



2025 Diversity and Inclusion in Procurement Training

We provide training as a convenience to the public. The Illinois Compiled Statutes, and the Illinois Administrative Code are the official sources of information. While we try to keep our training up to date and accurate, there may be a delay in updating our training after there have been changes to the statutes or rules.

Overview

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RESOURCES

Resources

Illinois Procurement Code

- 30 ILCS 500

Standard Procurement Rules

- 44 Illinois Administrative Code 4

Business Enterprise for Minorities, Females, and Persons with Disabilities Act

- 30 ILCS 575

Governmental Joint Purchasing Act

- 30 ILCS 525

Resources

Chief Procurement Office for Public Institutions of Higher Education (CPO-HE)

- <https://cpo-highered.illinois.gov/>

State of Illinois Commission on Equity and Inclusion

- <https://cei.illinois.gov/>

Illinois Department of Human Rights

- <https://dhr.illinois.gov/>

CPO-HE

CPO-HE

Forms

Resource Library

Illinois Procurement Gateway (IPG)

Statutes & Rules

**Illinois Procurement Bulletin for Public
Institutions of Higher Education**

Trainings

Purchasing Offices

Vendor

CPO-HE

- The CPO-HE works with the State's public universities to meet their procurement needs free of undue influence through independent authority, oversight and approval.
- The CPO-HE is dedicated to promoting the use of diverse vendors in State procurement.
- Understanding how that happens is an important part of the role you play in the process as well.

Test Your Knowledge

Which office works with the State's public universities to meet their procurement needs free of undue influence through independent authority, oversight and approval?

- a) Executive Ethics Commission
- b) CPO-HE
- c) Office of the Inspector General
- d) None of the above

CPO-HE

Answer: b) CPO-HE

The CPO-HE works with the State's public universities to meet their procurement needs free of undue influence through independent authority, oversight and approval.

DIVERSITY TRAINING

Diversity Training

"Each chief procurement officer, State purchasing officer, procurement compliance monitor, applicable support staff of each chief procurement officer, State agency purchasing and contracting staff, those identified under subsection (c) of section 5-45 of the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act who have the authority to participate personally and substantially in the award of State contracts and any other State agency staff with substantial procurement and contracting responsibilities..." will be required to take and successfully complete this training. (30 ILCS 500/50-85)

STATE PROCUREMENT AND BEP

State Procurement and BEP

What is BEP?

It is the public policy of the State of Illinois to promote and encourage the continuing economic development of minority and female owned and operated businesses, and that minority and female owned and operated businesses participate in the State's procurement process as both prime and subcontractors.

It is the public policy of the State of Illinois to promote and encourage the continuous economic development of businesses owned by persons with disabilities. (30 ILCS 575)

DEFINITION OF BEP TERMS

Definition of BEP Terms

"Minority person" shall mean a person who is a citizen or lawful permanent resident of the United States and who is any of the following:

- American Indian or Alaska Native (a person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America, including Central America, and who maintains tribal affiliation or community attachment).
- Asian (a person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent, including, but not limited to, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam).
- Black or African American (a person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa).
- Hispanic or Latino (a person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race).
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (a person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands). (30 ILCS 575/2(A)(1))

Definition of BEP Terms

"Woman" - a person who is a citizen or lawful permanent resident of the United States and who is of the female gender (30 ILCS 575/2(A)(2))

"Person with a disability" - a person who is a citizen or lawful resident of the United States and is a person qualifying as a person with a disability under subdivision (2.1) of this subsection (A). (30 ILCS 575/2(A)(2.05))

"Person with a disability" - a person with a severe physical or mental disability that (a) results from: amputation, arthritis, autism, blindness, burn injury, cancer, cerebral palsy, Crohn's disease, cystic fibrosis, deafness, head injury, heart disease, hemiplegia, hemophilia, respiratory or pulmonary dysfunction, an intellectual disability, mental illness, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, musculoskeletal disorders, neurological disorders, including stroke and epilepsy, paraplegia, quadriplegia and other spinal cord conditions, sickle cell anemia, ulcerative colitis, specific learning disabilities, or end stage renal failure disease; and (b) substantially limits one or more of the person's major life activities. (30 ILCS 575/2(A)(2.1))

Per 30 ILCS 575/2, another disability or combination of disabilities may also be considered as a severe disability.

