Supplier Diversity Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Does the Tennessee Board of Regents have a supplier diversity program?
A. Yes, the Tennessee Board of Regents is committed to and supports supplier diversity because it is essential to the system's mission and core values. The Procurement, Contracts, and Payment Services (PCPS) unit of Procurement Supplier Diversity administers the Tennessee Board of Regents supplier diversity program.

Q. Does the Tennessee Board of Regents have supplier diversity goals?
A. Yes, the mission of Supplier Diversity is to expand procurement opportunities to businesses that have been historically underrepresented in the procurement process by increasing utilization of businesses owned by minorities, women, and persons with disabilities to at least 20% of allowable expenditures and 3% for veteran-owned businesses.

Q. How do diverse firms participate on Tennessee Board of Regents contracts?
A. Diverse firms may participate as prime contractors or subcontractors. Diverse firms may also participate as joint ventures with majority-owned firms or with other diverse firms.

Q. Does the State of Tennessee GoDBE Office have a searchable database to locate certified diverse firms to participate on Tennessee Board of Regents contracts?
A. Yes, certified diverse firms are included in a searchable database maintained by the State's Governor's Office of Business Enterprise Program (GoDBE), which can be found at: Governor's Office of Diversity Business Enterprise (Go-DBE)

Additionally, the Tennessee Board of Regents Office of Procurement Diversity Staff would assist with searches.

Q. Does the Tennessee Board of Regents guarantee work for diverse businesses?
A. No, the Tennessee Board of Regents does not guarantee work to any supplier, but we are committed to working with diverse suppliers to navigate the System Office procurement processes.
Q. What types of goods and services does Tennessee Board of Regents, and its Institutions purchase?
A. The System Office and its Institutions purchases a wide variety of goods and services to support academic, research, technical, and health programs. Procurement opportunities are posted on the Tennessee Board of Regents | Bid Opportunities Webpage

Q. What is certification?
A. The certification process verifies that a business is at least 51% owned and controlled by an eligible minority, woman, disabled person or veteran.

Q. How does a minority, woman, a person with a disability or veteran-owned firm get certified?
A. Diverse suppliers can apply for certification through the State of Tennessee's Office of Diversity Business Enterprise Program (GoDBE). Detailed information about GoDBE, eligibility criteria and an online application is available at: Governor's Office of Diversity Business Enterprise (Go-DBE)

Q. Does a minority, woman, person with a disability or veteran-owned business required to be a certified diverse vendor to do business with the TBR and its Institutions?
A. No, but being a certified diverse firm allows you to potentially participate as a subcontractor to meet Tennessee Board of Regents diversity spending goals.

Q. Are there any benefits of certification?
A. Yes, once certified a business is entered into a public database that is accessible to any business or entity that desires to do business with a diverse firm. Certified diverse firms can be utilized by prime vendors to meet solicitation diversity goals.

Q. Does my firm have to be certified to be counted towards a diversity goal?
A. Yes, a diverse firm must be certified to be counted towards a diversity goal.

Q. How long is the certification process?
A. The State will grant certification within 90 days if it determines that your firm meets its eligibility criteria and has submitted all required documentation and forms, but it usually takes less time.
Q. How do diverse businesses learn about current and upcoming opportunities to do business with the Tennessee Board of Regents?

A. The Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) maintains one database of vendors for the System Office and its Institutions. The online portal allows vendors to register one time and maintain/update its information, accordingly, alleviating the need to register with each individual TBR Institution. Registration does not guarantee that all bidders will receive Requests for Quotations (RFQ)/ Requests for Proposals (RFP) emails. **It is the vendor's responsibility to inquire regarding current bid opportunities.** Vendors may also contact the Procurement Diversity Coordinator, Danyelle Johnson @ procurementdiversity@tbr.edu or call 615.365.1558 with any questions.