



Responsible Department: Business and Financial Affairs
Recommended By: SVC Business and Financial Affairs
Approved By: Chancellor

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12/11/2024

I. INTRODUCTION

The University of Denver strives to enhance equitable and practical opportunities to compete for contracts for historically underrepresented businesses which includes but is not limited to minority, women and emerging small businesses (MWESBs), within in the Denver metropolitan area. University Policy 3.10.010 – *Discrimination and Harassment* prohibits discrimination - including in its contracting processes. As such, this policy establishes guidance for expanding opportunities for historically underrepresented businesses and mitigating obstacles for participation in the University’s procurement and contracting activities.

II. POLICY OVERVIEW

The University is committed to vendor, contracting and procurement practices that promote participation from historically underrepresented businesses and requires periodic (annual) reporting to the Board in vendor contracting initiatives, practices and results.

Authority for certain types of contracts and purchases is delegated to departments and employees pursuant to their specific roles and institutional policies. This policy furthers the University’s commitment to diversity and inclusion by providing outreach opportunities, setting minimum contractual thresholds aimed at increasing opportunities for a wide range of underrepresented businesses and establishing reporting and comparison requirements. This policy applies to the University community and is not intended to provide for or to encourage the granting of unlawful preferences in University contracting. Reasons for a policy on diversity and inclusion in contracting and purchasing include:

- Historically, underrepresented businesses have not received the contract opportunities that larger firms receive.
- Small businesses make up a portion of the metropolitan Denver business community, provide local jobs and are a vital part of the University and regional community.

- A level playing field ensures all businesses received an equal opportunity to earn University contracts.
- A formal policy conveys the University's commitment to equity, inclusion and diversity in its contracting process.

III. PROCESS OVERVIEW

A. *Outreach*

The University encourages memberships with associations and clubs which provide access to underrepresented businesses and MWESBs, participation in vendor fairs, workshops, and small group meetings between historically underrepresented businesses and those with contracting and purchasing authority at the University.

B. *Procurement of Goods and Services*

All procurement contracts, including construction-related services, consultant and capital construction should follow established competitive bidding rules as outlined in [University Policy FINA 2.10.033 – Procurement](#). and when applicable, must make a solicitation effort to at least one (1) historically underrepresented businesses.

Notwithstanding current University procurement policy rules, all units are strongly encouraged to contract with historically underrepresented businesses who are capable of meeting the University's procurement requirements for the purchase of goods or services.

C. *CM/GC and Design/Build Capital Construction Projects*

All RFPs for capital construction projects and associated consultants utilizing CM/GC or Design/Build processes shall include a "Management Plan" as part of the proposal and be part of the evaluation criteria. Annual reporting will include judgments made about minority contracting participation at both tier-1 and tier-2 levels.

D. *Goals*

A non-binding utilization rate of at least 18% should be included in solicitation documents, which will indicate to bidders and proposers the University seeks to achieve a level of underrepresented and MWESB participation on designated contracts or projects. The goal may be articulated in overall terms or as a percentage of the contract dollar amount or number of subcontractors awarded contracts for the contract or project.

E. *Diverse Business Certification Resource List*

The University will establish a program for certification that ensures full participation from all diverse business categories. Programs and resources available that certify qualification for classification as a diverse business include

but are not limited to:

- Payments & Purchasing Tool Kit on Pioneer Web
- City and County of Denver's Office of Economic Development
- Regional Transportation District Small Business Office
- Colorado Department to transportation
- Mountain Plains Minority Supplier Development Council
- Women's Business Enterprise
- United States Small Business Administration Government and Contracting Programs
- United States Department of Veterans Affairs Vets First Certification Program

F. *Record Maintenance and Reporting*

University Financial Services (UFS) will develop and submit an annual report on equity contracting and purchasing efforts through Business and Financial Affairs. The annual report should include data on utilization of historically underrepresented businesses and MWESBs for capital construction projects and goods or services that were completed in the most recent fiscal year. The report should compare utilization to the prior year as available. The annual report may include utilization data from contracts with non-MWESB firms that subcontract with historically underrepresented businesses.

On behalf of the University, UFS is responsible for administration of this policy which carries the following responsibilities:

- Identify and maintain a database of underrepresented businesses
- Maintain relationships with underrepresented businesses
- Establish and implement procedures for policy compliance
- Offer training to campus constituents regarding contracting with underrepresented businesses
- Maintain records and reports of compliance with accomplishments and submit annually to the Senior Vice Chancellor of Business and Financial Affairs
- Monitor progress towards established goals

IV. Definitions

A. “**Historically Underrepresented Businesses**” means a certified and self-identified minority-owned, woman-owned, or emerging small business (MWESBs) firms certified federally or by the state of Colorado.

B. “**Management Plan**” means a plan to increase the diversity of a business' workforce and to subcontract with or purchase from historically underrepresented businesses. The Management Plan may include the business' nondiscrimination practices, subcontracting strategy, workforce

diversity plan, and outreach plan to increase participation by historically underrepresented businesses. The Management Plan shall become part of the contract.

C. “Solicitation Effort” means a plan to increase utilization of historically underrepresented businesses.

Revision Effective Date	Purpose
<i>6/28/2021</i>	<i>Minor revisions</i>
<i>12/11/2024</i>	<i>Minor revisions</i>