Definition of BEP Terms

"Minority-owned business" - a business which is at least 51% owned by one or more minority persons, or in the case of a corporation, at least 51% of the stock in which is owned by one or more minority persons; and the management and daily business operations of which are controlled by one or more of the minority individuals who own it. (30 ILCS 575/2(A)(3)

"Women-owned business" - a business which is at least 51% owned by one or more women, or, in the case of a corporation, at least 51% of the stock in which is owned by one or more women; and the management and daily business operations of which are controlled by one or more of the women who own it. (30 ILCS 575/2(A)(4)

"Business owned by a person with a disability" - a business that is at least 51% owned by one or more persons with a disability and the management and daily business operations of which are controlled by one or more of the persons with disabilities who own it. A not-for-profit agency for persons with disabilities that is exempt from taxation under Section 501 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is also considered a "business owned by a person with a disability". (30 ILCS 575/2(A)(4.1)

BEP GOAL WAIVER REQUEST FORM

BEP Goal Waiver Request Form

30 ILCS 575/8i requires:

- universities to review renewals at least 6 months prior to the renewal date to determine if the contract goal is being met by the prime contractor;
- review renewals to determine if the contract goal should be adjusted based upon market conditions and availability of confirmed firms;
- prime contractors are encouraged to notify the university as soon as they are aware they are not meeting the BEP goal; and
- even if there had been no goal set for the previous contract term, it is required that the procurement be reviewed at renewal for the possible addition of a goal.

BEP Goal Waiver Request Form

No vendor shall be eligible for renewal of a contract when that vendor has failed to meet the goals agreed to in the vendor's utilization plan, as defined in Section 2 of the Business Enterprise for Minorities, Women, and Persons with Disabilities Act, unless the State agency or public institution of higher education has determined that the vendor made good faith efforts toward meeting the contract goals.

If the State agency or public institution of higher education determines that the vendor made good faith efforts, the agency or public institution of higher education may issue a waiver after concurrence by the chief procurement officer, which shall not be unreasonably withheld or impair a State agency determination to execute the renewal. (30 ILCS 500/20-60(f))

BEP Goal Waiver Request Form

- Submitted by the university when the university wants to renew a contract in which the BEP goal is not being met.
- University presents information detailing that the contractor made a good faith effort to meet the goal.
- The CPO reviews and concurs/not concurs at renewal.

BEP Goal Waiver Request Form

The form and content of the waiver shall be prescribed by each chief procurement officer but shall not impair a State agency or public institution of higher education determination to execute the renewal. The chief procurement officer shall post the completed form on his or her official website within 5 business days after receipt from the State agency or public institution of higher education.

The chief procurement officer shall maintain on his or her official website a database of waivers granted under this Section with respect to contracts under his or her jurisdiction. The database shall be updated periodically and shall be searchable by contractor name and by contracting State agency or public institution of higher education. (30 ILCS 500/20-60 (f))

BEP Goal Waiver Request Form

 **BEP Goal Waiver Request Form**

Section 1: General Information

University

Project Title: _____ Bulletin Reference Number: _____

University Name: _____ University Point of Contact (POC): _____

Univ. POC Email: _____ University POC Phone Number: _____

Vendor

Vendor Name: _____ Vendor Point of Contact (POC): _____

Vendor City: _____ Vendor State: _____

Section 2: Waiver Information

Initial Award (Complete "Initial Award" Subsection 2.1 below and then skip to Section 3)

Renewal* (Skip "Initial Award" Subsection 2.1 below, and proceed to "Renewal" Subsection 2.2)

* No vendor shall be eligible for renewal of a contract when that vendor has failed to meet the goals agreed to in the vendor's utilization plan unless the public institution of higher education has determined that the vendor made good faith efforts toward meeting the contract goals and has issued a waiver or that vendor is otherwise excused from compliance by the chief procurement officer in consultation with the public institution of higher education. The form and content of the waiver shall be prescribed by each chief procurement officer who shall maintain on his or her official website a database of waivers granted under this Section with respect to contracts under his or her jurisdiction (30 ILCS 500/20-60(f)).

