, and delivery schedules in ways that facilitate participation by DBEs;
2. Making contracts more readable and accessible to small businesses and non-native English speakers;
3. Providing assistance in overcoming limitations such as inability to obtain financing or insurance by identifying outside businesses or agencies that can possibly lend assistance;
4. Providing technical assistance and other services;
5. Implementing information and communications programs about University contracting procedures and specific contract opportunities by, for example, ensuring the inclusion of DBEs on recipient mailing lists for bidders; ensuring the dissemination to bidders on general contract lists of potential subcontractors; and providing information in languages other than English, where appropriate;
6. Ensuring distribution of the list of DBEs in the University's internal procurement system, through print and electronic means, to the widest feasible universe of University personnel and current and potential general contractors;
7. Assisting DBEs in developing their capability to utilize emerging technology and conduct business through electronic media;
8. Recommending qualified businesses become certified with the OMWBE and assist with the certification process, where appropriate and feasible;
9. Including Qualified DBEs in solicitations and among the vendors contacted and asked to respond to qualifying questions if a Request for Information ("RFI") is needed;
10. Including Qualified DBEs in the list of potential vendors to be used for Requests for



Proposal (“RFP”);

- 11. Inviting Qualified DBEs to respond to final RFPs;
- 12. Having the fact that a respondent is a DBE weigh in favor of the respondent on RFP scoring templates;
- 13. Including DBEs among the vendors selected to negotiate a contract following an RFP, if multiple respondents are chosen to negotiate.

VI. VIOLATIONS

Individuals with authority to sign contracts on behalf of the University should request confirmation when requested to sign a contract that the business owner used race- and sex-neutral procurement procedures, and procedures designed to encourage DBE participation. If the business owner is unable to provide the signor sufficient assurances, the signor should determine whether it is in the best interest of the University to re-procure the contract following more inclusive procedures. This should be done in consultation with the Office of University Counsel to account for the potential legal risks that may be associated with re-procurement. If the signor determines that it is in the best interest of the University to re-procure the contract following more inclusive procedures, the business owner shall do so following the guidelines in Section V.B, above.

VII. RELATED INFORMATION

Item	Description
University Links	Supplier Diversity Program Statement on Diversity Procurement Services Procurement Policy Statement Vendor Programs Contract Review & Approval Policy Policy on Delegation of Signature Authority
Forms	SU Vendor Data Form
Related Links	Washington State Office of Minority & Women’s Business Enterprises
Procedures	Procurement Policies and Procedures