Subsection 2.1: Initial Award (complete only if "Initial Award" is selected in Section 2 above - otherwise, skip to Subsection 2.2)

Initial Term Start Date: _____ Initial Term End Date: _____

Initial Term Amount: _____ BEP Goal % on Original Solicitation: _____

BEP Goal % on Initial Award: _____ \$ Amount of BEP Goal on Initial Award: _____

Brief description of goods/services to be provided. Attach additional documentation if necessary.

Provide a justification for waiver of the BEP goal. Attach additional documentation if necessary.

Chief Procurement Officer for Higher Education
BEP Goal Waiver Request Form Version 24.1

Page 1 of 3

BEP Goal Waiver Request Form

Vendor requests a BEP waiver, in its entirety, to the aspirational goal identified in this solicitation, but has made a Good Faith Effort towards meeting the goal. Vendor's Utilization Plan is being included as supporting documentation.

Vendor cannot fully meet the established BEP goal for this solicitation, but has made a Good Faith Effort toward meeting the goal and requested a waiver or reduction of the goal to _____ % based on the completed Good Faith Effort. Vendor's completed Utilization Plan is being included as supporting documentation.

Section 2.2: Renewal (Complete only if "Renewal" is selected in Section 2 above - otherwise, skip to Section 3)
Provide the following information for the initial term for this procurement as well as the information for the renewal for which this BEP Waiver is being requested:

Initial

Initial Term Start Date: _____ Initial Term End Date: _____

Initial Term Amount: _____ BEP Goal % on Original Solicitation: _____

BEP Goal % on Initial Award: _____ \$ Amount of BEP Goal on Initial Award: _____

Renewal

Renewal # _____ of _____ Renewal Term Start Date: _____ Renewal Term End Date: _____

Prior BEP Waivers Granted for this Procurement? Yes No

If this waiver is granted, the revised BEP Goal will be: _____ Total Renewal Amount: _____

Provide a justification for waiver of the BEP goal. Attach additional documentation if necessary.

Provide a brief description of the goods/services to be provided. Attach additional documentation if necessary.

Vendor has not met its BEP goal commitment, in its entirety, but has made a Good Faith Effort towards meeting the goal and has requested a waiver.

Vendor has not fully met its BEP goal commitment, but has made a Good Faith Effort towards meeting the goal and has requested a waiver or reduction of the goal to _____ % based on its Good Faith Effort.

BEP Goal Waiver Request Form

Section 3: Approval		
University		
I attest that I have reviewed the contents of this BEP Waiver Form and know and understand its contents. I further attest that the statements contained in this Form are true and correct.		
University President or Director of Purchasing (or equivalent position) Signature	University President or Director of Purchasing (or equivalent position) Printed Name	Date
Chief Procurement Officer (*Applies ONLY when "Renewal" is selected in Section 2 above*)		
<input type="checkbox"/> I concur.		
<input type="checkbox"/> I do not concur.		
Comments: 		
Chief Procurement Officer Signature	Chief Procurement Officer Printed Name	Date Field

BEP Goal Waiver Request Form

Why would a BEP Goal Waiver Request Form be needed?

- If there was a goal set for the current term of the contract and that goal will not be met by the subcontractor(s), the prime contractor must demonstrate it did everything possible to meet the established BEP goal.
- If the prime contractor cannot meet the goal before the end of the term, the university must complete the BEP Goal Waiver Request Form referenced in CPO Notice 2022.03.

BEP Goal Waiver Request Form

The more specific the information provided in the waiver, the better.

- Why has the goal not been met?
- What steps has the prime contractor taken to support the subcontractor in fulfilling their goal?
- Has the prime contractor involved the university to provide support in a timely manner?

The BEP Goal Waiver Request Form is an evaluation of what has been completed to meet the goal up until the point of evaluation.

BEP Goal Waiver Request Form

Test Your Knowledge

Who oversees the Business Enterprise Program?

- a) Chief Procurement Office for General Services
- b) CPO-HE
- c) Commission on Equity and Inclusion
- d) Procurement Policy Board

BEP Goal Waiver Request Form

Correct Answer: c) Commission on Equity and Inclusion

CEI was created to expand access to state contracts for minorities, women, persons with disabilities, and veterans and assist the state in enhancing the equity and inclusion throughout its workforce. The Commission shall have oversight over the Business Enterprise Council for Minorities, Women, and Persons with Disabilities.

BEP Goal Waiver Request Form

Test Your Knowledge

True or False?

The BEP Goal Waiver Request Form is required at renewal, when the vendor has failed to meet the goals agreed to in the vendor's Utilization Plan and the University has determined that the vendor made good faith efforts toward meeting the contract goals.

BEP Goal Waiver Request Form

Correct Answer: True

The BEP Goal Waiver Request Form is required at the time of renewal. The University may issue a waiver after concurrence by the CPO-HE which shall not be unreasonably withheld or impair a University determination to execute the renewal.

BEP Goal Waiver Request Form

Test Your Knowledge

True or False?

BEP Waiver Request forms are published to the CPO-HE website.

BEP Goal Waiver Request Form

Correct Answer: True

The Business Enterprise for Minorities, Women and Persons with Disabilities Act requires the CPO to publish all waivers granted by the universities under Section 3 of the Act. In addition, the CPO is also required to publish all BEP Good Faith Effort Waivers, individual contract exemptions, and class exemptions processed by the Commission on Equity and Inclusion. (30 ILCS 575/7(5))

EMERGENCY PROCUREMENTS

Emergency Procurements

A university may make emergency procurements without competitive sealed bidding or prior notice when...

- there exists a threat to public health or public safety;
- immediate expenditure is necessary for repairs to State property in order to protect against further loss of or damage to State property;
- there is a need to prevent or minimize serious disruption and critical State services that affect health, safety, or collection of substantial state revenues;
- to ensure the integrity of State records;
- the term of emergency purchase shall be limited to the time reasonably needed for a competitive procurement, not to exceed 90 calendar days. (30 ILCS 500/20-30)

Emergency Procurements

- Emergency procurements shall be made with as much competition as is practicable under the circumstances, and universities shall use best efforts to include BEP certified contractors in the university's emergency procurement process.
- A written description of the basis for the emergency and reasons for the selection of the particular contractor shall be included in the contract file.
- Using “best efforts” means that each emergency procurement needs to be reviewed and evaluated by the university to determine if adding a BEP goal is feasible based on the specifics of the procurement. (30 ILCS 500/20-30a)

Emergency Procurements

How can the university use best efforts to include BEP subcontractor in emergency procurements?

- Use BEP registered vendors for as many services as possible when initiating the emergency procurement.
- Encourage the use of any currently contracted BEP subcontractor in the emergency procurement.
- Identify additional services needed that can be fulfilled by BEP subcontractors such as, transportation, skill specific work, or administrative oversight.
- Supply prime vendors with a list of qualified BEP subcontractors available to fulfill contract requirements.

Emergency Procurements

Test Your Knowledge

Reviewing and evaluating emergency procurements to determine if adding a BEP goal is feasible based on the specifics of the procurement is considered....

- a) Responsiveness
- b) Best efforts
- c) Good business practice
- d) Best and Final Offer (BAFO)

Emergency Procurements

Correct Answer: b) Best efforts

Using “best efforts” means that each emergency procurement needs to be reviewed and evaluated by the university to determine if adding a BEP goal is feasible based on the specifics of the procurement. (30 ILCS 500/20-30a)

BEP AND GOVERNMENTAL JOINT PURCHASING ACT

BEP and Governmental Joint Purchasing Act

The Governmental Joint Purchasing Act (30 ILCS 525) authorizes the CPO to allow the purchase of personal property, supplies, and services jointly with a governmental unit of this State or another state, with a consortium of governmental entities of one or more other states, or to make purchases from a group purchasing organization as a member or affiliate of that organization. Additionally, Section 25-15 of the Illinois Procurement Code provides that the CPO may establish by rule a process to make non-governmental joint purchases.

When the State of Illinois is not a party to the joint purchase agreement, the acceptance of responses to the competitive procurement process shall be governed by the agreement. (30 ILCS 525/3)

The CPO-HE has established a Joint and Cooperative Purchasing Program called ICOP: Illinois Cooperative Opportunities Program. Additional information regarding ICOP is available on the CPO-HE website.

BEP and Governmental Joint Purchasing Act

Each chief procurement officer may establish a joint purchasing program and a cooperative purchasing program. When the State of Illinois is a party to a joint purchase agreement pursuant to subsection (a-5) of Section 2, the State may act as the lead state or as a participant state. When the State of Illinois is the lead state, all such joint purchases shall be conducted in accordance with the Illinois Procurement Code.

When the State of Illinois is the lead state, a multiple award is allowed. When Illinois is a participant state, all such joint purchases shall be conducted in accordance with the procurement laws of the lead state, provided that all such joint procurements must be by competitive solicitation process. (30 ILCS 525)

BEP and Governmental Joint Purchasing Act

When does BEP apply?

- When the State is the Lead Entity in a Joint or Cooperative purchase, purchases shall be conducted in accordance with the Illinois Procurement Code, which includes BEP goals. When the State is a Participant in a Joint Purchase, adopting a Group Purchasing Organization's award, or Piggyback, purchases shall be conducted in accordance with the procurement laws of the Lead State.
- Lead State may or may not have Diversity (BEP) goals.
 - If no BEP goals have been established, the State will advise awarded vendors of Illinois BEP goals and extend every effort to achieve as much BEP participation as practicable.

COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY EVALUATION FACTORS

Commitment to Diversity Evaluation Factors

Vendors must submit information when responding to request for proposals (RFPs) and request for Professional and Artistic proposals (P&As), demonstrating their commitment to diversity within these seven categories:

- 1) whether or how well the Offeror, on the solicitation being evaluated, met the goal of contracting or subcontracting with businesses owned by women, minorities, or persons with disabilities;
- 2) whether the Offeror, on the solicitation being evaluated, assisted businesses owned by women, minorities, or persons with disabilities in obtaining lines of credit, insurance, necessary equipment, supplies, materials, or related assistance or services;
- 3) the percentage of prior year revenues of the offeror that involve businesses owned by women, minorities, or persons with disabilities;
- 4) whether the Offeror has a written supplier diversity program, including, but not limited to, use of diverse vendors in the supply chain;

Commitment to Diversity Evaluation Factors

- 5) whether Offeror has a training or mentoring program with businesses owned by women, minorities, or persons with disabilities;
- 6) the percentage of members of the offerors governing board, senior executives, and managers who are women, minorities, or persons with disabilities; and
- 7) whether Offerors has demonstrated commitment to diversity through its participation in community- based diversity programs within the past year. (30 ILCS 500/20-15).

Commitment to Diversity Evaluation Factors

7 Commitment to Diversity

7.1 Instructions

An Offeror responding to a Request for Proposal must show a demonstrated Commitment to Diversity and return the information requested within this section with their offer. Please read this entire section and provide the requested information as applicable and per the instructions.

Section 7 must be completed and signed. Section 7 and all supporting documentation must be included in Packet 7. note that when the solicitation has a BEP goal, completion and submission of the Utilization Plan in section 3, is a separate requirement from the completion of this section.

7.2 Commitment to Diversity Elements

Provide responses and indicate whether the elements are met by checking the boxes.

On the solicitation being evaluated, Offeror met the goal of contracting or subcontracting with businesses owned by women, minorities, or persons with disabilities (inapplicable if there is no goal on the solicitation).

--

On the solicitation being evaluated, Offeror assisted businesses owned by women, minorities, or persons with disabilities in obtaining lines of credit, insurance, necessary equipment, supplies, materials, or related assistance or services.

Vendor Name:	
Vendor Name:	
Vendor Name:	

Percentage of prior year revenues of the Offeror that involve businesses owned by women, minorities, or persons with disabilities. That percentage is indicated below.

--

Offeror has a written supplier diversity program, including, but not limited to, use of diverse vendors in the supply chain. Offeror must include its written supplier diversity program in Packet 7.

Offeror has a training or mentoring program with businesses owned by women, minorities, or persons with disabilities. Offeror must include details of the training or mentoring program in Packet 7.

Percentage of members of the Offeror's governing board, senior executives, and managers who are women, minorities, or persons with disabilities. This percentage is listed below. Additional documentation is included in Packet 7.

--

Offeror has demonstrated commitment to diversity through its participation in community-based diversity programs within the past year. Please describe below. Additional documentation is included in Packet 7.

--

7.3 Signature

The undersigned certifies that the statements set forth in this document are true and correct, except as to matters therein stated to be on information and belief and as to such matters the undersigned certifies as aforesaid that he or she verily believes the same to be true.

Signature:

Date:

Printed Name:

Title:

Commitment to Diversity Evaluation Factors

1.17 **Evaluation:** Proposals shall be submitted in 3 parts: Responsiveness, Commitment to Diversity, and Price.

Each part of all proposals shall be evaluated and ranked independently of the other parts of all proposals. The results of the evaluation of all 3 parts shall be used in ranking of proposals. 30 ILCS 500/20-15.

The University will consider the information provided in the response and the quality of that information when evaluating responses. If the University finds a failure or deficiency, the University may reject the response or reflect the failure or deficiency in the evaluation, as appropriate.

The University will determine how well responses meet the Responsiveness and Commitment to Diversity requirements. They will rank responses, without consideration of Price, from best to least qualified using a point ranking system (unless otherwise specified) as an aid in conducting the evaluation.

The maximum number of points possible is <#maximum points>

(Responsiveness <#pts> + Commitment to Diversity <#pts>)

Maximum number of points possible is:

Responsiveness points

+

Commitment to Diversity points

+

Price

Commitment to Diversity Evaluation Factors

1.17.2 Commitment to Diversity: 30 ILCS 500/20-15 requires Offerors to show a demonstrated commitment to diversity and requires the allotment of points for Commitment to Diversity. Commitment to Diversity shall account for 20% of the points assigned to the technical part (excluding price). The chart below shows the Commitment to Diversity elements and the maximum number of points available for each element. The total number of points available for Commitment to Diversity is <#points>.

The University will evaluate the information provided in the Offeror's response to Commitment to Diversity (Section 7.2) and the quality of that information based on the elements below.

Commitment to Diversity Elements	Maximum # of Possible Points
Whether or how well the Offeror, on the solicitation being evaluated, met the goal of contracting or subcontracting with businesses owned by women, minorities, or persons with disabilities (inapplicable if there is no goal on the solicitation).	
Whether the Offeror, on the solicitation being evaluated, assisted businesses owned by women, minorities, or persons with disabilities in obtaining lines of credit, insurance, necessary equipment, supplies, materials, or related assistance or services.	
Percentage of prior year revenues of the Offeror that involve businesses owned by women, minorities, or persons with disabilities.	
Whether Offeror has a written supplier diversity program, including, but not limited to, use of diverse vendors in the supply chain.	
Whether Offeror has a training or mentoring program with businesses owned by women, minorities, or persons with disabilities.	
Percentage of members of the Offeror's governing board, senior executives, and managers who are women, minorities, or persons with disabilities.	
Whether Offeror has demonstrated commitment to diversity through its participation in community-based diversity programs within the past year.	

Commitment to Diversity Evaluation Factors

Test Your Knowledge

Commitment to Diversity is included in which of the following solicitation templates?

- a) Professional and Artistic (P&A)
- b) Request for Proposal (RFP)
- c) P&A and RFP
- d) None of the above

Commitment to Diversity Evaluation Factors

Correct Answer: c) P&A and RFP

Commitment to Diversity Evaluation Factors are included in the RFP and P&A templates.

UNCONSCIOUS BIAS AND PROCUREMENT

Unconscious Bias and Procurement

What is unconscious bias?

- Unconscious bias, or implicit bias, refers to the automatic associations and reactions that arise when we encounter a person or group. They are social stereotypes about certain groups of people that individuals form outside their own conscious awareness.
- Everyone holds unconscious beliefs about various social and identity groups, and these biases stem from one's tendency to organize social worlds by categorizing.

Unconscious Bias and Procurement

It is important to note that biases, conscious or unconscious, are not limited to ethnicity and race. Though racial bias and discrimination are well documented, biases may exist toward any social group. One's age, gender, gender identity, physical abilities, religion, sexual orientation, weight, and many other characteristics are subject to bias.

Unconscious Bias and Procurement

What does this have to do with procurement?

In the world of supplier diversity and inclusion, bias significantly inhibits progress towards equality in the supply chain, and often, unconscious bias can be found in the way that IFBs or RFPs are written, reviewed, or evaluated. Procurement professionals must be aware of what to keep an eye out for to avoid bias.

Unconscious Bias and Procurement



Affinity Bias

- Feeling a connection to those similar to us

Perception Bias

- Stereotypes and assumptions about different groups

Halo Effect

- Projecting positive qualities onto people without actually knowing them

Confirmation Bias

- Looking to confirm our own opinions and pre-existing ideas

Unconscious Bias and Procurement

Confirmation Bias

- The most common type of evaluation bias is confirmation bias.
- This is the tendency to search for, interpret, favor, and recall information in a way that confirms or supports one's prior beliefs or values.

Unconscious Bias and Procurement

Perception Bias

- Perception bias occurs when we subconsciously form assumptions or draw conclusions based on our beliefs, expectations, or emotions.
- Perception bias works like a filter, helping us make sense of all the information we are exposed to in our surroundings. As a result, our perception of reality is often distorted. This can cause us to unfairly label people or make inferences about their abilities based on superficial observations or stereotypes.

Unconscious Bias and Procurement

Halo Effect

- The halo effect is a form of unconscious bias that occurs when an initial positive judgment of a single trait of a person or event unconsciously colors the perception of the whole.
- That perception can then carry over to how the person or event are perceived, as a whole.

Unconscious Bias and Procurement

Affinity Bias

- Affinity bias is the tendency to search for, interpret, favor, and recall information in a way that confirms or supports one's prior beliefs or values.
- People display this bias when they select information that supports their views, ignoring contrary information, or when they interpret ambiguous evidence as supporting their existing attitudes.

LIMITING LANGUAGE OR STANDARDS

Limiting Language or Standards

Unconscious bias can also impact the procurement process through limiting language or standards in the IFB or RFP. Be aware of how mandatories, job/skills, bonding, and payment requirements may impact competitiveness.

Limiting Language or Standards

Mandatories - These limiters can have the greatest impact on a truly competitive procurement. Mandatories of any type such as time, materials, or location, immediately exclude businesses that might otherwise be able to participate. Mandatories should be thoroughly evaluated and eliminated when not pivotal to the procurement.

Limiting Language or Standards

Job/Skills - Setting generalized and exaggerated standards for job skills or experience can be a limiter for vendors who are interested in being a prime contractor. When determining the appropriate standard for skills experience be specific and reasonable. Ask what is most important.

Limiting Language or Standards

Bonding - Although for some procurements bonding is statutory, not every procurement requires a bond. When it does, the state agency or public institution of higher education makes the determination on the bond amount, and any vendors interested in bidding on the procurement would need to be bonded for that amount. Requiring an unnecessary or excessive bond amount on a procurement can significantly limit a vendor's ability to bid.

Limiting Language or Standards

Payment - For many businesses, the timing of payments from the State can be the most limiting factor when bidding on contracts. Prompt payment of invoices can be the determining factor for smaller businesses, limiting their opportunities even if they are the best choice for the work that needs to be done. Ensuring that there are clear payment terms, that payments are made on time, and that there are avenues for clear communication helps to make the process more inclusive.



Please click the link below and complete the survey.

[2025 CPO-HE Diversity Training Questions](#)



Thank you!



<https://cpo-highered.illinois.gov/>



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